

Extended Definition Essay

When one thinks of the most important quality in a friend or a family member, trust immediately comes to mind. It can be defined as reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, and surety of a person or thing. But what does it really mean? Trust, in simple terms, is faith in another person, despite a lack of an assured outcome.

One characteristic that makes trust unique is its fragility. To gain the trust of a parent or friend, one must continuously prove one's honesty and reliability. To gain the complete trust of someone can take years, but can be lost in a single moment. A perfect example of the delicate nature of trust can be found in marriage. Two spouses must constantly support and be honest with each other to gain real trust. However, this bond can be easily broken if one of the spouses is caught cheating with someone else. Trust in another person can make one feel secure and loved, while broken trust can lead to the feeling of anger and vulnerability.

One very important question arises when examining trust: If one knows the outcome of something before it happens, is there any trust involved? For example, a friend asks to borrow \$10,000 so that he can invest it in a company, and receive more money in return. If one already knew that they would get the money back at the time of the loan, there is no trust involved. However, if the investment seems very risky, and the only thing that made one approve is the friend's promise of success, than genuine trust takes place. The person that is doing the trusting should have faith in the person making the promise, not in the event itself. Real trust is not tested in times of certainty; rather, genuine trust occurs when we are not certain of the outcome.

Trust can be found in simple things, like a dog relying on his master to feed him, or it can be found in more complex things relationships such as two police officers looking out for each other. Most friendships are based on trust as well. Friends will not let other friends make bad decisions and will expect that others will do the same for them. Trust can be proven to others by doing the right thing even when one is not asked. If other people know that one can handle responsibility and can manage to do the right thing, even when they are not asked, they will not falter in providing friendship and support.

Trust has always been a part of everyone's life whether or not they are aware of it. From the time we are born, we know that our mother will care for us and show us love and affection. In our teenage years we hope that our friends and family alike will support our decisions and correct us if we are wrong. To our college years, we expect that our teachers will accurately grade everything we do. We even expect our spouse to support and love us throughout our adult years. We rely on others to take care of our every need when we are old. Even on the day that we die, we know that our friends and family will be at our funeral to bid us farewell into the afterlife. We hope that there is a heaven and a hell, one of which will be our final destination. But throughout our lives, trust follows us everywhere we go and these trusting relationships that we develop will help lead and guide us. But when it all comes down to it, who can we trust?