Activating Empathy

Facilitator Guide

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement Ireland

CHILD AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTRE

Acknowledgements

The *Activating Empathy* Curriculum was developed by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway and the Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education at The Pennsylvania State University. It is designed as a resource for teachers working with 15-17 year old students, and can be adapted for a variety of audiences. The content of the unit builds on theory and practice in the area of empathy education and is underpinned by literature reviews on empathy, civic behavior and empathy education undertaken by staff at the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre.

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Introduction to this Curriculum

Empathy has been the subject of considerable social science research in recent decades, with a particular emphasis on the link between empathy and prosocial behavior.

Empathy is often seen as comprising of two components.

1. **Cognitive empathy**: the ability to **understand** and identify another person's thoughts, feelings, perspective and intentions.
2. **Emotional** or **affective empathy** is the capacity to **share** another person's feelings or to feel what they feel.

Why teach empathy?

One of the goals of an education system is to create responsible, caring and socially aware citizens who feel connected to their communities, societies and the wider world. This is a goal that is sometimes lost sight of in the context of exam pressure and overloaded curricula. Empathy matters because of its capacity to foster social connectedness and civic behavior. Empathy education can be seen as a targeted intervention designed to improve empathy skills amongst young people with a view to enhancing their social competence and promoting civic behavior.

There is a considerable body of research on empathy and civic behavior, which demonstrates the importance of cultivating empathy as a life skill. Key to this is the demonstrated connection between empathy and prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior is defined as a voluntary behavior designed to help or benefit another person (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Some examples of prosocial include sharing to meet others' unmet material desires, comforting another person in emotional distress and cooperating with others to attain mutual goals. Empathy is claimed to be central in promoting prosocial and altruistic behaviors by increasing an individual's positive, helpful and thoughtful actions (Gano-Overway et al., 2009; Pavalovich & Krahnke, 2012). Empathy for others and its associated prosocial behaviors are key facilitators of positive social understanding (Hoffman, 1977; Tori & Batson, 1982).

Research has shown that empathy is aligned to a range of beneficial effects on behavior and attitudes. Specifically, empathy and prosocial responding in children and adolescents is associated with:

- better quality peer relationships (Dekovic & Gerris, 1994; Eisenberg et al., 2006)
- greater academic achievement (Caprara et al., 2000; Wentzel, 1993)
- greater social competence (Saarni, 1990)
- less prejudice (Dovidio et al., 2000; Galinsky & Ku, 2004);
- fewer externalising behaviors (Bandura et al., 1999; Kokko & Pulkkinen, 2000)

- lower aggression (Miller & Eisenberg, 1988; Pulkkinen & Tremblay, 1992; Raskauskas et al., 2010)
- lower engagement in antisocial behavior (Barr & Higgins-D Alessandro, 2009).

It is relevant to note that adolescence has been identified as a crucial period for empathy development (Chase-Landsdale, Wakschlag, & Brooks-Gunn, 1995). Research also indicates that the social and developmental experiences that occur during childhood and adolescence can set the stage for citizenship and responsibility across the lifespan (Hope & Jagers, 2014; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011).

"You know, there's a lot of talk in this country about the federal deficit. But I think we should talk more about our empathy deficit - the ability to put ourselves in someone else's shoes; to see the world through the eyes of those who are different from us - the child who's hungry, the steelworker who's been laid-off, the family who lost the entire life they built together when the storm came to town. When you think like this - when you choose to broaden your ambit of concern and empathize with the plight of others, whether they are close friends or distant strangers - it becomes harder not to act; harder not to help." – Barack Obama (2006)

About this Resource

This curriculum aims to promote and increase empathy levels as a key component of students' personal and social development. Empathy and the prosocial behaviors it motivates are crucial to how we navigate our interpersonal relationships with friends, family, colleagues, peers and our community. They are also directly related to how we see ourselves in the world and our role in society. Giving students a chance to explore and learn about empathy, to practice key skills, and to consider their role as responsible and active citizens and community members is an essential part of their personal and social development. By activating empathy the curriculum also hopes to increase prosocial behavior and civic behavior.

This Introductory Unit aims to:

- Increase students' empathy levels
- Increase students' prosocial behavior
- Improve students' interpersonal relationships
- Promote positive social action, civic behavior and civic engagement

The *Activating Empathy* Curriculum accords with the core commitments of the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (CFRC) in the area of youth development. The CFRC's work on youth development is concerned with how youth can be supported to exercise greater agency within their lives; how a stronger sense of inclusion can be fostered by those with influence; and how meaningful developmental outcomes can be actively promoted. Research is focused on knowledge creation around 'what works' in the real world of practice. Work in the area of youth development, including Empathy Education, reflects the Centre's core principles of social support, resilience and children's rights, while also embracing

concepts such as participation, civic engagement and leadership. The Centre's work on Empathy Education aligns with UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector, their research theme 'Learning to Live Together', and broader work with other UNESCO Chairs, UNICEF and the United Nations.

Using this Resource

The *Activating Empathy* Curriculum seeks to harness young people's individual and collective potential to make a positive contribution to society. For this reason, the curriculum is designed to be student-led as far as possible: students should be encouraged to choose activities, to adapt activities to their own interests, to exercise their own creativity in completing activities, and to direct their own project work. The reflective learning part of the curriculum includes time for students to write about their experiences in empathy in the Learning Journals. The Student Learning Journals are provided in Appendix B (p.65) for teachers to copy and distribute.

It has been suggested that if empathy training is to effectively foster prosocial responses, it should be accompanied by prosocial behavior training (Feshbach & Feshbach, 2011). Therefore this resource includes a focus on modelling and practicing prosocial behaviors and on social action projects.

Further reading on empathy:

David Howe (2013), *Empathy: what it is and why it matters*. Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan.

Peter Bazalgette (2017) *The empathy instinct: how to create a more civil society*. London: John Murray.

Simon Baron-Cohen (2011) *Zero degrees of empathy: a new theory of human cruelty*. London: Penguin.

Roman Krznaric (2015), *Empathy: why it matters, and how to get it.* London: Rider Books.

Activating Empathy

Introduction

Activating Empathy is an introductory curriculum, consisting of twelve thematic lessons that take approximately 12 classroom sessions to complete. Each 50 minute session contains a variety of group activities designed to activate and develop empathy, cultivate prosocial behavior, and recognize the link between empathy and civic behavior. In this curriculum, students will learn how to activate empathy, practice empathy skills, and recognize the importance of empathy to interpersonal relationships and to the wider community and global issues. Students will be asked to reflect on their learning outside of these core sessions using their Learning Journals *(see Appendix B, p.65)*.

On completion of Activating Empathy, students will be able to:

- Define empathy
- Explain the importance of empathy in improving interpersonal relationships
- Explain how empathy motivates civic behavior, social action and active citizenship
- Practice core empathy skills such as empathic listening, perspective-taking and responding with empathy
- Identify and set clear empathy goals relevant to their own lives
- Reflect on their learning

Using this Resource[1]

The sessions have been ordered with continuity of learning in mind. The curriculum begins with an introduction to the concept of empathy. It then introduces students to the practice of empathy skills with particular application to interpersonal relationships. Finally, it examines the connection between empathy and wider social issues. It is therefore recommended that teachers follow the lessons in order. Approximations are given for the timing of each unit and individual activity.

Each lesson is also designed with flexibility in mind. It offers a menu of activities: teachers and students should choose the activities that would work best given the needs and interests of the students and the available resources in the school.

It is recommended that approximately 12 weeks in class, 1 hour a week are spent on this curriculum in addition to short assigned homework after each session.

[1] This resource is based on the *Activating Empathy Training Manual* (2017) created by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at NUI Galway and Foróige, the National Youth Development Organisation.

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Session 1 Exploring Empathy

Session 1 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Define and explain what empathy means.
- Identify examples of empathy they have encountered in their own lives.
- Evaluate their empathy levels.

Estimated Length of Session 1: 60 minutes

Session 1, Activity 1: What is Empathy?

Type of Activity: Brainstorm, Discussion

Estimated Length: 20 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard, Dry Erase Markers, Writing Utensils, Student Learning Journals

Activity Objective(s): To enable students to define what empathy means. To identify examples of empathy students have encountered.

Method:

1. Write the word empathy on the whiteboard and ask students how they would define empathy. Note any keywords on the whiteboard.
2. Read through the definitions of empathy in the Learning Journals on page 2 (LJ p.2)
3. Ask the class which definition they preferred. Take a vote and write the preferred definition on the whiteboard.
4. If you have available resources, watch some of the video resources provided below.
5. Discuss this definition and other words and examples that came up during the earlier discussion. You can guide this discussion using the following questions:
    - Why is empathy important?
    - Is empathy is something people are born with or a skill that can be learned? Why?

Session 1, Activity 2: Empathy Explained by Others

Type of Activity: Video, Website Exploration

Estimated Length: 20 minutes

Materials: Projector, Computer, Speakers

Activity Objective(s): To provide students with alternate and in-depth definitions and examples of empathy from scholarly resources.

Method:

1. Choose a video or website (or two) from the list of resources below to show to the class.
2. After viewing the video or website, discuss how this definition of empathy agrees or disagrees with what you have already discussed surrounding the definition of empathy.

Videos:

- Brené Brown on Empathy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw
- Sesame Street with Mark Ruffalo https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM
- Empathy can change the world https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU3QfyqvHk8
- The importance of empathy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzPMMSKfKZQ
- What is empathy? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5jrUg_kXjY
- Brené Brown on Empathy v Sympathy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZBTYViDPlQ
- 'Empathy' and 'sympathy': what's the difference? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YDpQke-gwY

Websites:

- ‘Empathy Defined’, Greater Good Magazine: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/empathy/definition
- ‘Empathy vs Sympathy’, Psychology Today, 22 May, 2015, https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hide-and-seek/201505/empathy-vs-sympathy

Session 1, Activity 3: Empathy in Real Life

Type of Activity: Brainstorm, Discussion

Estimated Length: 20 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard, Dry Erase Markers

Activity Objective(s): To enable students to identify when they have seen empathy in their lives.

1. Explain to the students that they are now going to reflect on a time they witnessed empathy in real life. This could be a time when somebody showed empathy to them, an occasion when they showed empathy to another person, or a time they witnessed a display of empathy between other people.
2. The teacher should give an example to the class of a time they encountered empathy, role-modelling the type of responses the students might give.
    - Remind students that if they are uncomfortable naming the people in their examples they can recount them as anonymous scenarios e.g. 'I once saw one girl help another boy in her class…' etc.
3. Ask students to break into pairs and spend a few minutes with their partner discussing their experience of empathy. Ask them to describe the people involved, what was said and what was done to show empathy, and the effect of the experience of empathy on the people involved.
4. Bring the class back together and ask for some volunteers to share their experience of empathy. Lead the discussion with the following questions:
    - How does it feel when somebody shows you empathy?
    - How challenging is it to show empathy? How can a situation or person involved in a situation change how challenging it is to show empathy?
    - What happens when there is a lack of empathy in society?

Session 1, Take Home Activity: Definition of Empathy

For the next session, students should:

- Write their personal definition of empathy on page 3 in their Learning Journals (LJ p.3)
- Identify examples of empathy that they notice during the week, whether this is in their own lives, on television, in books, or in the news, and make a note of some of these on page 3 in their Learning Journals (LJ p.3).

Session 2 Identifying Empathy in Everyday Life

Session 2 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Identify the difference between an empathic response and a response that lacks empathy.
- Explain how responding with empathy is an active choice.
- Consider how to actively engage in empathy through body language, actions, and words.

Estimated Length of Session 2: 60 minutes

Session 2, Activity 1 Identifying Empathy

Type of Activity: Role play

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: Scenarios *(found on pages 4 and 5 in the Learning Journals - LJ p.4&5)*, Whiteboard, Dry Erase Markers

Activity Objective(s): To identify and outline the differences between an empathic response to a situation and a response that lacks empathy.

Method:

1. Ask for volunteers to act out each of the characters in the two Scenarios in front of the class. The scripts for the scenarios can be found on pages 4 and 5 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.4 & 5) You might prefer to change the character's names/genders, depending on the profile of your group.
2. Give them a few minutes to prepare.
3. Ask the first three volunteers to act out Scenario 1.
4. Once they finish, ask the second three volunteers to act out Scenario 2.
5. Discuss these scenarios with the class, using the following questions:
    - What are some similarities and differences between Lucas' response to Jason in Scenario 1, and Annie's response to Caroline in Scenario 2?
    - Who demonstrated a more empathetic response? What about his or her words or actions showed this?
    - How could Lucas have shown a more empathetic response to Jason's story?
    - What are the challenges of responding with empathy?
    - How can you apply this to your own interactions with people?

Scenario 1 points to note:
Lucas is not demonstrating empathy here, despite his well-meant efforts to cheer his friend up.

- He does not listen to Jason or respond to what Jason is trying to tell him about how he is feeling.
- He tries to convince him that he is better off without his girlfriend and that this is a positive development, when Jason is not evidently ready to think about things this way.
- He ignores what Jason says about not being sure he wanted to break up with his girlfriend and about his humiliation that it happened publicly.
- He does not put away his phone or other distractions to listen carefully to Jason.
- He is dismissive of Jason's feelings.
- He offers clichés like 'Time is a healer' instead of truly listening and responding.
- He does give any examples from his own life to suggest that he understand what Jason is going through.
- He does not offer any affection or soft words.

Scenario 2 points to note:
Annie demonstrates empathy in responding to her friend in a number of ways.

- She puts away her phone and all distractions to focus on listening to her friend.
- She moves closer to her Caroline so that her friend knows that she has her full attention.
- She responds directly to what Caroline is telling her about her feelings.
- She asks her open-ended questions 'How do you feel now?' so she can understand her friend's situation better and to allow her friend to explore her feelings.
- She does not rush Caroline, but allows space and time for her to talk.
- She shares a relevant experience from her own life that shows she understands.
- She offers her friend affection when needed.
- She does not offer any judgements, only solidarity.

Session 2, Activity 2 "Switching On" Empathy

Type of Activity: Story-telling, Reflection, Active Listening

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: John's Story *(Learning Journal - LJ p.6)*

Activity Objective(s): To demonstrate that feeling empathy can be 'switched on' and 'switched off' by active choice.

Method:

1. Explain that the ability to empathize is something we are all born with. We need to be aware, however, of empathy in order to activate it. Explain that empathy is something that can be switched on and switched off, and that we need to make an effort to be empathetic.
2. Explain to the students that you are going to read a personal story to demonstrate that you can choose to switch on empathy or switch it off.
3. The first time they hear the story, they are asked to 'switch off' their feelings, to listen to the story in a detached way, and to shut down any emotional response to the story. You may need to expand on how students can 'switch off' and 'switch on' empathy. For example, for the second reading of the story, help them to activate the "empathy mode". For example, give them a few seconds to imagine what John looks like and to envision his home, suggesting that they imagine John is one of their friends or their brother. For the first reading, ask them to imagine they are listening to instructions for building furniture or a weather report and attempt to suppress any emotions that come up.
4. Read John's Story from the Learning Journal on page 6 (LJ p.6).
5. Now explain to the students that the story will be read a second time. This time, they are to 'switch on' empathy. They are to imagine themselves experiencing all the hurt of the person in the story, to feel the same emotions, think the same thoughts, and imagine themselves in the same situation.
6. Read John's Story a second time.
7. After reading a second time with empathy "turned on", lead a class discussion using the following questions:
    - How did it feel to actively turn empathy on and off?
    - Why do you think some people chose to deliberately "switch off" empathy when interacting with other people?
    - Why could it be difficult to "switch on" empathy?
    - What can we do to help ourselves "switch on" empathy?

Session 2, Take Home Activity: Guide to Empathetic Listening and Displaying Empathy

For the next session, students should:

- Carefully read the *Guide to Empathetic Listening* on page 7 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.7).
- Reflect on how they can display empathy toward others and write some of these ideas on page 8 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.8).

Session 3 Identifying and Practicing Empathy

Session 3 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Identify the difference between an empathic response and a response that lacks empathy.
- Outline the reasons why understanding body language is an important empathy-related skill.
- Practice empathic listening and reflect on the importance of listening to people with empathy.

Estimated Length of Session 3: 60 minutes

Session 3, Activity 1 Empathetic Listening

Type of Activity: Listening, Group work

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: *Guide to Empathic Listening (Learning Journals, page 7 - LJ p.7)*

Activity Objective(s): To highlight the importance of empathetic listening and to practice empathetic listening skills.

Method:

1. Review the *Guide to Empathetic Listening* on page 7 (LJ p.7) of their Learning Journals or go through the *Guide* with the class.
2. Split the class into groups of three and ask them to assign a Speaker, Listener and Observer.
3. Ask each person to think of a time when they felt unhappy or challenged in some way. Give some examples such as a time when they were ill or injured; a time when they didn't perform as well as they expected in an exam or at sports; a time when they felt unfairly treated by a parent. Remind students that they do not have to share a deeply personal experience unless they are comfortable doing so.
4. Each Speaker will be given three minutes to tell their story while the Listener practices empathetic listening and the Observer provides feedback at the end of each conversation. At the end of each conversation they will swap roles until each person is given the chance to be the Speaker, Listener, and Observer.
5. Time the conversations (3 minutes each) and remind the class when it is time to swap roles.
6. Discuss the activity with the class using the following questions:

- What empathic listening skills did you see being demonstrated as an Observer?
- What was the most challenging aspect of being an empathetic Listener?
- As a Speaker, how did it feel to be listened to with empathy?
- How important is listening as an empathy skill?
- How might you improve your empathic listening skills?

Session 3, Activity 2 Reading Body Language

Type of Activity: Game, Role Playing

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: *Emotion Cards* (Appendix A, page 39)

Activity Objective(s): To demonstrate the importance of body language in determining the emotional states of others.

Method:

1. Copy the *Emotion Cards* found in Appendix A on page 39, and cut them apart.
2. With the class, discuss the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication, and define what is meant by body language.
3. Ask each participant to select an *Emotion Card*. They must not show the *Emotion Card* to anybody else.
4. Explain to students that this is like a game of charades. Ask students to come to the front of the room and act out the emotion on the card using only body language and limited props. They cannot make any sounds. You may prefer to ask your group to act out the emotion in pairs, making it clear which participant is conveying the emotion.
5. Discuss the activity with the class, using the following questions as a guide:
    - How did you determine which emotion was being acted out? Was it difficult? Why or why not?
    - How is body language an important part of communication?
    - How does reading body language relate to empathy?

Alternative Activity for Session 3, Activity 2: Reading Body Language Online Quiz

Type of Activity: Online Quiz, Group Activity

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: Internet connection, Projector/Screen

Activity Objective(s): To demonstrate the importance of body language in determining the emotional states of others.

Method:

1. Load the Body Language Quiz on the Greater Good website http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/ei_quiz/
2. Do the quiz with entire group, accepting the answer that most of the class agrees on in each case.
3. Remind students of the webpage and tell them they can re-take the test at home
4. Discuss the activity with the class, using the following questions as a guide:
    - How did you determine which emotion was being acted out? Was it difficult? Why or why not?
    - How is body language an important part of communication?
    - How does reading body language relate to empathy?

Session 3, Take Home Activity: Practicing Empathetic Listening

For the next session, students should:

- Practice empathetic listening at least once and record their experience on page 8 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.8).

Session 4 Responding with Empathy

Session 4 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Explain the different ways in which people can respond with empathy in specific situations.
- Experience how to cultivate feelings of compassion for others using mindfulness meditation.

Estimated Length of Session 4: 60 minutes

Session 4, Activity 1: Responding with Empathy

Type of Activity: Skit, Group Work

Estimated Length: 45 minutes

Materials: *Social Situation Cards* (Appendix A, page 40), Learning Journals, Writing Utensils

Activity Objective(s): To explore the different ways in which people can respond with empathy in specific situations.

Method:

1. Copy the *Social Situation Cards* found on page 40 of Appendix A, and cut them apart.
2. Divide the students into 5 groups and give each group a different *Social Situation Card* and a large sheet of paper, and a marker.
3. Explain that each group has 10 minutes to write down on page 9 of their Learning Journals at least three different ways they might respond with empathy to the situation card you gave them.
4. Students should then create a short skit using some or all their responses. Remind them to consider things from the point of view of the person at the center of the scenario.
5. Walk amongst the class prompting and helping if necessary.
6. Ask each group to act out the skit for the rest of the class at the front of the room.
7. After each group has finished, ask the observing students to list the responses they were showcasing. Ask the other groups if they can come up with any other ways of responding with empathy in that situation.
8. After the final group has presented, lead a class discussion about the activity using the following questions:
    - What ways of demonstrating empathy do you think were particularly effective?
    - Are different responses needed in different circumstances?
    - What are the consequences of showing empathy?

Session 4, Activity 2: Befriending Meditation

Type of Activity: Mindfulness Meditation

Estimated Length: 15 minutes

Materials: *Befriending Meditation Script* (Appendix A, page 41), Music *(optional)*, Music Player *(optional)*

Activity Objective(s): To cultivate feelings of compassion for others using mindfulness meditation.

Method:

1. Allow the students to seat themselves comfortably in their chairs with their hands on their knees or in their lap or to lie on the floor if they would prefer.
2. Turn on meditation music *(optional)*.
3. Guide students through the meditation using the *Befriending Meditation Script* (Appendix A, page 41).
4. Once the meditation is complete, lead a class discussion using the following questions:
    - How did it feel to extend compassion to yourself? Why is this important when practicing empathy?
    - How did it feel to extend compassion to people you knew?
    - How did it feel to extend compassion to strangers and all living beings?
    - How might a regular meditation practice like this would increase your empathy and compassion for others?
5. Inform students that a version of this meditation can be found online at http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/ if they want to practice on their own.

Session 4, Take Home Activity: Responding with Empathy

For the next session, students should:

- Practice responding with empathy at least once and record their experience on page 9 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.9)

Session 5 Commonalities

Session 5 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- List commonalities they have with their classmates and hypothesize similarities they might have with people not in their class.
- Explain the importance of establishing common ground with others to empathy.

Estimated Length of Session 5: 60 minutes

Session 5, Activity 1: Dualities

Type of Activity: Game, Group work

Estimated Length: 15 minutes

Materials: List of Dualities *(see below)*

Activity Objective(s): Students will recognize that others in the class share commonalities they may not realize by seeing who picks the same options as they do.

Method:

1. Explain that finding common ground serves to bring people of all backgrounds, nations, ages, and cultures together and that this can serve as a first step to connecting with others and establishing empathy.
2. Tell the class you are going to read a list of two options. For each item you say, they are to pick which of the two items relates to themselves the most, and go to whichever side of the room you assign that choice. For example, if choice one is “Chocolate Ice Cream” and choice two is “Vanilla Ice Cream”, you can instruct *choice one* people to go to the left of the room and *choice two* people to go to the right of the room. A list of items can be found below, but feel free to modify as you desire.
    - List of Duality Items:
        - Chocolate Ice Cream or Vanilla Ice Cream
        - Morning or Night
        - Pencil or Pen
        - Apple or Android
        - Fruits or Vegetables
        - Dogs or Cats
        - Winter or Summer
        - Sun or Rain
        - Paper books or Ebooks
        - Mountains or Beach

Session 5, Activity 2 Finding Common Ground

Type of Activity: Game; Group work

Estimated Length: 45 minutes

Materials: Learning Journals, Writing Utensils, Whiteboard, Dry Erase Markers

Activity Objective(s): To understand that everybody shares common traits, characteristics or experiences. Students will identify that they share common ground with others by actively recognizing multiple commonalities rather than differences.

Method:

1. Explain to the class that now that they have found some similarities among the entire class, they will now come up with more in smaller groups.
2. Divide students into groups of three and ask the groups to gather together.
3. Explain to the class they must find 10 things that they all share in common with one another and write them on page 10 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.10).
4. When a group has reached 10 things they can sit down. See the Teacher's Note below for some suggestions if groups are stuck, but try to make them come up with them on their own.
5. When all groups are seated again, ask the class who sat down first to read out their list. Ask the rest of the students to raise their hands if they share anything on the list. Record in two lists any traits that (1) the entire class and (2) the majority of the class shares on the whiteboard.
6. Continue through the groups creating a list of commonalities shared by the entire class.
7. Once you have a list of commonalities shared by the entire class, lead a class discussion using the following questions:
8. In what situations do we tend to look for common ground with other people and in what situations do we tend to focus on the differences?
9. Ask students to think about somebody in their lives with whom they are in conflict, with whom they disagree, or who has different views to them. Ask them to think of three things that they share in common with that person. Suggest that this is an exercise that might help in situations of conflict: establishing common ground with people can help to break down barriers between people and help us to see others as human beings just like us rather than as "enemies".
    - What happened when you started to think about commonalities you have with this person?
    - Do you think we could find some common ground with every person on Earth regardless of background, nationality or culture? What effect would that have?

Teacher's Note:
Examples of commonalities might include:

- Having a certain number of brothers / sisters, or any siblings
- Being in the same school/year
- Having the same eye colour or hair colour
- Being from the same area or street
- Sharing a birthday month/year
- Liking a particular sport or sports team / music or band / book or author
- Having been to a particular country / place in Ireland
- Liking or disliking the same subject in school
- Being concerned about the same social and political issues like mental health or climate change
- Liking or hating certain foods
- Having a pet
- Owning a bicycle
- Being scared of the same things e.g. spiders, elevators, flying
- Character traits like being prone to worry, being an optimist etc.

Session 5, Take Home Activity: Commonalities

For the next session, students should:

- Answer the questions found on page 10 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.10) that allow them to reflect on commonalities they may have with others.

Session 6 Perspective-taking

Session 6 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will:

- Practice perspective-taking and understand its importance to cultivating empathy.
- Identify the importance of perspective-taking and empathy in resolving conflict.

Estimated Length of Session 6: 60 minutes

Session 6, Activity 1 Someone Else's Shoes

Type of Activity: Role play, Game

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: Photographs *(some examples are provided in Appendix A on page 43. Many other free to use photographs can be searched for online. For example, if you search Google Images and use the Tools option to filter your search for "labeled for reuse" images)*, One pair of shoes, Music, Music Player

Activity Objective(s): To practice imaginative perspective-taking.

Method:

1. Explain to the students they are going to take part in a perspective-taking activity and explain that perspective-taking is a way of stepping into another person's shoes to try and see the world from their point of view.
2. Ask students to stand in a wide circle.
3. Place the pair of shoes somewhere around the circle, in front of one of the students.
4. Explain to students that this is a version of musical chairs. They will walk in a circle until they hear the music stop.
5. The person who stops nearest to the pair of shoes will be given a photograph. They are asked to step into the shoes of one person in the photograph. They choose who, but it cannot be the same as another person if you repeat photographs. They should tell that person's story in the first person ("My name is…", "I am…"). Explain that there is no right or wrong story, but they should try their best to imagine the person and describe their situation.
6. Choose one photograph and demonstrate an example for the class.
7. Ask students to hold the picture facing outwards while they are telling the story so that the rest of the class can see it.
8. Continue the activity as long as you feel is needed, then lead the class in a discussion, guided by the following questions:
    - How did it feel to put yourself in someone else's shoes?

- Did you feel empathy for the person when you were telling their story?
- Did you feel empathy when you heard the stories?

Session 6, Activity 2 Perspective-taking and Conflict

Type of Activity: Role play, Group Work

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: *Perspective-Taking Scenario Cards* (Appendix A, page 44), writing utensils, paper

Activity Objective(s): To highlight the importance of perspective-taking to resolving conflict.

Method:

1. Photocopy the *Perspective-Taking Scenario Cards* from Appendix A, page 44, and cut them apart. You might prefer to change the character's names/genders, depending on the profile of your group.
2. Divide students into groups of four and give each group one of the *Scenario Cards.*
3. Each group of four is to divide into pairs. Ask the pairs to prepare a role-play based on the scenario they have been given. The first pair is to role-play a situation of conflict, where both characters put forward their own positions forcefully. The second pair is to role-play a situation in which the characters attempt to see things from each other person's perspective: they listen to one another and try to understand each other's thoughts and feelings.
4. Give the class 10 minutes to prepare their role-plays and to act them out within their group.
5. Bring the class together and ask some of the groups to act out their role-plays in front of the class, so that each scenario is covered, whether it be as a conflict or as taking-perspectives.
6. Discuss the activity with the group, using the following questions:
    - How important is perspective-taking to resolving conflict?
    - Did the pairs who practiced perspective-taking feel empathy for the other person?
    - How can you apply perspective-taking to your own lives? Give examples of how you might do this.

Session 6, Take Home Activity: Perspective-Taking

For the next session, students should:

- Think about someone they know who they do not always agree with, and attempt to take their perspective. Reflect on this experience in their Learning Journals on page 11 (LJ p.11).

Session 7 Learning to Work with Other Personalities

Session 7 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will:

- Practice perspective-taking and understand its importance to cultivating empathy.
- Identify that all humans are different, and while they cannot be put into strict categories, there are techniques you can learn to help you work better with others.

Estimated Length of Session 7: 60 minutes

Session 7, Activity 1: Personality Compass

Adapted from Compass Points: North, South, East, and West - An Exercise in Understanding Preferences in Group Work. (2017). In *School Reform Initiative*.

Type of Activity: Personality Matrix, Brainstorm, Discussion, Group Work

Estimated Length: 60 minutes

Materials: *Vocabulary Words* worksheet (Appendix A, page 46), four directional cards (Appendix A, page 48), Tape

Activity Objective(s): To help students define their direction (personality) type and determine the traits of other directions (personality) types. To discover tools to aid in working with others from different categories.

Method:

1. Make copies of the *Vocabulary Words* worksheet and *"Are you more North, East, South, or West?"* Worksheet (1 per each of your students). Print and hang up the four directional cards in the order of a compass around the classroom.
2. Explain to the class that a personality compass separates personality types into the four directions of a compass. This session is to help them determine what their personality direction is and what it means, and learn the same about others.
3. Pass out the *Vocabulary Words* worksheet and have the students circle the words that best describe them, choosing only one per set.
4. When they finish, have them add up the letters they circled, and write the numbers on the *"Are you more North, East, South, or West"* worksheet. Then they should write whichever letter has the most and least words circled to tell them which direction they are. (If someone has the most a's they are a North, b's they are a West, c's they are an East, and d's they are a South.)

5. Walk through each of the four direction types with the students. Show each card and talk about the traits of the animals depicted. Bison represent the North because they are strong and powerful. Bears represent the East because they prepare for the winter and hibernate, rising in the spring to new ideas. Eagles represent the West because they fly high over everything, thus seeing the big picture. Wolves represent the south because they are pack animals that work well together. You can find more information about these directions on the corresponding directional cards.
6. Once you have discussed each direction and its traits, have the students get into groups based on their direction, and answer the in-class questions on page 12 of their Learning Journals (LJ p.12).
7. Have each directional group share their responses to the in-class questions with the rest of the class and discuss them as a class.

Session 7, Take Home Activity: Your Direction

For the next session, students should:

- Fill out their Learning Journal (LJ p. 12) to reflect on what they learned in completing the Personality Compass Activity.

Session 8 Empathy and Stereotypes

Session 8 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will:

- Identify the role music can play in promoting empathy.
- Identify barriers to empathy and reflect on overcoming these.
- Challenge stereotypes and prejudices, a key barrier to empathy.

Estimated Length of Session 8: 60 minutes

Session 8, Activity 1 Labels and Stereotypes

Adapted from 'What do you know or what have you heard?' (Ingram, 2008, p. 11).

Type of Activity: Current Events, Brainstorm

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: Large Pieces of Paper, Writing Utensils, Tape, Learning Journals

Activity Objective(s): To outline common labels and stereotypes and identify how these impact on our ability to empathize.

Method:

1. Before the session: cut out some large pieces of paper, and write the name of a particular social group in marker across the top in large letters as a 'headline'. Cover a broad cross-section of social groups that are readily labelled and for whom prevalent stereotypes exist.
    - Examples might include: Men, Women, Teenagers, Children, Senior Citizens, Christians, Muslims, Hindis, Jewish People, Wealthy People, Poor People, Homeless People, People on Social Welfare, Irish People, Americans, Africans, Chinese People, People from Cities, People from the Country, People in the LGBTQ Community
2. Begin by explaining what stereotypes are and giving some examples. You may use the definition provided in the Learning Journal on page 13 (LJ p.13).
3. Stick the prepared large pieces of paper up around the room.
4. Provide each participant with a writing utensil.
5. Explain that students are going to answer the question "What have you heard about…?". Students should move around the room to each large pieces of paper and write one thing they have heard about the group identified on the page.
6. Ensure that each student adds a comment to every large piece of paper.
7. When they are finished, allow a few minutes for students to circulate and read the other comments.
8. Lead a discussion on the activity using the following questions:

- What do many of the comments written here represent?
- Why do we label and stereotype people?
- How do stereotypes and prejudices inhibit empathy for other groups and people?
- How can we ensure that we see the individual person and not the stereotype?

Session 8, Activity 2: Blasting Stereotypes

Adapted from 'Stereotype blasters' (Jacketti, 2013).

Type of Activity: Debate, Role Play, Critical Thinking

Estimated Length: 30 minutes

Materials: *Stereotype Cards* (Appendix A, page 52), box or bag to put cards in

Activity Objective(s): To challenge and debunk everyday stereotypes.

Method:

1. Copy the *Stereotype Cards (*Appendix A, page 52) and cut them apart.
2. Place the *Stereotype Cards* in a box or bag.
3. Explain to students that they might be asked to take the side of something they do not necessarily agree with but the idea is to challenge stereotypes commonly held by people.
4. Ask students to come to the front of the room and draw out one *Stereotype Card*.
5. They must read out what is on the card and argue against it in 60 seconds using examples or situations.
6. Discuss the performance with the class, using the following questions as a guide:
    - What was the stereotype that was being debunked?
    - Is this a stereotype you have heard of before? (Have the class raise their hand if they have or have not).
7. When the time is up, the next participant goes up to select their card.
8. Repeat as many times as you feel are needed, then discuss the following questions with the class:
    - How did it feel to challenge stereotypes? Why?
    - How can we challenge stereotypes and prejudice in our daily lives?
    - Is it ever ok to judge someone? When and why?
    - How can you tell when you are judging someone based on a stereotype or based on his or her individual personality?

Session 8, Take Home Activity: Recognizing Stereotypes

For the next session, students should:

- Fill out their Learning Journal (page 13) to practice recognizing stereotypes.

Session 9 Directing Empathy Toward Social Issues

Session 9 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Examine social exclusion in their local communities and the wider world.
- Explain how putting a human face on collective suffering and social issues will enable them to develop empathy for those who are suffering.

Estimated Length of Session 9: 60 minutes

Session 9, Activity 1: Social Exclusion

Adapted from "Giant Steps" (Barrett & Richardson, 2007)

Type of Activity: Perspective taking

Estimated Length: 20 minutes

Materials: *Giant Steps Role Cards* (Appendix A, page 54)

Activity Objective(s): To develop empathy for individuals and groups affected by social exclusion.

Method:

1. Copy and cut apart the *Giant Steps Role Cards* found on starting on page 54 in Appendix A.
2. Explain what is meant by *social exclusion*. Social exclusion occurs when people are denied resources, rights and the ability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, which are available to the majority of people in a society. Being excluded from education, work, the political system, a good living environment, and denied access to decent health care are all forms of social exclusion. One definition is "a process which pushes people out to the edge of society and distances them further and further from the chance of a job or an adequate income, from social and educational opportunities, from social and community networks and from power and decision-making" (Barrett & Richardson, 2007, p. 8). As can be seen from this definition, social exclusion is very closely linked to economic disadvantage and poverty which often excludes people from resources, rights, and participation in society which others take for granted.
3. Give each participant a *Giant Steps Role Card.* Be sensitive to the individual circumstances of your class. If you feel that certain students should not receive certain cards, exclude these cards altogether.
4. Ask students to read their *Giant Steps Role Card* and to enter into their roles. They should think about the character's details: who they are, where they live,

how many are in their family, what kind of life they have, and whether they feel as though they belong in their community, school, family, etc…

5. Ask students to line up on one side of the room with their backs against the wall. Ensure that they line up in random order, so that each person will move a greater or lesser distance than the person beside them.
6. Explain that you are going to read a series of statements. Students should take a giant step forward if the statement easily relates to them or if the statement fully applies to them. They should take a small step if they can do it but with difficulty or if it applies to them a little bit. They should not move if it does not apply to them.
7. Read the statements below one at a time:
    - You will stay in school until you are 18.
    - You will go to college when you finish school.
    - You can live at home with your family.
    - When you are sick, you can go to the doctor easily.
    - You have a secure home.
    - You feel like you belong.
    - You have enough to eat and drink.
    - You like living where you live; it's a nice, clean environment.
    - You get involved in things happening in your school and local community.
    - You get plenty of extra help and support whenever you need it.
    - You can be yourself without being made fun of or made feel different.
    - You are looking forward to your life ahead and your future is pretty secure.
    - You can easily socialize with your friends.
    - You get most things that you ask for at home, like clothes, shoes, books, spending money, etc.
8. Once you have read all the statements, discuss the activity with the class using the following questions:
    - (Have them raise their hands) Who felt privileged and who did not? Why or why not?
    - For those who had the role card of a privileged person, how did that feel?
    - For those who had the role card of someone suffering from social exclusion, how did that feel?
    - Is it possible to be privileged and still not take a giant step forward for each of the questions? Why might this be the case for some of our characters?
    - How did you feel when others beside you were moving ahead or being left behind?
    - What role can empathy play in helping to combat social exclusion?
    - What can we do to combat social exclusion?

Session 9, Activity 2: The Human Face

Type of Activity: Perspective-taking, Creative Writing, Art

Estimated Length: 40 minutes

Materials: *Human Face* Cards (Appendix A, page 58), Paper, Writing Utensils, Art materials, Learning Journals

Activity Objective(s): To humanize individuals affected by wider social issues to increase empathy for these groups.

Method:

1. Copy the *Human Face Cards* (Appendix A, pages 58) and cut them apart.
2. Divide the class into four groups. Hand out one of the four *Situations* to each group.
3. Explain that they are going to read the scenario on their card and put a human face on the issue.
4. Ask them to imagine an individual existing in those circumstances and to describe that person's experience. Encourage them to imagine what the individual looks like, to give them a name, and to imagine as much detail as they can with regard to the conditions in which they are living. They can approach the exercise however they would like, but everyone in the group must contribute in some way. For example, one person might like to write their piece as a first person narrative ("My name is…") while another writes an imaginary interview, and the third sketches or draws the person and his or her environment.
5. Ask them to fill out the questions on page 14 of their Learning Journals to help them prepare (LJ p.14).
6. Allow students to work on their project. Encourage them to work collaboratively, and get help and ideas from one another.
7. Read each of the scenarios and ask for volunteers to show or tell their "human face".
8. Lead a class discussion about the activity using the following questions:
    - Did you feel empathy for the person you imagined?
    - Is putting an individual human face on global issues important to activating empathy for large groups?
    - What impact can individual stories have in promoting an active response or social action?

Session 9, Take Home Activity: Social Exclusion in Current Events

For the next session, students should:

- Make note of one story they read in a newspaper or see on the television news or see online that covers the topic of social exclusion. This could be a story about poverty or lack of access to education, food, or a home, etc… Fill in the section in their Learning Journals on page 14 (LJ p.14).

Session 10 Empathy and Climate Change

Session 10 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Identify how their choices and behaviors impact the world around them.
- State the connection between empathy and climate change.

Estimated Length of Session 10: 60 minutes

Session 10, Activity 1: Choices Spectrum

Adapted from 'I think therefore I act' (Smith, 2013).

Type of Activity: Critical Thinking, Game

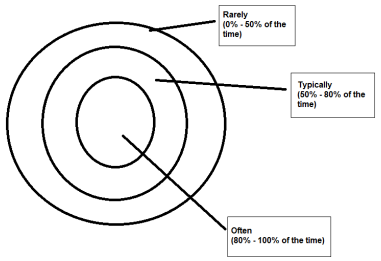
Estimated Length: 20 minutes

Materials: *Statements* (Appendix A, page 59), Rope or String

Activity Objective(s): To enable students to recognize how the choices we make and behaviors we undertake impact on other groups of people, animals, and the environment.

Method:

1. Make three nested circles on the ground of the classroom, such as this:



You may need to make two or more sets of circles depending how many students you have in the class.

2. Ask students to stand around the circles.
3. Explain to students that you are going to read a series of statements that reflect the decisions humans make and how they impact other people, animals, and the environment. Each of the circles represents a degree the statement applies to them (not their families). Upon hearing each statement they will step into the biggest circle if the statement applies to them rarely (50% of the time or less), the middle circle if the statement typically applies to them (50-80% of the time), and stand in the smallest circle if the statement applies to them often (80%-100% of the time) *(see diagram above).*
    - Explain clearly that this is not a competition: there are no "winners" or "losers", Students will all have different levels of exposure to the issues

raised. The goal is to respond honestly to the statements and to consider the choices that they make now, at this point in their lives.
    - You might wish to join in as you read the statements to reinforce the idea that it is not a competition.
    - Students can ask a clarifying question about the statement if necessary.
4. Read the *Statements* found in Appendix A on page 59 one at a time.
5. Lead a discussion with the class using the following questions:
    - Were any of these statements issues you had not considered?
    - Which of the statements stood out to you as something you would like to do MORE of?
    - Which of these statements stood out to you as something you would like to do LESS of?
    - How can you raise awareness in your community about the issues in these statements?

Session 10, Activity 2: Climate Change in the News – Why should I care?

Type of Activity: Group Work, Research

Estimated Length: 40 minutes

Materials: *Climate Change Situation Cards* (Appendix A, page 61), Writing Utensils, Learning Journals

Activity Objective(s): To enable students to empathize with people affected by climate change and inform others about their situation.

Preparation: Print the *Climate Change Situation Cards* (Appendix A, page 61) and cut them apart.

Method:

1. Explain to the students that this lesson is about global climate change and the people who are most affected by it. While changes in climate can occur because of natural processes, the term is now generally used to describe changes in our climate because of human activity. In 2008 the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared climate change to be the “defining challenge of our era”. Developing countries are the most at risk from the effects of climate change and yet they are the least responsible, having emitted less CO_2 than wealthy developed nations which industrialized earlier and consume more. The impacts of climate change already underway include sea level rise, extreme weather such as droughts, floods, and hurricanes, organism extinction and habitat loss, and air pollution. The human toll in lost lives and livelihoods is rising, especially in Africa and the Small Island

Developing States (SIDS). No part of the world, however, will escape the effects of climate change. According to the U.S. Global Change Research Program (2014), impacts of climate change on the United States include:

- more intense storms and rainfall events
- increased likelihood and magnitude of river and coastal flooding
- hotter, longer summers and warmer, shorter winters
- adverse impacts on water quality
- longer allergy seasons
- difficulty growing certain plants

2. Split students into four groups.
3. Give each group one of the four *Climate Change Situation Cards* found in Appendix A on page 61.
4. Explain they are a news team of journalists and camera people preparing a report for the evening news bulletin to inform people about the human impact of climate change. They will be interviewing the people on their *Situation Card* and filming in the area. Ask them to prepare their report, noting down five questions they will ask their interviewees, where they would like to interview them, what shots and images they might film for their report, and who else they might like to interview. They can record this information in their Learning Journals on page 15 (LJ p.15).
5. Give the class 20 minutes to prepare their interview.
6. Bring the class back together and ask each group what questions they have asked, and how they would film their report. Lead a class discussion about each situation by asking the following questions:
    - Why did you choose the questions and people you chose for creating this news piece?
    - What goals were you hoping to accomplish?
7. Once each group has a chance to present, lead a class discussion using the following questions:
    - How did empathy come into play when you were thinking about the people in these situations? What about when you were choosing the places and things you were going to film?
    - How can reports in the media help us to feel empathy for people affected by climate change?
    - Does empathy play a part in the media? Does the media have a responsibility to report on these issues in a way that activates our empathy for victims of climate change and other social issues like poverty, hunger, and homelessness? Why or why not?

Session 10, Take Home Activity: Letter to my Grandchild

For the next session, students should:

- Write a “Letter to my Grandchild” on page 16 of their Learning Journals (LJ p. 16). Explain to the class that this letter will be addressed to their grandchild in 2070 and begin “My dear grandchild,…”. They should imagine what life will be like for their grandchildren in 2070 if we fail to do anything about climate change in our time. Remind the class that if we fail to act on climate change the consequences for the next generation will be devastating with crop failure, mass forced migration, extreme weather events, flooding, air pollution causing illness and deaths, and extinctions of animal species.

Session 11 Empathy Inspirations

Session 11 Learning Objectives:

On completion of this session students will be able to:

- Describe a real life empathetic person and explain why he or she is empathetic.

Estimated Length of Session 11: 60 minutes

Session 11, Activity 1: Empathy Inspiration

Type of Activity: Creativity

Estimated Length: 60 minutes plus time at home

Materials: Poster paper, Art materials, Learning Journals

Activity Objective(s): To research individuals who exhibit empathy in their lives.

Method:

1. You may want to book the school library for students to conduct research.
2. Brainstorm with the class to find examples of individuals who exhibit empathy in their work and lives. Examples might include social justice activists or charity workers.
3. Allow students to conduct independent research on inspirational individuals who have shown empathy in their lives using internet searches, books, magazines, newspaper, and other sources.
4. Ask students to write a brief account of their chosen person using the prompts in their Learning Journals on page 17 (LJ p. 17).
5. Ask them to create a poster on their person, using photographs, artwork, newspaper and magazine cut-outs, and other resources.
6. You may wish to have the students present their posters to the class at the beginning of the next session.

Session 11, Take Home Activity: Empathy Inspiration

For the next session, students should:

- Continue working on their empathy inspiration posters to share with the class at the beginning of the final session.

Session 12 Setting Empathy Goals

Session 12 Learning Objectives:

At the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Outline how they can develop empathic habits and set relevant, personal and "SMART" Empathy Goals.

Estimated Length of Session 12: 60 minutes

Session 12, Activity 1: Setting Empathy Goals

Type of Activity: Creativity, Goal-Setting

Materials: Colored Paper, Art Materials, Learning Journal, Whiteboard, Markers

Estimated Length: 60 minutes

Activity Objective(s): Students will identify the specific ways in which they can become more empathetic and practice empathy daily. Students will develop "SMART" goals that will help them to feel encouraged to develop and practice empathy on an ongoing basis.

Method:

1. Explain to students that they are going to create their own personal 'Empathy Goals'.
2. Take students through how to create "SMART" Goals on page 18 through 19 of their Learning Journals (LJ p. 18 & LJ p.19) and demonstrate one with the class on a whiteboard.
3. Give students time to read the 'Six Habits of Highly Empathic People', on page 20 through 22 of their Learning Journals. Alternatively, if you have the resources, there is a video based on the *Six Habits of Highly Empathic People* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNEuEO94J1o .
4. Have the students fill out page 22 in their Learning Journals (LJ p.22).
5. Provide students with a sheet of colored paper and allow them to write out their goals, decorating the poster using art materials.
6. Suggest that they display the list somewhere in their homes to remind them of their goals.
7. Lead a discussion with the class on their goals, using the following questions:
    - Why should we practice empathy in our lives?
    - What positive outcomes arise when we begin to apply empathy to our relationships?
    - How does empathy help society to thrive?

Appendix A: Lesson Supplements

Session 3, Activity 2 Emotion Cards

Sadness	Disappointment	Excitement
Hurt	Irritation	Triumph
Worry	Anger	Shyness
Fear	Guilt	Loneliness
Boredom	Happiness	Frustration
Annoyance	Pity	Joy
Pride	Embarrassment	

Session 4, Activity 1 Social Situation Cards

1. A new girl arrives to join your school club and seems shy. She lingers by the door and looks afraid to come into the room.
2. You and your friends see an elderly man struggling with his heavy shopping bags while walking down the street.
3. In the hallway at school, some students make a nasty comment to another student. You see that he is upset and fighting back tears.
4. You and your friends have just seen another friend lose a championship basketball game, where she did not perform her best. You meet her leaving the venue afterwards.
5. Your brother arrives home very upset and tells you and other family members that he has just broken up with his girlfriend.

Session 4, Activity 2 Befriending Meditation Script

Adapted from Williams & Penman (no date).

Settle in a comfortable position in your chairs. Allow your spine to be strong, your shoulders relaxed, your chest open and your head balanced.

Focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. Focus on the rise and fall of your stomach or on the sensation of the breath moving in and out at the nostrils. **[Pause].** Don't worry if your mind wanders. Whenever it does, gently bring it back to focusing on the breath. **[Pause.]** Remember that if at any time you feel overwhelmed you can come back to focusing on the breath.

When you are ready, repeat these words of friendliness towards yourself.

> *May I be free from suffering.* **[Pause]**
> *May I be happy and healthy.* **[Pause]**
> *May I have ease of being.* **[Pause]**
>
> **[Repeat phrases]**

If you find it difficult to bring a sense of friendship towards yourself, bring to mind a person or even a pet who loves you unconditionally. Once you have a clear sense of their love for you, see if you can offer this same love to yourself.

> *May I be free from suffering.* **[Pause]**
> *May I be happy and healthy.* **[Pause]**
> *May I have ease of being.* **[Pause]**
>
> **[Repeat phrases]**

At a certain point, bring to mind a loved one and wish them well in the same way using the same phrases.

> *May he or she be free from suffering.* **[Pause]**
> *May he or she be happy and healthy.* **[Pause]**
> *May he or she have ease of being.* **[Pause]**

Hold the person in your heart, wishing them well.

> *May he or she be free from suffering.* **[Pause]**
> *May he or she be happy and healthy.* **[Pause]**
> *May he or she have ease of being.* **[Pause]**

When you are ready, think of a stranger. This might be somebody that you see daily, but may not know their name. Perhaps it is somebody who works in a store you

frequent, or a person you see in your neighborhood, school, or on the bus. Recognize that although you may not know them, they probably also have a life full of hopes and fears like you. They too wish to be happy like you. So keeping them in heart and mind, repeat the phrases.

May they be free from suffering. **[Pause]**
May they be happy and healthy. **[Pause]**
May they have ease of being. **[Pause]**

Now, bring to mind somebody you find difficult or have found difficult in the past. Allow them to be in your heart and mind, acknowledging that they too wish to be happy and free from suffering. Repeat the phrases.

May they be free from suffering. **[Pause]**
May they be happy and healthy. **[Pause]**
May they have ease of being. **[Pause]**

Finally, extend loving kindness to all beings, including yourself, your loved ones, strangers and those you find difficult. The intention here is to extend love and friendship to all living beings on the planet.

May all beings be free from suffering. **[Pause]**
May all be happy and healthy. **[Pause]**
May all have ease of being. **[Pause]**

[Repeat phrases]

Sit for a few moments with the breath until you are ready to open your eyes.

Session 6, Activity 1 Sample Photographs

Session 6, Activity 2 Perspective-Taking Scenario Cards

Debra and John are married. John has been unemployed for almost a year and the family are in financial difficulty. John interviewed for a position last week and has been offered the job. However, he does not want to do this particular job. He knows he would find it very difficult and would be miserable in it. On top of this he will have a long commute. Imagine the scene when John tells Debra that he is considering turning down the job.
Michael and Philip have been best friends since elementary school. Michael really likes Stephanie and told Philip about this last month. Philip also likes Stephanie but felt he couldn't say anything since Michael had mentioned it first. Over the weekend Philip got together with Stephanie though he felt very guilty. Michael has just found out and is very upset. Imagine the scene where Michael confronts Philip about this.
Jessica and Karen have just finished soccer practice. During the practice match, Jessica made some joking comments about a few mistakes Karen made. Karen was hurt by these comments and felt humiliated. Jessica meant the comments as a joke to lighten the mood. Imagine the scene when Karen confronts Jessica after training.
Caroline has been working as a manager in Boyle's shop for five years without being given a raise. Her boss David Boyle is struggling to keep the shop going, and money is very tight. He is worried about the future of the company and how he can keep employing all his workers. Caroline feels that after five years' service and increasing responsibility she deserves a raise. She also has a baby now, so needs this raise even more. Caroline requests a private meeting with her boss. Imagine the scene when Caroline approaches David asking for a raise.

Jenny's elderly grandmother Mary is living on her own. Jenny is the only family member who lives in the town, the rest live much farther away. Mary feels that Jenny hasn't been coming to visit as often as she should. She feels increasingly isolated without regular visitors, and misses her granddaughter. Jenny is in college and has a part-time job. She has been especially busy these last few months and hasn't been able to visit her grandmother twice a week as she used to. Imagine the scene when Mary confronts Jenny about her lack of visits.

Vocabulary Worksheet

Personality Compass

Directions: For each of the sets of four words below, circle the word that best describes you. It may not be easy, but you can only choose **ONE** word from each group.

Set 1: a. Leader b. Risk Taker c. Planner d. Team Player	**Set 2:** a. Goal-centered b. Idea-centered c. Quality-centered d. People-centered
Set 3: a. Efficient b. Creative c. Analytical d. Easy-going	**Set 4:** a. Task-oriented b. Innovative c. Reliable d. Peace-oriented
Set 5: a. Assertive b. Flexible c. Logical d. Non-Confrontational	**Set 6:** a. Decisive b. Visionary c. Focused d. Sensitive
Set 7: a. Confident b. Spontaneous c. Exact d. Patient	**Set 8:** a. Determined b. Enthusiastic c. Perfectionist d. Understanding
Set 9: a. Competitive b. Free-spirited c. Industrious d. Cooperative	**Set 10:** a. Independent b. Energetic c. Structured d. Helpful
Set 11: a. Bold b. Cheerful c. Factual d. Unselfish	**Set 12:** a. Initiator b. Motivator c. Finisher d. Mediator

Set 13: a. Productive b. Inventive c. Persuasive d. Supportive	**Set 14:** a. Straightforward b. Adventurous c. Systematic d. Generous
Set 15: a. Opinionated b. Carefree c. Consistent d. Diplomatic	**Set 16:** a. Challenger b. Dreamer c. Traditional d. Loyal
Set 17: a. Doer b. Delegator c. Rule-follower d. Communicator	**Set 18:** a. Deadline-driven b. Idea-driven c. Fact-driven d. Values-driven
Set 19: a. Results-focused b. Methods-focused c. Protocol-focused d. Relationship-focused	**Set 20:** a. In-charge b. Option-provider c. Fact Checker d. Caregiver

Are you more
North, East, South, or West?

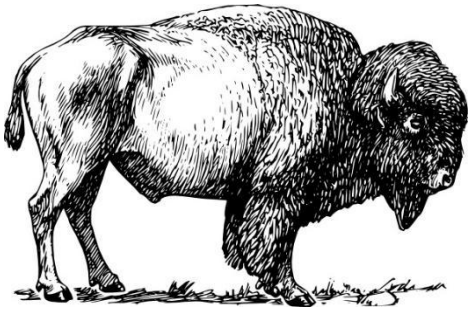
Directions: To identify your type, *c*ount the total of each letter you circled on the vocabulary sheet, and write the numbers below.

a
b
c
d

This letter has the ***highest*** number of tally marks:_____

This letter has the ***lowest*** number of tally marks:_____

I am a **NORTH**

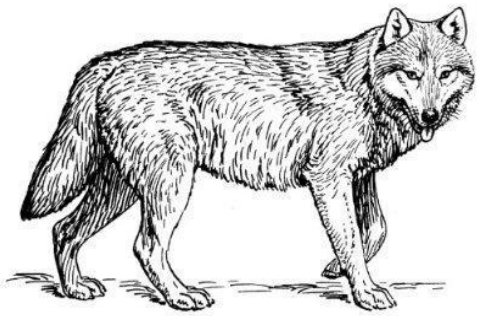


Motto	“Get the job done, fast”
Greatest Strength	Making quick decisions
Greatest Challenge	Impatience
Best at…	Leadership
Priority	Goals
Motivation	Competition
Pet Peeve	Indecision, Uncertainty
Work Style	Independent
Life Pace	Fast and Determined
How you want to be seen	High Achiever

I am an **EAST**

Motto	“Do it right the first time”
Greatest Strength	Planning in detail
Greatest Challenge	Tunnel vision
Best at…	Logical analysis
Priority	Facts
Motivation	Looking for errors
Pet Peeve	Incorrectness
Work Style	Serious
Life Pace	Slow and cautious
How you want to be seen	High Quality Achiever

I am a **SOUTH**



Motto	“Build the best team”
Greatest Strength	Cooperation
Greatest Challenge	Not assertive
Best at…	Peace making
Priority	Values
Motivation	Helping
Pet Peeve	Conflict
Work Style	Group
Life Pace	Slow and laid-back
How you want to be seen	Caring

I am a **WEST**

Motto	“Expand all horizons”
Greatest Strength	Creativity
Greatest Challenge	Disorganization
Best at…	Seeing the end goal
Priority	Ideas
Motivation	Freedom
Pet Peeve	Rules
Work Style	Adaptable
Life Pace	Fast and flexible
How you want to be seen	Original

Session 8, Activity 2 Stereotype Cards

Old people are past their prime and should be out of the workforce.
Women are terrible drivers.
Women are highly emotional.
Women are caring and nurturing.
Women are great at multitasking.
Men like cars and sports.
Men are messy and untidy.
Girls are concerned about their physical appearance.
Boys are aggressive.
Teenagers are moody.
Gay men have great fashion sense.

Immigrants come to the United States to receive free benefits from the government.
Many people who live in rough neighborhoods are involved in crime.
The long-term unemployed are lazy.
Immigrants are untrustworthy.
People who live in rural areas are backward.
Irish people are drunks.
Jamaicans are really relaxed.
Italians are great cooks.
French people are arrogant.
Islam is a religion that promotes terrorism and violence.

Session 9, Activity 1 *Giant Steps Role Cards*

HELEN, 16

You have two sisters and a brother and you live in San Francisco in a nice big house overlooking the sea. Your mother is the accountant in the company that your father manages. You have your own room and because you are the eldest and going into 10th grade you have your own computer in your room to help you with your studying. You are planning to go to college after graduating high school and would like to study languages. You've gone on two summer exchanges to France and Italy to learn the languages and you're hoping to go to Spain this summer. Your class is going to Colorado on a skiing trip next term.

CLAIRE, 15

You live in Iowa with your parents and older brothers and sisters on a small farm. The farm is near a river that has flooded many times over the past few years. Your family has lost a lot of money due to the floods. Your parents regularly look worried and seem to talk a lot about money. You travel 10 miles to the nearest high school. You used to take music lessons after school but you had to give them up as they were too expensive. You would like to study law in college when you graduate high school. Your parents are already worrying about where they are going to get the money to pay for you, as your eldest brother is in college already.

JOE, 16

You have two brothers and one sister who are aged between 14 and 7 years old. You live in an apartment in North Philadelphia. Your father is 42 and has been unemployed for as long as you can remember. Your mother works as a cleaner, but doesn't get paid much. You may have to leave high school when you turn 18, before graduating, so that you can get a job. You already work part-time in a supermarket. You give three-quarters of what you earn to your mother.

MICHAEL, 14

You live in a trailer on a temporary site with your father and four brothers and sisters. There is no toilet or washing facilities and only one tap between eleven families. There was supposed to be a permanent site built but the local people are objecting to it. You're always getting made fun of at school because of your accent and some of the other students call you names. They say your dad is a loser, but it's not his fault he can't get a job. He has trouble keeping steady work because of an old military injury that flares up randomly. You're in 9th grade now, but you don't go to school often because you don't feel that you fit in.

JAKE, 16

You spent a lot of your childhood in foster care due to family difficulties. You've been living on the street in New York for the past nine months. You have a drug habit. You can't read or write properly because you missed a lot of school over the years due to all the family problems and you left school when you were 12. You don't see any hope for getting out of your situation. You don't think anyone cares.

JASON, 18

You live with your sister, brother, and parents in Alabama. You realised you were gay two years ago but so far you have only come out to your two best friends. You love cooking and Home Economics and want to be a chef when you're older. You have a hard time in school, as people often make fun of you. You can't wait to leave school and get as far away from home as possible.

SARAH, 14

You are deaf and as a result you go to a specialized school 70 miles from your home. You get home once a month to spend time with your family. All your family use sign language and a few times a year you all go to an event organized by members of the deaf community. You love sports and play on your school's field hockey and lacrosse teams. Most people treat you as though there is something wrong with you. They don't understand that you just communicate in a different way. You would like to go to college when you leave school but you worry that you won't fit in.

HASSAN, 15

You are living with your uncle and two brothers in New York City. You came to the United States from Algeria two years ago after your parents were killed. You are all waiting to see if the United States Government will allow you to stay in the United States as a refugee. You are living in a place that used to be a hotel and get all your meals supplied. You have to leave at 7:30am to be in for school at 8:00am, which means that you miss breakfast because the kitchen staff start cooking at 8:00am. Meals are at set times in the evening and there is a curfew. You have no money of your own.

MERCY, 17

You were born in Nigeria but moved to the United States when you were eight and have been attending the local high school. Most of the students at school treat you well and are friendly, but you have also experienced a lot of racism. You've been subjected to nasty comments at school and in the street and have had people telling you to "go home to your own country". You feel that teachers don't ask for your contribution that often and that the school doesn't expect you to have any ambitions to go to college. You've mostly ended up friends with other kids from Africa or whose parents are African.

AMIRA, 12

You are from Syria but had to leave your home months ago because of war. You have been fleeing with your family and are now in Europe, living in a huge migrant camp. You, your parents, and your four siblings live in a tent with no heat or running water. You line up for food and bathrooms during the day. If you get sick there is a doctor's station with huge queues. The authorities are worried about infectious diseases breaking out in the camp. Your schooling has been put on hold. You want to be a doctor when you are older, but first you want your family to be settled somewhere safe to start a new life.

ARIFA, 17

You are from Bangladesh and work in a clothes factory. You started there when you were 10 years old cutting extra threads from clothes and now work on the sewing machines making clothes. You work 12 hours shifts, from 9:00am until 9:00pm, six days a week. You get paid the minimum wage of 3,000 taka per month but the 'living wage' is 5,000 per month. The work is exhausting and hard on your body, causing frequent back pain because of the long hours hunched over the machine. You are worried about the safety of the building and are scared of the risk of fire or collapse.

PETER, 12

You are from Kenya and are one of eight children. Your family lives in a small mud-walled hut with no electricity or running water. You live on one meal a day of maize and beans, but most of the beans are kept for the younger children in the family. You go to school on an empty stomach where you share one textbook between ten of your classmates. During class breaks you rush to the nearby baobab tree to see if there are any fruits to pick, but you rarely find any as it is only in season once a year.

MALIKA, 17

You are from Afghanistan. You were lucky that you were allowed to attend a local girls' school but it was burned down after you had been there for two years by people who don't believe in female education. At the age of 12 your parents told you that you were going to be engaged and married. You married your husband when you were 14 and he was 30 years old. Two years later, you now have a 1-year-old daughter and live with your husband's family. You spend your day cleaning and cooking in the home and looking after your child.

DINARA, 14

You are one of the "street children" of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. You are part of a group of about 50 children who survives on the street together. You sleep in a park that is locked at night, so at least you feel safe there. Your mother also grew up on the streets, and although you once had a home, it was lost. You try to attend school but only make it from time to time. You go to a drop-in centre to get food, shower, and play football. The authorities want to place you in accommodation for homeless children, but you don't like the restrictions and escape to the street at night.

Session 9, Activity 2: Human Face Cards

Scenario 1 The refugees fled their war-torn homeland and made the long and dangerous journey north. Carrying their most precious possessions and whatever money they had, entire families risked their lives walking for hundreds of miles to the coast where they were herded onto unsafe, overcrowded boats to make the crossing by night. Those that survived the dangerous sea crossing arrived cold, hungry and frightened in a country they didn't know.
Scenario 2 This was the worst famine to strike the region for over thirty years. The drought had decimated the crops and the people began to starve. With the starvation came fever and disease and people began to die in the hundreds without medical care, buried outside villages in communal graves. The people had heard that food and medical aid was on its way through foreign charities working in the country.
Scenario 3 The authorities have admitted that smog from the factories is generating health problems in the city. The severe air pollution has resulted in deaths amongst the most vulnerable groups like the elderly and the sick, while the rate of lung disease and asthma is increasing. The population goes to work and school wearing face masks but try to avoid going outside when the smog is at its worst. The government has made no specific commitments to cut emissions or to move the factories away from population centres.
Scenario 4 The charity for the elderly announced that there are one thousand elderly people living alone in the community, over a quarter of them living in poverty. The cost of fuel has risen and it is increasingly difficult for these people to stay warm over the winter. Some of them have family that call in occasionally but others have nobody at all. The charity has warned the government that there are real fears that some of them may not survive the cold this winter.
Scenario 5 The country was seeing nationwide unrest. Nearly a quarter of the workforce was unemployed or underemployed. Despite quarantines, nearly 500,000 citizens died as a result of government mismanagement of the spread of a newly discovered virus. Then the anti-government protests began in many major cities. While the majority of protests remained peaceful, the Prime Minister branded protesters terrorists and dispatched his secret police to deal with them. Everyday citizens were waking up to a new reality.

Session 10, Activity 1 Statements for Choices Spectrum

- Consumption:
    - When choosing which clothes to buy I consider the country of origin and whether the clothes are likely to have been made in a sweatshop.
    - I deliberately source clothes from alternative sources like second hand shops, charity shops, clothes swops, or sharing.
    - When buying food I think about the country of origin or whether the food is fair trade.
    - I refuse to buy particular brands for ethical reasons.
    - I choose personal care and other products that are guaranteed not to have been tested on animals.

- Charity:
    - I can name at least three organizations working to help people in the developing world.
    - I can name at least two organizations working in war zones.
    - I can name at least two organizations working to help protect the environment.
    - I have given money to at least one charity in the past year.
    - I have volunteered time with at least one organization working to help people, animals or the earth.

- Environment:
    - I have implemented at least one energy conservation strategy in my home, school or club in the last year.
    - I recycle as much as possible.
    - I have one bottle that I regularly refill instead of buying lots of bottled drinks.
    - I have chosen to use a bicycle or public transport over a car in the last month.
    - I care very deeply about climate change.

- Treatment of others:
    - I avoid telling jokes or making statements intended to make fun of people based on their race, country of origin, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or physical ability.
    - I have spoken out in person when someone told a joke or make a statement that I felt to be offensive to a particular person or group of people.
    - I have spoken out online when someone told a joke or make a statement that I felt to be offensive to a particular person or group of people.
    - I am involved with an anti-bullying campaign or initiative.

- Understanding the wider world:
    - I have read at least one book in the past six months written by or about somebody whose background, life, or beliefs differ significantly from my own.
    - I regularly read or watch the news about other countries.
    - I have regular contact with people whose race, country of origin, sexual orientation, religion, ability status or socioeconomic background is different from my own.
    - I have identified a particular individual or organization working to create global change that I really admire.

6. After completing the last statement, lead a discussion with the class using the following questions:
    - For which groups of statements did you move forward the most?
    - Which issues could you easily change your current behavior toward? Which issues would be harder to change your current behavior toward?
    - How can individual choices change the world?
    - What role might empathy play in your choices and behavior?

Session 10, Activity 2 Climate Change Situation Cards

Adapted from Trócaire (no date), ‘Stories from a Changing Climate’

Situation 1: Gerardo and Jovita, Leyte Island Philippines

Leyte Island is in the Philippines. It is mostly heavily forested and mountainous. The population is about 2.3 million. Most of the inhabitants are famers, with fishing as a supplementary activity. On Friday, 8 November 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan destroyed 70-80% of the structures in its path in Leyte province. An estimated 10,000 people died and up to 620,000 people were displaced across the region.

Gerardo and Jovita Amantillo were both at home when Typhoon Haiyan struck on November 8th, 2013. The couple, both aged 74, had been warned that a bad storm was on its way but nothing had prepared them for the intensity of what they faced.

The winds had been battering their home for several hours when suddenly the waves crashed down all around them, destroying their home and leaving Gerardo and Jovita fighting for their lives.

The strength of the waves carried Gerardo and Jovita out of their home. The survived only by clinging to the neighbour’s roof – almost three metres off the ground.

Miraculously, they received only superficial wounds to their legs but were otherwise unharmed. However, sitting on the pier waiting for a boat to take them off Leyte island, the couple has just one small bag of possessions. Everything else was lost.

"We stayed with neighbours for a few nights but we plan on living with our son for the next few months,” says Gerardo. “I do not know when we will be able to move back."

Across the Philippines over 4 million people were displaced by Typhoon Haiyan.

Situation 2 Eliyeta, Malawi

Malawi is a landlocked country in southeastern Africa. With a population of about 16.7 million. It is amongst the world's poorest countries. Life expectancy is low and there is a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. It is heavily agricultural and most of the population lives in rural areas.

It's 5am in Kanyera village, central Malawi, and the first thing on everyone's mind is water.

Eliyeta (32) and her daughter, Enestina (9), make the one kilometre round trip every morning to fetch water for their family of six. When they get there, there is usually up to six people waiting in line.

"I don't like carrying water," says Enestina. "It's very far and it's heavy to carry. I have neck pains. When I have to get water in the morning, there is a queue so I wait and I am late for school. I love school but I didn't do well in my exams. I've been failing because I didn't know how to read and write. The time I spend getting water would be better used to study."

"Life is hard here because we have difficulty with water," says Stephen (38), Eliyeta's husband. "The water we drink is contaminated. It's not clean. It's not treated. It's where animals drink and even pass waste... If we drink it we get sick."

And it's not just drinking water that's affected. The water crisis has caused a perennial food crisis.

Stephen and Eliyeta farm a ½ acre of land. They have no irrigation system and rely entirely on the rain and adjacent river to water the crops. Inevitably, their one annual harvest only feeds them for seven months.

"Between November and March we have no food," says Stephen. "We work on other people's land as labourers during this time. We get paid maize, sometimes a tin, sometimes a bag.

I know it's something to do with climate change. We don't have enough rain water."

Situation 3: Thiga Nanyaga, Kenya

Kenya is a country is east Africa with a population of about 48 million. More than 43% of the population live in poverty on less than $2 per day, with many very reliant on subsistence farming to feed themselves. Poverty rates are far higher in arid and semi-arid regions, where over 60% of people live on less than $1 a day. Rural migration to cities, often driven by the effects of climate change and severe poverty, is a growing concern as many are forced to live in the country's growing urban slum areas.

Thiga Nanyaga is still getting used to seeing green fields again.

The 65-year-old farmer has lived his whole life in a village in eastern Kenya, but increased drought over recent years was making it more difficult to survive.

Farmers in this region have traditionally relied on two rainy seasons each year. With no other way of getting water to their land, the rain was vital if crops were to grow. When the rains came, farmers could grow enough food to sustain their families through the dry period. When the rains did not come, however, people went hungry.

"The rains are disappearing so it was getting more difficult every year. Life was very hard. We experienced hunger very often."

Thiga, who lives with his wife, Alice, and their two young children, received a lifeline earlier this year when his farm was connected to a Trócaire-funded irrigation project which brings water directly from a river to over 1,400 farms in the area.

"The irrigation has made a big difference," he says, proudly displaying his thriving crops.

The irrigation project has transformed this community. However, across Kenya millions of farmers are still reliant on rain to grow crops. With rains becoming more erratic and less predictable, hunger is on the rise.

"The rains are getting less by the year," says Thiga. "When I was young there was plenty of rain but not anymore. It is going to be very difficult for people who do not have irrigation. I do not know how they will continue."

Situation 4: Mechu Dayo, Ethiopia
Ethiopia is the second most-populous country in Africa, with a population of over 90 million people. There are over 80 languages spoken in this country, with English being the language of instruction in institutions of higher learning. About 70% of the mountains of Africa are in this country. Lake Tana in this country supplies the Blue Nile River, which feeds the White Nile River before joining the Great Nile River.

In the village of Tisho Kebele in southern Ethiopia, Mechu Dayo woke each morning not knowing whether she would have enough food to feed her children that day.

“Drought has been so severe and I didn’t have enough flour to bake to feed my children,” she said. “I had to prepare a very thin porridge just for them to feel something in their stomach and survive the day.”

Like many people in the region, Mechu (40) had relied on cattle farming, but regular droughts were making it more difficult to raise livestock. A Trócaire project gave 170 families in the area the skills and tools to begin growing vegetables.

Thanks to the project, Mechu believes that hunger will be a thing of the past for her family.

“Previously when I went to the market and saw cabbage, I would want to buy for my kids but I could not afford it,” she says. “Now I am able to grow it and then feed my children. I am also making money out of it. Feeding my children and having left with plenty for the market is a big change for me.”

As well as helping local farmers to grow vegetables, the project also improved water supply and irrigation in the area. New wells and irrigation methods have helped the people to cope with the extended periods of drought that have sadly become a regular feature of life for people in the area.

“I don’t think I will face major problems again,” Mechu says confidently. “I can still grow vegetables even if there is no rain. I will be able to bring water on a donkey from a well. The project has helped me reach this stage out of nothing.
I am very happy. If I had money I would send the supporters a gift, but now I am sending my big round of applause.”

Appendix B: Learning Journals

Activating Empathy

Learning Journal

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Session 1, Activity 1: Definitions of Empathy

From the dictionary:

“The ability to understand and appreciate another person's feelings, experience, etc.” ("empathy, n.", 2016)

From psychology:

“Empathy is our ability to identify what someone else is thinking or feeling, and to respond to their thoughts and feelings with an appropriate emotion”
(Baron-Cohen, 2001, p. 12)

Empathy is: “the ability to sense other people’s emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling”
(Greater Good: the Science of a Meaningful Life, no date)

From literature:

To Kill a Mockingbird
“if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.”
(Lee, 1989, p. 33)

The Odyssey
“taught by time, my heart has learned to glow for other's good, and melt at other's woe”
(Homer, 1906)

Session 1, Take Home Activity: Definition and Examples of Empathy

Directions: Write your own definition of empathy in the box below.

Identify examples of empathy that you notice during the week, whether this is in your life, on television, in books, or in the news. Note of some of these below:

1.

2.

3.

Session 2, Activity 1: Identifying Empathy

Scenario 1

Characters: Narrator, Jason, Lucas

Narrator: Jason visits his friend Lucas at his house after school.

Jason *[upset and angry]*: I can't believe she broke up with me, and did it in front of everybody!

Lucas *[scrolling through phone]***:** She was a terrible girlfriend though. You're way better off without her!

Jason: I know she could be annoying and a bit selfish, but I'm not sure I wanted to break up with her. And I definitely didn't want it to happen in front of the whole school.

Lucas: She was so self-centered and spent all her time with her friends. Look, she's already posted a photo of herself in town!

[He shows Jason a photo from social media on his phone]

Seriously, you're so much better off without her and you can hang out with your own friends more now. It'll be great!

Jason: Yeah… but why do I feel really angry and sad then?

Lucas: Because no one likes to be broken up with, but you'll get over it really soon I swear. Time is a healer and all that stuff.

Scenario 2

Characters: Narrator, Caroline, Annie

Narrator: Caroline has called in to see her friend Annie after school.

Caroline *[upset and angry]***:** I can't believe he broke up with me, and did it in front of everybody!

Annie *[puts her phone down and moves to where Caroline is sitting]***:** That must have been terrible, to have everybody watching something so personal.

Caroline: It really was. I was so humiliated you know?

Annie: Of course you were. Anybody would be in that situation.

[Nobody says anything for a few seconds.]

Annie: How do you feel now?

Caroline: Really hurt and sad. I know he wasn't the best boyfriend…

Annie: But he was still a really important person to you. I remember how terrible I felt when Michael broke up with me. You feel there must be something wrong with you.

Caroline: Exactly. What did I do wrong? I'm not sure what to do now.

Annie *[putting arm around Caroline]***:** We can figure it out together.

Session 2, Activity 2: “Switching On” Empathy

John’s Story

My name is John. I’m 16 and in 10th grade at the moment. On Tuesday at lunch, a group of guys decided to play football. I really don’t like to play. I’m just not coordinated at all, and feel really self-conscious taking part in any sport. I was dreading having to play but went along with it so I wouldn’t draw any attention to myself. All throughout the game, every time I messed up a kick, missed a really easy tackle, or made a pathetic pass, the other guys laughed and made a big deal about it. It started off with a few joking comments from a couple of them, but it soon spread throughout the group. The tone really changed and it all became fairly nasty. They got personal with some of the comments saying things like, “Useless”, “You’re a total joke”, and “You’re a waste of space”. It went on and on. They even started deliberately trying to make me to fall over. By the end I think they were getting more enjoyment out of tearing me apart than playing football. I felt so completely humiliated, but had to keep trying to laugh it off even though my throat was dry and I was fighting back tears by the end. Why did they pick on me? All I did was try to join in.

Session 2, Take Home Activity: Guide to Empathetic Listening

1. Give your full attention.
- Put away phones and get rid of other distractions if possible.
- If your attention wanders while the other person is speaking, gently bring it back to them.

2. Maintain eye contact.
- Maintain good eye contact with the speaker without staring.

3. Remove barriers.
- Do not use physical barriers such as tables or crossed arms when you are listening.

4. Use encouraging body language.
- Use appropriate and encouraging body language signs like nodding and smiling.

5. Ask open-ended questions.
- Ask open-ended questions such as: “How did it feel when…?”, “Can you tell me more about…?”, “What did you feel about…?”.

6. Reflect.
- Reflect back to the person what you have heard such as, “I understand from what you are saying that…”, “What I am hearing is…”, and “You sound…”.

7. Let them speak.
- Do not interrupt the other person unnecessarily.
- If you need to clarify what the person is saying, wait for a natural break in the conversation.
- Allow for silence.

8. Understand.
- Listen to the other person’s words and read their body language.

9. Show that you understand.
- Let the other person know that you understand them by using words and gestures.
- Share examples from your own experience if you have any, but be careful not to make the conversation about you.

10. Do not judge.
- Do not judge or criticize what the other person is saying.

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Session 2, Take Home Activity: Displaying Empathy

Directions: How can you display empathy toward others? Write 3 ideas below.

1.

2.

3.

Session 3, Take Home Activity: Practicing Empathetic Listening

Directions: Practice empathic listening or responding with empathy at least once before the next class session. Record your experience below.

1. Describe the conversation in brief.

2. I listened with empathy in the following ways:

3. How did the other person/people respond?

4. Afterwards I felt…

Session 4, Activity 1: Responding with Empathy

Directions: Write down three ways you would respond with empathy to the situation given to you in class.

1.

2.

3.

Session 4, Take Home Activity: Responding with Empathy

Directions: Practice responding with empathy at least once before the next class session, and record your experience below.

1. Briefly describe the situation.

2. I responded with empathy in the following ways:

3. How did the other person/people respond?

4. Afterwards I felt…

Session 5, Activity 1: 10 Things Your Group Has in Common

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Session 5, Take Home Activity: Commonalities

Directions: Answer the following questions to reflect on the activity about commonalities.

1. What is one thing you had in common with a classmate that surprised you? Why?

2. Find a picture of someone you do not know. What are three things you could have in common with this person?

Session 6, Take Home Activity: Perspective-Taking Practice

Directions: Find an opportunity to practice perspective-taking. You might attempt to take the perspective of somebody you find yourself in conflict with. Alternatively, you might practice stepping into the shoes of somebody you do not know very well personally, but who might be going through a hard time. You could also draw upon stories of people you read about or hear about on the news.

Once you have your person or people in mind, answer the questions below about your perspective-taking experience.

1. Which person or people did you try the exercise with?

2. How successful was the exercise?

3. How did you feel afterwards?

Session 7, Activity 1: In-Class Questions about the Personality Compass

Directions: Reflecting on your newly discovered compass direction, respond to the following questions:

1. What are the strengths of your direction?

2. What are limitations of your direction?

3. What is the direction you have the most difficulty working with and why?

4. What is the direction you have the easiest time working with and why?

5. What do you want other directions to know about your direction?

Session 7, Take Home Activity: Reflecting on the Personality Compass

Directions: Respond to the following question about the Personality Compass activity from class.

1. What do you value most about your compass direction?

2. Did your compass direction reflect who you are, or do you identify more with a different direction? Why?

3. List the other three directions (besides your own). What do you value about each of the other three directions?

Session 8, Activity 1: Definition of Stereotype

A stereotype is a belief that all members of a given group share the same fixed personality traits or characteristics as a result of this group membership. Stereotypes are always based on an oversimplified generalization of a social group… Stereotypes can be attached to any assumed marker of group membership, such as age, ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, family, religion and disability. It is important to note that we also stereotype our own group(s) as well as others. Needless to say, we often tend to emphasize our own 'virtues' by attributing positive labels to them and view other groups in a less flattering light. For example: "Irish are warm and friendly" while "French people are arrogant"' *(The Equality Authority & The National Youth Council of Ireland, 2008, p.1)*

Session 8, Take Home Activity: Recognizing Stereotypes

Directions: Watch for stereotypes happening around you outside of class. Reflect on one stereotype you observe, whether it be at school, at home, in a newspaper or magazine, see on the television news, or see online.

Answer the following questions:

1. Summarize the situation and stereotype.

2. How did observing the stereotype in action make you feel?

3. What could you do to prevent the stereotyping situation from occurring again?

Session 9, Activity 2: The Human Face

Directions: Answer the questions below to help you prepare for drawing or writing about your individual from the Scenario Cards.

1. What does the person look like?

2. What is the person's name?

3. What conditions do they live in?

4. What suffering have they experienced in their life?

Session 9, Take Home Activity: Social Exclusion in Current Events

Directions: Reflect on one story you read in a newspaper, see on the television news, or see online that covers the topic of social exclusion. This could be a story about poverty or lack of access to education, food, or a home, etc...
Answer the following questions:

1. Summarize the news story.

2. How was this story about social exclusion?

3. How did reading or watching the story make you feel?

4. What could be done to solve this issue?

Session 10, Activity 2: Climate Change in the News – Why Should I Care?

Directions: Your group is a news team of journalists and camera people preparing a report for the evening news bulletin to inform people about the human impact of climate change. You will be interviewing the people on your *Situation Card* and filming in the area. You are to prepare a report, noting down five questions they will ask their interviewees, where they would like to interview them, what shots and images they might film for their report, and who else they might like to interview.

A. Five questions to ask your interviewee:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

B. Where would you like the interview to take place?

C. What are some shots and images you would like to include in your piece?

D. Who else might you interview about this situation?

Session 10, Take Home Activity: A Letter to my Grandchild in 2070

Directions: Try to imagine what life will be like for your grandchild in 2070 if we fail to do anything about climate change in our time. Write a letter to your him or her in 2070. Remember that if we fail to act on climate change the consequences for future generations will be devastating with crop failure, mass forced migration, extreme weather events, flooding, air pollution causing illness and deaths, and extinction of animal species.

Date:

My dear grandchild,

Session 11, Activity 1: Empathy Inspiration

Directions:

1. The person I have chosen is…

2. Write a bit about their background and lives.

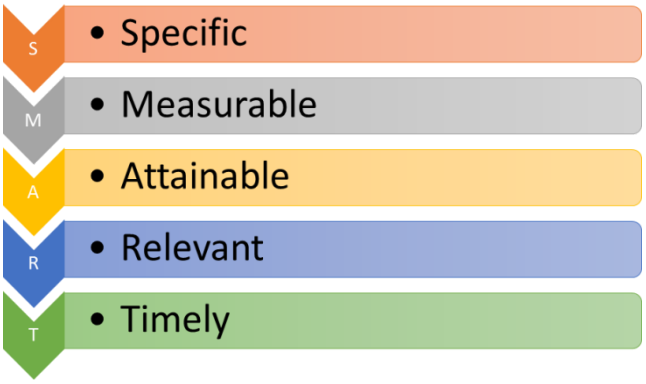
3. How do they show empathy in their lives and work?

Session 12, Activity 1: "SMART" Goals*

*Adapted from *Leadership for life programme* (Foróige, 2010)

Writing your goals as SMART goals helps you to evaluate how you are progressing as you go. If you reach a goal quickly, or experience some delays, you can adapt your goals so that you can continue in a meaningful and real way. We often become overwhelmed by the goals we set ourselves, but if we break them down into simpler tasks then it becomes easier to work them into our everyday lives where we stand a greater chance of achieving them.

SMART Goals are:



Specific
Goals should be clear and precise.
Example: "I will be healthier!!" is too general. *"I will drink 8 glasses of 8 oz of water per day to be healthier"* is more specific.

Measurable
Goals should be measurable so that you know how you are doing with them.

"I will end world hunger!" is very general. *"I will sponsor a child* ***for one year*** *in Africa",* is measurable.

Achievable
Goals should be achievable. This may mean that they start small and get bigger as you develop and reassess.

"I will be healthier!!" is too general. *"I will drink* ***2 glasses of water every day for the first week, then I will build up to 8 glasses every day to be healthier****".* This is achievable because you are starting small and working your way up. When we make our goals achievable there is more chance we will succeed. The goal here is also measurable and specific. LJ p. 18

Realistic
Setting realistic goals doesn't mean that you can't aim high, but goals should be realistic.

"I will end world hunger"' is very general. "*I will sponsor a child for one year in Africa to help end world hunger and each year I will add a child to my sponsorship program from a different country* ***with the support of fundraising"***. This goal is also realistic as it is starting small and planning to expand taking into consideration the need for additional resources as the program expands.

Timed
Good goals should have a time frame. This keeps the focus and gives a clear time for establishing if the goal has been completed or not (at which point a new goal should be developed).

"I will be healthier!!" is too general. *"I will drink 2 glasses of water one in the morning and one in the evening for the* ***first week****, then I will build up to 8 glasses every day to be healthier* ***within 4 weeks****".* Making your goal timed helps you remain focused and to adjust it if you need to. If you are finding the initial part hard then you can adjust goal to remain on target. Remember that changing a habit or reaching a goal requires patience and persistence!

Six Habits of Highly Empathetic People*

*Adapted from 'Six Habits of Highly Empathic People' (Krznaric, 2012).

See video '6 Habits of Highly Empathic People'
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNEuEO94J1o

Habit 1: Be curious about strangers
Highly Empathic People are very curious about other people. They are the type of people who talk to the stranger sitting beside them on the bus or the train, eager to find out about them and their lives. Being curious about strangers expands our empathy by opening up our world beyond our own social circle to different types of people with different ways of viewing the world. Cultivating this kind of curiosity does mean doing beyond a conversation about the weather. It means trying to get inside the head of another person.

Set yourself the challenge of having a conversation with one stranger every week. You can also choose to read about people whose lives are very different from ours in novels or newspapers, for example.

***Note:** It is, of course, important to exercise care and caution when talking to strangers. Be discerning and always extract yourself from a conversation you feel uncomfortable with.*

Habit 2: Challenge prejudices and discover commonalities
We all make assumptions about other people and use labels to describe them as particular types: a Muslim fundamentalist, a single mother on the dole, a 'jock'. Highly Empathic People challenge their own preconceptions and prejudices and look for what they share in common with other people. They search for those feelings, experiences and views they share with people who are different from them. In doing this they recognize the sameness instead of seeing the difference.
Challenge your own assumptions about another person you have labelled as a 'type' and see if you can find any common ground with them.

Habit 3: Try another person's life

Highly Empathic People expand their experience of empathy by getting direct experience of other people's lives. The author George Orwell undertook an extreme experiment. He dressed as a tramp in shabby clothes and lived on the streets of London with the homeless to experience what life was like for the poorest and most oppressed. The result, which he wrote about in his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*, was a radical change in his beliefs and relationships. He realized that homeless people are not 'drunken scoundrels'; developed new friendships; and shifted his views on inequality.

We can all undertake versions of this experiment. For example, we can volunteer with communities of people we normally never associate with or if we were brought up in a particular religion, we can attend the services of other religions.

Habit 4: Listen hard and open up

Highly Empathic People have mastered the art of empathic conversation. This involves listening very hard to the other person to grasp their emotional state and their needs. Listening is just one half of empathic conversation. To really connect with another person and create a mutual understanding we need to open up and reveal our feelings. This kind of conversation is a two-way-street based on exchanging the beliefs and feelings that are most important to us. It creates a strong empathic bond.

We can practice empathic conversation – listening and sharing - with the people in our lives and with strangers in our communities and world.

Habit 5: Inspire mass action and social change

We often assume that empathy takes place at the individual level, between two people. Highly Empathic People understand that empathy can be a mass phenomenon that brings about social change. A very good historical example is the ending of the slave trade. Those social campaigners who sought to end the slave trade galvanized massive support by getting the public to understand the horrific human suffering experienced by slaves on slave ships and plantations.

We can volunteer for an organization and take up causes and campaign for change. We can find ways to use social media to cultivate empathy to inspire action.

Habit 6: Develop an ambitions imagination

Highly Empathic People don't just empathize with those who are suffering but challenge themselves to empathize with people whose beliefs we don't share, even with people we think of as 'enemies' in some way. If we can make that difficult imaginative leap into the minds and feelings of those we disagree with, we might find insights into their motivations and better ways of dealing with their arguments.

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We can challenge ourselves to feel empathy for an individual we are against or with people who hold different views from us. A person being bullied could try to feel empathy for their bully, to understand what motivates them to act the way they do. Somebody who feels strongly about racism in society could challenge themselves to feel empathy for a person who holds racist views, in order to better understand where they are coming from.

Creating Personal Empathy Goals

Directions: Consider what you have learned throughout this course on empathy, such as the definitions of empathy and Six Habits of Highly Empathetic People. Also consider the skills you have practiced such as, “switching on” empathy, empathetic listening, finding common ground, etc…).

Make a list of specific activities that you can practice. Be as detailed as you like here (e.g. be more empathic when listening to my friends tell me about their problems; offer to help people whenever I notice that they need it; practice mindfulness). Make your list relevant to your life. Based on what you have listed, write out a set of clear goals and methods to help you achieve that goal. You can be as detailed as you like with your goals and methods.
An example might be:

Goal	**Methods/Examples**
1. Open up to strangers or people I do not know well (in safe settings).	● *Talk to the people I know the least about on my sports team.* ● *Talk to the cashier when I am buying things.*

Goal	**Methods/Examples**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

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Appendix D: Contacts and Resources

If you are concerned about any of the issues raised through taking part in the Activating Empathy Program, the contacts list below includes some organizations offering support and information. You can also use the contacts list to learn about empathy-related issues in society. The resources list includes empathy and empathy-related initiatives and organizations where you can learn more about issues like empathy, compassion and social action for the common good.

Contacts (Alphabetical)

Bullying
- https://www.stopbullying.gov/
- https://www.stompoutbullying.org/get-help/helpchat-line

Child and Domestic Abuse
Childhelp - National Child Abuse Hotline
- https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/

Family & Youth and Service Bureau - The National Domestic Violence Hotline
- https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/ndvh
- 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Office of Women's Health
- https://www.womenshealth.gov/
- 1-800-994-9662

The National Domestic Violence Hotline
- https://ncadv.org/get-help
- 1-800-787-3224

Climate Change
ECO-UNESCO
- http://www.ecounesco.ie

Greenpeace
- http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/

Project Learning Tree
- https://www.plt.org/greenschools/

NASA - Global Climate Change Project
- https://climate.nasa.gov/

NOAA Science and Information for a Climate-Smart Nation
- https://www.climate.gov/climate-and-energy-topics/causes-climate-change

National Science Teaching Association - Climate Science Resources
- https://www.nsta.org/climate/

Eating Disorders

National Eating Disorder Association
- https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/
- 1-800-931-2237

Mental Health

Mental Health Resources
- https://www.mentalhealth.gov/get-help/immediate-help

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- 1-800-273-8255
- https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/
- 24 hour online chat available

SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline
- 1-877-SAMHSA7 (1-877-726-4727)

Substance Abuse

Addiction Hotline
- 1-855-402-9391

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Hotline
- https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline
- 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

National Drug Addiction Helpline
- http://drughelpline.org/
- 1-844-289-0879

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
- https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
- https://www.justice.gov/crt/how-file-complaint#three

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Hotline
- https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

Veterans Crisis Line
- 1-800-273-8255

Additional Resources (Alphabetical)

Center for Building a Culture of Empathy: http://cultureofempathy.com

Center for Nonviolent Communication: http://www.cnvc.org

Changing Worlds: http://www.changingworlds.org

Charter for Compassion: http://www.charterforcompassion.org

Compassionate Listening Project: http://www.compassionatelistening.org

Compassionate Societies: http://www.compassionatesocieties.org

Everyday democracy: http://www.everyday-democracy.org

Facing History and Ourselves: https://www.facinghistory.org

Greater Good: http://greatergood.berkeley.edu

Public Conversations Project: http://www.publicconversations.org

Roots and Shoots: http://www.rootsandshoots.org

Roots of Empathy: http://www.rootsofempathy.org

Start Empathy (Ashoka): https://startempathy.org

Young Social Innovators: http://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie