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# Character

One of the several meanings of the word “character” is “the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual”. Mental qualities have as much to do about mental health as intelligence. “Mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. It includes how you feel about yourself and how you adjust to life events.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The National Mental Health Association cites the following 10 characteristics of people who are mentally healthy.

1. They feel good about themselves.
2. They do not become overwhelmed by emotions, such as fear, anger, love, jealousy, guilt, or anxiety.
3. They have lasting and satisfying personal relationships.
4. They feel comfortable with other people.
5. They can laugh at themselves and with others.
6. They have respect for themselves and for others even if there are differences.
7. They are able to accept life’s disappointments.
8. They can meet life’s demands and handle their problems when they arise.
9. They make their own decisions.
10. They shape their environment whenever possible and adjust to it when necessary.

Moral qualities include the existence or lack of virtues such as empathy, courage, fortitude, honesty, and loyalty.

This is a presidential election year in the United States, so the news is primarily focused on the two candidates: the Republican incumbent Donald Trump and the Democrat challenger Joe Biden. Through all this reporting what becomes apparent to me is not just the differences in their political views, but the differences in their character. Regarding the 10 attributes listed above, only Nos. 1 and 9 apply to Trump while the remaining 8 qualities do not. For Biden, on the other hand, all 10 attributes apply to him. It is easy to understand why an increasing number of Republicans have voiced their support for Biden rather than Trump. Trump demands loyalty from those around him, but does not give it in return. He is crass, insulting, vindictive, and a liar. He certainly does not have any of the decent qualities one would expect of a national leader. In short, he lacks moral character and this is reflected in his speech and behavior.

The election is scheduled for November 3rd, which is just around the corner. Due to the pandemic and the need for social distancing, the current debate is over the use of absentee or mail-in ballots. Some fear that the results will not be conclusive and there are already growing concerns that the election results will be strongly contested regardless of the outcome.

1. https://healthylife.com/mymh/SecIb.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)