



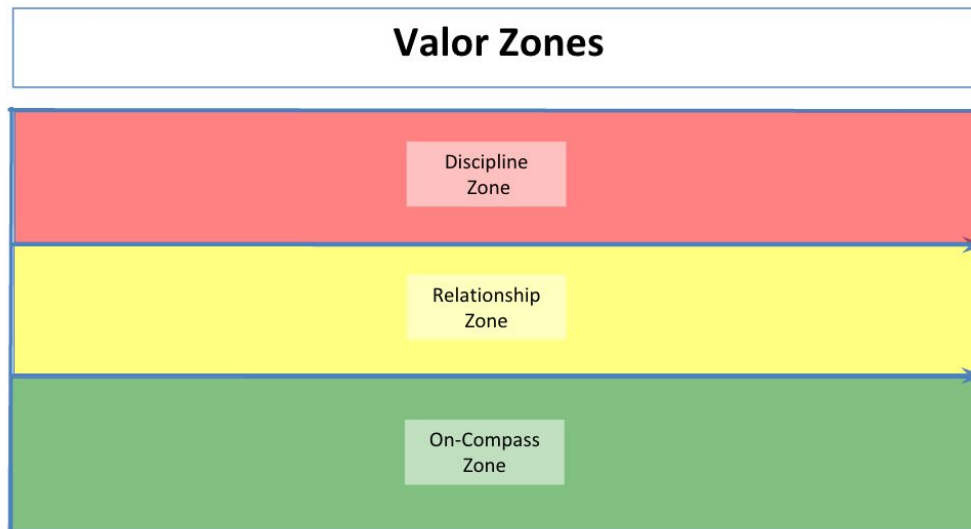
## On-Compass Systems Overview

### Overview

We believe everyone wants to be and has the capacity to be “On-Compass” in their lives. In fact, most of us, and our scholars, are remarkably “On-Compass” most of the time! At Valor we recognize that the most effective ways to create an “On-Compass” community that is rooted in character- and value-driven behaviors are to 1) create an environment of high expectations where everyone is expected to be their best selves, 2) to clearly define what “excellence” looks like in heart, mind, being, and doing, 3) and to seek out and recognize members of our community that are demonstrating that excellence.

### Compass Zones:

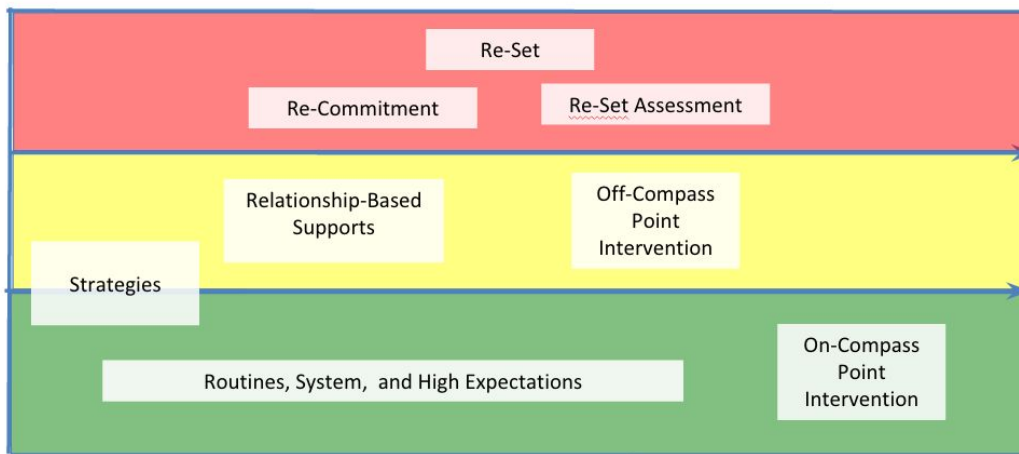
At Valor we train that scholars behavior will generally fall within 3 categories: On-Compass zone (80% of the time), Relationship Zone (15% of the time), and the Discipline Zone (5% of the time). We believe the majority of Off-Compass behaviors can and should be managed in the Relationship Zone with strong classroom-wide and individualized routines, systems, supports, and interventions.



### Compass Zones:

We believe creating safe, positive, supportive learning environments is rooted in having consistent, positive, high expectations and teach and train our teachers to use consistent routines and systems. We also emphasize the importance of reinforcing “On-Compass” behavior and all of our teachers work to achieve a “positivity ratio” of 4 positives to 1 correction in their classrooms. When a scholar, or scholars, begins to get “Off-Compass” (enters the Yellow Zone), we expect teachers to use a series of Relationship-Based supports and that are “outcomes-based” to help correct that scholars behavior and get them back on track. We use the term “outcome-based” to reinforce that the “outcome” we want with all of our supports and interventions is to help a scholar get back “On-Compass” and back to learning. If an intervention or support further escalates a child, getting them more “Off-Compass”, then it was not a successful intervention or support.

## Components of Compass System in Zones



### On-Compass Points

We work hard at Valor to encourage everyone in our community to continually “Work the Compass” by pushing themselves to develop the character strengths, skills, and competencies in each Foundational Discipline of the Valor Compass. One way we reinforce the development of these strengths, skills, and competencies is through our On-Compass Point system that encourages scholars to demonstrate specific character strengths “in action” during the school day at Valor. For each Foundational Discipline, we focus on two character strengths that we believe lead to mastery in that Discipline.

Scholars can receive On-Compass Points for demonstrating any of the following ten character strengths:

- Identity
- Joy
- Diversity
- Curiosity
- Kindness
- Courage
- Determination
- Integrity
- Balance
- Presence

While there is some variability in defining each of these “strengths in action” we have provided some guidance below to provide a framework for the types of behaviors we hope to see scholars working to display on a regular basis in our community.

### **Noble Purpose – Developing Habits of Being**

Having Noble Purpose means being connected to my deepest values, living from my best self-story, and bringing joy into the world. Having Noble Purpose also means being connected to my multiple communities’ values, shared histories, stories, and identities, and being grounded in my communal identity.



**IDENTITY** looks like...

- Demonstrating strong self-identity
- Demonstrating conviction
- Demonstrating self-awareness
- Connecting thoughts, feelings, or actions directly to identity, purpose, beliefs, values, and/or intentions.
- Demonstrating ability to notice and/or comment on my thoughts, feelings, or patterns in a “meta” way.
- Demonstrating pride in “who I am” in a positive manner.
- Making a connection between the content of a course with a unique aspect of my identity

**JOY** looks like...

- Bringing enthusiasm and positive energy
- Connecting experience to larger meaning in my own life
- Making a positive comment or encouraging statement to someone who seems down
- Smiling even when smiling isn’t necessarily called for
- Sharing hopeful or optimistic viewpoints
- Connecting thoughts, feelings, and actions to larger meaning(s)

***Sharp Mind – Developing Habits of Mind***

Having a Sharp Mind means pursuing knowledge and skills through critical thinking, creative problem solving, curiosity, and diversity of perspective. Having a Sharp Mind also means being able to listen and communicate effectively in my relationships.

**DIVERSITY** looks like...

- Actively seeking multiple perspectives
- Being able to have my mind changed
- Not moving on in a discussion until multiple perspectives have been heard
- Using language structures that infer that my thoughts are just one way to think about something
- Starting conversations by asking what others think or by exploring another’s point of view
- Having my mind changed

**CURIOSITY** looks like...

- Asking and answering questions to deepen understanding
- Actively listening
- Asking lots of questions!
- Posting my attention on another person and using “open” body language to demonstrate I am attending to them
- Using active listening skills (open posture, nodding, tracking, asking follow-up questions, reflecting words and feelings, validating experience)
- Expressing interest in “knowing more” around topics I may already know something about

***Big Heart – Developing Habits of Heart***

Having a Big Heart means understanding and drawing energy from my emotions. It means having the courage to stand in uncertainty, to connect with and value others, and to be kind to myself and others. Having a Big Heart also means having compassion for the needs of the world and having the courage to be “a part of the solution”.

**COURAGE** looks like...



- Taking risks
- Bringing my “inner out” (disclosing inner experiences in a helpful and relationship-building way)
- Volunteering an answer even when I may not know if it is correct
- Trying something new
- Not talking or jumping into a discussion if that’s my natural tendency
- Doing something that scares me
- Attempting problems or topics that are potentially challenging instead of opting for the familiar
- Sitting with or talking to people I don’t know very well
- Standing up for someone else even when it might be unpopular
- Expressing an idea that others might not agree with
- Disclosing information about my life and/or inner experiences (thoughts, feelings) that other people may not know
- Acknowledging and expressing (in a safe, kind way) feelings that might be difficult to talk about (anger, fear, sadness, shame)
- Expressing disagreement appropriately if that is something that is hard for me

**KINDNESS** looks like...

- Helping others when I see a need
- Validating others’ feelings/perspectives
- Attending to someone else’s needs before your own
- Seeking out others that may not be included in an activity or discussion (finding the potential lonely person in the room)
- Expressing appreciation for others actions
- Expressing gratitude when others help you and or do things for you
- Smiling when you greet people
- Helping people up when they fall
- Checking in with people that you think might be upset or in a bad mood
- Reaching out to people who you know are going through a hard time
- Asking about and then making validating statements about other people’s experiences

***Aligned Action – Developing Habits of Doing***

Having Aligned Action means working steadfastly to ensure my actions match my intentions.  
Having Aligned Action also means being an engaged and supportive community member and being willing to contribute, through my actions, to the greater good.

**DETERMINATION** looks like...

- Finishing whatever he or she starts
- Seeking opportunities for perfect practice
- Completing work all the way through
- Doing “great” work even when “good” might pass
- Asking for opportunities to practice more
- Requesting extra work to help your further your understanding
- Taking errors in stride and learning from them
- Expressing certainty about ability to learn or finish something even when it seems difficult
- Giving “pep talks” to teams/groups that you are working with
- Using your time wisely and effectively so that you can accomplish what you want
- Finishing things even when you really, really don’t want to

**INTEGRITY** looks like...

- Telling the truth even when it is hard



- Walking your talk
- Doing “the right thing” even when no one is watching
- Following through on things you say you will do
- Making decisions based on your values and what matters most to you
- Playing fair
- Holding information others share with you very carefully
- Being “responsible” – taking care of things you’ve been given responsibility for
- Speaking to the person, not about the person (or about people when necessary as though they were there)
- Being honest with yourself about what you think, feel, and want
- Taking responsibility/owning up to off-compass behavior immediately
- Taking genuine responsibility for off-compass behavior after reflection.

### **True North – Developing Habits of Center**

Finding True North means being balanced, present, and alert. True North is my most balanced center where I am able to be present and make clear decisions about my next steps.

#### **BALANCE** looks like...

- Using my attention wisely and consciously
- Weighing multiple sources to make decisions
- Being able to find and post my attention at any given moment
- Being able to keep track of my attention and keep it posted (for the most part) on what I want
- Being able to “find my center” by taking a deep breath (or some other practice that helps me)
- Considering values, thoughts and feelings before making a decision
- Being able to take elements from more than one source/perspective when forming an opinion
- Using language that indicates I recognize that I am not my thoughts, feelings, or sensations
- Clearing my mind
- Trying to control my thoughts or feelings

#### **PRESENCE** looks like...

- Valuing quiet and using it to renew
- Being “present” to others by tracking, posting attention, using open body language, using active listening skills, and/or demonstrating resonance through words or body language
- Using quiet hallways, quiet reading time, True North practices, or Re-Focuses to re-center and re-balance (as evidenced by calm demeanor, open body language, slow speech)
- Actively participating in a conversation or activity by fully engaging (by listening, asking questions, speaking up)
- Completing routines and systems of class with urgency on a consistent basis
- Following directions the first time with urgency without the need of reminders or redirection on a consistent basis



## On-Compass Character Strengths: One-Pager

<b>Big Heart</b>	<b>These Habits of Heart might look like...</b>
Courage	• Attempting problems or topics that are potentially challenging instead of opting for the familiar
	• Standing up for someone else even when it might be unpopular
Kindness	• Seeking out others that may not be included in an activity or discussion (finding the potential lonely person in the room)
	• Attending to someone else's needs before your own
<b>Sharp Mind</b>	<b>These Habits of Mind might look like...</b>
Diversity	• Using language structures that infer that my thoughts are just one way to think about something
	• Starting conversations by asking what others think or by exploring another's point of view
Curiosity	• Expressing interest in "knowing more" around topics I may already know something about
	• Using active listening skills (open posture, nodding, tracking, asking follow-up questions, reflecting words and feelings, validating experience)
<b>Noble Purpose</b>	<b>These Habits of Being might look like...</b>
Identity	• Demonstrating pride in "who I am" in a positive manner.
	• Connecting thoughts, feelings, or actions directly to identity, purpose, beliefs, values, and/or intentions.
Joy	• Smiling even when smiling isn't necessarily called for
	• Making a positive comment or encouraging statement to someone who seems down
<b>Aligned Actions</b>	<b>These Habits of Doing might look like...</b>
Determination	• Taking errors in stride and learning from them
	• Finishing things even when you really, really don't want to
Integrity	• Making decisions based on your values and what matters most to you
	• Being "responsible" – taking care of things you've been given responsibility for
<b>True North</b>	<b>These Habits of Center might look like...</b>
Balance	• Using language that indicates I recognize that I am not my thoughts, feelings, or sensations
	• Being able to keep track of my attention and keep it posted (for the most part) on what I want
Presence	• Actively participating in a conversation or activity by fully engaging (by listening, asking questions, speaking up)
	• Actively and continuously tracking the speaker

## On-Compass In-Class Systems



We've found that the most effective way to ensure you are seeing and rewarding character strengths in action is to design in-class routines and systems to effectively create opportunities for scholars to shine and to ensure that you capture these and reward them.

Some ideas for effective In-Class Systems for giving On-Compass points consistently:

- Having a Compass “Focus of the Week” written on the board with a Character Strength you’ll be looking for that week and 1 or 2 specific examples of what you’ll be looking for:
  - Focus of the week is **Balance**
  - I’ll be looking for scholars who do an excellent job transitioning between activities in class.
  - I’ll be looking for scholars that accept corrections/Off-Compass points respectfully.
- Completing challenging independent practice in a given time frame with all IP 100% correct
  - “Scholars, you’re going to complete your last page of independent practice. You will have 4 minutes to work. All scholars that finish it with all the problems correct with earn a **Determination** on-compass point. On your mark, get set, go!”
- Asking challenging academic questions and awarding a **Courage** on-compass points for volunteering or answering question correctly
  - “Why is the answer 25 and not 28? Who can tell me for a courage point?”
- Adding an extra, challenging problem on homework or in-class materials. Scholars earn an on-compass point for **Curiosity** for answering correctly.
  - “Scholars, there is an extra problem on your homework tonight. It is optional, but if you complete it correctly you will earn a Curiosity point tomorrow”
- Creating an intentional opportunity for scholars to “live into” a character strength through carefully structured questions/requests:
  - “Okay, for an **Identity** point, I’d like to hear someone build on that last idea by connecting it to your own life or culture.”
  - “Great, now for a **Diversity of Perspective** point, can someone express a different, but supported, argument for why that answer might be correct?”
- Creating an opportunity for scholars to “practice” character strengths:
  - “Give me three in 5...4...3....2...1. Good now everyone notice if your mind is wandering or if you are really putting all your attention on what I’m saying. If you notice it’s wandering, bring it back to me. Good. For a **Presence** point, can someone whose mind was wandering share with the class how they found their attention and brought it back to the present?”
  - “Quick Kindness Hit: who wants to share an appreciation for someone you did group work today? (after appreciation). Great, **Kindness** points for you both.”