



# THE IDEA OF AMERICA™

## *Colonial Williamsburg®*

**Value Tension**—conflict between two equally desirable goals.

### Unity vs. Diversity

**Unity**—the pursuit of common principles and goals, often expressed through cultural norms or as nationalism and patriotism.

*We celebrate our unity as one American nation. But we also cherish our diversity. How do these values sometimes clash?*

**Diversity**—differences among individuals as well as groups of people based on race, ethnicity, religion, economic class, location, and political beliefs.

### Law vs. Ethics

**Law**—rules established by custom and history and enforced by government. Law includes both written statutes and stated policies.

*We are a nation of laws. But American heroes have protested or even rebelled against laws that were unethical. When is the time for protest?*

**Ethics**—system of moral standards and individual conscience that guides behavior and thought.

### Private Wealth vs. Common Wealth

**Private wealth**—resources—such as income, personal character, and capital—earned and kept by an individual, family, or corporation.

*Accumulating individual wealth is at the heart of our economy. Yet we also contribute to the needs of the community. How do we do both?*

**Common wealth**—the material infrastructure and shared resources of a community, as well as the ethical relationships that exist between and among people.

### Freedom vs. Equality

**Freedom**—power, rights, and privileges enjoyed by an individual or group.

*Too much freedom for some can threaten equality for all. But the quest for equality can limit individual freedoms. How do we find a balance?*

**Equality**—identical treatment in society. The availability of opportunities and shared common wealth that arise from a shared sense of reciprocal duty.