

03 7 TRAITS OF A REAL MAN: INTEGRITY, COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE, SELF-CONTROL, PERSEVERANCE, COURAGE, HUMILITY

... many boys are confused and have no idea what it takes to be a real man. They seek inappropriate role models and emulate the bad behavior that they see on a regular basis. It is our duty... to counter these negative images and raise a new generation of men who are respectful, loving and willing to contribute to society in a positive way.

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“What am I most proud of? I'm proud that I'm not trying to be the old me - the me I was back in the day. I'm a new me, and that's good because I have a better future.”

“Back in the day,” José* was a fourteen-year-old seeking to become a man in the only way he knew how: caught up in the world of dealing drugs, hanging out with the wrong people, doing the wrong things and getting into trouble. “Back in the day,” José’s focus was on himself, and looking out for “number one”. “Back in the day,” his surroundings shaped his view of a man as a macho, gun-wielding tough-guy focused on money and the things it can buy.

Thankfully, José is no longer “back in the day.”

While he wouldn't choose the circumstances that brought him here, José sagely recognizes that the direction his path veered when he came to The Children's Home is a better one.

WE BELIEVE

... in generational change through children



“Now I listen to others; I volunteer without being asked; I choose to do the right thing. What I do reflects on me – affects how people see me... I'm protective – I care about others. I really care about them, and I don't want them to get hurt. I treat them as my family.”

José is on the cusp of a new journey. Now he is caught up in the world of The Children's Home, and we get to play a major role in reshaping his view of what it means to be a man as well as his goals for his own life.

“My goals back then... I would have ended up in prison. If I hadn't come to The Children's Home, right now I'd be on the streets, not focusing on others, doing drugs, drinking, partying and getting myself caught. Now, I'm getting an education. I have a bright future and a better chance of being the first in my family to go to college.”

We are blessed with the exciting job of encouraging and celebrating each step that José is making along this new path: the step of showing protective tenderness to his struggling little sister who was frozen with terror on a high ropes course... the step of shedding his backpack to go back and help others through a particularly difficult spot on a mountain hike... the step of working tirelessly without complaint in the sweltering summer sun to shovel mulch during Missions Week... the step of responding to correction with a smile rather than anger... the step of being vulnerable when necessary and strong when called for...

“I want to be an over-achiever... a better brother... better at caring for others... well educated... I'm an outgoing person. I like to cheer others up and help others. They** tell me when I smile it brings joy to other people. That's the real me - I bring happiness to others. I guess that's a gift... a smile that lights up the room.”

** *they* TELL ME... That's us: WE get to tell our kids their strengths, their talents, those unique things that God put in them as gifts to the whole world. WE get to identify those things, name them and give them power, and watch our kids learn to own who they are.

Taken from an interview with José and several staff of The Children's Home

* name has been changed