

The Character Checklist

For Crushes, Friends & Dating

Based on Covenant Over Culture: High School Edition

This checklist comes straight from Chapter 8. It's not about judging people or declaring them unworthy. It's about slowing down and asking better questions — about them and about yourself. Chemistry is easy. Character is what you actually live with.

THE FOUR CHARACTER QUESTIONS

1. How Do They Handle Disappointment?

Everyone gets disappointed. What comes out when they do?

HEALTHY

"I was really upset; I shouldn't have snapped at you. I'm sorry." — They can calm down, admit what's theirs, and move toward repair.

RED FLAG

"You made me act like that." — They blame others, punish with silence, icy vibes, or explosions.

WATCH FOR:

Watch for: who they blame when things go wrong.

2. How Do They Treat Low-Status People?

The substitute teacher. The awkward kid. The cafeteria worker. The younger sibling.

HEALTHY

They show kindness even when it costs them social points. They don't join in when others bully or gossip.

RED FLAG

Sarcasm as a weapon. Every story about exes ends with "they were crazy — I did nothing wrong." Their humor is mostly tearing people down.

WATCH FOR:

Watch for: if their kindness is consistent or only when it benefits them.

3. How Do They Respond to Boundaries?

This might be the clearest sign of all.

HEALTHY

"Okay, I respect that." – They might ask to understand, but they don't argue you into exhaustion or mock your standards.

RED FLAG

"Come on, it's not that deep." / "If you really trusted me, you'd..." / Going cold-shoulder until you give in.

WATCH FOR:

Tattoo this on your brain: "Someone who loves you will not punish you for having self-respect."

4. Who Do You Become Around Them?

This is the sneakiest but most powerful question.

HEALTHY

You're more honest. More yourself. You feel peace. You like who you are in this relationship.

RED FLAG

You gossip more. You're meaner to your family. You've drifted from God. You replay every interaction to see if you messed up.

WATCH FOR:

"Sometimes the clearest sign isn't 'they're a monster' – it's 'I don't like who I'm turning into.'"

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Step 1 – Pick one person

A crush, a close friend, or someone you're considering dating.

Step 2 – Walk through the four questions

Don't rush it. Think of specific moments, not general impressions.

Step 3 – Ask the summary question

"Does this connection move me toward or away from the kind of person I want to be?"

Step 4 – Don't ignore what you find

If the answers are mostly good, great – nobody's perfect. If your stomach sinks, talk to God honestly and then to one wise adult.

THE MIRROR SIDE — CHECK YOURSELF TOO

This checklist isn't just for evaluating others. It's also a mirror. The questions below are the same four areas — turned inward.

How do I handle disappointment?

Do I blame others, go cold, or can I own my part and repair?

How do I treat people who don't benefit me?

Am I consistently kind, or only when it costs me nothing?

Do I respect others' boundaries?

When someone says no, do I accept it — or do I pressure, negotiate, or punish?

Who do people become around me?

Do the people closest to me feel more free, more honest, more themselves?

QUICK REFERENCE — THE 4 QUESTIONS AT A GLANCE

#	The Question	What It Reveals
1	How do they handle disappointment?	Emotional maturity & accountability
2	How do they treat low-status people?	True character under zero pressure
3	How do they respond to your boundaries?	Whether they respect you as a person
4	Who do you become around them?	The health of the relationship itself

"You are allowed to choose character over chemistry. You're not being 'too picky' by wanting someone who respects you, tells the truth, and treats people with kindness. You're just refusing to build your future on a spark that can't actually keep you warm."

— Covenant Over Culture: High School Edition

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