

ON THE ROAD TO OURSELVES

1

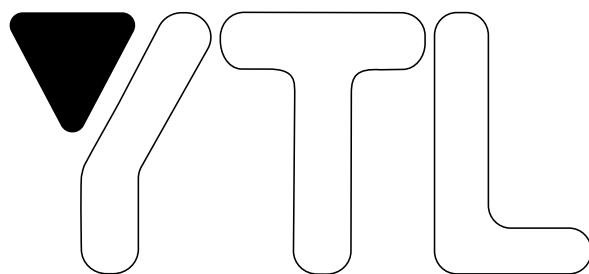
**AUTHENTIC
SELF-ESTEEM**



YOUTH AT THE THRESHOLD OF LIFE

TEACHER'S MANUAL

2021



YOUTH AT THE THRESHOLD OF LIFE

A program to instill self-esteem,
relationship building and character development

AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM

On the Road to Ourselves

Teacher's Manual **Volume 1**

Written by:
Gábor Grész and David M. Robinson

<https://ytl.academy>

Eighth edition revised
U.S.A., 2021
All rights reserved

The following people contributed to this YTL Teacher's Manual:

Members of the YTL editorial board: Gábor Grész, David M. Robinson, Béla Kenessey, Izabella Zs. Nagy, Éva Mergl, Edina Grész, Carol LaGue, Angela Ellett, and the members of Crossroads, the working group of YTL's international division.

The Crossroads lesson plans were prepared by:

Dr. Marcia Ball, former associate professor at the Department of Health Sciences at James Madison University
- <https://www.twr360.org/speakers/view/id,134>

Beverly Byers, consultant

Dr. Jennie Cerullo, professor at Department of Education and Behavioral Studies at Azusa Pacific University

Rex E. Johnson, professor emeritus at Talbot School of Theology - <https://www.biola.edu/directory/people/rex-johnson>

Dr. Alan Scholes, professor at the Department of Theology at the International School of Theology

Dr. Gary Stanley, professor at the Faculty of Communications at the International School of Theology

Contributing writers and editors:

Erin Balance, editor, International School Project

Rebecca S. Cotton, editor-in-chief, Women Today International, CCC

Christina Creutz, writer, Worldwide Challenge Magazine

Steven Grezlak, writer and editor, Worldwide Challenge Magazine

William Horlacher, editor-in-chief, writer, Director of Bridges International

Richard Morris, writer, Cross-Cultural Leadership Training

Kirsten Wilson, writer

Mary Ann Thurmond, partner, 35 years with leadership management firm

Jean Saunders, edited approximately 25 books for Dr. Jack P. Lewis, Memphis, TN

Reviewers:

Gábor Grész, co-founder and leader of the YTL program

David M. Robinson, co-founder of the YTL program

Dr. Dénes Bánhegyi, former national AIDS coordinator

Dick Day, professor at the Faculty of Human Ecology and Family Studies at the University of Malawi

Dr. Delanyo Adadevoh, PhD, William Beauvis

Moirá Chimombo, professor of Curriculum and Learning at the University of Malawi

Charlotte Day, member of the Faculty of Human Ecology and Family Studies at the University of Malawi

John Harris, president of Summer Night Communications

Daniel LaGue, former regional coordinator of YTL

Diana Langerock, South and East Africa Coordinator of YTL

Translated into English by: Gabriella Nagy, Edina Grész, Carol LaGue

Cover design and page layout: Renátó Grész

Cover image: Guy Gerrard, Worldwide Challenge Magazine, 1994. Used with permission.

Managing editor: Gábor Grész

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from The NIV® Bible (The Holy Bible, New International Version®). NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica Inc.®

*“...by starving the sensibility of our pupils we only
make them easier prey...a hard heart is no infallible
protection against a soft head.”*

C. S. Lewis: *The Abolition of Man*

Table of Contents

Preface	1
Why YTL?	3
The Philosophy and Ethics of YTL	9
Authentic Self-Esteem: Introduction	29
Introductory Lesson: Looking Ahead	Lesson 01. 31
 Part I: Am I Who Others Say I Am? / Overview	 41
Me and Myself	43
“Am I who others say I am?”	Reading I. 45
I Am Special!	Lesson 02. 53
Understanding Yourself	Lesson 03. 61
I Am Valuable!	Lesson 04. 73
 Part II: Am I How I feel? / Overview	 87
Me and My Emotions	89
Intelligent Emotion?	Reading II. 91
IQ + EQ = Opportunity	Lesson 05. 99
Emotional Skills	Lesson 06. 107
Aware of Myself	Lesson 07. 111
Aware of My Emotions	Lesson 08. 119
Controlling Myself	Lesson 09. 125
 Part III: Am I What I Do? / Overview	 133
Me and My Character	135
The Trap of Subjectivity	Reading III. 137
Brokenhearted Role Play	Lesson 10. 143
The Silver Ball	Lesson 11. 147
Character Development	Lesson 12. 155

Taking Responsibility _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 13. _ _	161
Respecting Others _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 14. _ _	169
Workshop of Character _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 15. _ _	177
Choices You Face _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 16. _ _	181
The Basis of Your Value System _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 17. _ _	187
A Life Worth Living _ _ _ _ _	Film _ _ _ _ _	197
Pure Heart _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 18. _ _	199
Games _ _ _ _ _		209
Collective Table of Contents _ _ _ _ _		215

Preface

“The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts”—C. S. Lewis writes in his truly remarkable book, *The Abolition of Man*¹. Since its launch in 1994, ***Youth at the Threshold of Life (YTL)*** has been trying to fulfill this mission to irrigate the drought of self-esteem and the relational, emotional and spiritual desert that surrounds children. This wilderness causes their souls, emotions and relationships to suffer from drought. This forces them to seek after tiny drops of water instead of the emotional, relational oasis available for their souls. These three volumes of the YTL Teacher’s Manual are here to help point children from the wilderness to many well-being resources. They are now thoroughly revised and combine the experience of over two and a half decades.

Over the 25 years of the ***Youth at the Threshold of Life (YTL)*** program at least six generations have graduated from high school. Tens of thousands of Hungarian students took part in the ‘YTL classes’ all over the country. Globally, hundreds of thousands graduated from this program as well.

The accumulated experience clearly shows that those needs that prompted the birth of this program in the first place are still present and they increasingly apply to young people today. The situation of families hasn’t become better, relationships haven’t become more stable, and the values that determine a balanced life (love, selflessness, self-sacrifice, respect, honor, honesty, etc.) are less and less present. The lack of values that characterized Hungary after the democratic transition in 1989 was quickly replaced by a very powerful and loud value system. This value system is very clearly showing its true colors—for many people, everything can be sacrificed on the altar of consumption, career and money over their relationships and families. Now there is no longer a vacuum, as family values (relationships, family, love, friendship and children) have been replaced by self-satisfying pursuits (success, money, career, sex without love, etc.).

Our task is even more difficult and important now than when the YTL program was first launched. We must stand for these values as a signpost and even toil for them ceaselessly “like a voice in the wilderness,” since individuals and society as a whole are headed for destruction without them. The devastating signs of this erosion of values are already tangible in the lives of families and children. The evidence is depressing; the institutions of marriage and family are being questioned. Divorce and violence are on the increase, as well. This erosion of values starts affecting every society.

Even if the situation seems to be hopeless at times, it is still possible to achieve thorough and lasting changes in the way young people live and think of their lives. Here are some encouraging examples:

- Sexual activity among high school age students in the US—even if not dramatically, but slowly and steadily—has decreased since 1991. Drug use in the same age group increased until 2001-2003; however, it has greatly reduced since then. There is a similar trend when it comes to alcohol consumption and smoking.
- In Uganda, which became one of the countries most severely affected by AIDS in the late 1980s, HIV prevalence was reduced by a third by 2000. The radical turn can be clearly attributed to

¹New York: Macmillan, 1965

the campaign targeting marital fidelity, abstinence and having less sexual partners. There are similar experiences in Senegal, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

- When it comes to Hungary, the effect of the YTL program on youth is very difficult to quantify. Due to our limited resources we haven't been able to carry out a scientific survey, but it would be extremely beneficial if a professional organization would do so. However, our own questionnaires—far from being scientific—show a positive reception and impact among the students. Prior to participating at our lecture series, only 5% of the students thought that it's worth waiting to become sexually active at a later age. By the end of the series, this figure increased to 60%, and 25% of the students expressed their desire to truly wait. Similarly, 60% of the students indicated after our drug prevention lectures that they will refrain from experimenting with drugs.

However, to continue to see increasing good results, we must implement up-to-date tools. The YTL program seeks to help educators, parents and youth workers with old and new tools. As problems and challenges facing youth, work and family education are on the increase, we want to share our useful tools with those who can benefit from using them.

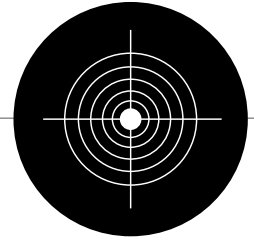
There is a huge task before us all. YTL helps us carry out the most important and valuable task for the future of mankind—namely, to shape the future through the children entrusted to our care.

Sincerely,

Gábor Grész, co-founder and leader

David M. Robinson, co-founder

Members of the YTL team



Why YTL?

Youth at the Threshold of Life (YTL) educational program and movement exists to help young people become healthy adults, gain a more meaningful complete life, and through this to contribute to a more livable society.

A 'healthy adult' means—beyond the obvious physical and biological health—that the following three characteristics are present in the life of a person to have a meaningful, complete and whole life:

1. **AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM**—Are able to see themselves realistically; their self-observation is based on stable

foundations; they see themselves as valuable, but they don't under- or overestimate themselves; have solid characters. Healthy adults are aware of themselves.

2. **INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS**—Are able to establish mutual, equal, vulnerable and lasting relationships with others and receive and give acceptance. Healthy adults are aware of their connections to others.
3. **MOTIVATING GOALS**—Have a goal and task, a purpose in the world they live in. Healthy adults are able to set motivating goals that give meaning, hope and significance, and place them in society through their work and profession. Healthy adults know their role in the world.

These three characteristics of a healthy adult are rooted in the following basic emotional, and spiritual needs we all have and want to experience:

1. **I AM VALUABLE! A SENSE OF WORTH.** It's a basic human need to feel valuable. Our sense of worth prompts us to ask existential questions like *Who are we?* and *Why do we exist?* The most basic question of life is related to defining ourselves. Until you can define yourself and discover your worth and who you are, you will not be able to find your place in an intimate relationship or in society. Since our basic human need is to know who we are, we must first understand our strengths and weaknesses. In order to realistically see your worth, you will also need a strong sense of what is good and bad. Without the ability to differentiate between good and bad, you will not be able to realistically see your strengths and weaknesses, your mistakes and virtues. If someone is not able to see and love themselves for who they are (which is very different from self-worship or self-loathing), they will not be able to love and accept others either.
2. **I BELONG! A SENSE OF SIGNIFICANCE.** *'I belong!'* comes with the desire to know whether we matter to anyone. Am I acceptable and lovable? Do I belong to anybody or anywhere? In this universe everything is connected. Life wouldn't be possible without the chemical elements connecting to each other. Without connections there would be no life, not only in the physical, biological and chemical sense, but also in the emotional, spiritual and human dimension. We were created to be connected. We can experience acceptance only through our relationships and love. If someone is incapable of establishing a lasting, vulnerable and intimate relationship, they will not have a sense of belonging.
3. **I AM CAPABLE! A SENSE OF COMPETENCE.** Our need for a sense of competence makes us ask *'Is there any purpose for my existence?'* *'Why do I live at all?'* *'What is my role in this world?'* *'Am I capable of achieving anything?'* It is a basic human need to understand why we exist. We must identify our purpose in life that provides a framework for the un-repeatable and unique few decades that we spend here on Earth. Identifying our purpose in life empowers us with the sense that we have an important role to play in this world and we are capable of fulfilling this role. As we discover this purpose—in whatever work or profession—it will motivate us to maximize our abilities and develop our skills. Ultimately, this process will lead to a better, more developed society which solidifies our well-being and existence.

In order for the generation that is entrusted to our care to grow up as healthy adults, we need to help them meet these three needs mentioned above. YTL provides educators and parents with resources in this handbook that are aimed at achieving the following purposes.

OUR PURPOSES

01

AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM

To develop the self-esteem of students by strengthening their self-awareness, building strong foundations on which to base their self-worth, giving them tools to understand and control their emotions (EQ) and developing their character.

In order to have an **authentic self-esteem** we need to have a good amount of self-awareness, we need to be able to **intelligently control our emotions** and we need to have a **solid character**.

- a. **Self-Awareness:** To have the right self-awareness: first, we need to see ourselves as unique valuable beings; secondly, we have to realistically understand our strengths and weaknesses; thirdly, we need to accept the fact that both good and bad exist in us. To help our students with self-awareness we need to strengthen the following: their sense of worth, their sense of competence and their acceptance of themselves. If people are unable to accept themselves or they don't know themselves, they will be unable to connect to others or discover their own goals in life.
- b. **Emotional Intelligence (EQ):** Our students need to develop their ability to intelligently control their emotions. They need to be able to understand their own emotions and use them for their own advantages.
- c. **Character:** We have to help develop a solid character in the life of our students. We must teach them the difference between good and bad, useful and harmful. We also need to equip them to be able to choose the good and useful instead of the bad and harmful. It's not only our ability to choose well, but it is our character that determines who we are and how others perceive us. Our character is inseparable from who we are. Character is the ability to distinguish between good and bad and to choose what is good and not what is bad.

The **FIRST VOLUME** of the YTL Teacher's Manual discusses this topic.

02

INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

To help our students grow in their ability to build and maintain mutual, impartial, and lasting friendships and intimate relationships.

This goal can be achieved by:

- a. Showing the significance of accepting and valuing others; we present the importance, hindrances and tools for building life-long **friendships**.
- b. Presenting the beauty of the committed, happy and lasting **love-relationships**, by explaining the place of sex in the mutually faithful, life-long relationship and by introducing the dangers of promiscuity.
- c. Equipping our students with the tools of effective **communication** and conflict-resolution.

The **SECOND VOLUME** of the YTL Educator's handbook discusses this topic.

03

MOTIVATING GOALS

To help our students discover their goals and find their place in society; to be able to identify and take the steps necessary to achieve those goals; and to be able to make the right decisions to avoid potential traps that could hinder them from achieving these goals.

This goal can be achieved by:

- a. Helping our students recognize that they have **a role** to play/a task to accomplish in this world. Helping them realize how to turn these roles into plans to accomplish these goals.
- b. Helping them make the right **decisions** and follow through on those decisions with discipline. For this they will need to be able to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, useful and harmful.
- c. Teaching them how to recognize and avoid the **traps** that could hinder them from reaching their goals.

The **THIRD VOLUME** of the YTL Educator's handbook discusses this topic.

SUMMARY TABLE:

BASIC NEEDS Determining how to become a healthy adult	YTL'S PURPOSES
1. I AM VALUABLE!	1. AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM [VOL. 1]
2. I BELONG!	2. INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS [VOL. 2]
3. I AM CAPABLE!	3. MOTIVATING GOALS [VOL. 3]

A healthy individual builds healthy relationships and a healthy society.

LEGEND

The icons and signs used in the Educator's handbook mean the following:



BASIC IDEA is a reading or text that explains the foundational philosophical concept or belief of the YTL program.



MISSION is a reading or text that defines the purpose and mission of the YTL program.



READING is a text written for the educator that explains a given topic and provides background information for the processing and deeper understanding of the Lesson Plans.



LESSON PLAN provides a step-by-step, visual and clearly understandable explanation of the given topic.



STUDENT NOTES: At the end of some Lesson Plans there are student notes that can be copied and distributed to the students to facilitate their understanding.



GAMES: At the end of some sections there is a collection of games and tasks that can illustrate and help the processing of a given topic.



FILM SCREENING is a Lesson Plan that includes watching a film together and then discussing it as a group.



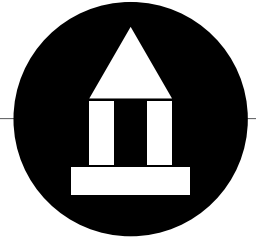
APPENDIX: At the end of the YTL manual there are additional readings and a collection of other resources.



TIME INDICATOR indicates the amount of time required for the processing of the given section in the Lesson Plans.



LESSON HIGHLIGHT shows important truths in the Lesson Plans that must be paid more attention to during the discussions.



The Philosophy and Ethics of YTL

In the Colosseum

“When all that says ‘it is good’ has been debunked, what says ‘I want’ remains.”

— C. S. Lewis

“The question is whether Life is sustained if we continue to disregard morals?”

— Johann Reichert

Undeniably, there are significant changes in the society of our times. Some of these changes make us confident and hopeful, while some other changes fill us with fear and uncertainty. If we were to compare our society to the ancient Colosseum, the processes and actors could represent today’s reality. There are people in this ‘Colosseum’ seated far away from us, whose voices we cannot even hear. In the clearly visible center there are the leaders. Their voices fill the entire Colosseum. You can also see TV cameras monitoring the area and the loudspeakers of the media broadcast that comment on all the happenings. Some of the competitors are praised while others are humiliated. You are also seated in the stands, somewhere to the side. In this sector reserved for ordinary people you are sitting quietly with your friends and acquaintances. There is a special competition about to begin.

It is our children entering the arena and we watch as the next generation is prepared for survival. We watch them as they overcome hurdles and compete to learn the skills required to stay alive, but we cannot help them. We cannot give them advice. The only thing we can do is cheer for them from a distance, but we have no influence over them. Life is harsh, we know that, and the next game is a very cruel one—they let in the hungry lions. They are preying on children who are vulnerable, weak, clueless and helpless.

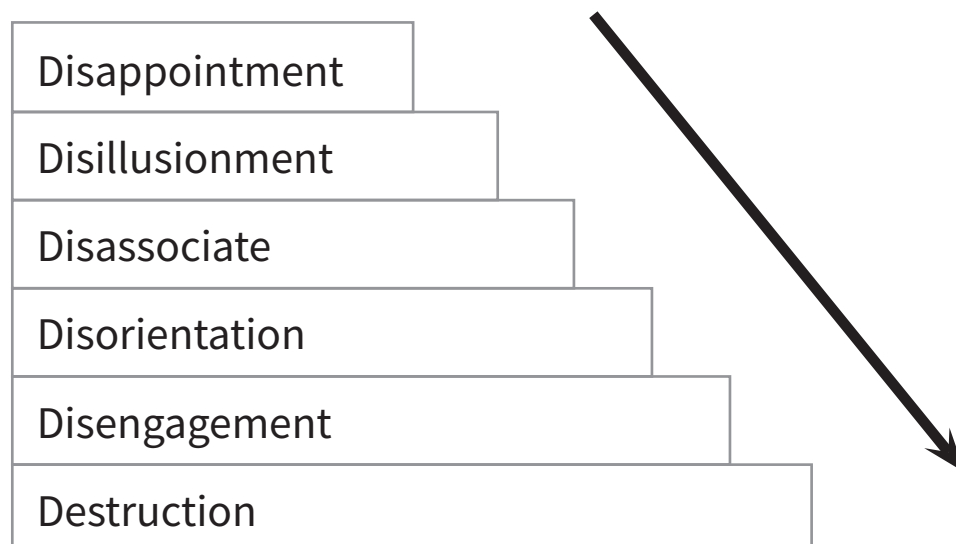
Does it sound extremely brutal? Well, there are dangers like these lions prowling around our children that want to devour and deprive them of their future. These predators may be drugs, a purposeless life, depression, promiscuity and early sexual activity or disintegrated families, etc. The list could go on.

In many ways, our youth are locked up in a 21st century Colosseum. There is no previous generation that had to struggle with such a huge emotional and relational vacuum, with moral issues of this size and quantity. Young people today fall prey to bad company, negative societal pressure and bad decisions that they will suffer the consequences of unless our society—that is currently hiding behind a neutral position—holds out a helping hand.

This is a time of victories and hazards. When our young people face the challenges of our times are they ready to stand their ground with confidence? Today most people only passively observe how the different woes flood and infect societies as a virus. Life is being devalued, values are eroded, there is a disintegration of family. The focus is on self-indulgence and pleasures, while fatalism, nihilism and hopelessness spread like a disease among the younger generation. Promises are not kept since no one considers them as binding. Can our children grow up in the midst of this fear, skepticism and uncertainty to be adults who bring healing to this world? Are they ready to inherit all the problems that we leave behind as a legacy?

The Steps of Fatalism

This is a very gloomy perspective. If you want them to ever get out of this vicious cycle, first they have to understand what leads to this extreme hopelessness and fatalism, a situation so many people experience.



It usually starts with a **simple disappointment**. Unfulfilled expectations are then accumulated. Personal failures become too frequent. And dreams don't become a reality. Afterwards young people lose heart and at times even become depressed. When the above pattern keeps repeating itself it will lead to **disillusionment**. You might find yourself unable to cope with a situation and are oppressed by your failures. Young people are in serious trouble if they don't have relationships where they can receive encouragement, answers and instruction. They also need a safe environment where they can share their feelings. If their need for love, security and physical protection are unmet, they could likely grow up depressed and in danger. Therefore, it is particularly important how young people are treated during failures. If a young person never receives confirmation that they did a good job or made a good decision; or when their friend one day decides to replace them with another friend; or they are never hugged by their parents; no one wants to have lunch with them in the cafeteria; or someone offends them with an insensitive joke; or they cannot share their pain over the divorce of their parents; or if they cannot afford designer clothes that the cool guys/girls wear; their parents are never at home to ask about their day at school; or if the bus driver yells at them; or if they played poorly in the orchestra when that special person was around—in such situations they may have lots of questions, feel overwhelmed by pain and loneliness. Sometimes their thoughts become halted and emotions become confused which results in an attitude of giving up. The deeper the person immerses in this feeling, the longer it takes to recover. And the more others are excluded from their life, the more they close themselves up.

This leads to **disassociation and isolation**. They start ignoring and excluding pain as a way to handle it. There is nowhere to turn for help. There is no one to belong to. They start building walls due to the lack of support and unfulfilled needs. Over time these walls become higher and higher, and they only magnify the already existing pain. This young person now feels hopeless. Their basic need for love, acceptance, belonging, security and importance continue to remain unfulfilled.

We hate emptiness. There must be something that gives hope and meaning to our lives, something that fills us. We cannot exist in a lonely secluded place where we retreat because of our disappointments. The cracks in the wall must be repaired. This is a state when we are looking for meaning and strength to overcome the pain. Truth, morality, honor and honesty are no longer important at this point. This young person will **lose direction**. They will become afraid of this pain that prompts them to do anything just to get rid of it. Aimlessness becomes the new reality.

This loss of direction resulting from their desire to mitigate the pain will snatch them from their immediate surroundings—away from their family and community. They cut their ties with other people either because of depression, suicidal attitudes or through continuous rebellion. Public morals these days are no longer around. Society falls to pieces and an increasing number of people experience a deep solitude and pain. People become **rootless**. In such a vulnerable state many young people can easily become prey to crime, drugs, addictions or physical abuse, while others could be easily misled by gangs and cults. Anything or anyone that gives the promise of hope and purpose, even if it is extremely dangerous, will grab their attention and demand their commitment.

These young people may drift without any conscious thought or idea; they could even cut ties with their past, tradition, culture and even their family. They will try anything that offers the prospect of putting an end to their pain and loneliness.

Such a painful reality will prompt them to live a potentially dangerous lifestyle that can lead to either extremes of **destruction**. One extreme would be a life full of shame and depression that may

even end in suicide. This kind of shame is embodied in the following feelings: *“I am hopeless. I cannot change. I do not have answers. Even though I tried really hard, I failed.”*

The other extreme would be a life characterized by open rebellion and fake ignorance. *“I’m entitled to be happy and have all the power I can attain. I deserve to get rid of boredom and pain at any price, I don’t care!”*

YTL fights against this trend by helping you as an educator or parent. We want to help you create an atmosphere in your classroom where you can comfortably discuss topics that are important for your students. We want them to build character, develop a healthy emotional life, and for you to be a good example to the students and therefore help them live in safety and security.

Besides the dreams and hopes surrounding the new millennium, we must face the reality that the world is now turned upside down. Hunger, oppression, wars, poverty, sexually transmitted infections, drugs, smoking, alcoholism, child prostitution, internet pornography, sex slavery and the disintegration of families are all a reality behind which there is the individual tragedy of millions and even billions of people. These are words that shouldn’t even exist in our dictionaries. They should be abolished. These horrible things are caused by human wickedness, lack of intellect, lust for power and money, as well as irresponsible behavior that in addition to the severe personal tragedies and immense economic burden, also threaten mankind with extinction. Such words will be a heavy burden not only for us, but also for generations to come. Therefore, the biggest question regarding the future of mankind is what will happen to the next generation, are they ready, and have we prepared them for the task awaiting them? There is hardly a need to answer; the sad reality is very obvious so we have a reason to be concerned about the future. Most young people from burdened families struggle with serious self-esteem issues and have a relational crisis; they live aimlessly without knowing where they belong.

In an ill-defined, ever-changing and subjective moral atmosphere where you can rely only on yourself, it is impossible to discover who you are, build healthy relationships and work towards meaningful goals. Most of them are also trapped in the dangerous lifestyle from which we are trying to protect them—drugs, alcohol, sexual promiscuity, Internet addiction, etc. The social changes of our times inevitably generate such problems. However, the immense scale of these problems and how adults respond to them will determine to a large extent how young people are going to cope with these issues.

In the YTL program we didn’t define some new kind of morals, instead we use the Judeo-Christian values that form the basis of Western civilization and caused its emergence. The basic principles used in our curriculum both preceded and exceeded the ‘new traditions’ of our times. We want to emphasize and recall notions and ideas that used to be general principles in our lives: truth, service, courage, self-discipline, kindness, hospitality, social conventions, etc. We didn’t feel

It is impossible to effectively help without conveying a clear set of values and morals. It is equally important for a society to have a common culture as well as a shared moral culture. The mere existence of communities, societies and cultures depends on their shared understanding and awareness. Without such a specific understanding and shared moral world view, communication and collaboration between members of the community becomes difficult. A certain culture is doomed to collapse if there are widespread divisions and arguments regarding this shared understanding (moral consciousness).

like introducing a new kind of morality. Together with others we want to encourage society to live the best of their traditions and beliefs.

We would like to introduce the ethical world view of YTL. To some extent the educational material contains obviously Christian teachings and ideas. We are aware that this new experience will mean encountering new values and undergoing a character development for some people. You might feel challenged. It will be very important to prepare the first lesson plan. You might also feel unnatural about sharing the recommended material because you may be of a different opinion regarding certain topics. You may simply feel unable to use these parts of the curriculum, even though you would be happy to do so. In our experience, even those who do not agree with all the elements of the curriculum still like it a great deal and use the problem-solving approach applied by YTL. The parts that contain biblical principles, Bible passages or use arguments based on Christian values are marked separately. It is clearly indicated when the material contains such a section. You should know that we do not want to force any educator to use the YTL material in its entirety. Neither is it our intention to hurt anyone by including the moral and ethical aspects into the curriculum. Therefore, these parts are separately marked. Nevertheless, in our experience this approach is essential. This is why the sections and the readings on morals and values will remain essential parts of the YTL curriculum.

The ethical foundations of YTL

Your character establishes your self-esteem, behavior and relationships; it feeds off your value system. **Your actions are based on your character and your character is dependent on your value system. The values stem from what we believe to be true and false.**

For many years now there has been a crisis of values. It is a crisis of all Western civilizations. We have been shaken and lost the former balance of our value system. Human relationships have changed, people relate to each other now through an invisible value system where everything is governed by self-interest. It does not seek the interest of the other person, community, families or society, but only the interest of the individual. The three most important words in our society are: I, mine, and me. If someone believes in having pure intentions, they are considered to be naive. It's a utopian idea to think that individual interests could be overcome, but nowadays they seem to have stepped out of the boundaries where they used to be contained. The spoken or unspoken values that provide space for individual interests and place limits on them are no longer around.

The common, absolute values are missing. Nowadays it is up to individuals to determine their own values, and these personal values are in a constant struggle with each other. Young people have a heightened sense of this crisis regarding values. The primary place where values are shared and taught is in the family. As the social institution of the family is in a crisis, the role of schools to convey values has become more important. Value-neutral education is a balloon that bursts the very moment a teacher and a student meet, since the teacher conveys values to the student. When an adult meets a child, they automatically impart values with what they say and how they say it.

In a loud, powerful and overwhelming flood of messages we should carefully consider where it leads to follow the popular value-neutral approach that tolerates everything. Every day we are confronted with questions of value-neutrality that require an answer.

- Is everything acceptable that works for me? Is it true that what feels good is the right thing to do? Are my desires and emotions the final measure that determine my actions?
- Are there no absolute values at all—based on which things could be evaluated as either good or bad?
- Is it true that we have neither the right nor the responsibility to consciously convey values for our children in the education system?

Our answers to these questions will determine what we will do and say, what we will take responsibility for, what relationships we will form, how we think of ourselves and to what extent we give in to the pressures that come from our environment.

Definitions

Value. A value can be either personal or cultural. It can be a moral value, a behavioral norm, historical or literary value, as well as a value that is related to human relationships and tasks. A dictionary definition of value would be the following: ‘Values are basic principles, standards or qualities that influence the actions of people.’ It means that values—by definition—define our behavior, habits, speech, attitudes, how we relate to the other person, our tasks and different fields of responsibilities.

Moral relativism. Moral relativism is another popular concept of our times that affects the thinking of the general public. It proclaims the following: ‘There are no absolute values; we determine our own values.’ ‘We have to be neutral when it comes to values.’ ‘Truth becomes truth because we consider it to be true.’ Moral relativism is a basic tenet of postmodern thinking. The general thinking of the public is best described by the fact that the majority of young people do not accept an absolute moral truth. They consider truth to be subjective that they themselves define.

Absolute truth. The notion of absolute truth is the direct opposite of moral relativism. It means that truth is not flexible, it cannot change and it is a fact that cannot be sacrificed and, as such it, exists independently from us.

The contradictions of value-neutrality

In postmodern thinking, the climate of our times defines absolute values and it shifts us towards value-neutrality. There is a general command in the educational system to be neutral when it comes to values. But there are problems with value-neutrality.

1. Problem 1: Value-neutrality results in a vacuum that can lead to an immoral state.

The problem already lies in the tension between the definition of value itself; i.e., the goal we are setting and value-neutrality. If our inner value system (that used to be referred to as morals in the past, but the two are not entirely the same, see later) defines our actions and if it is a force that influences our place and relations within society, then value-neutrality is false and inhumane from the very start, because it allows the individual (especially the young, not yet fully shaped personality) to be drifting in the global flood of values proclaimed to be value-neutral without any assistance or point of reference.

The problem and threat of value-neutrality is not that it is without any values or would result in an amoral state in the life of any person. There is no such thing as an amoral state, just like there is no valueless state either. It is impossible by definition. There is an immoral state when bad values are respected. It means that the danger of value-neutrality does not lie in the possible threat that there are no values followed whatsoever, but that without assistance people might start following bad values. Therefore, value-neutrality can easily result in an immoral state.

2. Problem 2: Value-neutrality discredits itself by the fact that it uses force.

Another controversy in value-neutrality by definition is that it expects a neutrality of values from the one that conveys the 'values.' It means that the individual who is defined in society by their own value system violates the value-neutrality they themselves require by placing neutrality above other values in order to convey it as a value. That is, the value of not being committed to values is placed as more important than other values. This 'value' (that is value-neutrality) is forced on someone when that person follows other values and is not in agreement with value-neutrality.

3. Problem 3: Value-neutrality is an impossible mission and an unattainable expectation.

From a practical viewpoint there is another serious, insurmountable difficulty when it comes to value-neutrality.

- a. If we are all defined by our values in our individual lives and in society, and if our culture is defined by values and a common, yet often not expressed ethos, then how could we step out of our being and make ourselves independent from ourselves and our environment when it comes to our own values?
- b. Value-neutrality is not possible, because no matter how careful or attentive we are, either consciously or unconsciously, we cannot help but convey certain values. And when there is an adult in the company of a young person, they will still convey values even without any exchange of words. Following patterns is a well-known psychological phenomenon, especially among children and young people. It is true also for language learning and behavior that in the first phase following and copying patterns are particularly important. Simply the delivery of patterns and behavioral examples already means that values are transferred.

4. Problem 4: The problem with value-neutrality is that absolute truth is a logical necessity.

Since absolute truth is a logical necessity, all relative morality and value-neutrality is contradictory to common sense. They force children into a learning process that is not based on facts and objectivity, but on subjective preferences.

Absolute truth is a logical necessity for the following reasons:

- a. The relativistic principle of value-neutrality says that there are no absolutes and truth is relative. This first claim is a contradiction in itself because it makes the absolute claim that there are no absolutes. It elevates the denial of absolute truth to an absolute truth. The claim that 'truth is relative' is an absolute claim, therefore it is a contradiction in itself. If all truth is relative, then stating the truth that 'truth is relative' is relative, too.
- b. *'There is no hierarchy of values.'* *"There is no opinion that could override the opinion of others"*—is said by philosophy teachers who then collect the tests and grade them. *'Everyone can believe in whatever they want, do whatever they want, because it's all good and acceptable.'* If it was

unfair to request compliance with certain morals or values and force it on others, we would not have an absolute definition for good and bad. Value-neutrality may be an emotionally satisfying state, however, it is logically unacceptable. It may be emotionally satisfying until the person arrives home and sees that their home is robbed. This person will not say *'How amazing that this robber can really fulfill their desire and realize what they consider to be good and they could apply their values in real life.'* This crime victim will not say *'Who am I to set my value system above that of the robber.'* No, they will be angry, because they experienced loss and intrusion. But if the statement 'there is no right and wrong' is true and everyone should do what they feel comfortable to be doing, why do we get angry and upset when robbed?

The damaged value system of our children

What kind of situations are young people exposed to nowadays where value-neutrality is expected?

They live in a world that accepts everything and the very opposite of that everything, too—whatever you think is acceptable and correct. *'Don't tell me what to think, I'll figure it out for myself.'* While encouragement to think independently is an important part of teaching and education, our culture overdoes it when it urges young people to define for themselves what is good and right and what is bad and immoral, as part of their freedom.

This process has led to a significantly distorted view on the notion of truth. Most young people say that there is no absolute moral truth. They consider truth to be subjective and personally defined. Very often they would answer very straightforward questions with a subjective answer. For example, when you ask them whether it is wrong to lie, they would often say that 'it is not acceptable for me' or 'it depends.' They think that truth does not become 'a truth' until they start believing in it. This makes the truth subject to their consideration. It means that a lie is not unacceptable by itself, but it will become unacceptable for the individual in a given situation. Thus, the universal requirement for telling the truth ceases to be an absolute value. Even in the best case, truth has become relative.

Truth is no longer an absolute and objective value in the post-modern world and thinking. Postmodernism rejects that truth is universal, comprehensive and applicable to all. In other words, what truth is to me might not be truth for another person.

According to post-modern thinking, truth is created by a given culture or community for themselves and this truth is applicable only for them. The individual is therefore the product of a given culture. It means that truth is not defined by a universal human value, but by the given culture. The individual therefore will live according to the belief and value system produced for them by that given culture. This set of values should not be subject to any absolute judgment, because no single culture or community could vindicate the right to position themselves over other cultures and determine what truth is for them.

This faulty way of thinking is how our young people live and this is what permeates our thinking, too. This denial of the absolute leads to a war between cultures and communities. (By culture we do not mean a community defined by the country borders or nationality; it may be a very tiny group or community where self-defined truth[s] prevail.) The denial of the absolute makes it impossible for us to determine which culture is right. If truth is relative, there is no more basis to tell anyone at any time that something is not right. A great example for this is the 'truth' accepted by the Nazis that certain people groups can be abolished on a racial basis. This was acceptable for a given 'culture.' If it is true that one culture cannot rule over or judge another, then why do we have the International

Court of Justice in The Hague? Why do we talk about crimes committed against humanity? In some communities terrorism is very much accepted. However, terrorism is something we all condemn. So if the concept of truth, good and bad, is relative as claimed by postmodernity, then there are no proper grounds based on which killers could be sentenced to prison. According to their relative 'culture' or 'subculture' they acted according to their own accepted morals. An example of this is that some terrorists are heroes in their own cultures. Whatever is acceptable to them, is very much unacceptable to us. Who is right then? And who should decide who is right? The answer of postmodernity is that the stronger culture should prevail; it will persist and it will determine what should be considered as right. According to the relativistic post-modern thinking, if Hitler had been stronger and had won the war, all the crime committed by him would be acceptable. We all know that this is absurd. However, the relativistic logic, the denial of the existence of absolute truth should lead us to this conclusion.

Trisan Harris, Google former design ethicist, Co-Founder for the Center for Humane Technology, points out the importance of absolute truth: *"If we don't agree on what is true or that there is such a thing as truth, we're toast. This is the problem beneath other problems because if we can't agree on what's true, then we can't navigate out of any of our problems."*¹ Many in our culture turn to technology as a source of truth (i.e., we search for answers on Google), but technology—as Cathy O'Neil, PhD, Data Scientist, Author of *Weapons of Math Destruction* says—is inadequate to define truth for us. *"People talk about AI² as if it will know truth. AI's not going to solve these problems. AI can't solve the problem of fake news. Google doesn't have the option of saying, 'oh, is this conspiracy? Is this truth?' because they don't know what truth is. They don't have a proxy for truth that is better than a click."*³

The distorted value system supported and claimed by value-neutrality also distorts grasps of reality in young people. *'If something works for me then it is also for good for me'*—many people think. But we all know that there is a huge difference between what is currently working in our lives and what is right. A very simple example for this is cheating during a test. It works very well at the moment, but it is not right, because in the long run you faked learning something, but this is knowledge you never had. Stealing could make the life of the thief easier for a short while, but it will not make his actions right. Just because raping a girl causes pleasure to the perpetrator, rape still remains a deplorable and punishable crime.

The most important question

If what is right and wrong is not determined by whether we like it or it works for us, then **who decides about right and wrong?**

Well, this is what morality deals with. **Morality is the surface of absolute truth**, the truth when we know that something is good or bad. But who decides what is good and what is bad? What is the basis for morals? If we try to determine for ourselves the definition of good and bad, we could end up causing a lot of damage to ourselves and the whole world. People don't want some external factor, force or 'God forbid' God himself to determine what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong. Ultimately, we want to decide this question. The only issue is that there are too many of us and that makes it difficult to reach a common agreement. Many people say that we should let the stronger prevail. However, as soon as we utter these words we know and feel in the bottom of our souls that this is not right and we should stand by the needy and vulnerable. But why is that so? Why do we feel

¹*The Social Dilemma*, directed by Jeff Orlowski, Exposure Labs, 2020, Netflix, <https://www.netflix.com/title/81254224>

²AI = Artificial Intelligence

³*The Social Dilemma*.

it in our souls that this is not the right approach? (This problem was neatly described in the first pages of Genesis in the Bible. God said to the man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God prohibited it for man, not because He wanted to deprive Adam of the knowledge of good and evil, but because He cannot allow man to determine for himself what is good and what is bad. By going against the divine order, man wants to make himself independent from his own Creator and decide for himself what will be good and bad for him.)

The definition of morals

As we have seen above, our beliefs about right and wrong, good and bad, form the basis of our values which then define our character and behavior. **Character is the lasting co-existence of motivation and other characteristics** that manifest in the reaction of the individual in different situations. **Morality is the concept of good and bad, right and wrong, as well as responsibility.** The word ethics comes from the Greek word ethos. Classic philosophers wanted to find what was good, beautiful and true. In morality we are looking for the expected behavior. **Faith deals with questions like what is true/false, absolute/relative and transcendent/materialistic.** Morality feeds off faith and is based on our answer to the question of whether there is one true God, whether the transcendent exists, whether there is a personal God and whether we were created or came about by accident. It will also provide an answer for what is good and what is bad. Our value system develops from our morals by transposing what is good and what is right and what is wrong to determine how we think in certain important areas in our lives. This will develop into our character and motivation that will manifest in our behavior.

Morality could not be defined without a definition of man

It is important to have clear definitions when we talk about ethics and morality. But for the definition of morality we will need to dig even deeper. Before we undertake the enormous task of describing human behavioral patterns, it is useful to know what it means to be a human being. The primary reason why non-Christian ideologies fail is because they do not provide a convincing definition for what/who man is. **The definition of morality should be preceded by a definition of man, for whom morality and ethics exist and whose life and behavior it defines.**

In the last century Hungary experienced oppression by two extremely cruel ideologies. These ideologies gave a very specific definition to man.

1. In the interpretation of Nazism, mankind is made up of superior and inferior races. The primary goal of Nazi ideology was to reinforce the rule of the superior race over the inferior ones. Its ultimate goal—as the horrors of World War II clearly show—was the eradication of all species they considered to be inferior.
2. Communists—who were still in charge of the education system when the current adult Hungarian population was attending school—primarily defined man as an economic being. Egalitarianism was the main ideology and in the class conflict richer people or land owners were considered to be the enemy. The ruling class had to be stripped of their rights and privileges, and if it was necessary, they were even murdered.

By now it has become clear that both ideologies fully lost their credibility already back in the 20th century. These ideologies insisted on defining man independently from the Creator. And because they did so, they were doomed to fail.

There are other powerful, rather intellectually convincing and less political ideologies that seek to define man in our modern times. The followers of Darwin claim that the key to understanding man lies with biology. The followers of Freud believe that man can be understood through psychology. Existentialists say that understanding even in the best case is intangible, but the key to the identity of man is subject to human will. We have to make an educated choice regarding what is best for us and live accordingly. Due to a lack of time and place these ideologies cannot be studied here in great depth. They each have their own appeal and most people have their own convictions—at least to some extent—and are still being shaped by the Darwinian world view.

The Christian world view has a totally different take on mankind. According to the Bible, man is a **fallen image**. It means two things:

1. Man is made as an image⁴, which means that man was originally planned and created for a purpose, to bear the image of his Creator and to reflect the character of this Creator.
2. Man is fallen, which means that he consciously went against the original plan of the Creator by making an unlawful and condemnable choice. This is sin.

What can be said of man is that man bears the image of his Creator, but this image is distorted and ruined. God's plan is to restore the image of the fallen man. This work of restoration was accomplished by Jesus Christ. By redemption we mean the restoration of the original state of man.

When we say that God created man in his own image, it not only means that man is different from animals because of the cognitive skills such as speech, thinking, foresight, but also the social ability of living in relationships. Man cannot only live in a relationship with other human beings, but also bears this image function mostly because they can connect to the Creator, as included in the original plan. Therefore, the Christian definition of man entails the following three characteristics:

1. Because of his fallen nature, man is capable of doing a lot of evil. There are many historical examples that support this truth.
2. Being an image, man has an enormous capacity to accomplish many wonderful things. Obviously, even those who do not accept the Christian world view are also capable of doing good things. And our fallen nature is confirmed by the fact that even though many people believe the Christian Gospel they are still capable of committing a lot of evil.
3. Being made into an image, man is able to live in a relationship with his Creator.

How does this all relate to morality? Man is capable of good and evil; that is all that morality is about. **When we talk about ethics we talk about the difference between good (that we should seek) and bad (that we should avoid).** The notion that Christianity is all about man being good or bad is a dangerous idea, yet it's what many people think. But Christianity is primarily not about right and wrong. Obviously, this is a question that Christian people are concerned about, and this is why we are talking about ethics now.

Yet, the essence of Christianity is not whether we are good or bad, but whether we are alive or dead. This is the reason why we must distinguish between those who are nominal Christians and those who are Christians in the biblical sense because of their faith. The Son of God was killed by religious people, seemingly out of religious conviction. A religious evil man is always worse than a political opponent. Pilate—the Roman governor—would have been satisfied with Jesus being beaten

⁴In this section, “man” is used as a member of all of mankind, regardless of gender.

and then released. It was the priests who insisted that Jesus should be executed. It is important to note that not everything done in the name of Christianity is in line with biblical Christianity. Another observation is that most of the supposed failures of Christianity, if not all, can be attributed to the alliance between the Church and the State. If someone claims that Christianity lost its credibility by the end of the Middle Ages, it could also be said that the State also lost its credibility by then. When the State and the Church are not separated, the Church may engage in unforgivable wrongdoings. Most historical atrocities that Christianity is accused of were committed by governments. We have to realize that governments which deliberately deny religious realities aren't any better, either. Solzhenitsyn reminds us of the fact that the Bolsheviks killed more people in the first month when they came to power in Russia than the Spanish Inquisition did in the course of 100 years.

The Basis for Morality

After defining morality, let's now define the grounds for it. Without an ethical, moral ground there could not be authority based on legislation or office, even if that authority is man himself. **The basis for morality and ethics is some sort of authority.** In an atheistic structure, the autonomous and self-managing person is the only authority one can resort to. Therefore, man must be the moral authority. If we disregard the existence of God, our trust in the authority of man must stem from our trust in human wisdom. The wisdom of men—in this case—relies on its own power that originates from individual intellect and conscience. Morality could also come from a public consensus that developed in the course of many generations, based on social experience.

Human wisdom is a rather weak foundation and can become unreliable or insensitive. Morality based on public consensus could be totally degraded. For example, we would not welcome the social morals of 399 B.C., even if it was the golden age of Greek philosophy. Let's consider the cold reality that the arbitration court which sentenced Socrates to death consisted of 501 Greek citizens. We also tend to forget that the economies of ancient Rome and Greece prospered at the expense of their slaves. Neither would we want to submit ourselves to the public morals prevalent in Munich in 1936 when Hitler was worshipped almost as a superhuman.

Most philosophers agree that without the existence of an absolute God who set up the rules there can be no absolute ethics, only preferences. If there is no God—for whom the honor and respect of life is the absolute measure since He created it, and since life was not accidental, it is valuable—then there is no absolute right to life. It becomes only a preference, as if you would want to cling to life more than not. Without the existence of this absolute God, rulers could and actually did feel authorized to kill and oppress the weak. Without an absolute, the strong will survive while the weak will perish. For Christians, the basis for morality is God himself. God who reveals and declares certain things. **Since morality seeks what is good, God who exists and reveals himself must also be a good God.**

We believe that morality is built top down, not from the bottom up. **Morality has an objective basis.** If morality is based on human wisdom, conscience, consensus or culture, it must necessarily be subjective and changing all the time. The atheist who denies the existence of God can provide no explanation, not only for the origin and existence of morality, but neither for anything else, their own existence included. Denying the existence of God is equal to saying that the universe came into existence in an impersonal way. With the atheistic approach, not even the impersonal elements of the universe could be explained. However, if we presume the existence of the material, energy and the random (which are definitely all impersonal components), we should still find an explanation for

the appearance of living human beings in the universe. And it is even more impossible to find an explanation for thinking, will and emotions if we exclude the existence of God. If there is no God, no one was present at the outset. Aristotle said that it is much easier to imagine that something existing created the non-existent than it was the non-existent that created the existing one.

The Goal of Morality

So far we established that our behavior and the behavior of our children are very much defined by their character, value system, morality and, going even further, their faith. We also established that morality exists independently and outside ourselves. It was given to us; we did not create it. We can only make it deformed or distorted. But what is morality for? What's its purpose? Is there such a thing as morality itself? Or does morality feed off of something?

Just like our biological age, even our planet has a beginning and an end. Our lives and the world are like a story. As with each story, it has an author and the same applies to our own life as well as the life of the world. This author is God himself. That is why morality has a purpose. Morality serves certain goals. It serves the goals of the Author. This purpose and goal cannot be interpreted within an atheistic setting. Because if there is no God, then there is no Creator; without a Creator there is no Design; if there is no Design, then there is no Plan. If there is no Plan, then there is no Purpose; if there is no Purpose, then it has no Meaning either.

If we claim that human existence has a purpose and a goal, we also claim that it has a Creator. The purpose and goal of anything points to the person who created it and presupposes its existence. Purpose requires planning, so it must come from outside. Morality that seeks to define purpose is also a planning function that originates from the outside. God our Creator created us for a specific purpose, and morality helps us understand and move toward this purpose. The first line of Aristotle's 'Metaphysics' states that all men by nature desire to know. In support of this thesis, Aristotle gives the witty explanation that everyone greatly appreciates all their senses and we do not want to lose any of them. This is why man desperately seeks knowledge, because it is the senses that open the gates for the mind to grasp knowledge and understanding. We want to know the function that our different body parts play. At a very young age we discover the purpose of our visible external body parts. Since we see their purpose and what they are good for, it would be illogical to say that our body parts are not good for anything. If there is a purpose, God must also exist. And if God exists, then He created us for a particular purpose. Morality helps us find our purpose for which we were created and to make progress in fulfilling it. Theologically speaking, we could say that the purpose of morality is to align us with God. From a moral perspective, we could say that the purpose of ethics and morality is love.

The Place of Morality in Education

When you first start out your training to become a teacher your attention is drawn to the fact that your goals change due to external influences (they are affective) and at the same time your goal is to seek knowledge and understanding (they are cognitive). Whether it is a public or private school where we work as an educator, the school will prescribe what direction our affective goals should take when change occurs as a result of some external effects. It is inevitable that we take into consideration these external effects when it comes to reaching our goals. Your students must grow in their academics and you will encourage them as they excel. Note that you do this in a classroom that necessitates your enforcing a moral structure. For example, you consistently enforce not allowing cheating to occur, no matter what subject you are teaching. Our responsibility is great; if we train them only professionally

and intellectually, but not morally, we will be putting tools into their hands to use with no moral compass.

A teacher acts as a mediator of morality. It is the relationships of a young person with adults that shape their behavioral and moral patterns the most. We found that one of the most important learning processes among man is following patterns. This is impossible without a connection and a relationship. If there is no connection, there are no patterns. The patterns are required for the child to have a moral background. Showing a good example is an important element in conveying moral values and integrity. Children must see patterns that show integrity, are not hypocritical and that they can hopefully relate to in a personal way. It is necessary for them to be connected with adults who accept them and not only make declarations, but also show a good example. Could the high level of vulnerability and exposure to risks children take at least partly be attributable to the fact that one or more adults were missing in their lives from whom they could have received acceptance, attention, understanding, love, as well as a good and credible example to follow? A very simple and good example for this is telling a child *'Do not cheat during a test,'* while this child can see that adults lie. Another legitimate expectation of the parents is *'Behave respectfully with adults!,'* but they themselves speak disrespectfully of the grandparents. Another one is the adult telling a child *'Do not smoke,'* but as soon as the teacher leaves the building they start puffing a cigarette. We need credible examples and lives that show integrity. We do transfer patterns irrespective of whether we want to or not. The person and personality of the lecturer, teacher and adult will come through anyhow and it is going to convey values.

By connecting to them we are to help young people develop an internal **conviction**. Rules and orders like *'Don't do this,' 'Don't listen to that!,' 'Do not speak like that!'* are not always conducive. Obviously, rules and prohibitions are very much required. They have always been and will remain part of our lives. It is the rules of a race or competition that enable success and victory. One of the most important tools used by legislation is setting up certain rules, coupled with consequences in cases of non-compliance. There are stages in life when rules are to be used more for the safety of our children. However, a lasting result will require more than rules. You are to give reasons why you forbid certain things; the authoritative claims must be replaced by sensible reasoning. Why is it not good to lie? What are the consequences if you are unreliable? It's even more important to develop positive beliefs in them. The rule *'Don't do that!'* should be replaced by the alternative *'Do this instead!'*

Our value description started with the following questions: *'Do we really have the right to do anything that feels good to us?' 'Is it truly our desires, emotions and ideas that should be our ultimate standard?' 'Is truly everything acceptable that works for me?'* If there is no Creator, the answer is a very simple yes. Then I have the right to do anything because I set my own standards.

But if there is a Creator, the answer is no. Then it is the absolute rules set by the Creator that define the framework in which I must exist.

If there is no God, there is no morality. If there is a God, the best definition for morality would be a command to love God and your neighbor. Morality is a guide to life, that involves sacrificial commitment and serving others instead of seeking our own interests. It also means that when the other person has better things, they receive greater recognition or blessing than we do; instead of being envious we now feel satisfied and happy.

Can I really teach this?

You may feel inadequate and ask the question ‘*Can I really apply this knowledge?*’ *Am I capable of teaching this? My own life is a mess, too.*’ Maybe you hold to other values more than the ones described in this manual. You might be convinced that moral dilemmas should be settled with other solutions and you would set different rules for ethical behavior.

You could be saying ‘***I’m not interested in faith. I do not believe in God.***’ The YTL program does not want to engage in an argument about this. You may publicly take a stand before your class by saying the following: ‘I personally don’t believe in God, but let’s have a look at what kind of solutions and options are offered by those who do. These topics are important and we are interested in them anyway.’

You might have a problem with appreciating self-control and you could be thinking ‘***Abstinence? Students are simply incapable of refraining from sex. Why should I teach something that I would not ever believe to be possible?***’

This kind of approach is very different from how we think at the YTL program. It’s true that waiting develops the useful character of self-control. We believe that for a number of different (emotional, health, physical and social) reasons, teenagers should postpone becoming sexually active. They should wait until marriage when they are ready to deal with everything that comes with sex. Sex includes the promise of a close emotional, spiritual and physical bond with another person. We are convinced that there are plenty of reasons why teenagers should postpone becoming sexually active until an age when they can take responsibility for the consequences. Make sure you study the *Why should you wait?* reading that lists a number of positive reasons for waiting for sex until marriage. There is the possibility that sex results in starting a family. We think that you must be mature enough to be able to live according to your marital vows and take responsibility for the consequences that come with being sexually active. It is not inhumane or undemocratic to exercise self-control and practice sexual abstinence. It does not result in mental problems. There is no scientific research that proves that the lack of sexual activity causes long-term emotional defects or mental problems. Abstinence has been considered healthy and wise for a long time when applied to other areas of life.

Let’s take anger and hatred, for example. We encourage others to refrain from fights, murder and tell them not to commit suicide.

When it comes to material desires we teach ourselves to contain them, to save the money for later use instead of giving in to impulses to spend it straightaway. When you want a second slice of cake we try not to give in for health and dietary reasons. Yet eating is a far more compulsive and necessary desire than sex is.

I know that you could be saying ‘*Yes, but you will still have something to eat! Unless you eat you would definitely die. Likewise, sexuality is something that you need in your life. It is similar to appetite; you must follow your urges and feelings when it comes to sex, too.*’ Our appetite for food is completely different from our sexual desire. Appetite communicates that food has its purpose. In a similar manner, sexual desire indicates that sexuality has a purpose, and a rather beautiful purpose. Nevertheless, it still has its time and place, just like eating does. There are times when it is best to not eat or not to shop. There are also times when it is best to not be sexually active. It is not only biblical, but the HIV

virus also says the same. If HIV had a voice it would tell us that there should be boundaries and that there are dangers related to sex, wouldn't it?

Sex is amazing, there is no question about that. In fact, you could also say that sexuality is an artistic creation of God. It is one of the most precious things we have in life. Special things have a special place where they belong. Just like fire is a very useful invention; it is powerful and mysterious, yet it can be very bad and harmful. Fire also needs a right place where it can be contained. Why couldn't we think of sexuality along the same lines? After all, sexual activity kills millions of people in the world today. Sexually transmitted infections are like fires. Casual and promiscuous sex without mature commitment could result in tragedy.

There might be people who question the validity of the moral grounds of YTL and say that ***'I won't accept that the Bible and Christianity have anything to do with this topic.'***

Terrible things have been committed throughout history in the name of Christianity. We don't want to overlook or cover up these terrible deeds. But true Christianity and the teachings of Jesus Christ make us empathetic about these tragedies and true Christianity seeks to bring justice, peace, love and grace in this world through a personal connection with God. The writers of this material, along with millions of other people, have received help and support from the Bible and from the community of Christians.

The world was not closer to Christianity in New Testament times than it is now. We should not romanticize history and think that it used to be easier to live according to Christian principles back then. There used to be abused children, suicides, wars, murders, thefts, divorce, rape, etc., the same way these terrible things happen today. The moral teachings of Christianity were opposed back then just as they are opposed today. Some people simply do not accept certain things that are taught by Christianity. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Christian moral principles played a major role in the foundations of Western civilization. The way court decisions are made today is based on traditions of the Western world. In fact, based on this norm we not only judge other traditions, but even our own sins. As Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote, *"The crimes of the West have produced their own antidotes. They have provoked great movements to end slavery, to raise the status of women, to abolish torture, to combat racism, to defend freedom of inquiry and expression, to advance personal liberty and human rights."*⁵ There is no doubt that our children today should continue to enjoy these rights and the basic principles they are based on.

You could also say to your students that I'm not a born-again Christian, but there are some principles in Christianity that I greatly appreciate. The Ten Commandments provide an excellent foundation for us to talk about ethics and morality. In Hungary we like to emphasize that we are a Christian nation. Throughout much of history people lived based on principles laid down in the Bible. For example, we can very much identify with the statement *"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!"* *"Do not kill!"* *"Do not lie!"* Community is important. *"Live at peace with all men."* *"Love thy neighbor as thyself."* How is it possible that these principles are so widely known in your country? Well, the effects of these principles greatly depend on personal application. In earlier periods of history, large masses professed these doctrines and they lived according to them. Just like the health of the roots of a plant determine what happens to the branches and leaves, people who lived before us and the values they lived by also have a huge influence on us. This value system becomes an integral part of what it means to be a good citizens. While these Judeo-Christian values are still present on the surface, they have

⁵ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), 132.

lost their personal and historical function as well as their original meaning and validity. Let us consider ethics and morality today.

These principles work and they can be applied regardless of our personal convictions. For example, one of the most important universal human needs is to feel loved and accepted. For this need to be fulfilled we should live according to the Golden Rule, that is *“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”* Almost everyone agrees that adhering to this principle in your relationships with others will help you. It’s a signal that there is a need for this moral teaching as we relate to one another. This moral teaching directly benefits society and its citizens are characterized by mutual love and respect.

Or let’s take another example. The last commandment of the Ten Commandments says *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant...or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”* If it was a horrible, evil and immoral rule we could easily think that complying with it would have terrible consequences. Can you imagine anything terrible resulting from the following of this command? What would a society be like where the very opposite of this commandment and value system was followed and appreciated? Just imagine *“Covet the other property of others!”* The society where such ideas were followed would be characterized by comparison, envy, jealousy, selfishness, greed, theft, fear, anxiety, the violation of personal property rights, adultery, the breaking up of families and the pain and suffering of children.

It seems that God gave us His basic principles to protect us and to care for us, not to limit our joy or make us miserable.

All students should learn these generally accepted principles of the civilized world during their studies.

Why should you teach the sections of the YTL program that deal with moral issues?

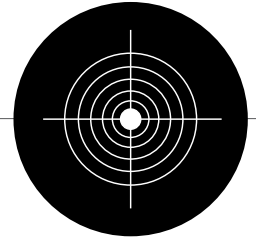
1. Because these principles do work. They fulfill needs, they deal with real problems and they provide answers to questions that young people are interested in.
2. They also help to convey fundamental moral values. Your task is to set the ethical and moral grounds for your students. These principles can provide a starting point for your work.
3. They focus on values that are well-established in the civilized world. The students can learn about the foundations of Western civilization. There are principles that are common to the citizens in many countries and you should stress the general notion that we are supposed to live by these rules.
4. Because they provide sensible and positive reasons why students should wait on becoming sexually active until they get married. These sections encourage students to consider the benefits of waiting to become sexually active until the right time comes.

We are absolutely convinced that the YTL program will be a useful tool when young people need help in dealing with their problems.

We greatly appreciate your determination and desire to touch the soul of the next generation and through this, change the world that we live in.

“What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we are gone?”

— Sir Winston Churchill



Authentic Self-Esteem

The Purpose of the Topic

*“Know how much you are
worth! Accept yourself!”*

— Aslan,
The Chronicles of Narnia
The Voyage of the Dawn
Treader

The purpose of this topic is for your students to realize that they are precious, unique and valuable. For them to learn about the building blocks of authentic self-esteem and learn to separate their self-esteem from the opinion of others and their own emotions and to become able to intelligently manage their emotions. We want them to recognize the importance of right convictions, character and values in the foundation of an authentic self-esteem.

The content of this topic

1. SELF-ESTEEM—For a stable and healthy self-esteem we have to acknowledge that the opinion of others, our external looks and our performance could have a distorting effect on our view of ourselves, and we need to be familiar with the building blocks of a stable and authentic self-esteem.
2. EMOTIONAL intelligence (EQ)—EQ is the ability to manage emotions in a sensible, intelligent way. This ability shapes our self-esteem; it has an effect on our relationships and decisions. The ability to handle our emotions in an intelligent way is therefore essential if we want to get to know and manage ourselves.
3. CHARACTER—Our actions are based on our character. Our character is based on the values we hold. Our character fundamentally defines us and it places us within our relationships. It reveals who we are and what we believe in through what we say and do.

The reason why this topic is important

Most people do not live up to their potential. One of the main reasons for this is that they never came to understand their own value and abilities, and never had the skills to use their emotions for their well-being. They also never invested in the hard work required to develop their character. The way we appreciate ourselves will either maximize our potential or it will deprive us of making the most of our opportunities and skills. The ability to realistically see our worth, strengths and weaknesses, and the good and bad in us is what will enable us to develop by focusing on our strengths while minimizing the impact of our weaknesses.

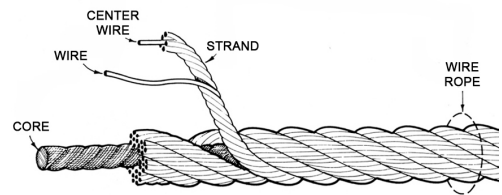
The wire cable of self-esteem

The threads of the wire rope by themselves are weak, yet when they are woven together they become very resistant and extremely durable. Your personality is made of a very complex fabric that consists of many different ‘threads.’

The stronger these individual threads are and the closer they are connected to each other, the more powerful this wire rope of self-esteem becomes. A wire cable consists of the individual wires, the strands that are several wires woven together and the core around which these strands are wrapped.

The inner core of this wire cable of realistic self-assessment is correct self-esteem. Correct self-esteem requires three different types of knowledge, internal conviction and understanding, namely the following three threads:

1. **To know that you are very precious** which says *‘I’m unique, valuable and special; there is no one else on earth who is like me, therefore I am the only one who can be me’*
2. **To know that you are capable or able** which says *‘I know what I’m capable of; I know my strengths and limitations and I can fulfill the task I’m facing’*



3. To know that you are important and you belong somewhere which says *'I am aware that I have good and bad characteristics; I commit mistakes every now and then, but even with that I am still acceptable and lovable and I am accepted and loved.'*

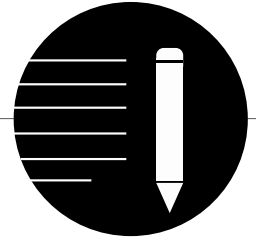
Those who cannot accept themselves will fall into the following extremes:

- a. They will see themselves all good and perfect who never make mistakes while they usually consider other people to be bad—these people we call narcissistic. They always blame other people, never own up to their mistakes and they always oppress the others around them. These are usually very insecure people with a minority complex because they are afraid of making mistakes and allowing their weaknesses to come to light. They are afraid of losing the respect of others.
- b. They see themselves all bad, they look down on and accuse themselves—they are the self-loathers who often act like victims. They will always see others as perfect and good while they consider themselves bad and evil. However, reality is quite different. Good and bad co-exist in each and every one of us. The world is not divided into two types of people—the good and bad. This kind of black and white approach is a typical characteristic of people who are struggling to accept themselves. The world consists of people who will have good and bad in them at the same time, and we will have to decide which one we allow to become more powerful. It is usually the part that we feed more (either the good or the bad) that will become stronger. In summary, you can develop a healthy and good self-esteem if you are aware of your personality, your uniqueness, your worth, and if you understand your strengths and weaknesses, and can accept that good and bad co-exist in you.

The strand of **emotional intelligence** that consists of many wires is very tightly connected to the inner core of self-esteem. We're born with an intellectual intelligence, but emotional intelligence is learned. We primarily learn it from our environment during socialization. Our emotions act like prisms as they colorfully reflect the different influences that we come under. Research shows that cognitive learning is preceded by emotional identification. The emotional state of our students fundamentally influences not only their learning abilities, but also their relationships and decisions. Emotions can bind up and paralyze people or even mislead us into a false sense of security. Emotions are destructive if they are uncontrolled, misunderstood or not controlled consciously. It is therefore crucial to understand why we feel what we feel, and how we can do the right thing regardless of what we feel. Taking conscious responsibility for and controlling our emotions belong to the category of emotional intelligence, and as such, we must deal with it if we want to help our students develop a healthy self-esteem.

Character is another wire strand that consists of many different wires and forms a structural pillar of our personality and self. Character is like a magnifying glass. It reveals what we believe in, what we consider to be true or false and what values we follow through our actions, behavior, words and attitude. Our character defines an important aspect of our self and self-esteem, namely our values and inner convictions. Character is what you do when no one sees you. Character is the gap between your urges, desires and actions. It is your character that will keep you from doing what you consider to be incorrect and it gives you the courage to act upon what you believe to be true. Character can be developed and shaped. And your character becomes powerful steel in the furnace of difficulties and hardships.

LESSON PLAN



01.

Introductory Lesson

Looking Ahead

Lesson Plan

Introduction to YTL classes
“The Best Road” game
Feedback
The Dimensions of a Person

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students should get to know each other better, be able to share with their parents about this content and be looking forward to what they will learn.

1. Introduction to YTL Classes

5

Introduce yourself if this is a new group of students, then give them the details of this course:

1. number of lessons
2. class times
3. hand out Student's Notes

In this social science course we are not going to be studying an academic subject like Mathematics or History or Science. Instead, our subject in this class is going to be you and your life. We are going to learn about your hopes and dreams, about some of the problems and decisions you are facing. We are going to talk about friends, family, relationships, and marriage. You are going to learn many things that will help you to have a happy, exciting, and fulfilling life. Additionally, we are going to see how you can avoid some dangers that might hurt or even destroy your life.

[Make 15 small slips of paper that say "STOP" and 15 that say "GO." In the front of the classroom (or through the middle of the classroom), create three "roads" by marking a starting line and a finish line. Label the "roads" with numbers 1, 2 and 3 at the starting lines. Along each road, create five stations. At each station, put face down a slip of paper that says "STOP" and a slip of paper that says "GO." (Make sure that you mix up the order that the slips are in, so that "STOP" is not always on the left, etc. Make a sign for the finish line of Road 1 that says "MOUNTAINS." Make a sign for Road 2 that says "BEACH," and a sign for Road 3 that says "BIG CITY.")

START	5 "STOP/GO" STATIONS	FINISH
ROAD #1	1____2____3____4____5____	MOUNTAINS
ROAD #2	1____2____3____4____5____	BEACH
ROAD #3	1____2____3____4____5____	BIG CITY

This diagram has straight lines, but you may want to make curved roads winding through the classroom with each road ending at a corner of the room.]

2. The best road

15

You will need three even groups of students—use the instructions.

Change city name depending on country / audience.

I want you all to imagine that you are old enough to drive a car and that you have enough money to own a car. Imagine that you live in a small town called Rialto that is in a valley. From Rialto, it would take you two hours to drive to the mountains. It would take you two hours to drive to the ocean. It would take you two hours to drive to the nearest big city. You have a free day coming up, and you want to go somewhere.

"How many of you would like to go to the mountains?"

Choose one of these students to stand at the starting line of Road 1. Choose five more students (one to stand at each station of the road to the mountains).

Begin with the student on Road 1. Once this student reaches a “STOP,” you will move to the student on Road 2. (“GO” always means that the student may proceed to the next station; “STOP” always means that the student remains at that station while the other students have a turn.) You will have to go back and forth between the stories. Just be sure to read the segment for the appropriate station on the appropriate road.

“How many of you would like to go to the beach?”

Choose one of these students to stand at the starting line of Road 2. Choose five more students (one to stand at each station of the road to the beach).

“How many of you would like to go to the big city?”

Choose one of these students to stand at the starting line of Road 3. Choose five more students (one to stand at each station of the road to the big city).

“Now we will play a game to find out which one of you will have the best day, and reach your destination first.”

Explain the following rules of the game:

1. The student on Road 1 (the mountains) will begin by moving to the first station.
2. He or she will ask the student at that station to choose one of the slips of paper at the appropriate time.
3. If the paper says “GO,” the student traveling on Road 1 will proceed to the next station and have the student standing there choose again at the appropriate time.
4. If the paper says “STOP,” the student must wait at that station, and it is the next student’s turn.
5. The game continues until one student reaches the finish line.

STORY FOR ROAD 1: THE MOUNTAINS

Starting line: A friend who lives in the mountains has invited you and a couple of other friends to come for a visit. You decide that a nice, refreshing day up in the mountains is just what you need. It can get hot where you live in the valley, but it’s much cooler in the higher altitudes. So you and your friends get in the car and start driving.

Station one: Part of the way is along a dirt road, and up ahead you see a large, deep mud-hole right in your path. (Have the student standing by that station choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
By your skillful maneuvering, you are able to avoid the mud-hole and continue on your way.	Unfortunately, you cannot maneuver your way around the mud-hole. You are stuck until someone comes along to help you.

Station two: Still in the valley, you find yourself on a long, straight stretch of road, and the driving starts to get a little boring. Your friends challenge you to use this opportunity to see how fast your car can go. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You decide instead to relax and enjoy this part of the trip, knowing that there is more challenging driving ahead.	You take the challenge, and begin to accelerate. Unfortunately, a police officer sees you speeding, and gives you a ticket.

Station three: The road starts to wind and curve as it goes up the mountain. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You roll down the window to enjoy the cooler breeze.	You get carsick and have to pull the car over to throw up at the side of the road.

Station four: Halfway up the mountain, your car gets a flat tire. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
With your friends’ help, you change the tire quickly and successfully and get on your way.	You get angry, kick the car, and hurt your foot. You have to wait for the throbbing to subside before you can continue.

Station five: You realize that because of the flat tire you are going to be late to meet your friend. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You are not too worried; however, your friend will understand once you explain all that happened.	You speed up to try to get to your destination sooner, but a police officer sees you speeding and pulls you over. You get a ticket, and end up later than you would have been if you had stayed within the speed limit.

STORY FOR ROAD 2: THE BEACH

Starting line: You decide to take a group of friends to the beach for the day. A nice swim in the ocean would feel great. So, you all get into your car and head toward the ocean.

Station one: Unfortunately, after only a few minutes, you discover that the road ahead is closed because of an accident. (Have the student standing by that station choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You find another route on the map and keep going.	You wait an hour for the accident to be cleared off the road.

Station two: One of your friends notices an injured dog by the side of the road. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You stop the car. Everyone gets out, and you bandage the dog the best you can. It only takes a few minutes and it looks like the dog will live.	You decide not to stop the car and take the time to help the dog. But, fifteen minutes later, your friends convince you to turn the car around and go back to help the dog. By the time you find the dog again, bandage it up, and get back on the road, you have lost a whole hour of the day.

Station three: Halfway to the beach, it starts to rain a bit, and the road gets slippery. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You slow down and drive extra carefully until the rain stops.	You figure you can handle the road conditions, but your tires hit a puddle that’s a little deeper than you thought it would be. The car skids into the opposite lane, and narrowly misses getting hit head-on. You pull your car to the side of the road and wait awhile before starting (more slowly) toward the beach.

Station four: Your car is almost out of gas and you will not have enough to get home. You decide to stop and buy some gas now instead of waiting until the trip home when it will be dark. Your friends protest, because they want to get to the beach. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You stand by your decision and buy gas—it only delays your arrival at the beach by a few minutes.	You give in, even though you think it would be safer to buy gas now. You head toward the beach, but you are in a grumpy mood because you feel like you made a bad decision.

Station five: Finally, you get to a point where you can see the ocean. But you get distracted looking at the waves and hit a parked car. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF “GO”	IF “STOP”
You stop and leave a note for the car’s owners, apologizing and letting them know how you can be contacted.	Since you see no witnesses, you just keep driving. Unfortunately, a police officer down the street saw you hit the car, and pulls you over.

STORY FOR ROAD 3: THE BIG CITY

Starting line: You've never driven to the big city yourself, but you and a friend decide to go see a movie there. So, the two of you get into your car and you start driving.

Station one: Halfway to the city, you see a stop sign ahead. But you don't see any other cars around. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF "GO"	IF "STOP"
You stop anyway, and are glad you did when you see a police car hidden behind a tree, with a police officer watching the intersection.	You drive through the intersection without stopping. Unfortunately, a police officer had his car parked behind a tree and was watching the intersection. He stops you and gives you a ticket.

Station two: Once you arrive in the city, you take a wrong turn. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF "GO"	IF "STOP"
You notice your mistake and correct it by driving around the block.	You get angry about the mistake and start yelling at your friend for not helping you navigate. As a result of paying more attention to the argument than to the road, you end up hitting the car in front of you.

Station three: At this point, you become completely lost in the city, and after half an hour, you have no idea where you are. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF "GO"	IF "STOP"
You stop and ask for directions. Soon you are back on the right track.	You refuse to ask anyone for directions, and end up driving around the city lost for two more hours.

Station four: You get thirsty and stop at a store to buy something to drink. Your friend offers to buy you some beer. (Have the student choose a slip of paper.)

IF "GO"	IF "STOP"
You refuse and have soda instead, since you are driving.	You take your friend up on the generous offer, and have a couple of beers. Unfortunately, the alcohol impairs your driving ability. You get into a bad accident in which you and your friend are killed. (Have the student return to his/her seat.)

Station five: You now try to get to the movie theater, but the road you need to take is closed for repair. Taking an alternate route will cause you to miss

the movie. Sorry, you have no choice here. You miss the movie and have to go home without seeing the film.

3. Lessons from game

10

Give time for students to have a lively discussion about the game. After a few minutes they will hopefully see similar thought-patterns surface.

- Why did _____ reach their destination first?
- Why did it take the others longer?
- Did the game seem fair? Why or why not?
- How would you change the game to make it fair?

How quickly the students arrived at their destinations depended on what choices they made at the different stations along the way.

Friends influenced the choices they made.

The game was not fair, because the students were not really making their own choices. Each time another student picked a slip of paper for them. It would be more fair if the students could look at each situation and decide what they would do.

STUDENTS' GOALS

I would like for you now to think about how your life is like a road. Each of the players in our game had a destination that they were traveling toward—a goal they were trying to reach. Each of you probably has some goals in life that you would like to achieve. Think about some of the things you might like to accomplish in the next ten years.

- What do you think you will do in the next ten years?
- As you move toward these goals, what are some of the things that could get in your way? What kind of choices will you have to make?

LESSONS FROM GAME

As we played the game, you noticed that our players moved forward or got stuck based on the choices they made. They never knew what was on the slip of paper they chose. Sometimes life can be like that. Some things in life we do not have much choice about—like the weather, when we get carsick or when a road is closed for construction.

However, for many situations in our lives, we have choices. We can look at a situation and know what the consequences will be—or could be—depending on our response to it. For example, we know that if we drink alcohol, we will be



unable to drive as well and may get into an accident. We can make a decision based on that knowledge—hopefully the right one.

In these sessions, we are going to look at some of the roadblocks that may come up as you travel down your life road. We will discover some information that will keep you from having to make decisions by choosing between two unknowns—like the slips of paper in our game. We will develop some skills that will help you to make the best decisions using the knowledge and values you have.

Another thing we will discover is that our relationships will make a difference in whether we reach our goals or not. We are not on our life journey alone. The family members and friends who travel with us will influence our journey. In our game, we could have gone to the mountains or the beach or the city alone. In life, however, our relationships often determine whether we succeed or fail.

COURSE OVERVIEW

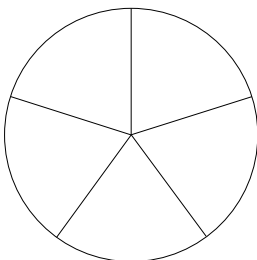
This course will be one of the most important courses you will ever take. What you learn in this course may literally save your life! We will talk about the things that are most important to you (your life and the way you live it). This course will help you make important decisions with life and death consequences.

In order to achieve your goals, you'll need to know who you are and what you are able to do.

4. Dimensions of a person

15

Draw the diagram below on the chalkboard.



People who study health talk about five dimensions of a person. (Ask a student to write the following bolded words on a chalkboard in one of the sections of the circle as you mention them. Tell all your students to fill in the circle on their Student's Notes.)

- The **PHYSICAL** part of you is your skin and everything inside it, all of you that can be touched, as well as your activities.
- The **EMOTIONAL** part of you is your feelings, reactions, motives and desires.
- The **SOCIAL** part of you is your interactions with other people, your relationships and boundaries. (We will explain the concept of boundaries later on.)
- The **MENTAL** part of you is the part that thinks, reasons, solves problems, and understands.
- The **SPIRITUAL** part of you is the part that relates to God.

You may be surprised that we will be discussing God and the spiritual part of your lives here in the classroom. However, most educators recognize that the spiritual aspect of our lives affects all we do. Often the choices we make in life flow out of how we view God and whether or not we see him as active in the world or in our own lives.

In this course we will discuss the five dimensions of a person. We will talk about friendship, love, sexuality, self-esteem and the importance of morals and character.



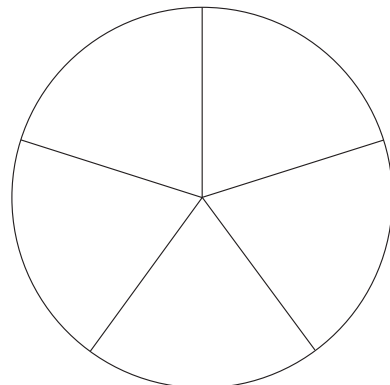
STUDENT NOTES

Looking Ahead

I want to achieve the following things in the next 10 years:

This year	
in 3 years	
in 5 years	
in 8 years	
in 10 years	

Write in the circle the 5 dimensions of a person:





AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM



Part I.



Me and Myself

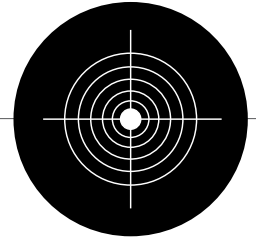
“Am I who others say I am?”

I Am Special!

Understanding Yourself

I Am Valuable!

INTRODUCTION



Me and Myself

*"I am a coward tramp
Surprised to be still loved.
Stamped on my body
Who would invite in such a worm.
I'm a sad clown.
Suffering silently.
I pretend not to be afraid.
I'm a cheap jewel box,
Empty, without any jewel.
I might be thrown out.
No one wants me anymore.
I'm a child playing,
Playing with my soul-toys,
Here at the threshold of ignorance."*

These lines were written by a 16-year-old boy during a YTL class titled “*I am*,” an exercise of writing poems. You can hear the desperate cry of a totally abandoned generation from the hundreds of similar poems that have been written by young people we have worked with during the YTL program. The majority of these poems that students write about themselves are similar to the one above—they speak about pain, confusion, isolation, hopelessness and fears. Reading these poems raised many alarming questions.

- How could a teenager come to the conclusion that they are a cheap jewel box, a worm and coward tramp?
- Why would they consider themselves to be without any worth, as if no one wanted them? What kind of an internal turmoil and agitation could it cause them; what effect could it have on their performance?
- What could be the reason for developing such a self-image and how could this self-image be influenced and improved?
- What kind of an adult, husband/wife, or parent will they become?
- How could they consider others (their spouse, children, etc.) to be precious if they don’t consider themselves to be valuable?

In this section we would like to give you some help so students can learn their inner worth, see themselves as valuable and separate their self-image from the opinion of others.



| .

Authentic Self-Esteem Self-Esteem

“Am I who
others say
I am?”

Me and Myself

Self-image—an image of yourself

Your self-image, your image of yourself. It's a mental image that you create of yourself that you carry. It means how you feel and think about yourself. It is your inner being that you might not necessarily show or express to others. There is this internal filter between you and the outside world that you use for the evaluation of your life and performance. It filters and assesses what you say, do and feel. It will also sow the seeds of what you believe about yourself. At the same time, it is also the 'product' and a 'generator' of your experiences. It includes your approach, your motivation and notion regarding people and things. Your self-image and the environment mutually influence each other.

What happens if you have a faulty image of yourself?

A distorted, corrupted self-image has a severe effect on your life. Just to give you a few examples:

- It can distort the messages and feedback you receive from the outside world, as well as your perception of events.
- It can transform your feelings toward yourself (into self-loathing or narcissism, for example), how you relate to others and the challenges you are facing (through an inferiority complex, fear, insecurity, etc.).
- It can have a negative impact on your communication with others, it can affect your ability to make friends and build relationships, and it can rob you of intimacy in those relationships.
- You can become overly dependent on the opinion of others, it can lead to pessimism and depression; your looks, performance and position can become overly important.
- You may become extremely competitive and consider others as opponents and not friends whose company you could be enjoying.
- Sexuality and sexual activity may become the only measure of your masculinity or femininity.
- You keep wanting to be different or like someone else.
- There is a constant feeling that you have to protect yourself, your decisions, or your opinion; therefore you are always explaining and justifying yourself.
- You may develop a fear of rejection that can also deprive you of intimate personal relationships.
- Your desire to live up to the expectations can turn you into a perfectionist that can deprive you of ever feeling content. You may develop a constant dissatisfaction with yourself.

What is your drive?

Your motivation comes from your internal needs. If you understand them you can also see the different ways you are trying to fulfill these needs. While you are seeking to meet these needs, your self-image is also being shaped. For example, efforts to meet your internal need for security can affect your self-image in a positive or negative way, depending on how you want to fulfill it. If these basic needs are satisfied in a legitimate manner, then your self-image will be stable. Otherwise, you are going to experience pain and hurt. This pain will prompt you to find ways to ease it (through dependent behavior, unhealthy relationships and compensation, etc.). The five basic needs we all seek to satisfy are the following:

1. **Security**—we all want to feel safe and secure.
2. **Relationships**—we all want to belong to someone and we all desire to be known.
3. **Power**—we all want to influence others and leave a legacy behind us.
4. **Freedom**—we all seek to control our lives and create new things.
5. **Joy**—we all seek happiness, joy and pleasure.

How do I decide who I am? Factors that shape your self-knowledge and self-image.

As you are trying to meet these needs, there are many different factors that shape your self-image. The unmet internal needs will boost you to get what you don't have and move you to becoming

different from who you are now. You may feel that you are important and valuable only if you have reached everything that your ideal image of yourself includes. However, the social expectations you are trying to meet keep changing all the time. It's almost impossible to keep up with them. There are many different opinions and positions that try to tell you what you should and shouldn't be like. Your environment—the people around you—will clearly express who you are and what you are worth, in their opinion. They do this by taking two aspects into consideration: your performance and the opinion of others about you. They use the following simple formula to describe us:

$$\text{ME} = \text{MY PERFORMANCE} + \text{THE OPINION OF OTHERS ABOUT ME}$$

The feelings and convictions you have about yourself to a large extent depend on what answer you give to the following three questions:

1. ***“What do I look like?”***—What do I think of my looks? In today's world, attractive appearance is idolized. You will experience rejection if your appearance does not meet the ideal societal standard (if you are too fat, too skinny, too pale or if your hair is too straight or curly, etc.). So, the first big question you will ask of yourself is: *“What do I look like?”* And we always answer this by comparing ourselves to someone else. You define your appearance by looking at others.
2. ***“What am I capable of?”***—What can I do? In other words, *“How am I progressing compared to others?”* We tend to create a mental picture of ourselves that is based on what opinion others (your parents and/or peers) have regarding your successes and failures.
3. ***“How important am I?”***—What's my role in society? The third question has to do with people you spend the most time with. *“How important am I?”* *“Do others appreciate and value me?”* To some extent your self-esteem is based on the level of acceptance you receive from your parents, teachers, classmates and friends. If they pay attention to you, your perception is that you are important. We look at ourselves in light of the love, approval and attention we receive from others. Their opinion and emotions towards us really matter. However, if they don't spend time with us, they are not paying attention or they are unaware, it will have a negative impact on us.

The basis of a healthy self-esteem

There are three main inner convictions that make up the image we have of ourselves. They provide our inner security and freedom like the legs support a small three-legged chair.

1. ***“I belong somewhere”—I am loved, accepted and I feel secure***

Security and connection are the most basic human needs. Nothing can live isolated in this universe. In order to stay alive, all the cells need to be connected to another cell. Similarly, the way to a safe existence is to belong somewhere. Security and connection are very tightly connected needs and one stems from the other and vice versa. Our need for security is met when we experience love and acceptance, when we know we belong somewhere.

This security results from the inner “knowledge” when we experience that we are precious and accepted irrespective of our performance. This sense of security can only come from unconditional love, when we are loved as we are and for who we are. It reinforces our real self, our existence and worth if we experience this type of acceptance in a relationship. Without such an experience, the inner

conviction cannot develop that we belong somewhere, which results in an emotional vacuum and our self-esteem will suffer damage.

2. “I am valuable”—I am considered to be precious and important

This inner conviction is very closely linked to the previous one. Psychologist Dr. Larry Crabb writes that, “*People must first come to consider themselves as precious, to see themselves as a very valuable and important person. Without this they cannot live for someone or something.*” It is easier to accept ourselves if others also accept us. We see ourselves as valuable when we are at peace with our own self, we feel worthy of acceptance and think that we are important to others. Unfortunately, many people live without this inner conviction since they only focus on their mistakes and weaknesses. It is not only that they remind themselves of their failures, but others also contribute this feeling. Being freed from failures and accepting forgiveness is very strongly linked to our need to feel valuable. Without this we will consider our mistakes as proof that we are not worthy or valuable.

3. “I am capable”—I am self-confident, determined and competitive

We need to feel that we are important. We must feel that we have a task and a role to play in this life. It goes hand in hand with the knowledge that we can do something. “*I am capable of doing this!*” This optimistic approach gives hope and courage. The “*I am capable*” feeling is very much linked to how you managed to solve problems in the past.

Often the sense of inadequacy simply comes from the fact that we are not sensitive enough. We want to help others by doing something for them instead of their doing it for themselves. By doing this, we impede the development of their own sense of ability and adequacy. Many people are overly dependent on their parents (or their family, the state) who provide for all the needs of the given person and therefore they develop a lack of self-confidence. Others accumulate failure after failure in the course of many years. If there is no sense of adequacy, we become discouraged, hopeless and we generally develop a gloomy outlook on life.

Inner conviction as a factor that shapes self-esteem

We all seek understanding. We try to understand the world around us, how the world has shaped us to be who we are and who we see ourselves to be. It is through an internal filter or approach that we sense the world around us. This is not a philosophical notion; it is based on experience and understanding. It includes our minds, our internal convictions and it reflects our emotional expressions. Since it affects our behavior, it is also part of our will. Almost anything we do originates from this internal filter, conviction and worldview.

This internal worldview and conviction is shaped by a great many variables as we develop. It is influenced by the skills we discover and explore. It is influenced by the understanding we have of the surrounding world and the feedback we receive from it. It is shaped by the values from our family and communications with people. It is also influenced by the value system of society as well as the entire sum of our own successes and failures. Each change that occurs in these factors influences our internal filter through which we perceive the world and place ourselves within it. Changes always result in a natural vacuum. Changes today happen at an unprecedented speed and magnitude, leaving behind a huge gap in terms of morals, values, relations, connections and the society. The size and speed of the changes tangibly affect the values, role, self-esteem and relational network of the individual, too. We

must consider how much we are affected by the uncertainty of our workplace or relationships. Social changes have an impact on the world view, internal convictions and self-esteem of the individual. How can we defend our self-esteem in the midst of continuous changes and what can help us keep all the legs of the above described three-legged chair to stay firm and stable? For this we need to develop a correct inner conviction that is independent from our emotions.

How do our inner convictions shape our self-esteem?

(ABC model on emotions by Albert Ellis.)

Most often it is our feelings that inform us about ourselves. First and foremost it is our emotions that reveal what effect a given situation had on us. Our feelings have a large influence. The model developed by Albert Ellis examines the root causes of emotions and it concludes that emotions are not based on the circumstances, but primarily on our perception of these circumstances. Ellis developed an equation to illustrate this:



A = A particular situation or circumstance.

B = Our deep convictions and beliefs that we consider to be true and that exist both in our conscious and subconscious.

C = Emotions, feelings that originate from what we think and believe of a given situation.

Ellis claims that the circumstances by themselves do not result in emotions, but our notions developed about them do. If you want to understand, control and change your emotions, you must first examine your beliefs in order to be able to decide whether that conviction is good or bad. If it is good, then the resulting thoughts, feelings and behavior will also be good. If your conviction is not acceptable, you have to change something so you could follow the right behavior. **Our emotions are basically windows to our convictions.** When you see that your conviction is unacceptable, wrong or offensive, you can change it much more easily. Since this also applies to the development of a healthy self-esteem, this model could have a huge influence both on intra-personal and interpersonal communication.

Let us examine this theory through a specific situation. Two students, John and Steve, are taking a math test. They both receive a C. The actual facts are the same, since they both receive the same grade. However, they respond differently to the same situation. John is satisfied; actually he is overjoyed by this grade, while Steve feels devastated because he considers it a terrible tragedy. Why? Did something different happen to them? No, it was the exact same event that took place and they both received a C. So why do they react differently? Only because they have different inner convictions and values; they

think and feel differently regarding the same situation. John is at the risk of getting an F for the final grade, and he is hoping to escape the additional torture of extra tests and papers with the C, while Steve, who has been a straight A student, considers a bad grade a personal failure. This is the reason why they have a completely different reaction to the same grade. Their emotional reactions stem from their inner convictions.

Conviction is the basis for your thoughts, emotions and behavior. Our emotions function as a thermometer; they measure and show something about us in relation to our environment. Our convictions, however, function as a thermostat—they define our reactions to events and happenings.

What did Steve think, feel and do? *“I wish I had learned more. I feel very miserable. If it goes on like this I will get an F in math. What will my parents say? How can I conceal it from my dad?”* Inner convictions and beliefs can result in fear, anxiety and worry. Such feelings can lead to improper actions, lies and withdrawal.

Steve came under the influence of three of the four typical and dangerous misconceptions.

1. **The performance trap.** This is a trap that says, *“I have to meet certain expectations in order to feel good.”* Filling out the “Fear of Failure” test helps you to see to what extent you are under the influence of this trap. (See: ‘Get to Know Yourself’ at the end of Lesson III.)
2. **The words of accusation.** The words of accusation tell us that *“If you make a mistake you become unworthy of love and you deserve punishment.”* Filling out the ‘Fear of Punishment’ test helps you to assess the impact of this trap on your life.
3. **The need for recognition.** If you are seeking recognition you feel that, *“Certain people must acknowledge and recognize me in order to feel good and valuable.”* The test on ‘Fear of Being Rejected’ reveals where we stand in this area. The feelings *“I am capable,” “I am valuable,” “I belong”* somewhere all become undermined when we fall into these traps.
4. **The trap of hopelessness.** Hopelessness says that *“I will always remain who I was and I will have to live with the self-esteem that I have now. I am who I am; I cannot change. I am hopeless.”* The *“I am ashamed of myself”* test is a good tool to assess how much we are captive to hopelessness. This trap can completely paralyze us. It comes from the feeling that you made such a huge mistake, you failed so badly that there is no longer a remedy or solution for it.

The offensive beliefs we have of our own selves can be replaced with correct beliefs/values. You must learn to use your feelings as a window through which you can get insight into what you think about circumstances, the world and yourself. If you clearly see your thoughts and beliefs, you will be able to decide what to change—what values you must adopt, what opinions you should ignore and what lies must be rejected. It’s only after this step that we can build a healthy self-esteem that is based on correct convictions.

Healthy self-esteem strengthens the convictions that *“I belong,” “I am valuable”* and *“I am capable,”* while it also protects you from the trap of performance, the words of accusation, the need for recognition and the trap of hopelessness. This inner conviction must be real and rock solid in order for it to be anchored to a healthy self-esteem in the midst of changes. These streams of thoughts can rob us of our joy and deprive us of our sense of worth. The four healthy inner convictions that ensure protection against misconceptions about ourselves and strengthen our self-esteem are the following:

1. *“I can be forgiven, and I will be fully forgiven irrespective of the severity of such mistakes.”*

2. *"I am acceptable and I am fully accepted even if I make mistakes."*
3. *"I am loved unconditionally, and I will be loved even when I make a mistake."*
4. *"I can change and grow; I'm going to become more mature, regardless of my past failures and circumstances."*

How can you obtain these healthy and sound convictions? Where can you experience forgiveness, acceptance, unconditional love and enough power to change? From your parents, with your friends or in your performance? Perhaps. Let's examine how we can establish a firm and healthy self-esteem.

(The following section contains the personal opinion and conviction of the authors.)

Laying the grounds for a solid self-esteem

So far, we have examined what the beliefs are (I belong, I am valuable, I am capable) that strongly influence our image of ourselves, and the traps and misconceptions which damage our self-esteem when we believe them. Many things happen in our everyday life that undermine the pillars of our self-esteem. Let's look at what could be the basis for your true convictions of *"I belong," "I can"* and *"I am valuable."*

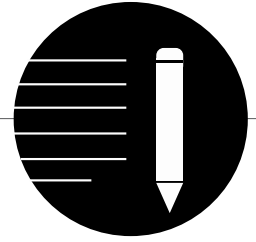
In his book titled *You are Special!* Max Lucado thoughtfully explores the idea that we all seek true acceptance, true belonging and self-worth. The main character of the story is a clumsy wooden Wemmick, Punchinello, who keeps experiencing failure and rejection until he goes to Eli, the woodcarver who created him. The encounter with his creator changes everything in his life.

Dr. Larry Crabb writes that, *"Security is when you are loved even if you show your worst side. We need the unconditional love of others to get our self-esteem back on track."* How is it possible to receive unconditional acceptance and love that you can have even when you make mistakes? This need shifts the attention of many people towards God. If man is the creation of God, it will ultimately mean that human life has worth, and each life is unique. Worth always originates from an external source. The worth of a human being originates from the external authority, the Creator God, whose image he/she bears. The Creator knows man, knows the purpose of their life and He accepts human beings as they are. This personal plan and acceptance is also evident from the fact that God desires all men to be restored to Him through Jesus Christ, God's Son, whom God sent to heal this broken relationship that was corrupted by the sin of man. The Bible clearly states that people don't need to earn God's acceptance and love. In order to experience God's love and acceptance, however, you have to turn to Him and accept this option so that you can have your relationship restored with Him.

The real "I am valuable" conviction. Facing your failures and sins is inevitable. It happens on a continuous basis. If you want to have a stable foundation for your self-esteem, you will need to experience love and feel valuable despite your greatest failures and weaknesses. Who will consider you precious and accept you despite your most disgusting faults and weaknesses? Christ had already died for us and God had already forgiven us when we didn't do anything to deserve this acceptance since we weren't even born yet. If you accept God's forgiveness and love, you will be able to see yourself as God sees you. Martin Luther once said that, *"God doesn't love us because we are valuable, but we are valuable because we are loved by God."* Anyone who has ever experienced this kind of love could commit a mistake, yet say the following, *"I made a mistake, but I'm not hopeless. I am more than my overall performance, and much more than what others think of me."*

The real “I am valuable” conviction. If we accept what the Bible says about God—that He is a personal, loving, Holy God—and enter into a relationship with Him, we will develop a new sense of courage and hope. If we accept God’s forgiveness and put our trust in His truth, He promised that He would always be with us. If you believe and know that God can give you His power, you will become free to accept your own weaknesses, failures and mistakes. These will not paralyze you anymore. With patience and hope you can solve these problems without being pulled down, since you are not trying to reach some imaginary standard of perfection.

LESSON PLAN



02.

Authentic Self-Esteem Self-Esteem

I Am Special!

Lesson Plan

Special things
— I'm special!

The Bizarre Break-in
— a story

The idea of worth
I Am poem

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students should be able to understand that they are special, unique and know their value, and then write an *I Am* poem.

1. Special things—I am special!

10

Encourage short, concise responses from your students, as there is limited time for this part of the lesson.

Last time, I asked you to bring to class something that is special to you. I would like for us to spend a few minutes sharing with each other what was brought and why it is special to us.

Have each member of the class stand, show what they brought to class and explain why it is special to them.

Special things

- How do we treat things that are special to us? *(Take good care of them, respect them.)*
- How do we want others to treat things that are special to us? *(Take as good care of them as we can, respect them, remember that they are important to us.)*
- Now I would like each of you to think of someone who thinks you are special. You need not tell us who that person is unless you want to do so, but think about this: How do we know that someone thinks we are special? Do they treat us in a particular way? How do they treat us? *(They respect us, are glad to see us, spend time with us and help us.)*

I am special!

Most of us have at least one person in our lives who thinks we are special. I believe that person is right! I think that each one of us is special.

1. I am special because I am unique

- If a potter makes 10,000 vases that are all the same size and shape and decorates them in exactly the same way, each one would probably not cost very much to buy. But if the same potter made a special vase in a unique and unusual shape with beautiful decorations unlike any other, that vase would command a much higher price.
- Each of you is like that specially created vase. You are valuable because there is no one exactly like you in the whole world. Each of you has fingerprints that are unique to you. Every drop of blood in your body carries genetic information (DNA) that is specific only to you. No one has your exact thoughts and feelings. You have a combination of ideas, opinions, tastes, talents, and feelings that are unique to you—that makes you special.

2. I am special because I am wonderfully made

Take a look at your hands. It would not be easy to invent any tool that would be more useful than the human hand. Think about how your body turns the

Have your students write down something special about themselves on their Student Notes by completing the sentence: “I am special because I _____.”

Example: “I am special, because I am the first person in my family to play the guitar.”

food you eat into energy. Think about your heart beating. It has continued to beat approximately 70 times per minute since before you were born. If you are 12 years old, that is almost 450 million times without failing! You really are an intricate and marvelous, wonderfully made creation. Something so intricate and marvelous must be very valuable.

The following facts prove how unique our body is:

- Our nerves are sending the signal from our brain at 170.992 m/h;
- 1 hair can hold 0.2 pounds of weight;
- If we would unfold the human lung it would cover a football field;
- Our livers have 500 different functions;
- In our whole life we produce so much saliva that it would fill up two swimming pools;
- Our nose can differentiate 50,000 different kinds of smell;
- The size of our eye remains the same from our birth until we die, but our ears and nose are growing during our whole life;
- We use 200 different muscles when we take one step;
- Approximately 30 million cells die in our body every single day;
- Every 27 days our whole skin renews;
- We can’t tickle ourselves; we won’t laugh;
- Hugging speeds up healing because it produces oxytocin;
- Our stomach acid is strong enough to dissolve a razor blade;
- Our fingerprints are unique (even in twins) and begin to develop at three months;
- When we smile, 17 different muscles are used.

2. The bizarre break-in—a story

5

Sometimes, even though we know that we are unique and wonderfully made, we don’t feel very special. Listen to the following story. I think it might help us understand why we may not feel special all the time.

One night in a large city, two men broke into a huge department store. They were chuckling as they went in, and chuckling when they walked out a couple of hours later—even though they had stolen nothing. What they did was far more sneaky, and perhaps even more damaging to the store than an actual robbery.

The two men went through the department store swapping price tags. They took the price tag off a bicycle and put it on a baseball bat. They ran upstairs and removed the price from a pair of socks, then tiptoed downstairs and stuck it on a shirt. They swapped the price tag on a plastic soccer ball with the price tag on a leather one. These two men rearranged every price tag in the store! And then they left.

What do you think happened the next day when the store opened?

In this particular case, the store opened as usual the next morning. The cashiers were at their stations. The merchandise was neatly displayed throughout the store. Customers trickled in from the street to do their shopping. People found the items they wanted, paid for them, and left. It took four hours—four whole hours—for anyone to notice that all the price tags had been switched!

Some lucky customers walked away with the deal of a lifetime. Others paid double or triple for their purchases.

3. Processing the idea of worth

15

This story illustrates that we may or may not be good judges of what things are really worth. We can get confused about which things in life are worth a lot and which things are actually worth very little. Sometimes other people switch the price tags on things or activities and we fail to realize that what we get is hardly worth the price we pay. For example, what if a friend of yours tried to talk you into drinking, telling you that it is a lot of fun and would help you fit into the group? Maybe you would try it, and get drunk with your friends. Perhaps you would think it was fun. On the other hand, when you ended up getting sick and having a terrible headache, you might begin to wonder if the price tag was really a lot higher than your friend told you.

Sometimes we let others take away our price tag that says we are very valuable and replace it with a price that is far below our real worth. People will try to rip off the tag that says you are special and replace it with a tag that says you are worthless, stupid or ugly. This happens when people insult us, disrespect us or treat us like an object instead of like a person. At times, we even do this to ourselves. When we make a mistake, we might tell ourselves, *"I'm just stupid. I never do anything right."* When we do that, we remove the price tag that says we are special and replace it with a price tag that says we are less valuable than we really are.

As a result, we are unable to feel special because we or someone else switched our price tags and we are unaware of our true value.

Have your students think of a mistake they made recently or a flaw that they see in themselves. (They do not need to write it down or share it with anyone else.)

Have your students write the final sentence on their Student Notes: *“Even though I am flawed, I am special because I am deeply loved.”*

Have your students finish the sentence in their Student Notes *“I am fearfully and wonderfully made because_____.”*

Perhaps you are thinking, *“What if I don’t feel special because I’m really not that great as a person? What if you’re telling me that my price tag is higher than it should be? I make a lot of mistakes. I do a lot of things wrong. Maybe I’m not that special.”*

Problem: I am flawed

If you have thought that, you have recognized a basic problem that all of us face. Even though everybody is special, nobody is perfect. We all make mistakes, it is a natural part of being human. This is also a painful part of being human. We get discouraged when we make the same mistake more than once. We get angry at ourselves or blame others for our bad decisions. We stop trying new things when we think that we could fail. Sometimes our imperfections keep us from believing that we are special.

Solution: I am greatly loved

In the last session I mentioned that from time to time we would examine the spiritual aspect of our lives by looking at what the Bible or some of the world’s great religions have to say about us and who we are. Both Judaism and Christianity teach that, despite our many failings, God has an infinite love for us. If you are discouraged by not being perfect, not being whatever you wish you were or want to be, if you feel inadequate and lack confidence, we have great news. You are greatly loved by the God who made you.

One of the ways we determine the worth of something is by what we are willing to pay for it. If you really value something, you are willing to pay a high price for it. You may not know it, but God greatly loves you. In fact, even though God knows all your imperfections, he puts a price tag on you that says you are worth an enormous amount. We will explore this more in Lessons 23 and 24. But for now, know that each of you can say:

- I am special because I am unique.
- I am special because I am wonderfully made.
- Even though I am flawed, I am special because I am deeply loved.

4. Creating a personal poem

15

Now that you understand how special you are, I want you to write a poem about yourself that will be totally unique to you. Every poem will be different, just like every person is different. You can keep this poem and read it when you may have doubts to remind you of how special you are.

On the Student Notes, have your students create an '*I Am*' poem about themselves. Read aloud the first two words of each line, have them copy those words down, and then fill in the qualities about themselves that are contained within the parentheses:

I AM

1st Stanza:

I am (two special characteristics you have)
I wonder (something you are curious about)
I hear (an imaginary sound)
I see (an imaginary sight)
I want (an actual desire)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

2nd Stanza:

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (an imaginary touch)
I worry (something that really bothers you)
I cry (something that makes you very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

3rd Stanza:

I understand (something you know is true)
I say (something you believe in)
I dream (something you actually dream about)
I try (something you really make an effort about)
I hope (something you actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

If you have time and students who are willing to share, you may have a couple of students read their poems or portions of them.

ENDING THE LESSON

Since our behavior is influenced by how we see and value ourselves, we need an accurate estimation of our true value.

Often this means we need to find out what the true qualities are that have been built into us, so that we do not let ourselves or others switch our price tags. When you are tempted to discount what you worth, remember that you are special because you are unique and wonderfully made. Remind yourself that your life matters and that even though you are flawed, you are greatly loved.

In the next lesson we will continue to explore our relationships and how they influence our lives.

STUDENT NOTES



Know Yourself—I.

I am special because _____

I am wonderfully made because _____

Even though I am flawed I am _____

I AM

I am _____ . *(two special characteristics you have)*

I wonder _____ . *(something you are curious about)*

I hear _____ . *(an imaginary sound)*

I see _____ . *(an imaginary sight)*

I want _____ . *(an actual desire)*

I am _____ . *(the first line of the poem repeated)*

I pretend _____ . *(something you actually pretend to do)*

I feel _____ . *(a feeling about something imaginary)*

I touch _____ . *(an imaginary touch)*

I worry _____ . *(something that really bothers you)*

I cry _____ . *(something that makes you very sad)*

I am _____ . *(the first line of the poem repeated)*

I understand _____ . *(something you know is true)*

I say _____ . *(something you believe in)*

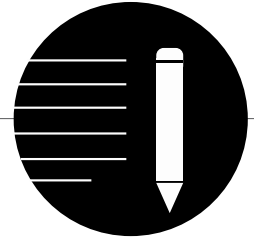
I dream _____ . *(something you actually dream about)*

I try _____ . *(something you really make an effort about)*

I hope _____ . *(something you actually hope for)*

I am _____ . *(the first line of the poem repeated)*

LESSON PLAN



03.

Authentic Self-Esteem Self-Esteem

Understanding Yourself

Lesson Plan

Faces—game

Self-image

*The Eagle and
The Ugly Duckling*

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students should be able to know the concept of self-image, understand the factors that influence their self-image and identify the basis of a healthy self-image.

1. Faces—game

10

As soon as the class is seated, split them into two groups. Have the two halves of the class face each other, leaving an aisle in the middle of the room. Walk through the middle aisle holding the picture of the old woman in one hand, facing only the one side of the room, and a picture of the young woman in your other hand, facing the other side of the room. It is important that each student only see one of the pictures. Give them a good long minute to look at the picture so they can remember every detail. Return to the front and have the class turn and face the front of the room together.

Now hold up the combined picture and ask the class what they see. Allow a few minutes for students to volunteer what they see and help each other see the other face. Ask the questions on the right once everyone sees both women in the picture.

Today we will take a closer look at self-image and also factors influencing our self-image (upbringing, environment, feedback from others, culture, etc.). Self-image determines how far we will get in life. It determines our confidence level in relationships, in our jobs, in everything. It is a very important and foundational concept with which teens should become familiar.

Faces



- When you looked at the combined picture, what did you see? (Probably whatever was seen in the first picture.)
- Why do you think that happened? (This is because our minds were preconditioned by what we were “told” to see through the first picture.)
- Why do you think it was so hard to see the other face in the combined picture? (Again, because we were convinced that there could be only one picture; that is the way it has always been and will always be.)
- Could this principle of false presuppositions based on past experiences be applied to other areas of our lives? (This is just a question for thought; they need not respond.)

Have the students take out the Student Notes and write down the three factors influencing our self-image.

Identity Card

Have students take out their school identity card or some other form of picture identification card. Then allow a few minutes of discussion using the following questions:

- How do you feel about showing other people that picture?
- Is that who you are?
- What would you think of this person if this were the only picture you saw of them?

On what do we have our perception of ourselves? What are the “pictures” in our lives that bias what we think of ourselves and others?

Factors influencing our self-image

1. Outward Appearance—“How Do I Look?”

Mention that there are three general areas we tend to evaluate in ourselves as well as others. Say that the first area in which we evaluate ourselves is outward appearance....The question we ask ourselves is “*How do I look?*”

- What is acceptable? What is not?
- Why does outward appearance play such an important role in our self-image?

2. Accomplishments—“What Have I Achieved?”

What achievements do you think people your age are looking for? (Sports? Money? Girlfriend/Boyfriend? Grades?)

- Is there anything wrong with basing a person’s self-worth on these things? If so, what?

3. Position, Influence, Importance—“How Important Am I?”

- Is it better to be a person who leads or a person who follows? Why?
- Is a person who is a natural leader a better person? Why or why not?
- Why can some people always get their way and others cannot, no matter what they do?
- What is good about getting your way? Is there anything bad about it?
- How are these three things like the first picture you saw at the beginning of the class? How can we go about seeing the rest of “our picture?”

Have the students take out the Student Notes and write down beside the picture of the three-legged stool the names of each of the three legs.

The basis of a healthy self-image

Just as the strength of all three legs are needed for a stable stool, each of these “legs” have their own needed purpose. It is like a three-legged stool.



Leg #1: A true “sense of belonging” / “I Belong.”

We know we are loved; we feel accepted and secure.

Leg #2: A true “sense of worth” / “I am Valuable.”

We know we are valued and important to others.

Leg #3: A true “sense of significance” / “I am Capable.”

We feel competent, we can do it, no matter what it is! We have something to contribute.

We have been raised with the knowledge that we have the ability to handle life. We were given gradually more and more responsibility and we were assisted along the way, especially when we failed. This gives us a positive outlook on life, that no matter what comes up, we can handle it!

Most of us have not been raised in homes where all three of these are true....What happens to us? We may not feel loved or accepted, we may feel very unimportant to others or we may feel that no matter what we do, it will always end in failure! We are full of negative emotions. If that is the case, how can we change the way we feel?

3. The Eagle and The Ugly Duckling

15

The Eagle

Once upon a time an eagle’s egg found its way into a hen’s nest. There it happily lay with all the others, until the day finally arrived that they all began to hatch. One by one the little chicks poked out their heads and began exploring their surroundings. The eaglet also hatched and, even though he was bigger than all the rest and uglier, the hen treated him just like all the rest of her chicks. They grew in the manner of chickens, learning how to scratch the ground to find worms and small grains.

Read the story.
Divide the class
into groups of 4 or 5
students each and
have them discuss
the questions found
after the story:

Then one day, when they were all grown up and were out in the field looking for something to eat, they heard a strange cry. All looked up and saw the most beautiful thing they had ever seen; it was an eagle gliding through the air with the greatest of ease. *"If only we could be like that eagle,"* they thought to themselves. What they said out loud to each other, however, was *"We could never fly like that because we're just chickens."* Then the full-grown eagle turned back to the ground and continued pecking for worms and grain, never realizing that he, too, should be up there in the sky gliding around.

- How would this story play out if we were talking about people instead of birds?
- Have you ever known anyone who was deceived by the pressure of comparison and, therefore, did not recognize their true self or live up to their full potential? In other words, they may have seemed like an eagle, but appeared to be living like a chicken? Without mentioning any names, what was the situation?
- Why did the other chickens not tell the eagle in the story that he was not like them, that he looked more like an eagle himself?
- What should we do if we see someone living like a chicken when they are really not one?
- The moral of the story is that you are much more than your environment suggests. Have you wrongly accepted the label of "chicken" by comparing yourself to others? You are not your performance, other people's opinions of you or a combination of the two. Every one of you is a unique individual. You need to discover who you really are and to know your true self.

The Ugly Duckling

Once upon a time in a land far away lived a wonderful, loving mother duck. She had laid five eggs and was patiently awaiting the day when they would hatch. She would periodically count the eggs to make sure they were all still there, she was so excited about them. One day as she was counting, she just could not imagine what had happened. She counted *"One, two, three, four, five, six."* No matter how she tried, she came up with six eggs! And one was bigger than the rest. How did this happen? *"Oh well,"* she thought to herself, *"One more at home just increases the joy!"* So she sat down on her eggs and continued to wait.

One happy spring day the eggs began to crack open and the little ducklings stumbled out. They were all fluffy and sunshine yellow, except for one. He was big and gray! The mother duck noticed the difference, but put it out of her mind and loved him the same as all the rest. The little ducklings, though, were not that kind. They teased him and made fun of him. Even the other barnyard

Read the story.
Divide the class
into groups of 4 or 5
students each and
have them discuss
the questions found
after the story:

animals would point at him and laugh or call him the ugliest duckling they had ever seen! As the days went by he felt lonelier and lonelier; no one would play with him, sometimes they even pushed him down in the mud. He felt sadder than ever before.

One day as he was walking through the yard he saw some very beautiful birds swimming on the lake. They glided along as if the lake were made of glass and then took off into the air so gracefully that it almost made him cry. *"If only I could be as beautiful as they are,"* he thought.

The winter came and everyone huddled in their warm nests waiting for the spring to come. The ugly duckling dreamt about what it would be like to be a beautiful swan like the ones he saw on the lake that day so long ago. When he woke up, he was still gray and ugly.

"Oh, what must I do to be beautiful?" he cried out.

An owl in a nearby tree answered, *"The solution is in your hands. If you become beautiful on the inside, you will be beautiful on the outside, too!"*

"Really? Okay, I'll try and think nice thoughts about others and be kind to those around me even when they are mean," he said with determination.

He did just as he said he would. For the rest of the winter he was kind to his friends and family even when they treated him badly and he refused to think bad thoughts about them even though they deserved it.

The spring came at last and the ugly duckling excitedly jumped up and ran out the door. He started stretching his wings and smiling at the beautiful flowers and budding trees all around him. It was great to be alive. He ran to the lake in order to take a swim and noticed some of the swans coming toward him.

"What's your name?" asked one of them.

"Ugly duckling," he replied a little embarrassed.

"You're kidding, aren't you?" said one of the swans.

"Take a look in the lake and see why we find it hard to believe that is your name," another swan said kindly.

So our friend the ugly duckling went over to the edge of the lake and looked in. His mouth fell open as he wondered in amazement. *"Could it be? Was that really him in there?"* A beautiful, snowy white swan with a long, graceful neck stared back at him from the water!

In reality, he never had been a duck, he had always been a swan. Baby swans are always gray and ugly.

- Was the ugly duckling really ugly? On what did he base his self-worth? Was his view of himself the true picture of who he was? Why or why not?
- What did the other ducks say about the ugly duckling? Why do you think they said these things?
- How did the ugly duckling feel when they said these things?
- Have you ever judged someone by their outward appearance or been judged because of how you looked or talked or behaved?
- What happened by the end of the story? What moral can we draw from this story?
- How could the truth illustrated in this story be applied to your life or help someone you know?



STUDENT NOTES

Know Yourself—II.

Factors influencing our self-image:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Basis of a healthy self-image:

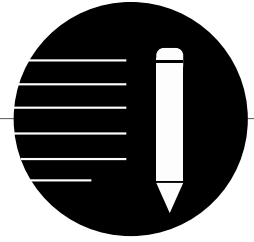








LESSON PLAN



04.

Authentic Self-Esteem Self-Esteem

I Am Valuable!

Lesson Plan

Review
The Source of Value
Story of John and Daniel
Ellis' Theory
Traps
Story of Punchinello

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students will understand the concept and origin of value; they will recognize that our value as humans comes from an outside source; they will understand how our own convictions influence our emotions and self-esteem.

1. Review

5



Positive self-image rests upon the following truths:

- Our basic needs are met (the three-legged stool), and
- We are able to react to the circumstances with the right convictions.

The source of the right convictions is the sense of worth, or value.

2. The source of value

5

Show a \$20 bill and ask the following questions:



How much is this piece of paper worth? What gives value to this paper?

- The paper gives it value?
- The time when it was printed gives it value?
- How worn out this paper is gives this paper its value?
- Will the value of this bill change if I fold it and crinkle it?
- Will its value be less if I step on it?

Where does the value of this paper come from? The government of the United States determines how much this piece of paper is worth. The paper and the ink itself is almost worthless. The value of this \$20 bill does not come from the material it was made of, but it comes from the government that's behind it.

The same is true of us, humans. Every single human is infinitely valuable. Regardless how "crinkled" or "dirty" or how many stepped on "it," "its" value has not changed. Mankind, as creation, carries value.

- What happens when we don't feel that we are valuable?
- How can we change how we feel about ourselves?

3. Story of John and Daniel

5

This is a true story, but we have changed the names of the characters.

In a city not too far away, there were two guys in the same high school class: John and Daniel. John was from a family of laborers. His family had never gone to college; as a matter of fact, his dad had barely finished the eighth grade before he had to go to work to support his brothers and sisters who remained at home. John's dad was really proud of his son because he was in high school. He encouraged his son to study, but did not worry about what kind of grades he brought home; he was just happy that his son was getting a better education than he had!

Daniel's dad on the other hand, was a mathematician. He had two doctoral degrees and was a well-respected scientist in his field. He expected his son to do at least as well as he did in school, but Daniel did not really like school. He was a smart guy, but liked the arts much more than math and science.

Well, one day there was a math test. Everyone was pretty nervous about it and hoped that they had prepared enough to be able to do well. After the test John thought he had done OK, but after all it did not really matter all that much; life would go on no matter what grade he had gotten. Daniel had gotten done early with the test, so he double-checked all his answers to make sure he had gotten everything right. Then with smug satisfaction, he got up and handed in his test...thinking that he aced it for sure, no sweat!

The day came when the teacher handed back the graded tests. There were tears and there were whoops of joy and there were eyes filled with satisfaction...but among them all were John and Daniel. John had gotten a "B" on his test. Wow! Would his dad be proud or what!!! This is a day to celebrate! He could hardly wait to tell all his friends and most of all to rush home and show everyone his paper with the "B" right there on top for all the world to see!

Daniel also got a "B" and his face dropped, "How could this be? There must be some mistake!" He went to the teacher pleading for him to look over the test again, but the teacher was right, he had missed one small detail on 3 of the questions and that meant a "B." How could he face his dad? This was worse than anything that had ever happened to him. On the way home, he just kept thinking about his dad and the look he was going to get, the lecture and maybe even worse than that—he would have to spend all of his free time studying from now on. That was just too much. His sense of significance/competence, worth and security/belonging were all slipping away. He decided the best thing to do would be not to go home at all. He would not cause his parents disappointment and he would be free to do what he wanted. He hid out in the woods thinking that after everyone went to sleep, he would sneak back into the house and pack a few things and hit the road.

Evening came and it was cold. Daniel's parents were starting to get worried when it was dark and he was still not home. They called all his friends to ask if they knew where he was. No one knew a thing. They went to all his favorite places and he was nowhere to be found. They called the police to help them,

but they could do nothing. They finally went to the woods and found Daniel in a little abandoned shed. They were so relieved, that they cried and hugged and kissed him. They told him to forget about the test. They said the important thing was that nothing bad had happened to him.

Daniel and John got the same grade on their tests. Why did they feel and react differently? Was it the test score that made them think, act and feel the way they did? Then what did?

4. Ellis' Theory and the traps

10

Dr. Albert Ellis,
psychologist,
established the
A.B.C. theory.

A—"Activating
event,"
B—"Belief,"
conviction,
C—"consequences,"
reactions.

Ellis proposed a theory which explains this difference. Let's take a look at it and see if it could help us in our predicament!

Example	Situation	Thoughts	Emotions	Actions
John:	"B" on test	Wow!!!	Joy, pride	Tells everyone
Daniel:	"B" on test	Oh, no!	Fear, shame	Runs away

Questions:

- Does a "B" on a test mean that Daniel should have felt bad or run away? Not really. Was it wrong for Daniel to think what he did? No, that is the way he was raised.
- Does Daniel have to think this way for the rest of his life? Why or why not? What would he have to change; how could he change?
- Look at the three-legged stool. Which leg do you think gives trouble to most teens? How could someone in this situation be helped?
- What about us? If we feel bad about ourselves, what can we do about it? We can replace incorrect thoughts about ourselves with correct ones.

Ellis states that our feelings are the result of our belief system. Feelings are neither bad nor good, they are just a result of my belief system in action. What I believe to be true will determine how I interpret the world around me, including what I think about myself! Feelings are really just mirrors of what is going on inside.

Have students take the Robert McGee tests and score themselves privately. Then go over the results on the chart. Encourage them to take note of the traps where they scored low and make a point of choosing to believe the things that are true about them rather than what they are used to thinking.

Traps

Replace harmful beliefs with right beliefs/values about yourself.

There are several traps (incorrect ways of thinking about ourselves) we fall into in trying to bolster our self-image. Take a look at some of them and then look at solutions for them.

1. **The performance trap**—*“I must meet certain standards in order to feel good about myself.”* (Being caught in this trap could lead a student to think, “I cannot feel good unless I get an “A.”)

2. **The blame game**—*“Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.”* (*“I deserve the punishment I get when I get home!”* might be the sentiments of someone playing the blame game alone.)

3. **The approval trap**—*“I must have the approval of certain people in order to be valuable and feel good about myself.”* (Some students in need of approval may think, *“My dad will hate me and I will feel like a failure if I do not make a high grade on this test!”*)

4. **The shame game**—*“I am what I am. I cannot change. There is no hope.”* (A student stuck in shame could be thinking, *“I am never going to be a good student, it’s just never going to happen. I might as well give up right now!”*) This belief is crippling! It arises out of a sense that a person is powerless to do things differently and that fate is against him. They think there is no hope for a better future.

Traps Chart

Test name	Trap	Feels/Thinks	But the truth is...
Fear of failure	Performance	I am only as good as what I can do or show for myself.... (I better get an “A” on that test, or my friends will not like me anymore.)	One is unconditionally accepted. One does not have to do anything to be lovable.
Fear of punishment	Accusation	I cannot reach the ideal, I am imperfect, a failure. (I got a “B” on the test, I am no good. I deserve the lecture I am going to get when I get home.)	One is forgiven for his imperfection. It is normal to be less than the ideal. One is not a failure and does not deserve punishment for failing.

Fear of rejection	Recognition	_____ has got to be pleased with me or I am history. (My dad was expecting me to get an “A” on this test and I got a “B.” I just cannot go home and face him.)	One’s intrinsic value is not dependent on what others think or say. Whether receiving attention or not, they are valuable as a person.
Shame	Hopelessness	This is the way I am, I will never change.... (I got a “C” again; no matter what anybody says, I am just dumb, that’s all there is to it. I am just never going to be smart.)	One has the ability to change. It can happen!

Based on Robert McGee’s book: *“Search for Significance.”*

We must learn to use our feelings as a window. We can look through them to see what we believe about our circumstances, our world and ourselves. Once we can clearly see what it is that we believe, we can examine what changes need to be made. We may have values that need to be altered, opinions that need to be ignored and lies that need to be rejected. After we have dealt with these changes appropriately, we can build a positive self-image based on healthy and proper beliefs.

Healthy beliefs about yourself must be able to meet the three needs we have discussed. Those beliefs must also counter attack and stand up against the four harmful beliefs of the “performance trap,” the “blame game,” the “approval trap” and the “shame trap.” Healthy beliefs must be as solid and heavy as a ship’s anchor to bind you to a positive self-image amidst the pressures you face that rob you of your joy and sense of worth.

The four “healthy beliefs” are:

1. I am completely forgiven and forgivable, despite any failure.
2. I am totally accepted and acceptable, despite my faults.
3. I am totally loved and always will be, even when I make a mistake.
4. I have the strength to change and I will mature, despite my circumstances or failures in the past.

- Where can you turn to find these anchors? Parents, friends, your performance. Maybe. Let us examine how to build a solid foundation for a positive self-image.

(Judeo-Christian content follows)

5. Story of Punchinello

20

On YouTube you can find *Max Lucado: You Are Special!* animated story. If you can, please watch this together with your students:
<https://youtu.be/15QuHygLwFU>

Building a strong foundation

Max Lucado: *You Are Special!* story illustrates well our struggle to find the path to our sense of worth. Let's watch this story together!

Let us return to the three legs on our stool.

A true "sense of belonging" / "I belong."

Dr. Larry Crabb says, "*Security is being loved at our worst. We need the unconditional love of another to find personal self-worth.*" This is due to the fact that we fail so often, but should that failure deny us a sense of security? This is why many feel the need to consider what God has to say. If you hold the view that he created us—he is the originator of the "self." God says to us:

"I already accept you. Even as you are. Because my Son died for your failures (sins), I can accept you."

There is no evidence in the Bible that says you have to perform for his acceptance, rather that you turn to him and receive it as an undeserved gift.

A true "sense of worth" / "I am valuable."

Remember what we said about the need to forgive ourselves and experience forgiveness. In order to feel important we must not avoid the need to face our faults and sins squarely. They overwhelm us because we are constantly making mistakes. If you are to rebuild your self-image you must experience love despite your worst failure. Again, if Christ died for us and God forgives us (even while we are far from him in thought and deed), then why would we withhold forgiveness from ourselves? We must receive his forgiveness and then see ourselves as he sees us—forgiven. Martin Luther once said, "*God does not love us because we are valuable; we are valuable because he loves us.*" One who experiences this kind of love can see that though, after failing at something, "*I failed, but I am not a failure. I am more than the sum total of my performance and others' opinions of me.*"

A true "sense of significance" / "I am capable."

If we accept the biblical view of God as personal, loving and holy, then we will have a new sense of courage and hope if we are in proper relationship to him. Accepting his forgiveness and trusting in his truth we know that he is always there with us. We know that, as the Bible says, "*I can do all things*

through Christ, who gives me strength. He began a good work in me and will bring it to completion.” (See Philippians 4:13 and Philippians 1:6 in the Bible.) If we believe this and know that his strength is there for us, we are free to accept our weaknesses, faults and mistakes—and not be threatened by them. Patiently and with hope, we can work through those problems without putting ourselves down because we don’t meet some imagined standard of perfection.

Develop Good Habits!

Here are some helpful suggestions. If you turn them into habits, you will develop a more positive sense of self-worth.

1. Do not label yourself negatively. (I am clumsy, stupid or ugly.)
2. Do not compare yourself with others. Remember that you are unique. Enjoy your uniqueness. Give others the dignity they deserve, too. God made them as rare and unique as you are. Enjoy the difference.
3. Do not forget that everybody has problems and weaknesses you cannot see. Some people look like they are perfect, appearing to have no weaknesses, only strengths. Do not believe your eyes; they are human just like everyone else! Remember that even the most confident people have insecurities about something.
4. Associate with friends who are positive, who like being around you and who enjoy life.
5. Learn to laugh; look for the humor in life and experience it.
6. Have realistic expectations of others, taking into account each person’s talents, gifts, abilities, potential, motivational pattern and interests.
7. Be positive. See how long you can go without saying or thinking something negative about another person or situation.
8. Relax and take it easy. Don’t get mired in worry.
9. Read the Bible to discover truth. As you contemplate it you will begin to experience good/stable emotions (even in difficult times) and be able to appropriately handle whatever situations come into your life.
10. When you fail, admit it to God (and others when appropriate), refuse to condemn yourself and ask God for the strength to continue on the right way.

STUDENT NOTES



Know Yourself—III.

Answers to the traps:

A test	Trap	Feels/Thinks	But the truth is...
Fear of failure	Performance		
Fear of punishment	Accusation		
Fear of rejection	Recognition		
Shame	Hopelessness		

The Fear Of Failure

— Test —

The fear of failure is the result of the false belief that says, *"I must meet certain standards in order to feel good about myself."* How affected are you by this belief? In order to get some idea, take the following fear of failure test. Remember, in order for this to help, you must be honest with yourself on each question.

Instructions:

There are seven possible answers to each of the following statements. Read each statement, then choose the answer that is most true about you. Each answer has a number code beside it. Write the correct number code in the blank space provided next to each statement.

1. Always 2. Very often 3. Often 4. Sometimes 5. Seldom
6. Very seldom 7. Never

	Statement	Code
1.	Because of fear, I often avoid participating in certain activities.	
2.	When I sense I might fail in some important area, I become nervous and anxious.	
3.	I get uptight.	
4.	I feel anxious for no real reason.	
5.	I am a perfectionist.	
6.	I feel like I have to defend my mistakes.	
7.	There are certain areas in which I feel I must succeed.	
8.	I become depressed when I fail.	
9.	I get angry at people who do things that make me look like I don't know what I'm doing or like I'm stupid.	
10.	I am critical of myself.	
	Score (Total the numbers you have placed in the blanks.)	

The Fear Of Punishment

— Test —

The fear of punishment is the result of the false belief that says, “*Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.*” How affected are you by this belief? In order to get some idea, take the fear of punishment test that follows. Remember, in order for this to help, you must be honest with yourself on each question.

Instructions:

There are seven possible answers to each of the following statements. Read each statement, then choose the answer that is most true about you. Each answer has a number code beside it. Write the correct number code in the blank space provided next to each statement.

1. Always 2. Very often 3. Often 4. Sometimes 5. Seldom
6. Very seldom 7. Never

	Statement	Code
1.	I am afraid of what God may do to punish me.	
2.	After I fail, I worry about God becoming angry with me.	
3.	When I see someone in a difficult situation, I wonder what they did to deserve their problems.	
4.	When something goes wrong, I have a tendency to think God must be punishing me.	
5.	I am very hard on myself when I fail.	
6.	I find myself wanting to blame other people when I fail.	
7.	I get angry at God when someone immoral or dishonest seems to get everything he wants and never gets punished.	
8.	I can't keep myself from criticizing others when I see them doing something wrong.	
9.	Instead of complimenting others on their strengths and accomplishments, I tend to focus on their mistakes and failures.	
10.	God seems cruel and punishing to me.	
	Score (Total the numbers you have placed in the blanks.)	

The Fear Of Rejection

— Test —

The fear of rejection is the result of the false belief that says, *"I must have the approval of certain people in order to be valuable and feel good about myself."* How affected are you by this belief? In order to get some idea, take the fear of rejection test that follows. Remember, in order for this to help, you must be honest with yourself on each question.

Instructions:

There are seven possible answers to each of the following statements. Read each statement, then choose the answer that is most true about you. Each answer has a number code beside it. Write the correct number code in the blank space provided next to each statement.

1. Always 2. Very often 3. Often 4. Sometimes 5. Seldom
6. Very seldom 7. Never

	Statement	Code
1.	I avoid certain people.	
2.	I become nervous and anxious when I sense someone might reject me.	
3.	I am uncomfortable around those who are different from me.	
4.	It bothers me when someone is unfriendly to me.	
5.	I am basically shy and unsocial.	
6.	I am critical of others.	
7.	I find myself trying to impress others.	
8.	I become depressed when someone criticizes me.	
9.	I always try to figure out what people think of me.	
10.	I feel like people are always trying to manipulate me.	
	Score (Total the numbers you have placed in the blanks.)	

The I-Am-Ashamed

— Test —

Much of our shame is the result of the false belief that says, *“I must always be what I have been and live with whatever self-worth I have. I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.”* How affected are you by this belief? In order to get some idea, take the shame test that follows. Remember, in order for this to help, you must be honest with yourself on each question.

Instructions:

There are seven possible answers to each of the following statements. Read each statement, then choose the answer that is most true about you. Each answer has a number code beside it. Write the correct number code in the blank space provided next to each statement.

1. Always 2. Very often 3. Often 4. Sometimes 5. Seldom
6. Very seldom 7. Never

	Statement	Code
1.	I think about past failures or experiences of rejection.	
2.	I have certain memories about my past which cause me to feel strong, painful emotions (guilt, shame, anger, fear, etc.).	
3.	I seem to make the same mistakes.	
4.	I have certain attitudes and behaviors that I want to change, but I don't think I can.	
5.	I feel inferior.	
6.	I don't like some things about the way I look.	
7.	I am generally disgusted with myself.	
8.	I feel certain experiences have basically ruined my life.	
9.	I think I am an immoral person.	
10.	I feel I have lost the opportunity to experience a complete and wonderful life.	
	Score (Total the numbers you have placed in the blanks.)	



AUTHENTIC SELF-ESTEEM



Part II



Me and My Emotions



Intelligent Emotion?

IQ + EQ = Opportunity

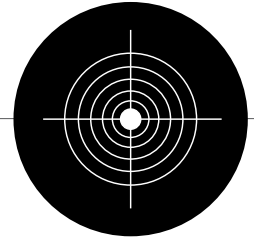
Emotional Skills

Aware of Myself

Aware of My Emotions

Controlling Myself

INTRODUCTION



Emotional Intelligence

“All learning has an emotional base.”

—Plato

This simple truth shapes the objectives and methods of the YTL program. Adults who work with children have a huge influence over lives that are entrusted to their care. The development level of our emotional skills is one of the most important areas of our lives. Our school system makes a huge effort to improve the cognitive intelligence of the students, but it neglects those areas that will determine whether a person can learn to be happy or not. These areas affect the quality of our relationships and whether we are at peace with ourselves. This describes emotional intelligence. It’s said that 80 percent of what makes a successful, prosperous and happy adult is determined by their emotional intelligence.¹ The emotional state of our children

¹Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (New York: Bantam, 2005); Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990).

is more important than the curriculum we teach during class. A child is not expected to be able to control and rule their emotions in an intelligible way.

The discovery, identification and management of their own emotions are part of a learning process that could be greatly obstructed by the adult society that sends uncertain messages in their family, school or wider community.

A learning process should be encouraged where our children and students will have the opportunity for the following:

- Identify what needs the different emotions belong to and what triggers that given emotion, why they feel what they feel;
- Learn to focus on their real needs and not on their desires since the biggest enemy to the fulfillment of their real needs are often their own desires. Real emotional gratification and satisfaction happen when their needs are met, often at the expense of delaying their personal desires;
- Learn to intelligently control their emotions. They learn not to make decisions based on temporary and often harmful emotions that will mislead even themselves.

As we go through the next lessons we can help our students with the following:

1. Learn to recognize and develop their emotional skills;
2. Control their emotions and learn to use them for their benefit;
3. Have a deeper understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses;
4. Learn how others have an effect on them;
5. Develop in building mutual and peer-to-peer relationships.



||.

Authentic Self-Esteem Emotional Intelligence

Intelligent Emotion?

Self-Esteem—Me and My Emotions

*“Without the aid of trained
emotions the intellect is
powerless against the
animal organism.”*

—C. S. Lewis

IQ or EQ?

Intelligence. This is a big word that indicates an important ability. Yet, when we look at the Latin original we find that it has a deeper meaning than the one we use it for. The word intelligence is a compound of two words: inter and legere. Inter means “*between*,” while legere means “*to decide*.” Therefore, intelligence is the ability to choose and decide, the ability to opt for the better.

Intellectual intelligence (IQ=Intelligence Quotient) is the ability that helps us understand different principles, truths, facts and the meaning of things, which afterwards can be applied in real life.

Emotional intelligence (EQ—Emotional Quotient) is the ability to understand feelings, emotions, social situations and effectively use these emotions in the handling of different situations. Emotional intelligence helps us to handle our own emotions well, to build our relationships and not to erode or destroy them, and to make good decisions even in emotionally overcharged situations. With the help of emotional intelligence you cannot only manage your own feelings in an intelligent way, but you can also better understand the feelings and emotions of others. Even Aristotle noted how important the intelligent management of emotions is when he said: *“Anybody can become angry—that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody’s power and is not easy.”* It means that emotional intelligence helps you intelligently manage your emotions.

EQ includes the understanding of the feelings of others and knowing ourselves as well as being self-aware. If you know who you are, have a developed self-awareness, you are also aware of how your emotions affect you and other people. EQ teaches us how to process fear, anger or worry or the lack of recognition.

*“Emotional intelligence is a path to recognize, understand and select your thoughts, your feelings and your actions. It develops your relationship with yourself and with others. It determines what and how we learn, it enables us to set priorities and it governs many of our everyday actions.”*¹

*“Emotional intelligence is the ability to comprehend, understand, and effectively direct your emotional energy as a resource in your relationships, collecting information and in having influence over others.”*²

We take it for granted that improving our intellectual intelligence will result in obvious benefits for us (learning generates more knowledge, better employment opportunities, etc.), but likewise, the development of our emotional intelligence can also result in significant advantages. We have all met people who are brilliant, know a sea of facts by heart, can precisely quote an entire library, yet it still feels uncomfortable to be around them. Such a person can always hurt others because they don’t sense that they shouldn’t intrude into conversations, they don’t realize what is allowed to be said and when. No one wants to live with someone who might know all sorts of facts and information, but who never senses what it is that the other person needs. People with extraordinarily high intellectual intelligence could have severe deficiencies when it comes to emotional intelligence. This deprives them of the opportunity to develop meaningful and happy relationships. However, emotional intelligence can be developed.

The advantages of developing your emotional intelligence

The following quotes show what benefits you can have from developing your emotional intelligence.

- *“In the past decade science discovered a lot of things about the role emotions play in our lives. Researchers discovered that your ability to be aware of yourself and handle your emotions will influence your success and happiness in life (family life included) more than your IQ, that is, your intellectual intelligence.”*³

¹ Joshua M. Freedman, Anabel L. Jensen, Marsha C. Rideout, and Patricia E. Freeman, *Handle with Care: Emotional Intelligence Activity Book* (Freedom, CA: Six Seconds, 1998).

² Robert K. Cooper and Ayman Sawaf, *Executive EQ: Emotional Intelligence in Business* (London: Thomson Learning EMEA, 2000).

³ John M. Gottman, *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998).

- “There is no thinking without emotions and there are no emotions without thinking. When you consciously work on getting to know yourself, gaining an understanding of yourself it is an essential part of the learning process.”⁴
- “Emotions result in a much more active and chemically more stimulated brain, which will help us to recall things more easily.”⁵
- “80% of successful adults owe their success to their emotional intelligence.”⁶
- “There is only one corner of the universe that you can surely make better and that is yourself.”⁷
- “When children learn, they connect different pieces of information: when and where they learned it, how they felt during this learning process.”⁸
- “It is essential that students understand they can decide what they think, how they feel and what they do. They usually find it very difficult to accept that it’s up to them. It is only after they grasped this that they will be able to think responsibly.”⁹
- “You cannot separate emotions from the intellect since emotions, thinking and learning are all connected.”¹⁰

Skills and competencies that are part of emotional intelligence

In the table below you find a list of skills and competencies that belong to the field of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be divided into two main competence groups: *personal* and *social* skills and competencies.

Personal competencies		Social competencies	
self-awareness	self-management	social sensitivity	social skills
emotional awareness	self-control	empathy	communication
self-assessment	transparency	understanding others	developing attachment
self-confidence	flexibility	handling people	conflict resolution
	initiative	developing others	influence on others
	optimism	understanding the hierarchy	teamwork
			leadership
			initiating changes

⁴Karen Stone-McCown, Joshua M. Freedman, and Marsha C. Rideout, *Self-Science, The Emotional Intelligence Curriculum*, 2d rev. ed. (Freedman, CA: Six Seconds, 1998).

⁵Larry Cahil, Bruce Prins, Michael Weber, and James L. McGaugh, “Beta-Adrenergic Activation and Memory for Emotional Events,” *Nature* 371 (1994): 702-704.

⁶Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (New York: Bantam, 2005).

⁷Aldous Huxley.

⁸Maurice J. Elias, Steven E. Tobias, and Brian S. Friedlander, *Emotionally Intelligent Parenting: How to Raise a Self-Disciplined, Responsible, Socially Skilled Child* (New York: Harmony, 1999).

⁹Stone-McCown, Freedman, and Rideout.

¹⁰Eric Jensen, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, 1998).

Regarding self-esteem, we have the opportunity to highlight only some of the personal competencies. We hope that they will reveal those areas and characteristics that we must seek and develop in the life of our students and children.

Self-awareness

The cornerstone of emotional intelligence is self-awareness. This is the basis that enables a person to work with all the other skills and competencies. It is particularly important to be able to adequately show the importance of certain words to the students. When it comes to self-awareness there is a huge difference between *I know something* and *I am aware of something*. We say that we know something when that information was acquired through thinking. You are aware of something when you experience or sense that information and it has a continuous effect on you. The following two everyday examples may help to illustrate this important difference.

The first example is IT related. Most computers have a hard disk where information is stored. This information is always there and available for your computer; your computer ‘knows’ and possesses this information since it is stored on the hard disk. The fact that your computer knows this information doesn’t mean that it uses it or that your computer is ‘aware’ of it. Your computer has another very important part, the RAM (Random Access Memory), which is also called direct memory. This is where information and data are stored that are absolutely necessary for the system to operate. It’s where the knowledge and information that the computer is ‘thinking about’ is stored; it’s what the computer is ‘aware of.’ Self-awareness is similar to this active memory you find in computers. Self-awareness is what you are aware of, what defines and influences your life and decisions in every moment.

Another graphic example that we can use with students to highlight the difference between “to know” and “be aware of” is from the popular Star Trek series: it has to do with Captain Picard and Lieutenant Commander Data. What do we know about these characters? We know that Lieutenant Commander Data is much smarter than Captain Picard. He possesses a whole lot of information and he connects them much faster than Captain Picard does. Lieutenant Commander Data commits no mistake. He has the ability to perform super-analysis and can keep much more information in his memory than Picard does. But we also know that Data is not a human, but an android (a humaniform robot). The captain is still Picard, even though he doesn’t have as much knowledge and understanding as Data does. Why? Because Lieutenant Commander Data doesn’t have ‘that’ specific knowledge, sense and ability that would exceed logic and mathematical analysis. You cannot have a machine as the boss because man has intuition, a special awareness that cannot be described with a mathematical formula since decision-making is a combination of facts and intuition.

It’s humiliating for a person when this self-awareness is impaired, and they suffer from a “*no clue*” syndrome. An example is when a boss thinks that the meeting he held went very well while the employees were all bored to death or when a teacher thinks highly of the class he gave, but the students hate listening to him. It results in very embarrassing and terrible constraints both in your work and relationships if you don’t have the right level of self-awareness.

The fight with our self-awareness dates back to ancient times. When Socrates called on people to “*know thyself*” it sparked such opposition when he refuted the worth of the nobility and leaders—severely offending their pride—that he was sentenced to death by the Council of 500. The people who sentenced him to death were also suffering from this “*no clue*” syndrome.

Self-awareness in the world of EQ means that we are aware of the following:

1. We know what we feel at the moment, so during our decision-making we are aware of our emotions; we have an emotional awareness.
2. We can put our emotions to use in order to reach our goals, which means that we have the skill of self-management.

Emotional awareness is taking responsibility for our own emotions

To illustrate the importance of emotional awareness we shall resort to the stories of a well-known comedian, Mr. Bean. His comic scenes clearly show what a person with a low level of emotional awareness is like. He keeps doing things that don't fit and are out of place. Mr. Bean does all those clumsy things that we would also do if our emotional awareness was at the same low level. Mr. Bean seems to cross boundaries that others are aware of, but he doesn't even notice it—as if these boundaries didn't even exist. He doesn't see them nor does he care about the consequences resulting from his trespassing. This makes the scenes very funny. But if you observe how many friends Mr. Bean has you will see that a friend to him is nothing more than his toy teddy bear. Mr. Bean lacks all sorts of emotional awareness and it isolates him in his human relations.

Emotional awareness is the part of our awareness that enables us to recognize our feelings, understand their effect on us and to continuously evaluate how these emotions affect others. If you cannot understand and process your own feelings you will have trouble understanding the feelings of others. The ability to understand feelings is an important one and we should encourage our students to develop this ability because emotions are the entry point—or doors—to have deep and meaningful relationships. Some people are very good at finding the door handles and going in and out through this door. Such people will be able to connect at a deeper level where it is not only facts and information that you share with others but also your emotions.

There are two ways to help our students develop their emotional awareness. On the one hand, they have to realize and accept their emotions and take responsibility for them; and on the other hand, we have to teach them how to keep their emotions under control. We must dispel the myth that someone else is responsible for our emotions. One of the key messages that we can teach our students about life is that they should take responsibility for their actions, decisions and emotions in all areas of their lives. In fact, the shifting of responsibility onto others is the highway for a miserable, unhappy life that affects all those around them. This is true for all areas of life, including our emotional life. The most ancient problem of mankind is exactly this: the shifting of responsibility and blaming others. Even in the first pages of the Bible in the story of Adam and Eve we read that Adam blames Eve while Eve blames the snake when their disobedience is revealed. This kind of shifting responsibility is still rooted in us and it is one of the biggest obstacles for an independent and fulfilling life. People often believe the myth that since our emotions are the result of others' behavior we are not responsible for our own of emotions, and if something negative happens, we are without fault. For example, *"It was this other driver that drove aggressively; he made me angry so I punched him in the face. He was the reason why I became angry, so it is his fault. If he hadn't cut me off on the road this whole thing wouldn't have happened."* But in reality no one is so powerful and mighty to be able to plant feelings in us. Even though others are capable of doing things that make us sad, hurt, angry or happy, ultimately these people cannot control what goes on inside of us. It is up to us to decide what emotions we allow to

rule over us. The driver who punches the other driver in the face because he had cut him off on the road is responsible for his own anger and actions because he could have decided not to allow anger to define his actions. His fury is his own fury, it was him who decided how he would act. Emotional awareness is the ability to take responsibility for our own emotions. Our emotions exist within our own boundaries. As Dr. Henry Cloud writes: *“Both our physical feelings of pleasure or pain and our emotional feelings are on our property and no one else’s. We are responsible for our own feelings. Feelings signal our state of being. Feelings tell us how we are doing, what matters to us, what needs changing, what is going well, and what is going badly. To disown our feelings, to ignore responsibility for them, is one of the most destructive things we can do to both ourselves and others.”*¹¹

“Self-management”—the way to control our emotions

Self-management has several meanings. ‘*Self-management*’ means that we can control our emotions and delay our desires in a way that they would contribute to the reaching and gratification of our goals and desires. ‘*Self-management*’ includes self-control, transparency, flexibility, initiative and optimism.

‘*Self-management*’ is the first step on the road to control our emotions. The Stanford Marshmallow Experiment—that examined delayed gratification—only highlights its importance. During the experiment small children were offered one marshmallow or they could receive another one if they waited until an adult returned to the room. This longitudinal research found that those children who could delay their desire for the marshmallow had better high school grades, advanced further in their studies (irrespective of their IQ), had a healthier BMI (body mass index) and had greater success in their work than their counterparts who couldn’t resist their urges to wait for another marshmallow. Self-control is the competence of emotional intelligence that enables you to delay your desires, remain calm in emotionally overcharged moments, resist anger-driven aggression and outbursts and the ability to deal with failures. We can greatly contribute to the development of self-control in the lives of our students if: 1. we teach them how to differentiate needs from desires; 2. we help them find appealing goals that will prompt them to make sacrifices and take disciplined actions; 3. we prepare and equip them for how to avoid certain situations.

1. Teaching how to differentiate between their desires and their needs

A small child is not yet able to make this distinction. They want to stay awake until 10PM because this is what they want. But the parents know that the child needs to sleep, so they put the child to bed at 8PM. Immediately, we see a conflict arise between the desires and the needs.

Small children don’t understand why they have to go to sleep, because they cannot accurately assess their own needs; they only know that they want to continue to play. But loving parents know that the needs of the children are more important than their desires; this is why they have to go to bed earlier to get enough sleep. For an older child, an example could be that the child needs to study but wishes not to, so the parents create an environment that is conducive to not being distracted to force them to deal with their needs over their desires. It is through such scenarios that we learn how to separate a desire from a need and to make an intelligent decision between the two, focusing on the needs instead of the desires. Each time we fulfill their needs and make those needs more important than their desires, we assist the children/students so they can become better able to

¹¹Excerpt from Henry Cloud, *Changes That Heal: Four Practical Steps to a Happier You* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

manage themselves. Obviously, desires are also important; desires must also be met, but not at the expense of our needs.

Many adults even today opt to immediately devour the candy as presented in the Stanford Marshmallow Experiment, by placing their desires in front of their needs or by not making a distinction between the two at all. This can cause a lot of problems to themselves and to others. For a moment just consider that such people—driven by their desires—will handle their money impulsively, won't be able to resist purchases that lead to unwanted debt, making the credit card companies thrive. The same impulsive and desire-driven life will prevent them from living according to a disciplined schedule—they will be late all the time and struggling with personal issues leading to uncontrolled outbursts of anger that will destroy their relationships through constant conflicts. This lack of self-discipline, self-control and self-management will affect their work ethic, the atmosphere at their workplace; they won't be able to meet deadlines and see everything exaggerated and magnified. They are characterized by arrogance and lack of competence and they make their colleagues terrified because they regularly abuse their power.

2. Setting appealing targets

If students set attainable and appealing goals it will boost the development of their self-control. It will teach them to push their desires to the background in order to reach their goals, because it will require them to focus on their needs and live according to the priorities they set. These goals can be financial, academic, sports related, or any other goals.

3. To prepare them to avoid certain situations

There are some things that have a huge impact on us and by the time you actually face these challenges it is too late; there is not much you can do to swim against the flow. Emotions are not easy to control because they can be very powerful. This is why we must help our students realize the situations that cause emotional storms and outbursts, leaving people wounded. Such situations are better to be well understood and preferably avoided altogether. Self-control also means the ability to recognize these situations and take the necessary steps to prevent them. It could include the decision to postpone an answer or reaction; when you decide in advance that you will be honest at the right time; and you decide in advance how far you will go in a certain situation.

Transparency and honesty

Transparency and being straightforward means that you have the emotional courage to share your emotions, thoughts and attitudes with others in an appropriate manner. It is the next level of control over your emotions. You are capable of showing the truth about yourself, since transparency means that your words and actions reflect the reality. When someone is able to exercise self-control, their lives become consistent. If you are consistent, you have nothing to hide and what you show of yourself is what people can expect from you in real life. Such a person is not trying to hide their weaknesses or mistakes. Without transparency there is no intimacy, because intimacy can happen only when two people are able to give themselves as they are. The less transparent someone becomes, the less credibility and trust this person will enjoy.

Flexibility

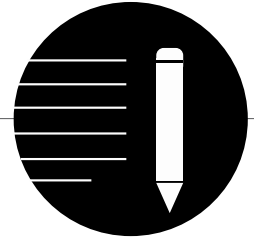
Flexibility is the ability and the way we react to changes and ultimately it is a mirror of a person's emotional stability and self-esteem. Each change brings about stress and frustration, no matter how small the change is. It could be simply a rushed morning because the whole family didn't wake up in time. A small change could result in great stress. The more stable someone is in themselves, in their self-esteem, the more flexibly they can manage changes. This is also true for human systems and communities like organizations and businesses. It is communities and organizations with strong self-identity that can respond to situations in a flexible way. They don't think that changes question their fundamental values or attack their existence. Today companies can be successful if they adapt to changes instead of considering them as an attack against their fundamental values. The story of Intel is a good example for this. The company was on the brink of bankruptcy in 1984-85 when they produced computer memories (RAMs) and then cheap Chinese products flooded the market. At the time the CEO, the Hungarian born Andrew Grove, described this period as the 'valley of death.' The company had to completely revamp its profile and they started manufacturing processors. In an interview Grove said that the future of the company depended on how the management reacted to the situation emotionally. People who constantly need an external reference point for a stable self-esteem will face a collapse at the smallest shake or change in these external criteria. It is very sad, yet common to take one's worth exclusively from a job or position, but when the job is lost, the self-esteem is also gone. Flexibility is close to initiative and optimism and is also part of the personal competency of emotional intelligence. Initiative is the ability to overcome your fears and hopelessness, remain firm in your conviction of what is right, and take the first steps and persevere.

There are many stories about people who could not control their emotions and they ended up with their emotions controlling them. *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas is one of these classics. The basic idea of the book is that a friend is unable to control his envy and jealousy. But another classic tale by the Brothers Grimm, *Snow White*, tells the story of an evil stepmother who cannot overcome her sense of jealousy and envy. The list of these classics could go on and on. These stories all reveal how people were unable to cope with their feelings. We also see plenty of examples in history. You could think of Ivan the Terrible who couldn't manage his anger and ended up killing his own son. But history also offers many good examples; people who carried out great and historic deeds because they could intelligently manage their emotions, conquer their anger and fears and nurture what is positive. Jesus Christ is one such person who reciprocated injustice with love. Gandhi also followed a similar path and he managed to change the course of history for India.

It is a huge responsibility for all adults who work with children as well as parents—to raise and shape little Gandhis who have a solid self-esteem, follow a calling and a mission, and can intelligently manage their emotions. However, if we remain ignorant and indifferent we may actively contribute to these children growing up to be adults that are feared like Ivan the Terrible. One thing is certain—either consciously or unconsciously—we are responsible for what will come of the next generation. They are a copy, an imprint of who we are.

If you don't like what you see it is not the mirror's fault.

LESSON PLAN



05.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Emotional Intelligence

IQ + EQ =
Opportunity

Lesson Plan

Introduction: game

Definitions

What is your level of
emotional intelligence?

Conversation:

Why is EQ important?

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students will become familiar with the concept of emotional intelligence, and understand its importance and impact on the different areas of our lives.

1. Introduction: game

15

Divide the students into three groups. Give a description of a conflict situation to each group.

Group 1

You are riding your bicycle on the street when a driver isn't paying attention and cuts you off on the road. You turn as you pass and yell at him which results in a conflict. What do you do and say?

Group 2

Your friend is organizing a party. You see the event on social media, but no one told you about it. You feel hurt and left out. How would you feel and what would you do in such a situation?

Group 3

Your brother took your phone charger with him. During the day your battery dies. What will you do when you get home?

Discussing the game:

The different groups should listen to each other.

In the end they should discuss the following:

- How did the different actors feel in the given situations?
- How could they have handled the situation differently?
- What would the conversation have been like if they had eliminated emotions (anger, rage, feeling hurt)?
- What would the consequence have been if the situation had been handled differently?
- Why couldn't they deal with the situation differently?

2. Definitions

5

Intellectual Intelligence is referred to by English Linguistics as "Intelligence Quotient" (this is why it is abbreviated as IQ), while emotional intelligence is called "Emotional Quotient," abbreviated as EQ.

Researchers came to realize that the handling of our emotions has a significant impact on the quality of our lives, progress and relationships. In 1975 Howard Gardner, a Harvard University Professor, introduced the concept of multiple intelligences. He found that people can be intelligent in different ways. There are linguistic, mathematical, logical, musical, physical (body-related), interpersonal, intra-personal and visual 'intelligences.'

Intelligence means to select from different things. It consists of our ability to choose, make decisions, and understand and choose the right thing.

Intelligence is divided into two main categories: intellectual intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ).

- **Intellectual Intelligence** helps us understand various principles, facts, truths and the meaning of things. It also includes putting into practice these facts, truths and principles.
- **Emotional Intelligence** helps us understand our feelings, emotions and social standing. It is the effective use and application of these emotions, feelings and situations.

“Anybody can become angry— that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody’s power and is not easy.” — Aristotle

The definition of emotional intelligence:

1. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to manage your emotions in a sensible and intelligent way. EQ enables us to understand our feelings and their impact on us. EQ also involves understanding the feelings of others.
2. EQ teaches us how to process fear, anger or worry and the lack of recognition.
3. EQ also means that we know ourselves and we have self-awareness. If people are settled about who they are, their self-awareness is developed. They know how their emotions affect themselves and other people.

3. What is your level of emotional intelligence?

15

Filling out the EQ questionnaire.

[Leave enough time for the students to fill out the ‘EQ evaluation’ test included in this Lesson. After they have completed the task, ask them to give the questionnaire to their friends, family members so they can also fill it out about themselves. This test reveals how others see us in this specific area and it will show us the gaps between how we see ourselves and how others see us.]

4. Conversation: Why is EQ important?

10

Lead the conversation based on these questions:

- Why is it difficult to talk about emotions?
- Would it be nice if you could express your emotions more easily?
- What types of people do you like to spend time with?
- What is required so others can understand your feelings? What helps us in understanding the feelings of others?

**Background
information for
the conversation:**

- What are those areas in life where emotional intelligence could be required?
- Why is it beneficial if you can manage and express your emotions in a sensible and intelligent way?

A Harvard University study revealed that only 15% of success depends on your IQ, while 85% is subject to people's emotional intelligence (EQ).

High EQ enables us to build healthy relationships (with friends, colleagues, classmates, roommates, our spouse and family members, etc.).

No one wants to be around people who are always negative. Everyone likes to spend time with people who are attentive and will listen to us. Only those people can listen and pay attention to others, are empathetic to others and can go beyond themselves.

Emotions that are managed improperly influence your way of thinking, decisions, work and ability to concentrate. For example, you might not feel like studying, but unless you overcome this negative feeling you might end up failing your classes.

EQ Evaluation

— Test —

Rate yourself in the following areas based on how you currently see yourself. Mark the column with an “X” that you think fits best. Ask 2 to 4 family members to describe you. This will help you understand how others see you in that specific area. (Give everyone a blank copy.)

SELF-CONTROL											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They can express their emotions in a proper way and there are no emotional outbreaks that are not contained. They are polite.											They hide their feelings or may have outbursts of anger. They express themselves very rudely.

TRANSPARENCY											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They are honest and have integrity. They are willing to admit any mistakes. They will confront others with their immoral actions.											They are not honest. They hide mistakes or even blame them on others. They are rarely critical about immoral actions.

ABILITY TO ADAPT											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They can handle changes in a flexible manner. They can meet several expectations while not losing sight of what truly matters.											Changes knock them off of their feet. They avoid changes. They are very worried when they have to do or take responsibility for several tasks at once.

PERFORMANCE											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They set goals and then reach them. They are motivated to improve their own performance. They continuously learn and develop themselves. They are open to constructive feedback.											They rarely set goals for themselves. They keep postponing doing their work. They are satisfied with what they have reached. They consider it a threat when someone gives them constructive feedback. They don't seem to be motivated in their tasks.

ABILITY TO INITIATE											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They are ready to take new opportunities. They undertake acceptable risks. They initiate in their work and relationships.											They are passive. They are afraid of risks. They wait on others to initiate conversations or relationships. They only follow the specified directions and they do not initiate by themselves.

OPTIMISM											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They persevere in achieving their goals despite the upcoming difficulties and obstacles. They don't live in a fantasy world of negation or empty faith. They are active and positive.											They give up quickly when they encounter difficulties. They have a negative approach to life or their tasks. They easily lose heart when problems occur. They feel like a victim.

COMMUNICATION											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They easily connect with others in different situations and social settings. They involve others and act at ease during conversations.											They find it difficult to connect with others or get in touch with them. Conversations pose a difficulty and they rarely involve others in conversation.

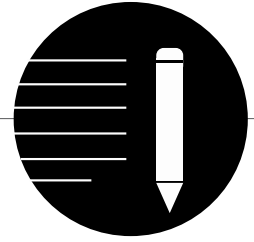
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They handle conflicts well, they want to understand the viewpoint of the person.											They cannot handle conflicts well. It is difficult for them to understand others and empathize with their position. They are defensive.

EMPATHY											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
They show empathy towards others and their situation. They are sensitive and attentive.											They lack empathy. They cannot identify with the difficulties of other people. They are insensitive and indifferent.

TEAMWORK												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
They are excellent team players. They can get the team to progress without overruling others. They are good listeners.											It is difficult for them to work with a leader or on a team. They are not good listeners. They resist the recommendations of other people and cannot respond well to leadership.	

SELF-AWARENESS												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
They are aware of themselves. They understand their own feelings. They see their strengths and weaknesses correctly.											They are not aware of themselves. They don't understand their own feelings, nor the feelings of others. They are not aware of their own strengths and weaknesses.	

LESSON PLAN



06.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Skills

Lesson Plan

Introduction: game
The Golden Rule and
skills of EQ
To know or to be aware
The 'No clue' syndrome

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students learn the concept of personal and social skills; they familiarize themselves with the Golden Rule of emotional intelligence and its cornerstone, self-awareness.

1. Introduction: game

15

The goal is to understand that the emotional reactions given to various situations have different consequences. It allows students to clearly see that there could be many ways to respond to the same situation, and that the given reaction only depends on how capable we are to intelligently control our own emotions. This little game is proof that our emotional reactions influence many areas.

Maturity or immaturity

What would you do in the following situations if you acted in an emotionally responsible way and what would the consequences be? What would happen if you did it carelessly and impulsively?

Situation	Reaction	Consequence
Your friend betrayed you.		
You would like to belong and be accepted at a party.		
You don't want to study for a test.		

2. The Golden Rule and skills of EQ

15



Lead the conversation based on these questions:

The Golden Rule of EQ is to apply the Golden Rule of the Bible that was presented 2000 years ago for our relationships—even today.

The Golden Rule of the Bible and EQ says:

“Do to others what you would have them do to you.”

- What skills are needed so we can apply the Golden Rule of EQ well?
- What kind of relationships will we have if we apply this rule?
- What will these relationships be like? What will characterize them?

We use the definition as it is used by a relevant book—*Emotional Intelligence*—written by Daniel Goleman.

Most literature uses the term self-management, which we also use, combined with the term self-awareness.

The two categories of EQ

Emotional intelligence has two main areas: personal (individual) and social skills. A person who has appropriate social skills will initiate conversations, pay attention to others and will also ask questions.

Personal skills: self-awareness, self-management, self-control, optimism, flexibility and transparency.

Social skills: understanding others, conflict management and the treatment of other people.

personal competencies		social competencies	
self-awareness	self-management	social sensitivity	social skills
emotional awareness	self-control	empathy	communication
self-assessment	transparency	understanding others	developing attachment
self-confidence	flexibility	handling people	conflict resolution
	initiative	developing others	influence on others
	optimism	understanding hierarchy	teamwork
			leadership
			initiating changes

3. To know or to be aware of

10

Discussion.

Self-awareness is the cornerstone of EQ

- What is the difference between *I know something* and *I am aware of something*?

To know something means that you obtain the information by way of thinking.

To be aware of something means that the information is sensed or experienced.

An illustration from information technology.

Most computers have a hard drive where information is stored. This information is always there and available for your computer; your computer 'knows' and possesses this information since it is stored on the hard drive. The fact that your computer knows this information doesn't mean that it uses it or that your computer is 'aware' of it. Your computer has another very important part, the RAM (Random Access Memory), which is also called direct or random access memory. This is where information is stored that is indispensable for the system to operate. It's where knowledge is stored that the computer is 'thinking about' the information it accesses, uses and is 'aware of.' Self-awareness is similar to this active memory you find in computers. Self-

Explain: awareness is what you are aware of and what defines your life and decisions in every moment.

Self-awareness is the skill that helps us know what we feel in a specific moment, think realistically about our emotions and abilities during decisions and have a healthy self-esteem and confidence. The identification and understanding of our emotions and their impact on us and others is a first major step in the development of emotional intelligence.

Your self-awareness is functioning well if you:

1. Know your internal state (e.g., you are angry, sad, happy, disappointed, worried, etc.);
2. Understand and own all your decisions, values, convictions, preferences, which means that you take responsibility for them;
3. Are aware of what impact your feelings have on others;
4. Are aware of your weaknesses and strengths.

4. The 'No clue' syndrome

5

A proof of your lack of self-management could be if you find yourself in 'no clue' situations described earlier. If your self-awareness is feeble it is going to affect even your social skills and self-confidence. It's really shameful for a person when their self-awareness is damaged, and they suffer from a 'no clue' syndrome. The useful advice of Socrates should be kept even today: *'Know thyself.'*

The 'No clue' syndrome in practice

Teacher: "I had an excellent class today."

Student: "Today's class was a total bore."

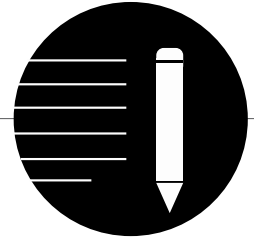
Boy: "I think this girl likes me."

Girl: "I'm disgusted by him. He is rude."

Agent: "We are about to finalize this deal."

Customer: "How can I finally get rid of him."

LESSON PLAN



07.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Emotional Intelligence

Aware of Myself

Lesson Plan

Introduction:
Small group task
To better understand
myself—DISC Test
Group evaluation
Summarizing thoughts

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students will have tools to understand their strengths, weaknesses, develop their self-awareness and understand that our differences are also our advantages.

1. Introduction: small group task

15

Start the lesson by dividing the students into groups of 4 to 5 people. The two tasks should be carried out in small groups.

Discuss the following questions in small groups:

- List a few characteristics of the people around you.
- List a few characteristics in which you differ from the people around you.

Conclusion: I am unique, just like everyone is. I'm unlike others.

The most important cornerstone of high EQ is self-awareness. It is people with a strong self-awareness who have a high emotional intelligence:

- They understand themselves: they know their strengths, weaknesses, personality traits and tendencies;
- They understand the other person: they recognize their strengths, their weaknesses, and their personality traits as well as tendencies;
- They apply the Golden Rule of EQ; and
- They are able to establish connections with people of different personalities.

2. To better understand ourselves—DISC Test

15

Distribute a printed copy of the test included at the end of the lesson.

This test is going to help us better understand ourselves and the differences between us. The purpose of the test is to discover your own personality profile and understand the emerging strengths and weaknesses, but also to realize the strengths and weaknesses of your classmates. It can help you learn to appreciate your differences.

Filling out the Personality Profile – DISC test

[D] Dominance

[I] Influence

[S] Steadiness

[C] Compliance

Based on the test everyone should determine which personality profile fits them most and what their second one is. The primary profile (the most characteristic in general) gets the highest score, and the next one will be the secondary profile. This is important because there is no one who would 100%

After completing the test students should read the evaluation and read the traits and characteristics of each personality profile. The students may write down their own characteristics in a similar table.

belong to a single personality type. Everyone may have different reactions in different situations, but usually there is a primary profile and a very important secondary profile, too.

A summary of my personality profile:

Characteristics:	Will respond best if:
The environment required:	Must learn to:

3. Group evaluation

10

The goal is to get to know ourselves and make ourselves known to others. You may want to dedicate more time—if possible—for this task or even a separate session.

Once you have identified your primary and secondary personality profiles, discuss the following in small groups:

- Share with each other your own characteristics and traits;
- What environment you need;
- What you react to the best;
- What is it you still need to learn.

4. Summarizing thoughts

5

1. Realize that everyone is unique.

Although this test could give the impression that people can be categorized as formulaic, the reality is far from it. Everyone is a mixture of these characteristics to a different ratio and the very same traits may manifest in very different ways in different people, or even within the same person at different times and in different situations. There are no two identical personalities,

and among others, this uniqueness is what makes us valuable and precious. As Viktor Frankl, the famous Viennese psychiatrist, wrote: *“Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated.”*¹

2. Do not think more highly or less of yourself than what is justified.

We all tend to compare ourselves with others, but it is rare that we do so in a fair manner. It's far more common that—depending on our mood—we compare our own strengths to the weaknesses of others only to become self-conceited and we look down on others; or we compare our own weaknesses with the strengths of others that leads to envy and an inferiority complex. Either one is very damaging, both regarding our personality and the development of our relationships. If you accept your uniqueness as a value and you position yourself in a community in a fair manner, which means that you take all areas into consideration, you will quickly realize that life is surprisingly just. This is what we saw when we evaluated the test. The strengths of one personality type go hand-in-hand with certain weaknesses. A certain trait could be harmful to the same degree as it is useful in different circumstances.

3. Realize that we need each other.

In short, you could conclude that everyone is good at something, but nobody can be good at everything. A healthy EQ, among other things, helps you to find your role in a given community (e.g., your class or family) or in a situation (e.g., during a hiking trip or housework) that you are the best suited. In most communities and situations there are specific roles that most people desire to obtain. The truth, however, is that it is not the most envied, most prestigious position that will make you happy, but when you take a role or position that best suits your personality.

4. Different personalities, abilities and talents complement each other. We can learn from each other!

Of course, this applies not only to you, but also to every member of the group. No one is unnecessary, yet it could be that responsibilities are poorly allocated. If your self-esteem is healthy and you are empathetic, you can help others find their ideal roles. Individual people will always have their own weaknesses and mistakes. However, if a group can organize itself in such a way that everyone can maximize their strengths, and their weaknesses are not allowed to prevail, they may get close to being a ‘dream team.’

5. Be happy to use your skills and strengths for the benefit of others.

Of course, an ideal team is not created by magic in one day. The process requires understanding, adaptation and sacrifice from everyone. If everyone waits for the others to change and adapt to them, the team will never become

¹Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 2006).

| a powerful partnership. Take the initiative to be the first to cooperate and you will see that others will also join in. No doubt it means taking some risks, but it's definitely worth it.

Personality Profile – DISC test

— Test —

In the following table indicate to what extent these characteristics/behaviors describe you in a close relationship.

0. Absolutely not

1. Somewhat

2. Usually

3. Very typical

D		I		S		C	
Likes to take control		Enthusiastic		Attentive		Consistent	
Self-confident		Forward-looking		Calm		Reserved	
Decisive		Energetic		Undemanding		Practical	
Likes changes		Active		Enjoys routine work		Focuses on the facts	
Problem-solving		Easily relates to others		Relational		Perfectionist	
Courageous		Party animal		Adaptive		Thorough	
Goal-oriented		Spontaneous		Thoughtful		Inquisitive	
Strong-willed		Likes new ideas		Patient		Persevering	
Self-reliant		Optimistic		A good listener		Sensitive	
Persevering		Risk-taker		Loyal		Orderly	
Takes control		Motivates others		Balanced		Moderate	
Determined		Good with words		Submissive		Predictable	
Entrepreneurial spirited		Friendly		Indecisive		Precise	
Competitive		Popular		Doesn't like change(s)		Conscientious	
Effective		Hyper		Has a sense of humor		Sharp-witted	
Purpose-driven		Group-oriented		Winsome		Analytical	
Daredevil		Initiator		Caring		Scrupulous	
Independent		Inspiring others		Tolerant		Lives in a planned way	
Activity-oriented		Likes change		Peace-maker		Conscious	
Total D:		Total I:		Total S:		Total C:	

Personality Profile – DISC test

— Results —

D—DOMINANT

Characteristics:	Will respond best if:
• expects immediate results • active • accepts challenges • makes decisions quickly • questions the status quo • takes over leadership • solves problems	• gets direct answers • you stick to the subject • the emphasis is on being logical • they work well under pressure
What environment you need:	Must learn:
• freedom and independence • power • different activities • difficult tasks • opportunity to progress	• need other people • relaxation is not a sin • boundaries are required • everyone has a boss • it's good for others to hear the arguments behind the decisions
Their motivation: challenge	

I—INFLUENCE

Characteristics:	Will respond best if:
• they initiate towards others • they make a favorable impression • they can express themselves easily • enthusiastic • optimistic • fun • team player	• they are led democratically • they can make friends outside work • their abilities are recognized • they can encourage risk-taking
What environment you need:	Must learn:
• recognition • friendships • freedom from control and details • where they can help others • where they can motivate others • where they can express their ideas	• time management helps • deadlines are important • optimism could be too much at times
Their motivation: recognition	

Personality Profile – DISC test

— Results —

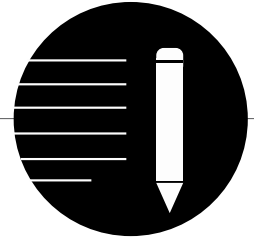
S—STEADINESS

Characteristics:	Will respond best if:
• consistent and predictable • patient • specializes in a specific area • helps others • is a good listener • loyal • they calm down agitated people	• relaxed and affable environment • has enough time to adjust to changes in the plan • can function as a friend • allowed to progress at their own speed • can ask their “How?” questions • clearly defined goal and roles
What environment you need:	Must learn:
• specialization • identification with a team • established workflows • security • familiar environment	• that change creates opportunities • friendship is not everything • that self-discipline is good thing
Their motivation: respect	

C—COMPLIANCE

Characteristics:	Will respond best if:
• insistence on quality • attention to details • analytical thinking • an indirect approach to conflicts • ensuring accuracy • systematic approach	• they are encouraged • they are supported • the others are available • the requirements are specific
What environment you need:	Must learn:
• clearly defined tasks • security • teamwork • stability • limited risk • the work requires precision and advance planning	• a detailed explanation is not everything • total support is not always possible
Their motivation: quality	

LESSON PLAN



08.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Emotional Intelligence

Aware of My Emotions

Lesson Plan

Case study
Emotional awareness
Emotion cards—game
Individual exercise

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students will realize that they alone are responsible for their emotions. By managing their emotions they can influence their behavior, personality and relationships. They understand that they have the power to extinguish negative feelings.

1. Case study

15

Read the case study.

Discuss the questions together with the group. Give time and space for many people to contribute. It is important that they would share their thoughts about the reasons behind the feelings.

A father finds out that despite his expectations he wasn't promoted at work. When he gets home he starts shouting at his daughter to immediately get off of social media and tells her that she should study instead. The girl protests by saying she hardly has been on social media and that he is being unfair. At this moment the mother tells them that dinner is ready. This girl furiously runs upstairs to her room and the parents are having dinner in stressful silence.

Discuss together:

- How did the father feel?
- How did the girl feel?
- What caused the feelings of the father?
- What caused the feelings of the girl?

Every day we come under the influence of many different events that we can respond to with a wide range of emotions. This is why it is important to have emotional awareness.

2. Emotional awareness

10

Definition:

Emotional awareness is the ability to recognize how I feel and why I feel that way.

Through emotional awareness we recognize that there is a connection between our feelings, actions, words and thoughts, which ultimately have an impact on our overall performance. Letting our emotions loose could even have fatal consequences. If we expressed our anger each and every time we felt it, we could easily kill someone; for example, road rage.

Emotional awareness also means that:

- You identify your emotions
- You acknowledge them (it's not someone else who 'makes us feel them')
- We keep our emotions under control.

Students should name and understand the different emotions—identify them and understand their triggers.

We identify our emotions by giving them a name and identifying the events that triggered them. Emotions are not good or bad, but they can be positive or negative. It is the way we express these emotions that can be good or bad. You might not have grown up learning to express your emotions properly. The following game helps you acquire the right vocabulary to express your emotions.

3. Emotion cards—game

15

Distribute an emotion card to each student. These emotion cards are found at the end of this lesson.

Transition:

Ask the following questions from the class:

At the end of the conversation ask: *How do your emotions influence your behavior?*

Start telling a story by saying something like: “*Something happened to me this morning as I came to school...*” Ask a student to continue the story in a way that intertwines the emotion from the card into the story. After a sentence or two, move on to the next student either based on alphabetical or seating order using their own emotion cards.

This little game clearly shows how much our feelings influence our behavior. We must learn to identify and own our feelings (since no one can make us feel them), as well as control them.

1. How did the emotion of the father influence his behavior in the story we read in the introduction?
2. How did it affect his daughter and wife?
3. What are the physical signs that can indicate that anger, fear or worry are starting to overwhelm you?
4. What are the positive or negative emotions that can be typical of a person with a high D, I, S or C score?

If you learn to recognize your feelings and the actions triggered by them, you can more easily avoid any behavior that could isolate you from others. Unrestrained emotions always work against us!

4. Individual task

5

Participants fill out the table individually. Give a personal example to start.

The talk that I use to overcome myself: ‘EXTINGUISHING.’

False ideas that I believe to be true.

Triggering event	Lies believed to be true	Consequence	Overcoming strategy	Further effect

Introduce the above table by sharing a personal example when you believed a lie to be true because of a triggering action that had some consequences, but you could overcome this emotion so the further bad consequences could be prevented. (For example, the negative emotion triggered by a bad grade may make you feel incompetent to really learn that subject, therefore you

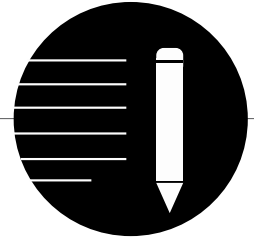
continue getting bad grades. How can you overcome this false idea and what are the desired effects and additional consequences if you do overcome it?)

[Ask the students to think about lies they believe(d) about themselves, their environment and others, and then consider based on the questions of the table how they would want to replace these lies with the truth.]

Emotion cards

happy	sad	curious	mean
excited	skeptical	restless	disappointed
satisfied	surprised	self- confident	shy
tense	disgusted	hopeful	uncertain
astonished	angry	ecstatic	confused

LESSON PLAN



09.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Emotional Intelligence

Controlling Myself

Lesson Plan

The experiment
The real power: self-control
True freedom: being
straightforward and flexible
The real development: taking
initiative

The Purpose of the Lesson

The purpose of the lesson is for your students to realize by the end of the class that they have the power to manage themselves, develop their self-control and realize that being straightforward, flexible and taking initiative are important emotional intelligence skills.

1. The experiment

10

Present the credit card experiment and then wait 1-2 minutes to process before presenting the Stanford Marshmallow Experiment.

The credit card experiment

Let's suppose a bank offers you an excellent credit card with a credit limit of \$1500. You are free to spend the money—at the expense of your available credit. You don't have to pay it back immediately, only in smaller installments together with the interest. You really want a new phone, and if you were to buy it with your salary you would have to save money and wait for 6 months, but you wouldn't have to pay any interest to the bank.

- What would you do in this situation?

The Stanford Marshmallow Experiment

In 1976 researchers carried out one of the most important psychological experiments of all times. They placed 4-year-old children in a room alone, in front of a mirror. The only adult in the room put a marshmallow in front of the children and told them that they could eat the marshmallow and leave now or if the children waited (i.e., didn't eat it) until the adult came back they would be given another marshmallow. The children had to wait up to 20 minutes at times. Some of them ate the marshmallow immediately, while others waited to get two marshmallows. In 1990 there was a follow-up research involving the same children who at this point were 18 years old. It turned out that those children who waited for their second marshmallow had better results in their high school exams in every subject than the ones who didn't wait. The ability to resist impulses and accept delayed gratification proved to be a better signal for academic advancement than the IQ test they took when they were four.

Those who didn't wait	Those who waited
• Didn't handle stress well. • Were irritable. • Often had disagreements. • Had weaker emotional and relational connections and a lack of empathy. • Were more prone to be isolated. • Were less flexible. • Had more emptiness in their emotional life.	• Were better prepared to reach their goals. • Had significantly better results in their studies. • Had better prospects for the future. • Had better relationships. • Were more reliable and responsible. • Had better self-control.

Name a person whose self-control is outstanding in your opinion.

- What did you notice about this person?
- Is this person some sort of a role model for you? If so, in what way?

2. The real power: self-control

15

Story:

Emperor William once inspected his empire. He met an old man and asked him who he was. The old man answered: *"I'm a king!"* "What kind of a king?"—asked the emperor. *"Well, the greatest king on all the earth"*—the old man responded. *"I rule over the greatest kingdom ever"*—he continued. "What kind of kingdom do you rule?"—asked the emperor. *"Well, it is nothing else than myself"*—the old man concluded.

Indeed, the only area in the world upon which we have full control and power is ourselves. Yet most people are incapable of exercising self-control; they are slaves to their own emotions, desires and feelings which often cause great damage.

Self-management means that

1. You are able to recognize and understand your own feelings, thoughts and attitudes.
2. You are capable of managing your feelings so that they facilitate and do not obstruct the reaching of your goals and the implementation of your value system.
3. You are capable of delaying the gratification of your desires in order to reach your goal.

Self-control

- You are able to resist temptation and delay the instinct that prompts you to action.
- You remain calm.
- You understand what causes the negative feelings or aggressive behavior.
- You can live with failures.
- You resist letting anger, rudeness or temper determine your behavior.

The training of police dogs involves many different situations—they are exposed to all kinds of temptation: food is offered to them, cats are made to walk in front of them, etc. Yet, they can only move when they are given permission.

- Why do police dogs have to learn the difficult skill of self-control?

Self-control
The first personality trait that reveals a lot about ourselves is self-control. Read what we mean by this term.
The training of police dogs: Their training is related to their purpose. Police dogs cannot perform their duties without self-control.

Discussion:

- What happens if you don't control your rage or anger?

Responsibilities, goals and tasks entrusted to us require similar self-restraint. We cannot be captives of our anger, instincts and impulses.

Discuss as a group how you would deal with the following situations:

- While traveling on the bus or standing in line someone knocks your shopping bag out of your hand and its contents spill all over the ground.
- After living together for 7 months your roommate tells you that they think you are very lazy.
- It turns out the day before the deadline that your partner in the group study project didn't do their part.

Emotions are difficult to control because they are powerful and can often overrule us. Sometimes the best thing you can do is to expect them and prepare in advance for how you are going to behave in specific situations. A wise person knows how to avoid wounds caused by outbursts of anger. They know what situations can trigger strong emotions and they try to avoid them. There are some things that can help us prepare for such situations, for example:

1. Decide in advance that you will not react immediately. Count to three.
2. Be totally honest. Many times you may need to wait for the right moment to tell the truth, as well as say it as objectively as possible so the other person can accept it.
3. Learn from your mistakes.

3. Real freedom: being straightforward and flexible

15

Discussion:

- How can you show that you are straightforward?
- How will people know when you are not straightforward?

What does it mean to be straightforward?

- It takes emotional courage to communicate your emotions, thoughts and attitudes with others in an appropriate manner.

A clay pot is examined for cracks by being held towards strong light. Tiny cracks that may have been concealed by paint will now show in the light. A straightforward, transparent person could be looked at from any direction, under strong 'light' and yet they will always look the same as there is nothing to hide. They don't live a double life. No matter where they are, they will say the same thing about a specific situation. A transparent and straightforward

Read the sentences and ask students to evaluate themselves between 1 to 5.

The higher score means more flexibility and willingness to adapt.

person builds trust, lives with a sense of inner peace and has the moral grounds to speak up when they see unethical behavior.

Flexibility

1. Always 2. Usually 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Hardly ever

Do you always order the same thing when you eat in a restaurant?	
Do you ever do something because you are afraid of the unknown and are wary of the possible negative consequences?	
Are you easily angered by others?	
Are you neat and tidy, keeping things in their own 'place'?	
Are you afraid of trying new things?	

What makes someone flexible and able to adapt?

Change is usually very difficult and comes with pain. It can fill you with uncertainty and frustration. During change you need to learn to contain your emotions. Change also prompts you to grow and develop. For example, you need new skills in your new job, and while you handle these new difficulties you must control your emotions. The complexity of life is only going to increase as there is progress in your career, work, family, housing situation, etc. Your ability to manage this complexity to a large extent depends on how capable you are of disciplining yourself. The sacrifices you can make today are for the sake of your future. If you want to advance in life you will always need discipline.

4. The real development: taking initiative

5

Initiative

is the ability to respond to change:

- by understanding difficult situations with common sense
- by the effective management of conflicts and problems
- by finding and implementing solutions.



It is the ability to:

- step beyond your fears and hopelessness
- persevere by what you believe to be right
- take the first step
- persevere through the situation
- and to involve others.

The story of Levi Strauss

Levi Strauss outsourced the manufacturing of jeans abroad where labor was much cheaper. Most of the employees were children because then Strauss could save them from becoming prostitutes. The Western world was very critical and wanted him to stop hiring the children. If he had done so the children would have become prostitutes. If he continued to employ them with no change Strauss would suffer significant financial losses as people would stop buying his products.

- What would you do to solve this problem?

The solution of Levi Strauss: He sent the children to school until they reached the legal age. This way he got a more skilled and thankful workforce.

- How much courage did it take for someone to come up with this idea?

Summary

People will only change if they want to.

If you feel that this lesson has little to do with the world you live in you are unfortunately right; not many people are straightforward, flexible and willing to take initiative. Sociologists and psychologists agree that our society today badly needs a change in these areas. And while you cannot say that sheer determination in itself is enough, it is also true that unless you do try to change, nothing will happen by itself.

Often it takes an emergency for change to start.

As many smokers quit after their first heart attack, we all tend to face our weaknesses only after we are already in big trouble because of them. It's better late than never! It's wiser to set out on a new path as early as possible, instead of after some setbacks and carrying burdens for a lifetime.

You should clearly see your 'ideal personality' and where you are heading and what you want to reach.

The fact that you're thinking about yourself and about what kind of a person you want to become deserves applause since very few people venture on this path. Instead many people escape by watching television, being involved in frenzied activity, or resorting to alcohol or other substances only to avoid the burden of facing their own lives. Many will blame others (parents, teachers,

spouse, boss, etc.) or the circumstances (their school or country, etc.) for their ruined lives. A strong EQ, among other things, means that while you take the previously described facts into consideration, you also acknowledge your own responsibility regarding the turn of events in your life.

Truth (objectivity) and grace (forgiveness) should be in balance.

While it is important to have a healthy dissatisfaction and work on developing our strengths and improving the weaknesses, it is equally important to be patient and understanding with ourselves. The shaping of your character is the most difficult task and you know well in advance that the final goal is unattainable as you will never be 'ready' and your personality will never become faultless. The point is not the end product, but the process itself. If you live your life persistently, celebrate the results, and learn from your failures, you will make the most of it.



Part III



Me and My Character



The Trap of Subjectivity

Brokenhearted Role Play

The Silver Ball

Character Development

Taking Responsibility

Respecting Others

Workshop of Character

Choices You Face

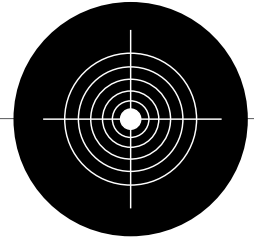
The Basis of Your Value System

A Life Worth Living

Pure Heart

Games

INTRODUCTION



Character

“Character is the measure of our freedom from the tyranny of our instincts. It is the space we create between our urges and actions.”

—Indian philosopher,
Valson Thampu

“Through discipline comes freedom.”

—Aristotle

Our character is an important element of our self-identity. It is the area that feeds off your value system and it defines your self-esteem, behavior and relationships. **Your actions are based on your character and your character is dependent on your value system. Your values stem from what you believe to be true and false.**

In our relativistic society it is becoming increasingly difficult to give points of reference to our children and students. Without them they will become lost and insecure, or even worse; with a false self-confidence they indulge in a self-centered, often fatalistic lifestyle.

The degree of a person's freedom is subject to their character. Real freedom enables victory. How free is a competitor during a race?

Do the rules of competition limit their freedom; does the strict discipline of preparation deprive them of something? Or to the contrary, do these enable their victory and success by freeing the competitor to truly become who they were really created to be? The road to freedom is achieved through character development. Without character you are doomed to be the slave of your instincts and urges. No stable self-esteem, no realistic self-image is possible without exploring your full potential. You cannot reach this discovery without character development.

Our values and character define us as much as our skills, characteristics and personality traits do. Your character is a mirror of your internal world, a cue for others about how they can relate to you. The strength of your character will influence your self-esteem. This is why character development, teaching good values and integrity are vital for our children.



Authentic Self-Esteem Character

The Trap of Subjectivity

Character—me and my Character

Every time an adult meets a child they will convey values to the child. They do so even when not a single word is uttered. Children learn their own worth and value system from the environment where they grow up. If the environment considers the children valuable and it is expressed, the children will also consider themselves and others as valuable.

Worth without an external authority is a relative concept. It is an external authority that has to determine the value of something, otherwise it becomes relative to the individual. The price of bread in the supermarket is defined by an external 'authority'; the store owner defines it based on certain factors outside his influence (e.g., taxes, profit margin, costs). This worth is the absolute value, since it is

not up to the customer to decide how much a loaf of bread will cost. It could be that the bread is worth only half as much for a customer; nevertheless, the product has an absolute value that includes labor as well as production costs. Without this external assessment of its value, the invested work would become relative and worthless.

Of course, the above example cannot be applied for a clear understanding of worth since it is mostly demand that determines prices in the world of commerce. However, this above example is a good illustration for the importance of stability and the external definition of worth, because if the worth of products was defined according to the needs of the 'customer,' they might as well be sold for free since that is the buyer's interest. It would soon lead to bankruptcy as the value-generating power of the surrounding economy would cease and depreciate and no one would want to work for free.

Similarly, there are values that are absolutes in our lives. If these values became relative they would threaten our very existence. The popular view of our times is that everything is relative, so values are also to be defined on an individual basis. It will be the values approved, believed to be true and to be followed by the individual that will define their decisions and actions. Unless there are common values to be held as true in an absolute sense, we can very quickly find ourselves in a conflict of individual values and in a society of chaos.

Many people see the same problems and even the possible solutions from many different perspectives. These differences can be explained by the differences in our values and behavioral styles that come from our upbringing and the influences we have been exposed to. How can you be sure about your decisions, then? How can we convince others that what we are doing is the right thing to do? Who will ultimately decide this? It looks like we need an external standard that is independent of our personal behaviors or individual values. The differences and the individual interests require a common, uniform and absolute value system; otherwise society falls apart, people become even more distant from each other and decisions are made in line with personal preferences along individual values that can be deeply harmful for the interests and values of the community as a whole.

Your actions are based on your character and your character is dependent on your value system. How we treat ourselves and each other stems from what we think of ourselves, who we consider ourselves to be and what self-esteem and self-image we hold. Our self-image is also rooted in our value system: what we consider to be true or false, good and right; or the very opposite, to be wrong, evil and to be avoided. These are all issues that relate to values or you could say they are 'matters of faith.' They all originate from what we believe to be good or bad, right or wrong. If you want people's actions to change, it will not suffice to merely use rules (even if at a certain stage in life it could be an effective and necessary tool, albeit only on the surface), but you will need to go deeper to influence the value system and the internal beliefs.

Society obviously applies rules and consequences when its basic values are violated. These external value regulators are required because there are people without any internal moral and ethical constraint that would internally regulate and prevent them from violating the common values. These people are stuck in their childhood where external regulators are still required. It is only due to external influence that they will respect others' property, boundaries, time, person or emotions. These are all issues of values and character that should be present as an internal compass or boundary in each and everyone's life.

If they are distorted, finding your way in society becomes insecure and uncertain. Therefore, these boundaries cannot be relative; they have to reflect clear and absolute values that set an obvious framework.

If we want to change any behavior or habit in the lives of our children, we will not manage unless we also convey a set of values. An everyday example would be the topic of cigarettes. In addition to merely banning and sanctioning smoking, we must teach children that their bodies and health are valuable, and why they shouldn't do things that would damage themselves. We should first teach them how to respect their bodies and value their lives. We must lead them to stable moral values and standards against which they can measure their own actions and deeds. In order to build meaningful relationships, have a good and healthy sexuality, a happy and satisfied self-esteem, it is indispensable to have a permanent ethical standard that is independent from us. Against this we can then calibrate our lives and evaluate our actions.

The events we see in our society and all over the world testify to the lack of an ethical standard and a moral crisis on a societal level, starting from the almost daily sexual and corruption-related scandals on the devaluation of relationships and the breaking down of families. The high divorce and abortion rates, the incredibly high number of suicides, and widespread drug use all testify that our society and humanity as a whole is undergoing a moral and ethical crisis. Mankind was never more in need of wisdom and knowledge to make the right decisions in politics, business and in people's personal lives than today. These social trends clearly reveal that a moral standard independent from us is the key to having a meaningful life, real joy and fulfillment.

The secret to a successful life according to King Solomon who lived 2500 years ago was the following. *"Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed."*¹ Obviously we need to have wisdom to distinguish between what is good and what is bad. In our world the good becomes bad and the bad becomes acceptable. Though there has never before been such wonderful technological advancement, still our general values that we follow in education, religion, politics and business let us down in a moral sense both on a national and individual level. We try to counterbalance the bad habits and bad practices with good behavior and habits. By contrast, the adult society could show a powerful moral example that would encourage honesty, helpfulness and self-discipline to be more in the forefront. This moral example or guideline is not meant to set tasks and requirements, but to make the above characteristics and personality traits a natural part of our lives. This is what even ancient Greeks and Romans meant by ethical education, except the fact that instead of focusing on habits, they focused on virtues and heroic behavior. And just like muscle strength increases due to training—says Aristotle—men become ethical when they do moral deeds; kind when they do kind acts; and courageous when they perform brave deeds. If Aristotle is right, it means that man must practice and exercise himself in his different abilities in order to be able to use them. The same applies to our decision-making capacity. In order to be able to choose between good and bad, we must learn based on what and how to decide. It doesn't happen overnight; it's the result of a learning process. How can you expect students to differentiate between good and bad or see the weight of their decisions and their consequences unless you teach them the basis for making such decisions? You could say that teaching and education must provide a clear guideline

¹Proverbs 3:13-18.

in preparation for adult life so that students could learn to make good decisions. For example, if you want to encourage students to have a safe sexual relationship that is satisfying in the long-term, you cannot teach them to follow their urges and instincts. We don't live like this in any other area of our lives. Neither do we tell them to eat as many cookies as they want, no matter how much they want to do this. We limit them based on specific values; we tell them not to eat more sweets, because it is bad for their health. We protect them because we love them. This love protects and defends by transferring values, developing character and setting moral standards. Since we don't want children to be little monsters ruled by their desires, urges and instincts, we cannot silently and idly watch as they choose their own values that don't strengthen, but rather weaken their character. Their future, their advancement and the common future of our society depends on whether they learn to tame their desires and rein in their urges in order to fulfill their real needs. This ability depends on character.

The Judeo-Christian values laid down in the Bible have helped the birth of societies, the establishment of educational institutions, large social networks, the strengthening of families and communities as well as boosting respect for life and work for thousands of years. The existence of cultures, countries and nations depends on whether they share these values or not. What harm or disadvantage could you suffer if, let's say, you take any of the 10 Commandments seriously? What harm could it cause to take the commandments "*Do not steal!*" or "*Do not kill!*" or "*Do not covet!*" seriously? Is there any social or individual harm when the commandment for marital fidelity, "*Do not commit adultery!*" is made into a moral standard? What would society win or lose, if married couples took their commitment and their fidelity to each other more seriously? Would the world become a bad place if the commandment "*Honor your father and your mother!*" was taken seriously? Of course not. Yet, these values are very easily discarded only because it's inconvenient to keep them.

It is equally important for a society to have a common culture as well as a common moral base. The task of teaching personal responsibility cannot be taken away from the families without any consequences. Our society has tried to transfer moral education through the different institutions to teachers, politicians, the legal system and experts while parents only cared about their work. And the result is a generation of young people who are captives of personal pleasures and consumerism, most of whom feel comfortable with a relative morality and discard all common social values. Why would they follow a society that let them down and caused them so much pain? The parents blame the schools for the situation while the schools blame the parents for it. When the adult society stops transferring clear values and obvious morals, and it conveys a fake, hypocritical moral standard, the result will be nothing less than confusion, chaos and disillusionment.

Industrialization crowded people into the cities (i.e., it brought different cultures geographically closer together), but in the meantime it increased the distance within families, because the children, parents and grandparents were all forced into a different institutional system. Children were forced to go to school, parents had to go to the workplace and the grandparents were sent to the nursing home.

The technological revolution stole the remaining time that was left after industrialization. People now spend any of that remaining time outside the different institutions connected on smartphones, sharing their lives with strangers on the other side of the planet.

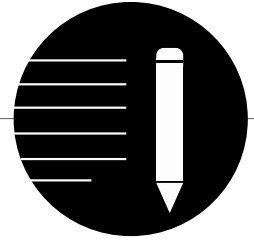
The morality of any group or social institution is the joint reflection of its character. The collapse of personal morals and responsibility experienced today threatens society to such a large extent that can be measured through the sharp increase in the number of divorces, drug use and rampant depression,

and ultimately even in social depravity and economic collapse. We paid a heavy price that can also be measured in monetary terms for the moral collapse in all areas of society.

Nobody wants to go to an untrained doctor or fly with an unskilled pilot, yet for some reason we believe that mankind can be good without being taught to be good. We want to believe that morality develops somehow naturally. In fact, the natural way is the path of least resistance, which means putting ourselves first. That is the reason why we need to convey stable, absolute values and to develop our character.

In a society of relative values, everything that is important to us loses its worth.

LESSON PLAN



10.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

Brokenhearted Role Play

Lesson Plan

Brokenhearted
Moderating
Under the tip of the iceberg

The Purpose of the Lesson

The goal of the role play is to point out the importance of values and choices as well as our underlying motivation; to help us understand how our actions and decisions are influenced by our character, values and personal beliefs.

1. Brokenhearted

20

Introduction:

Today we are going to do a special role-play and we will make decisions on an important issue. It is a fictional story, but I would like all of you to take it seriously. I'm curious to see what decision you will make!

In today's game you are a member of the Judicial Committee of the City Hospital and you will need to make a very important decision. You are the one to prioritize between 5 patients who are waiting for a heart transplant.

Everyone gets a list of names and some information about the patients. You should rank the patients according to who should get the heart first, second and so on. The list of patients waiting for a heart transplant are:

- George Mutti—Age: 61 years, occupation: suspected of criminal connections (mafia). Description: married with 7 children, affluent and after the surgery he is going to donate a large sum to the hospital.
- Peter Santos—Age: 23 years, occupation: university student. Description: not married, studies hard and helps his poor family to make ends meet. After school he wants to become a policeman.
- Ann Doyle—Age: 45 years, occupation: housewife. Description: widow with 3 children and low income, without any savings.
- Johnny Jaberg—Age: 35 years, occupation: well-known actor. Description: divorced, both of his children are raised by his wife, he gave a donation to establish a homeless shelter.
- Howard Wilkinson—Age: 55 years, occupation: Senator of California. Description: married with one child, recently elected, affluent.

Order the list according to what you choose. First, everyone makes the decision alone. When you are ready, hide your answers.

Afterwards, form groups of four where you discuss the order and make a single shared list (that might be different from your individual priority order). One person writes down the ranking selected by the group.

2. Moderating

10

Listen—What decisions have been made?

[and then ask:]

- Were you influenced by the background of the different people?

When people wait for a heart transplant in real life, the priority order is not created based on such information. It is primarily based on physical condition

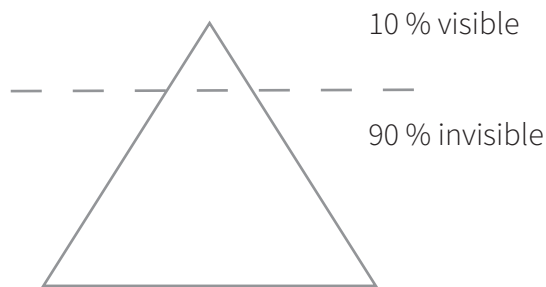
and life expectancy. So, this game revealed that there are many different factors that influence the decisions we make.

3. Under the tip of the iceberg

15

Draw a large iceberg on the whiteboard.

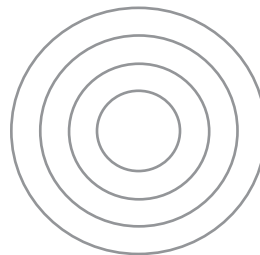
- Where do you think the water level is in the case of an iceberg?



Ships will encounter terrible problems if they only focus on the visible part of an iceberg.

- *If you apply this image to ourselves, what percentage of you as a person is visible? (OUR BEHAVIOR, the way we behave and relate to other people.)*
- *What part is invisible, but still affects the visible part? (Our CHARACTER AND VALUES that we believe to be true about the world; what we consider to be good or bad)*

Just like in the case of an iceberg, the larger part of us is invisible. The invisible part in people is built in the following way:



- What is that narrow inner circle where we learn our core values and beliefs?

It is where we grew up, the family or the lack of a family. It is the family where we learn what we think of the world.

After their attempts, help the students to find the right answer.

Draw circles as it is shown here.

Draw the first circle and write in it: ME.

Write in the second circle: FAMILY.

Write in the third
circle: FRIENDS.

Afterwards this circle expands. Adolescence is the time when we hear about different values, ideas and beliefs. It is possible that we think completely differently than what we experienced at home; this is totally normal. During adolescence these values are internalized and by the time you become adults you will have already developed your own convictions.

The next circle comes later, when you have your job, start traveling and collecting different experiences that open your life up to the world.

It is from your core values that your character develops; it will determine what kind of a person you become and you will make decisions based on your character. Your decisions determine your behavior. This is the part that is already visible from the outside.

Decisions

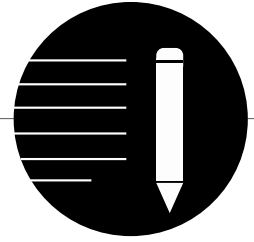
We constantly have to make decisions in life. When we are children our parents make the decisions for us.

- In general, what do parents usually decide about?

But as you grow older, the decisions and their consequences will increasingly become your responsibility.

- What are the decisions that you have to make? What are you responsible for?
- What do you want your decisions to express about you, your convictions and character?

LESSON PLAN



11.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

The Silver Ball

Lesson plan

Jason and the Time Thread

The importance
of small decisions

Summary

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this session, your students should be able to: recognize that even their “small” decisions can add up and result in a “big” consequence. Understand the concept of delayed gratification. Understand that long-term gain is worth short-term pain.

1. Jason and the Time Thread

20

Introduction:

Some people live in the past, some people live in the present, but many people live in the future. They imagine how perfect their life will be when they get out of school, get a job, get married, have kids or achieve whatever they think the perfect life is. They cannot enjoy today because they are too busy looking for tomorrow. Here is a story about a boy who could not wait for tomorrow.

Once upon a time there was a boy named Jason. Jason was a strong boy who could run like the wind. He was a loyal young fellow who liked nothing better than to spend time with his friend, Lisa. Even though she was a girl, Lisa was just as much fun as any boy. (In fact, Jason often thought—although he told no one—that when he grew up he would marry Lisa.) Jason was a good boy all in all, a fine friend, but he did have one problem. Jason was rather impatient.

Jason's favorite times were school holidays. When he was in school, he was always thinking about what he would do when classes were over for the day, or when they were over forever. Jason's teacher often reprimanded him for daydreaming in class.

"What are you dreaming about now, Jason?" his teacher would ask.

Jason often replied, *"I'm thinking about all the things I'll do when I grow up."*

Jason's teacher would smile and tell Jason, *"There will be plenty of time for that. Why don't you just enjoy being a boy for now? Being a grownup isn't all wonderful, you know."*

Jason was not so sure about that, so he kept thinking about the future. One day, he was sprawled out under a tree, dreaming about growing up and marrying Lisa. When he opened his eyes, there on the grass next to him lay a silver ball, from which dangled a golden thread.

Curious, Jason reached out and touched the thread.

"I wonder what it is," he said.

Just then, an old woman appeared in front of Jason. *"This silver ball holds your life thread,"* she said. *"If you leave it alone and do not pull at it, time will pass normally. If you want to speed things up, all you have to do is pull out the thread a bit, and an hour will go by like a second. You must be extremely careful, though, because you cannot push the thread back into the ball if you change your mind. Once the thread is pulled out, that time is gone. Now, you may have this ball if you want it, but you must be aware of the consequences and be certain to use it wisely. Do you want it?"*

Jason grabbed the ball and put it in his pocket. Of course he wanted it! Wouldn't you? He actually refrained from touching the thread for a couple of days. Then, on the third day while Jason was at school, he wished he were

outside playing instead of inside listening to the teacher. He knew that the day outside was sunny and warm; so Jason reached into his pocket, found the silver ball, and pulled at the golden thread.

When Jason looked up, the teacher was saying, *"All right, class, it is time to pack things up for the day. School is dismissed."* Jason dashed out the door and spent a delightful afternoon climbing trees with his friend Lisa.

From that point on, Jason tugged at the golden thread anytime there was a bad moment he wished to escape or a fun moment he wanted to reach more quickly. After a couple years of school, Jason decided that moving along to an actual job would be much more exciting. He gave the string a good, long pull and found himself an apprentice in a carpenter's shop.

Jason enjoyed his work as a carpenter and rarely pulled the string, except when he needed payday to come a little sooner. By this time, he and Lisa were in love and Jason simply could not wait to be married. A couple of tugs at the string brought him to their wedding day. As Jason looked out over his friends and family who had gathered for the wedding, he noticed that his mother's hair had grown rather gray. He felt a bit guilty that he had pulled the string so often.

Now and then, Jason thought of the old woman's warning to use the golden thread wisely, and for a time, he would resolve not to pull at it. However, something always came up that spurred him to tug at the thread just a bit.

Once Jason and Lisa had children, Jason gave the thread a little tug whenever the babies would cry or become ill just to spare them any pain.

When an oppressive government threw Jason in prison for speaking out against it, Jason shortened his sentence by a good yank at the string. He was back home in a flash, but now he was a middle-aged man; and the thread was no longer gold, but silver. Jason's hair had started to turn gray, and his face had wrinkles.

When the bills for a house full of children grew too troublesome one night, Jason pulled out a good length of thread. In the morning, the children were all grown with jobs and families of their own. Jason and Lisa had the house to themselves once again.

When he looked at the thread, he found that it had turned from silver to gray. In the mirror, Jason saw that he was now an old man. His hair was completely gray and his face was more wrinkled than ever. Lisa, too, was old and in poor health. At this point, Jason was cautious about pulling the thread because he knew he must be getting close to the end. Whenever Lisa was sick, Jason pulled a bit at the thread anyway, because he could not stand to see her suffer. When money troubles arose, Jason tugged at the thread because, by now, he knew no other way to handle his problems.

Take a minute and talk about what they think Jason's response would be.

One day, while Jason was worrying about his predicament, he took a walk in the forest. How could he pull less at the small amount of thread remaining to him? He sat down in a small clearing and closed his eyes to think. When he opened his eyes, he saw the old woman who had given him the magic ball. She smiled at him and asked, "So, have you had a good life?"

- Do you think Jason had a good life? Explain your answer.
- What do you think his response will be to the old woman's question, "So, have you had a good life?"
- Would you have taken the ball from the old woman? Why or why not?

"I don't know," Jason answered. "The silver ball has helped me to escape sadness, pain and boredom. I have never had to wait for anything I wanted. It seems, though, that my life has gone by too quickly. I feel as if I have had no time to reflect on anything that has happened, and the thread is almost gone; I am afraid to pull it any more, because if I do, I may die. No, I am not so sure that the silver ball has been a good thing after all."

"Why, you ungrateful man!" exclaimed the old woman. "I give you such a gift and you don't even appreciate it! What would you have me give you? I can grant you one wish."

Questions:

- What do you think Jason asked for?
- What would you ask for?

"Honestly," said Jason, "What I'd like is to live my life again, but this time without the magic ball. I know that means that I'll experience the bad as well as the good, but at least then my life won't pass by so quickly and be so meaningless."

"So be it," said the old woman, and she stretched out her hand. Jason placed the ball into her hand, leaned back and fell asleep.

He awoke as a young boy again, in his own bed, with his mother shaking him. "Get up, Jason," she was saying. "You'll be late for school."

"Mother," he said, "I had an awful dream. I was old and my life was almost over, and I had nothing to show for it, not even memories."

Jason's mother laughed. "Oh, Jason," she said. "You'll always have memories. Now why don't you go make some? I see Lisa waiting for you outside. Hurry and get dressed, and the two of you can walk to school together."

A few minutes later, Jason dashed out the door to join Lisa. It was a beautiful day. The sun had never looked so bright. Lisa's smile had never looked so big, and even school didn't seem like such a terrible prospect. In fact, Jason was actually looking forward to it.

2. The importance of small decisions

15

Allow students to discuss it a few minutes, then narrow their focus with the following questions and information:

- What does this story teach us about making decisions?

“Small” decisions can have “big” consequences

- Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?
- When small decisions are combined with other small decisions, can they have a big effect?

A. When they are combined with other “small” decisions

Jason made a lot of small decisions about when he would pull the thread. There was no single pull of the thread that seemed to cause his problem. It was not such a big deal at the time to get out of school early, get a job early or get married early. Collectively, however, they added up to the feeling that he had wasted his life or at least not experienced it to the fullest extent possible. The “small” decision to drink some alcohol combined with the “small” decision to try to find your way home alone can have disastrous consequences. On the other hand, the “small” decision to study for an hour instead of watching television combined with the “small” decision to get a good night’s sleep could have great results when you take your test the next day.

- Did you notice any habits being reinforced by Jason’s choices in the story?

B. When they shape your character by reinforcing habits

Each time Jason made a “small” decision, he reinforced his habit of dealing with problems by escaping them. Soon, he was unable to face his problems any other way. He developed a character that ran from any pain or sadness. A habit of telling “little white lies” can lead to larger lies and can develop a dishonest character. A habit of telling the truth even when it is a bit uncomfortable can lead to an honest character.

- Have you ever made a decision that turned out to have bigger consequences than you thought it would?

C. When they are not as small as you thought

At any point in the story, Jason could have given the thread a small tug to get out of a slightly uncomfortable situation only to find that he had reached the end of the thread and, thus, his life.

People who make the “small” decision to have sex without protection “because of their love” could find out that the decision was not as “small” as they thought. They could become parents, get an STI—even AIDS. On the other hand, a person could make the “small” decision to admit to a mistake in a friendship and work to correct the mistake. That person might discover

that it was not such a small decision after all when their friend appreciates the honesty and the friendship deepens.

3. Summary

10

Show the class a short three-legged stool. Point out that it is a small thing, and thus should not be able to have much impact on any of their lives. Position the three-legged stool toward one end of the classroom, at least one meter from any walls or desks.

Ask one of the boys to sit on the three-legged stool, with his legs bent and feet on the floor in front of him. Then ask another boy to sit on the first boy's knees with similar posture. Ask a third boy to sit on the second boy's knees. Continue this process until all the boys in the class are involved, each sitting on another's knees, forming a long chain of boys.

- How important is the three-legged stool now?

Notice how such a little object is holding up so many boys. Sometimes, a small decision, if it is a good one, can be a strong, positive factor in your life.

Now what would happen if I removed the three-legged stool out from under the first boy? All the boys would fall, or at least lose their balance. In the same way, sometimes a small decision, if it is a bad one, can have a negative affect on your life and the lives of your friends.

Write the following statement on the chalkboard:

Long-term gain is worth short-term pain

- Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?
- Could it help your future plans to make some sacrifices now? How?

A. Sometimes you have to make sacrifices now to achieve what you want in the future

This idea is called delayed gratification, and Jason did not understand it. He felt that experiencing pain and inconvenience was a waste of his precious time and chose to fast forward through those difficult or boring moments. He did not understand that hard work could give him satisfaction in his job. Jason was unaware of the fact that taking care of a crying child or a sick wife would give him the opportunity to express his love for the people in his life. He never realized that the long-term gain would be worth the short-term pain.

- Can you go back in time to change a bad decision you made, once you see the consequences?
- How does that relate to the idea of delayed gratification?



B. You cannot push the thread back in once it has been pulled it out.

Remember the old woman's warning in the story? You cannot push the thread back in once you have pulled it out. Jason was fortunate in getting the opportunity to live his life over again; we are not given that same luxury. This is why delayed gratification is so important. We cannot have everything we want now, and then push the thread back when we are dissatisfied with the consequences of our choices.

- Have you ever found a gift with your name on it, and when no one was looking, sneaked a peak inside to see what it was, then wrapped it back up? How did you feel after you had done that?

Maybe no one else found out what you had done, but when the gift was actually given to you, you probably felt less excited than you normally would have. It may have been hard to act surprised when you saw the gift. Some of the fun had been taken away.

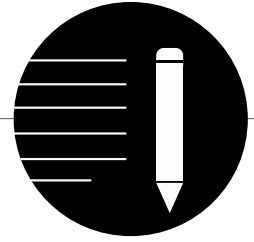
One of the gifts that God has given us is our sexuality, but He has also given us very specific instructions on how and when we can open it. If we get ahead of God's timetable and open it early, we will not experience the best this gift has to offer. Later we will regret not waiting. Like Jason, we may wish we could go back and do it all over again, making a different decision.

Ending the lesson

Delayed gratification is not an easy thing to understand by just talking about it.

- Have you experienced (other) situations when you benefited from practicing delayed gratification?

LESSON PLAN



12.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

Character Development

Lesson plan

The Golden Rule
Finding good traits
How to develop
your character?
Choosing to be brave
The rules of our group

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students can identify the qualities and behaviors they assign to a person of character, understand how the Golden Rule can be applied and then select a character trait of their own that they would like to develop.

1. The Golden Rule

5

Introduction:

- Do you think that some decisions were right and some were wrong? What is the reason for it? How can you determine what is right and what is wrong?

Some people think that the right behavior is governed by the Golden Rule:

“Do to others as you would have them to do to you.”

or in different words

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Discuss these rules in pairs.

- How do you think these rules help you to make good decisions?

Doing the right thing usually corresponds with a positive answer to the following two questions:

1. Is it in line with the Golden Rule? Would I want to be treated like this?
2. Should others also act this way in a similar situation?

2. Finding good traits

10

Discuss in groups:

You may need to list some possible traits like honesty, being responsible, etc.

[Divide the participants into 5 groups and assign to each of them one of the following roles: doctor, religious leader, government leader, mother and teacher.]

Today you will take a closer look at five important professions. In each group, list the characteristics you think people need in order to be good at this type of work.

[Then ask the participants to write down the desired characteristics of the profession assigned to them.]

- What are the characteristics of a good doctor? What traits does a good mother have?

[When all the groups have completed the task, ask them to share their lists with the others.] Write on the whiteboard all the characteristics suggested by the 5 groups.

[If necessary, you can add the following characteristics to the list:]

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reliable • respectful of others • kind-hearted • courageous • fair • responsible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • caring for others • diligent • honest • a person of integrity • loyal • keeps their promises |
|---|---|

3. How to develop your character?

10

A number of qualities such as honesty, respect and kindness, etc., were listed by several groups. These characteristics—often referred to as virtues—are important for people of any profession. If these virtues are in someone's life you call that person a man or woman of character.

The famous Greek philosopher Aristotle defined character as the right way of life which is manifested in how you relate to others and yourself. However, the most frequently quoted version of the Golden Rule comes from Jesus of Nazareth: *"Love your neighbor as yourself"* (which is often expressed in the following way: *"Do unto others as you would have them do to you"*). Jesus basically said that men and women of character treat others according to the Golden Rule. You could also say that they respect others and treat them as special. This is a definition that you should apply also for yourself. You are to treat even yourself this way, because you are special.

Character and behaving consistently in the right way does not happen on its own; it must be developed and you must practice it regularly. It takes a long time and many different life situations for you to develop character. You reach mature adulthood when you are able to distinguish what is right and what is wrong and choose the right thing no matter the consequences.



Let the participants mention several reasons why it could be difficult to make the right decision. Then complete the list with the following:

Act according to what you want to become and soon you will be what you act like.

Let's examine the two fundamental elements of character development.

You can develop your character by making the right decisions even in difficult situations.

- Is it hard to do the right thing, to act with integrity? Why is that?
- You can be misunderstood.
- You may be left all alone if others don't identify with your choices.

- You might have to give up on something you like or enjoy doing.
- It could be painful or uncomfortable (for yourself or others).

4. Choosing to be brave

10

Background history:

Much of the country of Holland lies below sea level. In order to keep the North Sea from rushing in and flooding the land, the people of Holland have built great walls called dikes and have kept a careful watch over the dikes for many centuries, making sure they stay strong. Even a tiny hole in a dike can be a very dangerous thing.

- What does it take to do the right thing when doing the wrong thing seems to be easier or more enjoyable?

It takes courage to make the right decision in a difficult situation. Courage means that you decide to face the difficult situation, because it is the right thing to do, even if it is unpleasant or painful. If you act with courage you might be afraid of the consequences, but you deliberately choose to do what is right.

Brave behavior

A long time ago lived a Dutch boy called Peter who was 8 years old. One afternoon his mother asked him to take food to a sick friend of theirs who lived on the other side of the dike. He nodded in agreement when his mother asked him to be back before it got dark, then he set out happily.

Peter visited the sick friend and he stayed for a while to chat. When the time came for him to leave, he started walking back home along the canal. He noticed that the autumn rain made the canal swell and it was beating heavily against the dike.

He was almost home when he was stopped by the sound of leaking water. Peter looked down and spotted a very small hole in the dike where water was leaking through.

Just like any other Dutch child, Peter knew that this was extremely dangerous. The small leak could very easily become a large hole and it could break the dike, resulting in half of the country being flooded.

Peter knew what he was supposed to do. He climbed to the hole and stuck his finger to stop the water.

And he was successful! Peter smiled and said to the water: *"Until you see me, you will not flood my beloved country!"* With that, he started shouting for help.

Unfortunately, nobody heard his cry for help. It was getting dark and chilly. Peter's arm started to grow tired. He was wondering whether his mom would worry about him for not going home at all. Maybe she thinks that he decided to spend the night at their friend's.

Time passed and his arm went numb and it was hurting badly. His eyelids were becoming heavy, but he didn't fall asleep. Every now and then he rubbed

the arm with the finger tucked into the hole. Peter knew he must persevere, he must stop the water from breaking the dike. So he spent the entire night outside, sitting by the dike.

Early the next morning a man on his way to work heard someone sigh in the bottom of the dike. He looked down and saw the boy clinging to the dike.

'Are you hurt?' he asked Peter.

'No, I'm holding the water back!' responded the boy. *'Tell others to come quickly and help.'*

The men ran and quickly called others to help who brought their tools to fix the dike. The dike was finally intact again. Brave Peter was taken home to his parents and soon he was revered by people as a hero who saved the lives of many Dutch people.

They even erected a monument for him, which can still be visited in The Hague.

A summary of the story

It doesn't really seem to be an act of bravery to be standing/squatting in a ditch, putting your finger into a hole. Peter, however, needed courage when he decided to plug the hole. He was only 8 years old and he had to spend the entire night alone, out in the cold and dark to prevent the dike from breaking. He knew he had to do the right thing and did it even though it caused him serious discomfort and pain.

In this course there will be many situations studied and discussed where it is very difficult to make the right decision, far more difficult than what Peter had to confront. At times others want to persuade us to engage in inappropriate actions such as taking drugs, stealing, cheating on homework or having sex at an extremely young age. These are the situations in which you can exercise courage and be proud of yourself for making the right decision, for developing your character.

- What kind of an adult do you think Peter has become? Why?

If Peter continued to make the right decisions as he did that night by the dike, he probably grew up to be a man of character. Developing your character is not a one-time event.

You become a person of integrity by continuously making the right decisions. With each right decision you make, you fill your bravery tank that you can resort to in difficult situations.

It takes time to become a man or woman of character, to know and even exercise doing what is right. Developing your character is a process that never ends. No matter how much you perfect it, there will be areas in your life where you can and should continue to grow and learn.

Everyone makes bad decisions at times. Developing your character means that you learn from these mistakes and next time you make better choices. It means that you have to do the right thing again and again in the various situations that life brings to you.

5. The rules of our group

10

Shared
application:

Write on the whiteboard all the responses and ask the participants to decide for themselves which rules they want to turn into standards for classroom behavior. Write (or ask a participant to write) these rules on a large sheet of paper that you can pin to the classroom wall for everyone to see.

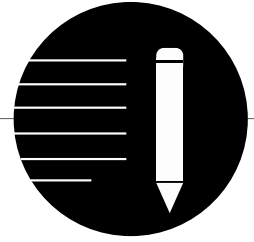
You can develop your character if you really commit to it and choose to practice the right thing, even at a price. Wouldn't it be great to live in such a community where everyone strove for doing what is right?

But you can always practice making the right decisions and develop your character even in this classroom.

- What rules or guidelines can you set for the class to express that you want people to treat each other according to the Golden Rule?

If you pay attention to adhere to these rules in the classroom and in other areas of your life, you are on the right track to becoming a man or woman of character.

LESSON PLAN



13.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

Taking Responsibility

Lesson plan

Will you be a fish or a log?

Responsible actions

Areas of responsibility

The king who lost his dinner

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students will learn methods to better control their behavior and assess their level of physical, emotional, spiritual, social and intellectual responsibility.

1. Will you be a fish or a log?

10

Introduction:

Today you will continue to examine the human character, more specifically, the trait of being responsible.

Note:

This is more related to developing/ acquiring a sense of responsibility than the natural development that happens as you become older.

Summarize the answers.

[Write on the whiteboard 'Dependent' and ask the participants to list how an infant is dependent on others. Write down their answers under 'Dependent.' Ask the participants to describe how an infant is dependent on others. Finally, ask the participants about the areas where a teenager is still dependent on others. Discuss how and why they are less dependent on others than earlier.]

When you were younger you acted under the influence of people who took care of you. You could eat only when your parents gave you food. You went where they took you. You completely relied on your parents and the people who took care of you.

As you got older you were becoming increasingly more responsible and less dependent on others. You learned to dress, eat, talk and play with other children by yourselves. You became responsible for going to school and performing your tasks.

- Soon you will become adults and be completely responsible for yourselves and others. Do you feel ready to be responsible for others?

[Refer to the needs of an infant that are written on the whiteboard and ask the participants whether they feel ready to undertake this enormous responsibility.]

1. I'm responsible for everything I do. If I do it right, I will get the credit for it. If I make a mistake, I am the one to assume responsibility for it, instead of blaming others.
2. I'm responsible for my studies and to do what I can do instead of relying on others.
3. I'm responsible to treat everyone with respect.
4. I'm responsible to support my community, my people and this world.
5. I'm responsible to take good care of our planet.

Your decisions today will determine how much you can handle responsibility when you are older.

- What influence does the water have on a fish and a log?
- How can the fish have the same 'experience' as the log?

You can live your adolescent years like a fish or like a log. Fish can swim upstream or downstream in rivers. When they stop swimming, the current carries them downstream. If they swim upstream, they can counterbalance

Tell the students the following principles of taking responsibility. As you read out the principles ask how ready they feel to undertake responsibility in these areas:



Ask the following questions:

the natural flow of water and take advantage of all that the river offers. Logs, however, are just drifting on the surface. They have no choice in deciding where to go; they end up where the river takes them.

The question you are to answer is this: Will you participate in the planning of your future or are you just drifting into it like a log in the river?

2. Responsible actions

5

Group discussion.

This activity is meant to clarify for students the responsibilities they have already undertaken and to encourage them to assume further responsibilities.

Take note to remember to bring this topic up every week for a full month.

Taking responsibility for your lives means many different things. You have probably undertaken various tasks and responsibilities. Form groups and find as many examples for 'responsible actions' (going to school, doing chores at home, doing your homework, etc.) as possible. Appoint a note-taker who writes down the different ideas of your group and will present them to the others.

[Give the participants 3 minutes to think about the question and write down their answers, then ask the note-takers to share these 3 ideas for each group. Record their answers on the whiteboard as they are speaking.

Explain to the participants that if you want to change your behavior and develop new habits, first you have to be aware of your current behavioral patterns. Ask the participants to write down everything they have done or accomplished in the course of the last week.

As a rule, it takes 30 days for a certain behavior to become a new habit. Encourage the participants to record and add to their list any other accomplishment in the coming 4 weeks. If they take note of their tasks and responsibilities, it will be easier for them to choose new ones.]

3. Areas of responsibility

20



Undertaking responsibility for your life starts with the decision that you want to become responsible, but the process doesn't end here. It is a lifelong process in which you recognize the things that are under your influence and you take control of them. Responsible people made a decision to take control of themselves and their behavior.

Taking responsibility is hard work, but alternatively, you will depend on others to decide for you (which might be easier, but you will not control your own life).

Write down these areas of responsibility on the whiteboard and ask the participants to list examples for each category that they can be responsible for.

During the conversation, mention the examples only if they need some help to get going.

Always focus on one area at a time and then move onto the next one.

You can add further examples that are linked to the difficulties experienced by the specific group of participants.

Individual task

If you want to be a 'fish' instead of being a 'log,' you have to take control of the things in your power. What are these things?

Do you remember the diagram with the various aspects of your personality? Your life consists of physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual aspects.

You are responsible for yourself and for your behavior in these five areas.

Physical.

- Make a conscious decision to rest and exercise enough.
- Set boundaries for premarital sexual relations.

Intellectual.

- Develop habits of studying and reading.
- Get engrossed in a topic you are interested in only for fun.

Emotional.

- Instead of hurting others, figure out another way to express your anger and frustration.
- Accept compliments and praise in a kind and polite manner.

Social.

- Acknowledge your mistakes and apologize for them.
- Pay attention when another person is speaking to you.

Spiritual.

- Ask your parents to talk about their faith in God and conviction.
- Pray and ask God to teach you more about himself.
- Read the Bible.

Are you a fish or a log?

[Ask the participants to fill in the FISH/LOG chart in the Student Notes. Explain that the chart includes examples for the areas of responsibility that they have just discussed. The participants should assess themselves for the different areas based on what they resemble more—a fish or a log. They should place a left-facing or right-facing arrow (depending on whether they are more FISH-like or LOG-like).

Then ask the participants to rank the various areas (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual) based on how difficult it is to undertake such responsibilities (1 = very easy, 5 = very difficult).]

4. The king who lost his dinner

10

The background story:

Alfred the Great reigned over the West Saxons and then the Anglo-Saxons in 9th century England.

At the time of the story, King Alfred defended his country against the Danish invaders.

Having lost several battles against the Danes, King Alfred and his men were forced to disperse and work to survive in whatever way they could. King Alfred disguised himself as a shepherd, wandering for days and days in the forest.

He finally arrived at a little hut, the home of a lumberjack and his wife. The hungry king knocked on the door and asked the wife to give him some food and a place to rest.

The woman had no idea who the ragged shepherd was, but she had pity on him and agreed to give him food. *'Come in,' she said. 'I will bake some cakes on the stove. Watch them and if you don't let them burn while I'm milking the cow, you will get a share of our dinner.'*

King Alfred thanked her for her goodness and promised to keep an eye on the cakes. He sat by the fire when the woman left. As he was staring into the flames he remembered his troubles. How will he gather his army back together? How can he defend the country against the Danes? What military plan should he follow in battle? It all seemed very hopeless.

King Alfred didn't notice the smoke that gradually filled the hut. Neither did he realize that the cakes were badly burnt, turning into tiny black charcoal dumplings.

However, he did notice when the woman returned from milking the cow. The woman looked at the cakes, the smoke in the air and started quarreling with King Alfred. *'What a lazy person!' she shouted. 'We will all go hungry tonight. You want to eat, but without working for it!'*

Alfred could not respond; he felt ashamed even to look at the woman.

At exactly this moment, the lumberjack arrived home from work. He immediately recognized the king and ordered his wife to stay quiet. *'This is no other than King Alfred himself!' he cried.*

The woman felt terrible. She apologized and fell on her knees asking for the king's forgiveness.

King Alfred told her to stand up. *'There is nothing to apologize for. You were right when you scolded me,' he said. 'I promised to watch the cakes, but I let them get burnt. If you undertake responsibility, you must do it whether it is a big thing or a small one. I failed you in this one and it will never happen again.'*

- Let's think about King Alfred for a second. In what way did he act like a log (that undertakes no responsibility)?
- In what way did he act like a fish (that undertakes responsibility)?
- Why is it important to fulfill even the smallest and the biggest obligations once you take responsibility for them?

The story of King Alfred is not about whether the King had dinner or not.

Soon after this happened, King Alfred did manage to drive the Danes out of England.

End of the lesson

Kings and children alike must take responsibility for themselves and their own actions if they want to shape their future.

If you undertake responsibility for yourself and your behavior, you will become like a fish rather than a log. You will make decisions, you will strive to make your dreams come true, and you will create opportunities for yourself instead of letting others make decisions for you.

STUDENT NOTES



Taking Responsibility

FISH

LOG



PHYSICAL (level of difficulty:____)

Make a conscious decision to rest and exercise enough.

Set boundaries for premarital sexual relations.

INTELLECTUAL (level of difficulty:____)

Develop habits of studying and reading.

Get engrossed in a topic you are interested in only for fun.

EMOTIONAL (level of difficulty:____)

Instead of hurting others, figure out another way to express your anger and frustration.

Accept compliments and praise in a kind and polite manner.

SOCIAL (level of difficulty:____)

Acknowledge your mistakes and apologize for them.

Pay attention when another person is speaking to you.

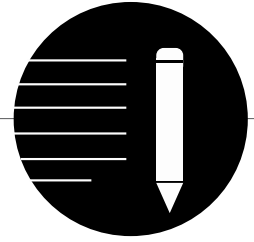
SPIRITUAL (level of difficulty:____)

Ask your parents to talk about their faith in God and convictions.

Pray and ask God to teach you more about himself.

Read the Bible.

LESSON PLAN



14.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

Respecting Others

Lesson plan

The Treasure—A story
The Golden Rule
The four areas of respect
Boundaries

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students will understand the concept of respect; they can identify examples and list the four fundamental areas of respect and can assess their boundaries. They will also understand the concept that a boundary is a threshold to be crossed only with permission.

1. The Treasure—A story

15

Ask the participants to explain the meaning of these statements, especially in light of the character traits discussed during the last lesson.

Before class, write the following statements on the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper:

What I do reflects who I am.

Who I am determines what I do.

Today you will continue examining the human character. We will address the character trait of ‘respect.’ First of all, think about these two statements.

Note that the two statements are interrelated, because who I am and what I do mutually affect each other.

[Read the following story after several participants have spoken up.]

Story:

The Treasure

There was once an old man who lived all alone. His wife died and he had three sons, but they were very busy with their own lives and rarely had time for their father.

This old man used to be a tailor, but his trembling hands could not hold the needle anymore and his eyesight also had deteriorated. Throughout his life he worked very hard to provide for his family, but now as a man incapable of working and therefore useless to them, he feared that his sons would forsake him. As his condition deteriorated, his sons came to visit him less and less, and he knew the time was coming when they would no longer visit him because he was such a great burden to them. There were nights when he couldn’t sleep, he was so worried about his future. He finally came up with a plan to handle this situation.

He asked a carpenter friend to make him a large wooden box. Then he visited another friend, a locksmith, and asked him for an old lock. In the end, he went to see a glass-blower friend and asked for all the scrap and waste glass parts he had.

The next time when the sons came to visit the elderly man, they wondered what the large and heavy wooden box under the table contained.

“What’s in the box?” they asked him curiously.

“Nothing special,” responded the father. *“It’s something that I have collected.”*

The box gave a mysterious sound when they shook it.

“It’s full of the gold that our father accumulated throughout the years,” the sons whispered among themselves. From that moment on, they decided to keep watch and take turns to stay with their father to protect the gold. The first week the youngest boy moved in; he cooked and did the laundry for his father.

The following week the middle son took care of him, and afterwards it was the oldest one's time to take his turn. This went on for a long time.

In the end, the old man became very sick and passed away. The three sons, with their minds fixed on the gold in the wooden box, gave their father a proper burial. They thought that now they could afford to do this for him.

As soon as the burial ceremony was over, they rushed to the house, searched for the key and opened the box in great haste. All three of them were expecting a rich inheritance.

When they opened the box the oldest son could hardly catch his breath. *"This is sooo evil!"* he spurted. They were staring at the wooden box full of glass pieces. *"This is a very cruel thing to do to your sons!"*

Then they suddenly all fell silent. The middle son spoke out:

"What else could he have done? Let's be honest. If it wasn't for this box, we wouldn't have taken care of him."

The youngest boy broke down and started sobbing. *"I'm so ashamed of myself. We forced him to deceive us only because we didn't honor the commandment he had taught us when we were children."*

The oldest son still couldn't believe that there was no treasure in the box. He turned it upside down and poured all the glass pieces on the floor. The three sons spotted a line that was written in the bottom of the box. *"Honor your father and mother."*

Group discussion

This story has a lot to teach us about character traits that were discussed before: about faithfulness, goodness, caring for others and about being responsible.

- Did the sons in the story manifest any of these character traits? What qualities did their actions reveal?
- Do you remember the message that the father left for them in the bottom of the wooden box?

Respect means that you reveal how much you value someone by how you talk to them, how you treat them or how you handle something that is important in their life. In this story the boys considered the gold to be the treasure, but for their father the real treasure was respect.

Respect is not just something that you owe your parents. It should characterize all your relationships.

Now let's try to understand respect by approaching it from the opposite direction, by examining disrespect.

- Can you give examples of people disrespecting others?

Examples of disrespect:

When others use your things without permission; damage something you loaned to them; ridicule your views; criticize your friends; enter your personal space; poke or touch you when you don't want it; pressure you to give up your values and principles, etc.

When someone shows respect, they avoid doing any of the above.

2. The Golden Rule

5



We have seen that everyone wants people to take responsibility for themselves and everyone wants to be treated with respect. We tend to trust people who act responsibly and we also feel good in the company of people who respect us.

Doesn't it make sense that others feel the same way about you? If you act in a responsible manner, others will trust you. If you respect others, they will be happy to be around you, won't they?

These ideas are in line with the Golden Rule that was discussed in the lesson on Character Development. Can you recall the Golden Rule?

"Do to others as you would have them do to you."

Just as this rule can help you understand what is right and what is wrong during character development, it is also one of the greatest secrets to any relationship, whether with your friends, siblings, parents or the opposite sex.

When you act responsibly and treat others with respect, they will trust you more and pay you the respect you desire.

3. The four areas of respect

15

Ask the groups to discuss and give examples for one area (yourself, others, studying and community) until every member of the group can list something that differs from what the other group members said.

[Assign a number to each participant, starting with 1 up to the total number of all participants. They should remember their number, because they will need it after the exercise. Now divide them into groups of 4 or 5.]

In your own group think about three examples of how you can show respect for the following:

- YOURSELF
- OTHERS
- STUDYING
- COMMUNITY

Ask the participants to come back in 5 minutes and stand by their chair.

Give them a number in advance and call one number at a time. The person should share one idea that their group has just discussed.

Once the participant has finished talking, this person takes their seat and also everyone else who had a similar idea sits down, too.

Continue until there is no one standing.

Here are a couple of examples for every one of these areas. This way it will be easier for you to think about your own examples.

Yourself

- You should take care of your appearance.
- You should stand by your opinion, even when it is different from what your friends think.

Others

- You should accept that your friends have the right to an opinion different from yours.
- You should never treat others in a way that is unpleasant or painful for them.

Studying

- You should finish your tasks and assignments on time.
- You should pay attention to the teacher or the other students when they are talking.

Community

- You should volunteer to serve in your community.
- You should not litter or paint on walls.

4. Boundaries

10

There is another idea that will be examined today—the concept of ‘boundaries.’ It is an important way of expressing respect to others when you respect their boundaries. Every country in the world (our country included) must draw and keep strict borders between its own territory and area of the neighboring countries. Border disputes often result in conflicts and even wars between countries.

In the same way, clear boundaries are very important in all human relationships. Two rules of respect are applicable in this case:

1. You respect the boundaries of others and
2. You take responsibility for what is within your own boundaries.

If you have healthy boundaries, you know who you are and respect the boundaries of others.

Discussion in pairs.

After one minute
switch partners:
pair up with a
different person
of the same sex.

Experiment with boundaries

You will conduct an experiment in order to better understand the concept of boundaries and how your boundaries affect your relationships with others. Boundaries are part of respecting yourself and others.

Pair up with someone of the same sex and wait for further instruction.

First, stand as close—or as far—as you would normally stand when talking to each other. Talk about your hobbies, your pets or what sports you do.

Now stand with your backs to each other and talk about your favorite foods.

Then one should remain standing, and the other should kneel down. Discuss your favorite films, books or music.

Finally, stand so close that your toes touch and talk about the qualities you would like to see in your future spouse.

The assessment of your boundaries

- Which situation was the most comfortable for you? Which one was the most uncomfortable? Why?

Maybe you have a friend who likes to be hugged and there are others who don't. These are examples for physical boundaries. You have to be aware of your own boundaries and respect the boundaries of others.

In addition to physical distance there are many other social boundaries that you have.

It could be boundaries in speech (things you don't like or want to hear from others), boundaries in group interaction (the length of time you like to spend in the company of other people and how many people), boundaries of possession (what you are willing to lend to others), etc.

Each boundary type could reveal that your boundaries are either too rigid or too weak. Both could result in relationship difficulties.

Let's say that Christie and Charles are friends. It is always Charles who decides what they do together. Even if she doesn't really feel like doing what Charles suggests, Christie always agrees because she is afraid of losing him as a friend. In this case, Christie has very weak relational boundaries.

But the opposite could also happen. Frank and Will became friends because they both like to play soccer. However, when Frank becomes interested in other hobbies and doesn't want to play soccer as often, Will stops being friends with him. Will probably has very rigid relationship boundaries.

The friendships are hurting in both cases because the boundaries were unhealthy: either too weak or too rigid.

Small group discussion:
The participants should discuss these questions in groups of 3 or 4 and then share their answers with the rest of the group.



What do you mean by boundaries? Boundaries provide the framework in which you feel comfortable. Since you respect yourself, you consider yourself valuable and worthy of love, you could say the following, *“This is how far I can go and still feel safe. Going past this line is painful for me.”*

For example:

“Because I consider myself to be valuable, I do not want a relationship where my partner only criticizes and ridicules me.”

Or

“Because I respect and appreciate myself, I will not sleep with just anyone who wants me to sleep with them. If someone truly loves me, they will not force me to prove my love for them by having sex with them.”

Or

“I’m created to be unique and special. This is why I will not do what the other person wants just to keep them from leaving me. It’s not worth giving up on my self-worth.”

- What do weak boundaries cause in a relationship?
- How can you strengthen your boundaries?
- What do too strict or rigid boundaries cause in a relationship?
- Where is the line of boundary in friendship?
- Where is this boundary in a relationship between a boy and a girl?
- And in a parent-child relationship?

Consider these examples and draw the boundaries for yourself in your current relationships.

You must all strive to understand your boundaries so they would be of sufficient strength.

People with overly weak boundaries need to respect themselves more. And those with very rigid boundaries should be more respectful of others.

End of the lesson

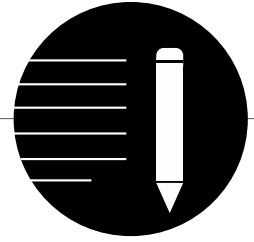
In the last three lessons you have learned about developing your character by taking responsibility and respecting others. Now let’s summarize the content of this lesson by doing a special activity together.

Prepare a chart for the group with five columns that represent the five weekdays. Ask the students to select a virtue or character trait for every day of the week.

A character building chart.

- Reliable
- A person of integrity
- Respects commitments
- Polite
- Fair
- Helpful
- Honest
- Keeps their promises
- Loyal
- Considerate
- Caring
- A good citizen

[Everyday write down the name of those students who exhibited that characteristic on that specific day. The students can also suggest names of those who demonstrated the selected character trait. You could give the student who showed the most character traits a special award or a certificate.]



15.

Authentic Self-Esteem Character

Workshop of Character

Lesson plan

This lesson is a workshop. We want to use different tools to illustrate the authenticity of character traits. The participants will prepare for a presentation during most of the lesson. If possible, it is a good idea to make the finished artwork available to parents and the school.

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of the lesson your students learn the importance of character traits by creating a piece of art based on a selected character trait.

Assign all the participants to one of the following five areas. Each group will use that specific form of art to illustrate the character trait assigned to them. The following list of art forms contains suggestions. This list is not exhaustive. Feel free to let the students be creative.

Fine art	collage, poster, diorama, painting, photo series
Media	radio or TV interviews, advertising, leaflets, brochures
Drama	a parody or a play
Music	a song rewritten with new lyrics, original music and lyrics, dance, instrumental music
Creative writing	a poem, parable, narrative, essay, dialogue

Then select and assign a character trait listed and explained below to each group. The participants can get inspiration from this list as they prepare their presentation. Each group will have to discover and express the specific character trait assigned to them as part of their presentation. The impression and presentation of only one group will not be complete, but all the group presentations together will depict what being a man or woman of character means. As the students are arranged into groups, instruct them to discuss the specific character trait assigned to them, develop the structure for their presentation and divide the tasks to be completed among the members of the group. They have the time that remains from the lesson to prepare (and the time they want to dedicate to this assignment outside of school). The groups will present the outline of their artwork in the last 10 minutes of the lesson.

A man or woman of character...

...is reliable.

Be honest; tell the truth; be trustworthy; do not mislead others or withhold important information in your confidential relationships; do not steal; do not cheat; be beyond reproach; stand by your convictions on what is right and what is wrong; be your best self and resist pressure to give in to temptation.

...treats everyone with respect.

Be polite and considerate; judge everyone based on their merits; be patient and receptive to individual differences and accept them; do not manipulate or exploit others; assume the best about the other person unless you have a serious reason to do the opposite.

...acts responsibly.

Think before you act; consider the consequences of your decisions and take responsibility for them; be accountable; do not find excuses; do not blame others for your mistakes; lead by example for those who look up to you; keep your word and keep your commitments.

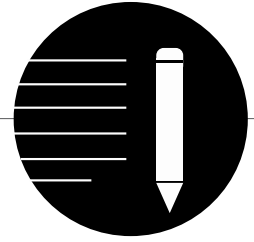
...is just, fair and cares about other people.

Treat everyone fairly; be unbiased; pay attention to others and try to understand what they say and feel; do not take more than what you rightfully deserve; live according to the Golden Rule; help others; do not be selfish; do not be rude, cruel or insensitive to the feelings of others; be kind-hearted.

...is a caring, kind citizen.

Keep the rules and the laws; do your share of the work; respect authority; be well-informed; protect your fellow citizens and your community; volunteer to help in your community or school.

LESSON PLAN



16.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

Choices You Face

Lesson plan

Spending Your Life—Game
Discuss the Game

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students should be able to list some of their own personal values, understand how these values affect their lives and understand that the way we spend our time and resources reflects our values.

Background information

As you look over the items for sale in this session's game, you may need to change some of them to match the understanding and real life choices your students face. The goal of the game is not only to reflect real choices but also to allow real values to surface, often through exaggerated opportunities.

Milton Rokeach, a world expert on values and how we come to own them, has identified 18 values that represent goals or desired end states, and 18 values that represent means or desired ways of achieving those goals.¹

Ends (Terminal Values)

- a comfortable life
- an exciting life
- a sense of accomplishment
- a world at peace
- a world of beauty
- equality
- family security
- freedom
- happiness
- inner harmony
- mature love
- national security
- pleasure
- salvation
- self-respect
- social recognition
- true friendship
- wisdom

Means (Instrumental Values)

- ambitious
- broad-minded
- capable
- cheerful
- clean
- courageous
- forgiving
- helpful
- honest
- imaginative
- independent
- intellectual
- logical
- loving
- obedient
- polite
- responsible
- self-controlled

According to Rokeach, beliefs express a relationship between two things. A belief in the existence of God, for example, expresses a relationship between God and existence. If you believe that the earth is round, it shows that you see a relationship between roundness and the earth. We have millions of beliefs. Attitudes are constructed from multiple beliefs and express positive or negative feelings. Someone who says, "I think delayed gratification is an important part of mature growth" is expressing their attitude about the concept of delayed gratification. Another attitude is evident in the statement, "I like to travel." We have thousands of attitudes. Values are constructed from attitudes and express a desired end state (a goal) or a means of attaining a goal. We have dozens of values.

¹Milton Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York: Free, 1973), 359-360.

1. Spending your life—game

35

Introducing
the game:

“Spending Your
Life” game.

© Copyright, Gary
Stanley, 1995.

Hand out the slips
of paper as you
speak. You will need
to look through the
list of items for sale
and either write a
key word on enough
pieces of paper for
each purchasing
student to receive

one, or cut the
pieces of paper
into the shape of
the item for sale.
Note: The more
realistic you make
the game, the more
effective it will be.

Hold up the papers
representing
the two items
up for sale.

Collect the slips of
paper from those
wishing to buy. Give
each buyer the card
or paper identifying
their purchase.

All purchases of
specific items are
only available at
the time they are
offered. No one can
go back and make a
purchase after the
next pair is offered.

I would like to begin our look at character with a question:

- What would it cost to buy you?

Another way to ask this would be:

- What would you be willing to accept in exchange for your life?

Today we are going to play a game called, “*Spending Your Life*,” which will help each of us answer that question.

Beginning the game

To begin the game, I want you to write your name on ten slips of paper that I have already prepared for you. Each slip of paper represents a piece of you—your time, energy, resources, interest, and identity. For the next several minutes these 10 slips of paper represent the sum total of who you are. DO NOT LOSE OR TEAR ANY OF THEM!

In a moment you will be given a choice to either “spend” or “save” your slips of paper. Certain pairs of items will be up for sale and each of you can buy one or the other, or neither one, but not both. Of course, when you run out of slips of paper you cannot buy anything. Are you ready? (Start when all students have signed their ten slips of paper.)

Here are the first two items up for sale:

Option A	Option B
A nice apartment or house (1 slip)	A new sports car of your choice (1 slip)

Our next two items are:

Option A	Option B
An all-expense-paid holiday (of one month’s duration) to any place in the world for you and a friend (2 slips)	A guarantee that the person you would most like to marry right now will definitely marry you in the not too distant future (2 slips)

Our next two items are:

Option A	Option B
To be the most popular person in your circle of acquaintances for 2 years (1 slip)	One true friend (2 slips)

Next:

Option A	Option B
A good education (2 slips)	A profitable business (2 slips)

Next:

Option A	Option B
A healthy family (3 slips)	World fame (3 slips)

Next:

Option A	Option B
The ability to change any one thing about your physical appearance (2 slips)	Life-long personal satisfaction (2 slips)

Next:

Option A	Option B
Five years of uninhibited physical pleasure (2 slips)	The respect and love of those you care most about (2 slips)

Next:

Option A	Option B
A clear conscience (2 slips)	The ability to succeed at any one thing you desire (2 slips)

Note:

After all students have decided either to purchase from this pair or not, announce that those who bought a healthy family get two slips back as a bonus.

In this case those who purchased five years of pleasure must pay an additional slip (if they have one), because some things cost more than originally expected.

Next:

Option A	Option B
A miracle for someone you love (2 slips)	The chance to relive (or repeat) any one event in your past life (2 slip)

Next:

Option A	Option B
Seven additional years of life (3 slips)	When the time comes, a painless death (3 slips)

No further purchases may be made. Any slips you have left over are now worthless.

2. Discuss the game

10

Discussing the game:

After 5 minutes ask for comments from the group. Note particularly what rules you would like to have changed. If your students do not suggest rule changes like, "I would prefer to see all of the options before having to buy," or "I would like to be able to swap one thing I purchased for something else later," or "We should start with more slips of paper," ask them if they think these would make the game more enjoyable.

For the next five minutes I would like you to divide into groups of three to five and discuss your purchases by answering the following questions:

- What is your favorite purchase?
- Do you have any regrets concerning what you might have purchased?
- Are there any rules to this game that you would like to change?

The problem with most of our suggested rule changes is that *life* is not like that. You cannot repeat a choice already made or undo a past decision. Neither can you do everything or make the most of every opportunity. You cannot predict what options will be open to you at a later date. You will always have limited resources, time, options, money, and interest. And everything you choose for your life will cost you something—and the cost is often more than you originally thought.

This was just a game, but the way you really spend your time and resources is a very good indicator of what you truly value.

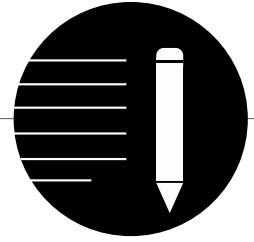
Individual task

Take a minute or two to write your answer to the question:

- If someone were to look back at your choices in this game, what would they be likely to conclude about your personal values?

As you think about the choices you made in the game today, some of you may be quite happy. You may be thinking, *“I traded my life for valuable things; I made good choices.”* Others of you may be feeling that you spent your life on the wrong things. You may wish you had waited longer to buy or that you should have spent your ‘life’ sooner. Some of you may be feeling, *“If only I could play the game over, I’d make much better choices next time!”*

LESSON PLAN



17.

Authentic Self-Esteem
Character

The Basis of Your Value System

Lesson plan

Case study
Small group discussion
Tests

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this lesson your students should be able to understand the cause for differing value systems and perspectives about life issues. They should identify their own value system and personal style.

Background information

- We evaluate different situations differently.
- The difference in the ways different people evaluate the same circumstance differently is caused by our upbringing and our differing personal styles.
- Human differences support the need for a universal ethical standard.
- There is need for an absolute moral standard.

Every person lives life based on a value system of their choosing. These values can greatly differ from one person to another. These differences are primarily determined by our family backgrounds, personality types and belief system. Even those who claim to live without an ethical standard or in an ethically neutral standard have a value system; that of no value system. Other people live their lives based on standards to which they have purposely chosen to adhere. They are constantly evaluating life and the circumstances it brings in light of the values by which they have chosen to live. A value system makes a difference in the standard we set for actions, decisions and relationships. How can these differing value systems be brought together so we can all live in peace and harmony? Who can determine which value system is the right value system? Is the opinion of the majority always right? These and many other issues will be raised in this lesson. Through the test and case studies, students will be able to recognize the differences in value systems and they will have an opportunity to wrestle with finding the solution of a common value system for everyone.

- How would you define a value system? What is a value?
- What is valuable to you?

A full life means a life filled with value and meaning which is independent of adulthood, but a necessary part of true adulthood. This means that we discover those values, foundational truths on which we want to build our lives. There are people who live life without any deep meaning and values. This type of person allows things to just happen to them; they permit circumstances to direct their lives. They are typically discontent, unhappy, have marriage problems, are unsuccessful at work and unreliable in relationships. They are often lonely and may live their lives in self-imposed solitude. The second type of person lives according to values and standards they have chosen to follow. Their choices and relationships are based on these internal convictions. They have a stable reference point with which to compare and relate to every day issues. Events, circumstances and the storms of life come their way just as for anyone else, but their answers and reactions to these situations are determined by the value system they have chosen to help them step beyond them and on to the rest of life. They have a sense of human dignity and self-confidence. They are not unduly influenced by other people's opinions because they lean on an independent value system that provides them with stability and security when they encounter hardships and difficulties.

We all have some kind of value system and character traits. These are clearly reflected in the decisions we make. In order to make this more clear, we will take a look at a case study.

Imagine that after you graduate from school you get a great job as a department manager in a big construction company. Your task is the modernization of an electricity-generating power station. A month after the building work has begun, the group leader comes to see you. It is obvious that he is disturbed. He says that it is clear that you are a new member of the company and that he knows that for you the interests of the company are of paramount importance. In light of that, he wants to disclose that the engineering group, which you direct, has a history of corruption and kickback arrangements with suppliers. In order for certain companies to receive contracts, they pay off people who have decision-making power. These companies do pretty rough work, but if we break off relations with them, it is possible that the work will not be completed on schedule. The group leader does not want to continue taking part in this practice. He is afraid this will cause him to lose his job. You quietly investigate and find that what he said is true. You need to make a decision.

- What will you do and how will you do it?

2. Small group discussion

10

In groups of four to five people discuss the following questions. Choose one person to be the speaker for the group.

- What is the problem?
- What is the solution?

The purpose of this case study is to show how difficult it is to make a decision without a well-grounded value system. There are vast differences in the way we evaluate problems; if we can't even agree on what the problem is, how can we solve it? Taking this a step further, how can we hope to solve similar situations which we face every day? We could come up with almost as many possible solutions in a given situation as there are people in the world. Who can tell us whether our decision is good or bad? In addition to our varying value systems, our character also influences how we make decisions. Some of us are very open; others are rather closed. Our decisions are determined by our personal style and value system.

A given situation can be evaluated by different people in different ways.

Now we will examine what kind of value systems and personal styles we each have. This will be done with the help of two tests. The first will help us identify our value system and the second, our personal style.

An assessment of your value system

This assessment provides information on your value system. Your values consist of the patterns and principles based on which decisions you make about your life. Your values are essential; they shape your behavior and all your relationships. Once you understand these values, you can improve your effectiveness in a number of settings and situations.

Instructions to the questionnaire

Identify the values that characterize you the most in the table below (from the most characteristic to the least characteristic one). From left to right, horizontally, mark **the most important** values with 4 and assign gradually decreasing numbers to the values that are less important to you by marking **the least important** ones with 1. Rank all the characteristics in each column until you reach the summary at the end of each 10-word batch.

Traditionalist		Impressionistic		Challenger		Agreeable	
Obligations		Equality		Privileges		Objectivity	
Respect		Goodwill		Individuality		Integrity	
Courage		Self-improvement		Ambition		Compassion	
Sense of duty		Openness		Being practical		Purpose-driven	
Realistic thinking		Responsiveness		Adapting		Visionary	
Reliability		Honesty		Resourcefulness		Wisdom	
Commitment		Shared work		Effectiveness		Cooperation	
Performance		Happiness		Comfort		Harmony	
Maintaining the status		Research		Fight		Being unbiased	
TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:	

The Assessment

1. Add the numbers up for each column. Enter the results in the right bottom row 'Total' cell.
2. Check that you counted correctly by adding up the results in the last row. It should amount to 90.

Assessing your individual style

Assessing your personal style is a quick method to identify different behavioral styles. Everyone has developed their own particular behaviors or different thinking, evaluation and acting mechanisms. By understanding and identifying these behavioral styles, you can increase your personal effectiveness in various situations.

Instructions to the questionnaire

Identify the behaviors that characterize you the most in the table below (from the most characteristic to the least characteristic one). From left to right, horizontally, mark **the most characteristic** behavior with 4 and assign gradually decreasing numbers to the characteristics that are less typical of you, by marking **the least important** ones with 1.

Leader		Influencer		Stabilizer		Cautious	
Self-confident		Optimistic		Thoughtful		Moderate	
Bold		Enthusiastic		Predictable		Reasonable	
Decisive		Open-minded		Patient		Analytical	
Daredevil		Impulsive		Creating stability		Precise	
Reckless		Emotional		Protective		Doubtful	
Competitive		Persuasive		Adaptive		Curious	
Pushy		Talkative		Modest		Discreet	
Experimental		Winsome		Comfortable		Consistent	
Energetic		Sensitive		Honest		Perfectionist	
TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:	

The Assessment

1. Add the numbers up for each column. Enter the results in the right bottom row 'Total' cell.
2. Check that you counted correctly by adding up the results in the last row. It should amount to 90.

Test evaluation

I hope everyone had a chance to complete these tests. First we will examine the results of the value system test. Whose survey indicated you have a traditionalist value system? Who is impressionistic? Which of you is characterized by the challenger? Who has an agreeable value system?

Value system test evaluation

TRADITIONALIST	IMPRESSIONISTIC	CHALLENGER	AGREEABLE
Motivation: Traditionalists are driven towards the goal of responsible living and away from their FEAR of loss of social respect. Their core value is based on the principle of loyalty.	Motivation: Their goal is self-assertion and happiness. The impressionistic is driven to reduce their FEAR of inner conflict. They believe in the central value principle of "equality" which to them means being fair or nice to others. They expect equality from themselves and others.	Motivation: Challengers are directed by their goal of self-preservation and satisfaction as well as their FEAR of loss of personal well-being. Their primary value is the principle of personal freedom.	Motivation: To the agreeable, the core purpose in life is their primary goal of self-integration with others. Their primary FEAR is the lack of personal congruence or inner honesty with themselves and others. In combination, these personal motives explain their central value through the principle of "justice."
Lifestyle/work-style They believe in people working together for a greater good (beyond themselves). The central theme in their actions is <i>"when the going gets tough, the tough pull together."</i>	Lifestyle/work-style Main belief is <i>"you can have your cake and eat it, too."</i> This means being nice to others, especially in their public or social behavior, while expressing individuality most strongly in personal, private situations.	Lifestyle/work-style They are likely to find the perspective and practices of Traditionalists most naturally in conflict with their own point-of-view. Their view tends to be the most individualistic of the four values positions. The values-driven theme that runs through their daily life is <i>"looking out for #1"</i> (myself) as they respond to the difficulties of the world.	Lifestyle/work-style They intuitively function by a sense of unwritten social contracts in their daily lives which provide the framework for their relationships and for their responsibilities, whether at work or socially. The one common, identifiable theme that pervades their life is expressed by the statement, <i>"Let your conscience be your guide."</i>

TRADITIONALIST	IMPRESSIONISTIC	CHALLENGER	AGREEABLE
Summary description: Tend to believe in the ethic of “work for work’s sake” and that there is a proper or correct way of doing things. They accept the importance of established authority and rules. In addition, they believe conformity to the group and those traditional patterns with which they identify are important. They value the “team players” they find in the work, social or political life arenas. They demand commitment to promises from themselves and others. They are concerned with what others think of them and their reputation.	Summary description: View life as a series of opportunities “to find themselves” in pursuit of their personal aspirations. They also believe it is important to have friendly relationships with other types of people, though from their point-of-view their individual rights should not be ignored or denied in order to satisfy group expectations. While they accept the importance of authority figures and significant individuals such as heroes, celebrities and experts, they also believe that their own personal perspective should be considered in any situation. Impressionistics may violate rules and expectations within safe boundaries and express their individual beliefs about what is important to them. They seek positive opportunities to communicate with others through varied forms in search of their personal fulfillment.	Summary description: Believe in the importance of the individual over the group. They do not accept the importance of conformity to group demands unless these are consistent with their own goals and standards. They tend to leave their jobs and change personal relationships when it is important for them to either further express or develop themselves. Challengers believe in questioning existing systems, rules and procedures—though they may differ in the directness of their style. From their point-of-view, life should provide them with the material and social rewards they deserve. As a result, they believe in “doing their own thing” in order to gain their end-goal of self-satisfaction. Since they do not typically identify with more traditional forms of satisfaction, they tend to seek this state of personal fulfillment through newer, more experimental or non-conventional practices.	Summary description: Believe in the importance of a broad social perspective in clarifying and committing to responsibilities in daily work or social life. Their style of attaining their values goal may range widely from a very personal to a noticeably direct pattern of values-driven behavior. Whatever their style, the agreeable believes in bettering conditions for the common good (even though this may sometimes be at their own expense). They are concerned with the quality of life that exists at the present time and are committed to working towards its improvement, even though the quantity of benefits or results may decrease. The agreeable tends to be tolerant of the other three value systems’ points-of-view, though not necessarily accepting the behavior which accompanies these positions. They tend to be characterized by a spirit of shared commitments which is observable in their collaborative efforts with other individuals, groups and organizations.

Individual Style Test Evaluation

TASK

<u>CAUTIOUS</u> Style description: This person tends to want accuracy and typically acts cautiously. The cautious style tends to be precise, reserved and concerned with the appearance of conditions. This combines to explain their motivation by self-direction through an approach which tends to involve compliance to critical conditions (situations, individuals and work relationships). This can lead to difficulties if not resolved or otherwise controlled. This style can range from being “contemplative” and appearing courteous at best, to being excessively “critical” at their worst. Motivation: Accuracy in achieving their goals through an indirect style. Fear: Criticism of their efforts or actions by others. Effectiveness: When more effective, this style tends to be creative, inquisitive and discrete. When less effective, this style is likely to be seen as overly perfectionist “nitpicking,” overly-demanding of themselves and others and detached or aloof. Increase effectiveness by developing further acceptance of the realistic limitations. This is part of an attitude of increasing progress towards approximating the perfection which they desire to achieve.	<u>LEADER</u> Style description: This person tends to want immediate results and typically acts decisively. The dominance style tends to be determined and assertive in meeting their needs through direction of others. This style, like all four, can range from more positive-to-negatively energized behavior which may be described as “decisive” at one end and “defiant” at the other extreme. Motivation: Personal control through a direct style. Fear: Being taken advantage of by others. Effectiveness: When more effective, this style tends to be results-oriented, forceful and practical. When less effective, this style is likely to be seen as overbearing, insensitive and distrusting. Increase effectiveness by developing further patience through accepting the limitations each of us possess as part of our human nature.
<u>RESPONDER</u> <u>STABILIZER</u> Style description: This person tends to want stability and typically acts systematically. The steadiness style tends to approach situations in a slower, more planned manner which is more likely to insure known actions and results. This can take the form of “servicing” tendencies when positively motivated and at the other extreme, passive resistance through a “stern” response which involves holding onto what is already possessed and certain. Motivation: Personal stability through an indirect style. Fear: Loss of stability (such as predictable conditions, actions and relationships in their environment). Effectiveness: When more effective, this style tends to be deliberate, objective and consistent. When less effective, this style is likely to be indecisive, overly-systematic in their concern about all details and procedures, and not expressive of their thoughts and feelings. Increase effectiveness by developing greater comfort and ability to deal with required change in situations, including growth in their own level of assertiveness.	<u>INITIATOR</u> <u>INFLUENCER</u> Style description: This person tends to want contact with people and typically acts enthusiastically. The influencing style tends to be entertaining and motivated to interact with others. They are people focused. This tendency can range from being “invigorating,” at best, to impulsively “indiscriminate” when negatively motivated or distressed. Motivation: Personal approval from others through a direct style. Fear: Loss of influence with others. Effectiveness: When more effective, this style tends to be persuasive, spontaneous and accessible or open to others. When less effective, this style is likely to be overly-subjective, extremely emotional and superficial in their approach. Increase effectiveness by developing additional tendencies towards being objective, analytical and organized in dealing with situations which do not naturally match the approach of their style.

PEOPLE

Conclusion

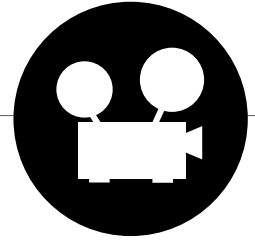
It is easy to memorize the characteristics of these styles if we learn their places within the lines labeled with different qualities such as task, initiator, responder and people. For example, the 'leader' style is placed between task and initiator. This means that they are task oriented; they think about the task which they have to accomplish and usually take the initiative—they do not wait for others to act. This lifestyle can be characterized by the phrase, "Ready, aim, fire!" The 'influencer' style is placed between people and initiator, meaning that they are not task orientated but they think more of people and relationships, and are also initiators. Their lifestyle can be characterized by the phrase, "Prepare, aim, speak." The 'stabilizer' type comes between people and responder. They are also people oriented, not through initiation, but rather in response to something that has already begun. Their lifestyle is simply to prepare and aim. Finally the 'cautious' type is between responder and task. They are task oriented and usually not initiators. Their lifestyle is focused on preparation, then aiming and continuing to aim. Naturally, no one's personal style is more valuable than the others. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. The purpose of the test is to understand our own and others' personal patterns of behavior, their weaknesses and strengths. In this way we can more easily accept each other and we can better understand why they act or make decisions in this way or that way. Furthermore, understanding our weaknesses can help us develop in these areas, and knowing our strengths helps us to take on tasks in which we will succeed. In this way we can escape the sense of lifelong failure, which can result from not feeling good about our work, our relationships or from not taking on tasks that are well suited for us.



Human differences support the need for a universal ethical standard.

We need an absolute ethical standard.

The differences in the way people evaluate circumstances and situations stem from differences in their upbringing and personal style.



A Life Worth Living

Lesson Plan

Watching the film
You will need two hours and fifteen minutes of class time, which will allow you fifteen minutes to introduce the film.

Watching the “*Jesus*” film

The Purpose of the Lesson

By the end of this session your students will have seen the *Jesus film*, evaluated the significance of Jesus’ life historically, philosophically and spiritually, and will have become familiar with the life and teachings on which the values of Western civilization rest.

Important information

The “*Jesus*” film is available at
<https://www.jesusfilm.org/watch.html>

Background information

The person of Jesus Christ has determined the past, present and future of Western civilization. His influence is felt in our everyday lives, whether we are aware of it or not. He, personally, has changed millions of people's lives even today and hundreds of millions follow his teachings. Nations and even whole regions of the world have based their culture on his teachings. It is impossible to understand history and culture in the Western world without familiarizing ourselves with the person and teachings of Jesus Christ.

This film provides an accurate portrayal of Jesus. The English language version of the Jesus film is almost word for word from the book of the Bible known as the Gospel of Luke. In it, Luke gave a historically accurate account of the life of Jesus.

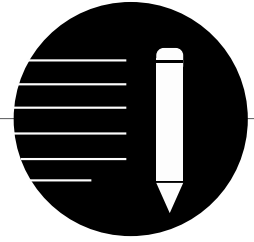
Over two thousand years ago, Jesus was born in the middle eastern town of Bethlehem. He claimed to be God's son. He said, *"If you have seen me, you know what God is like."* Jesus also said, *"I have come to do God's will on earth."* Therefore, as we look at the life of Jesus, we find a standard for what is really right and what is wrong.

The name of this film is "Jesus." It was produced by The Genesis Project in association with Campus Crusade for Christ, International and Inspirational Films. Warner Brothers distributed the film. It is the most successful Hollywood film in history as it has been seen in more areas of the world than any other film. More than one billion people have seen the film and it has been translated into 1,828 languages and dialects.

Two hundred fifty historians, archaeologists and theologians researched the film for five years to ensure its accuracy. Each scene was filmed in Israel and is as close as possible to where the original event depicted took place 2,000 years ago. The studio created a workshop to recreate as accurately as possible the foods and tools of the time. The actors—except for the person playing Jesus—were all local people (Jewish or Arab actors). The film provides a very reliable look at the person, Jesus. The events surrounding his life, the circumstances of his day, all help to give us a better understanding of his teachings, his value system and his life story. It also brings us closer to discovering our own roots.

In the English language version of the film, Jesus speaks only the words recorded in the Bible. The film is two hours long, so sit back and enjoy this account of the life of Jesus.

LESSON PLAN



18.

Authentic Self-Esteem Character

Pure Heart

Lesson Plan

The story of *The Prodigal Son*
An analysis of the story

The Purpose of the Lesson

By end of the lesson your students understand why it is worth building a personal relationship with God and how they can do so. They understand the role of Jesus Christ in building a relationship with God.

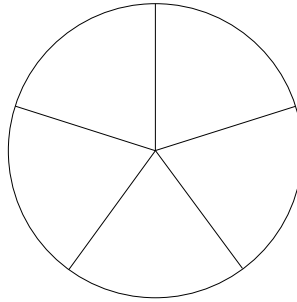
Note: This lesson contains the authors' personal beliefs and biblical principles.

1. The story of The Prodigal Son

15

Starting the lesson:

While dealing with this subject, we have examined a number of physical, intellectual, social and emotional questions. Do you remember the diagram with the various aspects of your personality? There is a slice that we have mentioned before, but the topic hasn't been discussed in detail.



In this lesson we examine the spiritual side of your personality and how it affects your health. It is explained in the first lesson that this curriculum approaches the spiritual side of life by examining the teachings of a highly powerful book, the Bible. The beliefs and teachings of some of the world's largest religious groups are based on the Bible.

When most people hear the word 'spiritual' they think of the convictions, beliefs and traditions of different religions about God and the universe. In this lesson we will not discuss the different religions, but instead, we will talk about a personal relationship. It is a rather unusual personal relationship that many people cannot even fathom or grasp, because we don't really talk about the fact that you can develop and have a personal relationship with God. The primary teaching of the Bible is that such a personal relationship is indeed possible between God and us. The following story illustrates this.

The story

Let me read an almost 2000 year old story for you. This was originally told by Jesus to illustrate how much God loves us and how much he desires to establish a personal relationship with us. This is the story of the prodigal son.¹

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent

¹Luke 15:11-32.

him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

When he came to his senses, he said, *How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.'* So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

2. An analysis of the story

30



Question:

Let's review the main parts of this story.

God loves you and He has a wonderful plan for your life.

As we saw in this story, this kind and dedicated father loved his son with all his heart and wanted to share himself and everything he had with the son. Jesus told this story to his listeners to show how much God loves them and how much He wanted their lives to make sense. On another occasion, Jesus said the following: *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*² In other words, like the father in this story, God also wants to give the best possible life for us.

- If you were the boy, why would you want to leave such a wonderful home and father?

The story shows that everyone tends to live their lives the way they think is best for them. The Bible calls this selfish attitude an act of independence and rebellion.

Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.

In the story the son demanded his inheritance and then left his father because he was indifferent to his love. Jesus indicated that, like the son,

²John 10:10



Ask the students to form groups of 8-12 people.

When the 'prodigal sons' come to your table, tell them to play two important roles:

1. No matter how good the arguments of the others are, they are not to give in; they should not agree to return home. Suggest some arguments to them that are against returning home: 'I am having a great time,' 'My father is going to be angry at me,' 'I would have to admit that I did something wrong,' etc.

2. The 'prodigal sons' should note the best arguments that the others give in favor of returning home. Tell them that later they will share with the others which arguments they felt to be the most convincing ones.



all men turned their back on God. We all chose our own path, ignored our Heavenly Father and went against or ignored His will.

Jesus probably had the Old Testament in mind where you read: *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*³

This means that all men have turned away from God and want to have life on their own terms.

For the next few minutes the task is to form groups and act as if you were the old friends of the prodigal son from his hometown whom you visit after he left his father's house. He moved somewhere far away, but he still has some of his money left. He has enough money to throw a dinner party in your honor. As you form these groups, appoint one person who will play the role of the prodigal son. These prodigal sons should come to the teacher to receive instructions on how to act in their role. While the teacher discusses it with the 'prodigal sons,' the others should brainstorm about the best arguments they can make to convince the prodigal son to return home, to his father. As the 'prodigal sons' return to the groups, you should act out the dinner party he organized for you, his good old friends from his hometown. This is a real fun evening, with great food and the best of everything. You have to persuade the prodigal son to leave behind this luxurious lifestyle and go home to his father.

You have 10 minutes to convince him.

[After ten minutes tell the participants to return to their seats and ask the 'prodigal sons' to share some of the best arguments they received to return home to their father.]

In this story the father's love includes the option of free choice. The father did not stop the son from leaving, and neither did he go after the son to save him from the consequences of his bad decisions.

The free choices that this boy made for himself resulted not only in his being separated from the loving care of his father, but they also proved to be harmful. The Bible teaches that sin is always harmful and it destroys our lives.

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love and plan.

Is it possible to restore your relationship with God? Jesus taught that God made a way for us to return to Him.

- Was it too late for the son to return home after his rebellion?

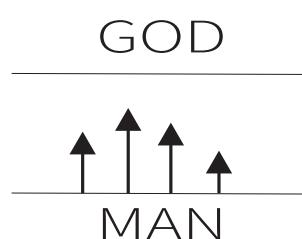
Even though the son had no right to be accepted and welcomed back to the family, his father still took pity on him. He noticed his son from far away, ran up to him, embraced him and offered him a new life.

³Isaiah 53:6.

Just as the father initiated the restoration of his relationship to the son, Christians also believe that God took the initiative to restore our relationship to Him!

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”⁴

The following two images illustrate this.

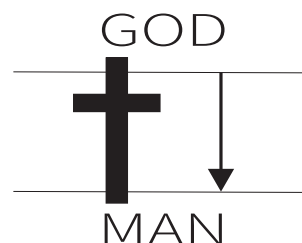


This first image shows that God is holy and we are sinners and there is a great gap that separates us from this perfect God, just like the father and the prodigal son were separated in the story. The arrows show that even if you try to be good enough to earn God's favor and goodwill, you can never reach Him on your own.

Christians believe in the good news that God himself reached out to us when He sent his perfect Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Now let's take a look at the second image. This illustrates the idea that Jesus Christ is God's only solution for sin. God bridged the distance that separated us from Him when He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us on the cross and thus He took upon himself the punishment for our rebellion and indifference. The Bible teaches that our relationship with God can be restored through the death of Christ on the cross.



We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

It wasn't enough that the father wanted his prodigal son to return home. The son himself had to make a decision.

⁴Romans 5:8.



When the son examined what he did, he realized the terrible mistake he had committed. He was looking for the meaning and the purpose of his life in vain. He missed the generous love and care of his father. Therefore, he repented and returned to his father. He acknowledged that he had sinned against his father and also confessed that he was unworthy to be called a son, yet he humbly accepted the love of his father.

The Bible teaches us that when you put your faith in Jesus, He gives you power to live a life of abundance and to persevere in difficult situations.

Christians believe that the most important decision you can make in your life is when you decide to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that through Jesus Christ you can accept the forgiveness of your sins, which is a free gift of God. You can turn to God today and He will gladly welcome you back into His family.

“All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.”⁵

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”⁶



The possibility to respond

If what Jesus taught in the parable was true, there are many people in the world today who are like the prodigal son. Let's consider the following questions for a moment.

- Do you feel that you are far from God as if you have gone physically far away from Him?
- Do you feel that you are not doing what is right, even if you are seriously committed to it?
- Would you like to leave your sins behind, turn to God and accept His forgiveness and love?
- Do you desire that God would welcome you and that you would then feel the value and dignity that He offers in this relationship with Him?

The Bible teaches that if you want to return to God, you have the opportunity to do so. When the son went back home, he didn't really know what to say to his father. The Bible suggests that, like the father in the story, God does not primarily care about your words, but whether you are sincere in your intentions of approaching Him.

Remember that the son had to make a decision in the story. Just like you saw in your group exercise, you could not convince the son to return home until he made that specific decision. It means that no one can make that

⁵John 6:37.

⁶John 1:12.

decision for you. When the son examined himself, he realized the mistakes he had made and the love that he had lost. This is when he decided to return home and could only hope that his father would take him back.

Writing a letter

The task is for you to write a letter to God in your worksheet. Write down what you think about the Christian teachings on God and what He did for you. It's totally up to you what you want to write down. You could still be wondering whether all this is true. You may have questions regarding God and the Bible. But you may also believe God and the Bible to be true, and you might be ready to 'return home,' just like the son in the story did. It is through the Bible that God the Father is inviting you to return to Him. Jesus taught that God welcomes you with open arms to take you into his family. Write down in your letter what you really think and feel about it. This is your decision. You don't even have to show the letter to anyone, unless you want to.

The end of the Lesson

Perhaps you decided to return to God and want to ask Christ to forgive you and become part of your life. It is important to understand that according to the teachings of the Bible, no one else can receive Christ on your behalf, only you. It is a personal decision that everyone must make for themselves.

Anyone can establish a relationship with Jesus if they trust in Him for the forgiveness of their sins and ask Him to enter their life in prayer.

Prayer simply means that you talk to God in a conversation. The Student Notes contain an example of this important prayer. You can use this prayer as a foundation or basic outline to which you can add your own words. Prayer simply means talking to God.

"Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

Notice that in this sample prayer you don't promise to work harder or try to live more justly and morally. This prayer acknowledges your inability to meet the expectations of God; it simply acknowledges that we are fallen creatures. In this prayer you ask God to come into your life and by His power change you from within. This prayer also expresses the biggest difference between true Christianity and the beliefs of other philosophical systems and religions. There are many great leaders who can help us realize what is good and right, but Jesus claims that if you receive Him, He will give you the power and the strength to actually do what is right.

If it resonates with your desire, say this prayer to God and Christ promised that He would enter your life.

(Christ says:) “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”⁷

⁷Revelations 3:20.

STUDENT NOTES

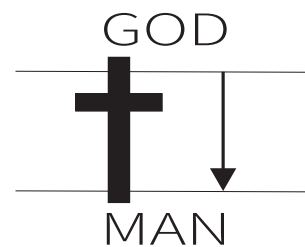
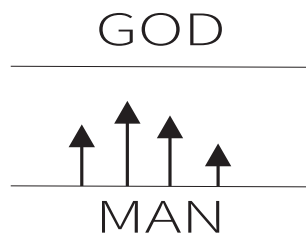


Pure Heart

The story of the Prodigal Son

An analysis of the story

1. God loves you and He has a wonderful plan for your life.
2. Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.



3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love and plan.
4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

"Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."



Authentic Self-Esteem For the section on Character

1. Lifeboat

To the attention of the teacher

First, everyone should think about the situation for a few minutes alone and write down what decision they would make. Then try to decide what to do in small groups. Once a decision is made, show the participants the additional questions to reconsider their answer in light of the new information they received.

Each group will share their decision and explain it to the entire class. They should also mention whether they changed their decision after they received the additional questions and, if yes, why they did so.

This game reveals that everyone has and we all must have, some set of values that serve as a basis for our decisions in life.

Five passengers are being tossed in a lifeboat in the middle of the ocean: a toddler (3 years old), an older man (65 years old), the mother of the toddler (30 years old), a young man (20 years old) and a teenager. They have enough food to last until they reach a nearby island (at least according to their map) for only four people. What would you do if you were in the boat. Who would you make get out of the lifeboat so the others could survive? Who would you choose and why?

- What if the old man was a sailor?
- What if the young man was a convicted criminal?
- What if the teenager was paralyzed?
- What if the toddler was mentally disabled?
- What if the mother had AIDS?

2. Possible tasks

- The participants should come up with five questions that they can ask their grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins to find out what values they hold. (For example, What is your view on the death penalty? Why do you think this way? When is it OK to cheat or lie and when it is not OK? What is the most important thing in your life? Is it family? Taking care of your family? Your career? Your own happiness?, etc.)
- The participants should ask their older relatives or acquaintances about events that made a lasting impact on their lives and how these events influenced the way they lived then.
- Write an essay about the factors and circumstances that have influenced your worldview up to now.
- Discuss some of the following questions in small groups. The answers will reflect your values.
 - Is it OK to report only some of your revenue to the IRS (your tax authority)? What personal values influence such a decision? Should it be different? Why or why not? What should be changed?
 - Is it fair that the majority of retired people, who worked hard throughout their entire life, cannot make ends meet from their pensions? What personal values are affected by such a situation? Should it be different? Why or why not? What should be changed?
 - Is it OK to bribe certain people so they would do something for us better or faster? What personal values are affected by such a situation? Should it be different? Why or why not? What should be changed?
 - Is it OK to cheat during a test? What personal values are affected by such a situation? Should it be different? Why or why not? What should be changed?

3. Values

To the attention of the teacher

Each student completes the test on values (p. 220) alone, then the participants discuss them in groups of 5-10 and write their list of values. There could be a heated debate as they try to make a decision about the most important values. After about 30 minutes the class should discuss the experience. Ask the participants the following questions:

- Was it easy to decide about these issues? If it was difficult, what made it so?
- Did you have to defend the values that you believe in? Did your opinion change based on what the others said?
- How do you think these values affect your daily lives? Do you really live according to the values that you selected?

This exercise can reveal that the participants have different views on how to live their lives. It also shows how important it is to get to know how others think if we want to live in harmony with them. Basically, your way of thinking and belief system determine how you live and how you relate to other people and your environment.

4. Values—test

The following list contains fourteen values. First, carefully read the list and then rank them with 1 being the most important and 14 the least important one. Try to understand the definitions of the various values and make your decision based on these. Do the ranking on your own without discussing it with others. You have ten minutes to complete the task.

- ___ LEGAL ORDER: the reduction of crime and riots
- ___ COMFORT: a prosperous life that is full of pleasures
- ___ WORLD PEACE: a world that is free from war and conflicts
- ___ YOUR OWN LIFE: safety and security
- ___ EQUALITY: equal opportunities for all, fraternity
- ___ THE LIVES OF YOUR LOVED ONES: the survival of the people you love
- ___ PROTECTING THE HOMELAND: protecting your country from attacks
- ___ INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SAFETY: a worry-free and peaceful life
- ___ RESPECT: when others look up to you and you are highly regarded
- ___ SALVATION: conversion and eternal life
- ___ SELF-ACTUALIZATION: making the most of your life and abilities
- ___ WISDOM: a mature and satisfying understanding of life
- ___ DEMOCRACY: a truly democratic and just governance
- ___ THE FATE OF MANKIND: the survival of human life

5. Possible tasks

- The participants should write their own “Declaration of Value.” Which values do they insist on being included? For which values are they willing to lie about or even die? To what values would they dedicate their entire lives?
- Write your own epitaph. What would best describe how you have lived? (For example, *‘A man of wisdom and slow speech.’* or *‘She had a tender heart and helping hands.’*)
- Write an essay on the role that values play in society and in the life of the individual.
- Discuss in groups of 4 to 5 people where values originate from.
- Form two teams and they should argue about the following: *‘Is there a need for absolute values? If so, where do we find them? If not, how do we decide whether something is right or wrong?’*, etc.
- The participants read and study the Ten Commandments¹ and the inherent values based on the following questions: *‘Why was this commandment necessary? Who did it protect? To whom could it bring harm? Would this commandment be useful in our society today? Why or why not?’*

¹Exodus 20:3-17.

Collective Table of Contents



Authentic Self-Esteem

VOLUME 1

Preface	1
Why YTL?	3
The Philosophy and Ethics of YTL	9
Authentic Self-Esteem: Introduction	29
Introductory Lesson: Looking Ahead	Lesson 01. 31
Part I: Am I Who Others Say I Am? / Overview	41
Me and Myself	43
“Am I who others say I am?”	Reading I. 45
I Am Special!	Lesson 02. 53
Understanding Yourself	Lesson 03. 61
I Am Valuable!	Lesson 04. 73
Part II: Am I How I feel? / Overview	87
Me and My Emotions	89
Intelligent Emotion?	Reading II. 91
IQ + EQ = Opportunity	Lesson 05. 99
Emotional Skills	Lesson 06. 107
Aware of Myself	Lesson 07. 111
Aware of My Emotions	Lesson 08. 119
Controlling Myself	Lesson 09. 125

Part III: Am I What I Do? / Overview	133
Me and My Character	135
The Trap of Subjectivity	Reading III. 137
Brokenhearted Role Play	Lesson 10. 143
The Silver Ball	Lesson 11. 147
Character Development	Lesson 12. 155
Taking Responsibility	Lesson 13. 161
Respecting Others	Lesson 14. 169
Workshop of Character	Lesson 15. 177
Choices You Face	Lesson 16. 181
The Basis of Your Value System	Lesson 17. 187
A Life Worth Living	Film 197
Pure Heart	Lesson 18. 199
Games	209
Collective Table of Contents	215

Intimate Relationships

VOLUME 2

Preface	1
Why YTL?	3
Intimate Relationships: Introduction	9
“It Is Not Good For Man To Be Alone”	13
Part I: The Power of Friendship / Overview	17
Boundaries and Attachments	Reading I. 19
The Golden Rule	Lesson 01. 25
Effective Communication	Lesson 02. 31
Friends for Life	Reading II. 37
I Am Not an Island!	Lesson 03. 47

Appreciate Each Other! _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 04. _ _	55
True Friend or Fake Friend? _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 05. _ _	63
Games _ _ _ _ _		69

Part II: The Beauty of Love / Overview _ _ _ _ _ 71

Waiting for the One _ _ _ _ _	Reading III. _ _	73
Lifelong Commitment _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 06. _ _	83
Creative Dating Ideas _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 07. _ _	91
True Intimacy _ _ _ _ _	Reading IV. _ _	97
Love or Something Else? _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 08. _ _	105
Leaving a Legacy _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 09. _ _	113
Sex: Joy, Purpose, Responsibility _ _ _ _ _	Reading V. _ _	117
Sex in its Place _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 10. _ _	125
Sex at the Right Time _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 11. _ _	131
Games _ _ _ _ _		139

Part III: The Pain in Relationships / Overview _ _ _ _ _ 143

Conflict Management _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 12. _ _	145
Difficult Conversations _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 13. _ _	157
Prejudices: Other People Groups _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 14. _ _	161
Prejudices: Minorities _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 15. _ _	169
Prejudices: Game _ _ _ _ _		173
My Parents Are Divorcing! _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 16. _ _	177

Appendix

Preparing for Parenting _ _ _ _ _	Reading VI. _ _	183
Family Atmosphere Survey _ _ _ _ _	Test _ _ _ _ _	197
Collective Table of Contents _ _ _ _ _		199

Motivating Goals

VOLUME 3

Preface	1
Why YTL?	3
Motivating Goals: Introduction	9
Part I: Reach Your Goals / Overview	13
Set Goals	Lesson 01. 15
Make Good Decisions	Lesson 02. 23
Overcome the Greatest Obstacle	Lesson 03. 33
Part II: Avoid the Traps / Overview	43
<i>Sex-Trap</i>	
Sex in the Age of STIs	Reading I. 47
Dangerous Embrace	Lesson 04. 55
Safe Embrace	Lesson 05. 65
Why Wait?	Reading II. 77
Games	89
<i>Drug-Trap</i>	
Getting High	Reading III. 95
On the Road to Drugs	Lesson 06. 105
The Debate on Drugs	Lesson 07. 111
The Secret about Drugs	Lesson 08. 115
<i>Internet-Trap</i>	
The Price of a Blessing	Reading IV. 121
Part III: Resist the Pressure / Overview	131
Relational Pressures	Lesson 09. 135
Pressure from Peers and Society	Lesson 10. 141
Pressure from the Media	Lesson 11. 149

Be Unique _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 12. _ _	155
The Art of Saying “No” _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 13. _ _	165
I Made a Mistake. How to Restart? _ _ _ _	Lesson 14. _ _	175
Which Way Are You Going? _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 15. _ _	183
Personal Development Plan _ _ _ _ _	Lesson 16. _ _	191

Appendix

Who Is Jesus? _ _ _ _ _	195
The Traces of God _ _ _ _ _	201
Used and Additional Resources _ _ _ _ _	215
Collective Table of Contents _ _ _ _ _	221

