

Golden Rule

CIVILITY

Character Lessons for Children Ages 5–8

MODULE 5

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Lesson Name: I Can See You Are Suffering

Lesson Theme: Compassion

Overall Goal:

The goal of this lesson is to introduce the concept of compassion.

Rationale:

We want children to understand that sometimes difficult and/or sad things happen to good and kind people and that these things are not always the person's fault. Sometimes the situation or other people cause the suffering or difficulty. Once children begin to understand that someone is not always to blame – that there are bigger issues/powers at play, they begin to learn skills for systems thinking. In addition, we want to teach children that when they feel compassion, they should try to help the other person. (This ties into the Civility Experts Inc. definition of civility which includes, "easing the experience of others").

Age appropriate for: Ages 5-7

Learning Objectives	Social Competencies	Essential Skills
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand what compassion is2. Understand when to show compassion3. Use strategies to be compassion	<p>Beginning to show an increasing awareness of their own emotions and that of others.</p> <p>Children can label what others are feeling. When observed, they can express why the other person feels the way they do. For example: "...he fell off his bike" or "...he dropped his lunch on the floor."</p>	<p>Essential Skills involved in being compassionate are:</p> <p>Oral communication in basic social interactions – comforting.</p> <p>Children expect highly predictable context – common situation and settings.</p> <p>Responsible for maintaining effective/cooperative interaction with one or a few others in situations requiring coordination.</p>

Supplies you will need:

- Pencils
- Washable markers
- Handouts



Recommended Reading for Trainer:



Add-on Sources and Resources e.g.,

- Children's book(s)

Resource 1) *The Birdman* by Veronika Martenova Charles, Annouchka Gravel Galouchko (Illustrator), Stephan Daigle (Illustrator)

Noor Nobi is a broken man, wandering the streets of Calcutta with no reason to live. His three children, snatched from him in a cruel accident, were everything he worked for and loved. But one day, he enters a crowded market and sees a bird, caged and frightened and sick. With very little money in his pocket, he waits until the vendor is closing up.

Quickly, Noor Nobi bargains and, happy to get anything for the sickly thing, the vendor accepts his offer. For some reason Noor Nobi cannot explain, it is important for him to nurse the bird back to health. When it is finally able to fly, Noor Nobi takes his bird to a big Banyan tree and releases it. Only then is he able to weep and fully grieve for his children.

Before Noor Nobi knows it, he is back at work and taking his weekly earnings to the market where he continues to buy, heal, and free as many birds as he can. Crowds gather; some laugh and say he is crazy, some stand reverently, some don't know what to think. But Noor Nobi's kindness saves a growing number of birds, and the birds, in turn, give him new purpose.

Source: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/130262.The_Birdman

Image Source: <http://d.gr-assets.com/books/1320475822l/130262.jpg>

Resource 2) *Under the Lemon Moon* by Edith Hope Fine

This is a charming story about a young Mexican girl learning about generosity and forgiveness. One night Rosalinda is awakened by a noise in the garden. A man is taking lemons from her beloved tree. She consults the wise old woman La Anciana, who offers her a creative solution. Watercolour and pastel illustrations make the story appealing for young readers who are learning what it feels like to share. The Spanish vocabulary in the book gives the characters a sense of place.

Source: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1308981.Under_the_Lemon_Moon?from_search=true

Image source: <http://media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/dd/14/66/dd1466323367eba210b0026d26d5decf.jpg>

Resource 3) *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio

Note: Adolescent book – Great book for parents as well.

I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse.

August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a facial deformity that prevented him from going to a mainstream school—until now. He's about to start 5th grade at Beecher Prep, and if you've ever been the new kid then you know how hard that can be. The thing is Auggie's just an ordinary kid, with an extraordinary face. But can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, despite appearances? R. J. Palacio has written a warm and uplifting story that will have readers laughing one minute and wiping away tears the next. With wonderfully realistic family interactions (flawed, but loving), lively school scenes, and short chapters, *Wonder* is accessible to readers of all levels.

Source: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/11387515-wonder>

Image Source: http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/41vUh9e1rxL._SY344_BO1,204,203,200_.jpg

- YouTube Clips

Resource 1) Compassion Bumper:

https://youtu.be/pKQaAUcd_0k

Resource 2) JellyTelly Kids Talk - Compassion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOHcGyfyxVM>

Resource 3) Raising Compassionate Kids

<https://youtu.be/aAssNcqoF1c?list=PL5hX RfcDzj6svlVEINsX3CYNmsxQqrYu>

- Additional Lessons
- Other

Resources for the parents following the session:

Resource 1) *8 Ways to Help Your Grade-Schooler Learn Social Cues* by Lexi Walters Wright

<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/common-challenges/picking-up-on-social-cues/8-ways-to-help-your-grade-schooler-learn-social-cues#slide-6>

Resource 2) Books to teach compassion

<http://www.the-best-childrens-books.org/teaching-compassion.html>



Length of Session: 1 hour

Handouts:

- Activity for Classroom Included
Activity A) Monkey See, Monkey Do
Activity B) Cause and Effect Pictorial Situations
Activity C) Open heart, open mind
Activity D) Leopard in His Tree (Activity for the older learner)
- Activity for Take-home Included
Activity E) Drawing Compassion

Terms to Know:

Golden Rule – Treat others how you want to be treated.

Civility – Choosing to treat others with kindness and respect.

Kindness – Speaking and acting in a way that doesn't harm others.

Respect – Treating others with kindness and civility just because they are people too.

Honesty – Telling the truth.

Trust – Saying what you know is real and true

Curiosity – Being interested and asking questions.

Compassion – Understanding that sometimes people can't control what happens to them or how they are.

Trainer's Script:

DO (Prior to the session starting): Have colouring and word search set up for the children prior to the session starting.

DO: Have each child introduce themselves by their full name and then make a silly face.

GOAL:

Here we are wanting to teach some social radar – what cues tell you someone is sad or upset or in pain, etc.

Activity A) Monkey See, Monkey Do

DO: Move the children into partners.

SAY: Can you please stand facing each other. At this time it is important to listen with your ears. I am going to ask you to do something and then you are going to do it while looking at your partner. Let's try a practice run.

ASK: Everyone please place your hand on your hips.

SAY: Now we are going to repeat this with different actions. Are you ready?

ASK: Can you please place your hand on the side of your body and look at the person across from you.

SAY: Can you please smile at your partner.

SAY: Can you please smile, while looking at the person in front of you.

SAY: Can you please smile while looking at your feet.

SAY: Can you please turn your back to the other person. You would be standing back to back or shoulder to shoulder.

SAY: Can you turn around and face your partner.

SAY: Can you say your name, very quietly.

SAY: Can you please make a sad face.

SAY: Can you please lower your head to look at your feet (no smiles this time).

ASK: Can you please sit on the floor facing the front of the room with your legs crossed.

Note: Please wait for them to quiet down before we move to the next session. You may want two or three taped lines on the floor to increase the organization level of the children sitting on the floor.

ASK: What did you feel like when your friend was smiling at you?

Possible responses – Happy, fun

ASK: How did it feel when your friend made a sad face?

Possible responses – I was sad for them, I did not know what to do.

ASK: When people speak softly to us, just as you said your name to your friend, what does that tell us?

Possible responses – We are in a movie, we are in church, the person is sad.

Note: Flipchart paper create a face with only eyes and mouth/smile. Include the flip chart paper face as you explore the topic below with the children.

SAY: Part of having friends is understanding what they could be feeling and we do that by paying attention to their facial expressions (are they smiling or looking sad), are they speaking quietly or loudly, are they making eye contact or not. These three (3) things are a good starting point to watching for cues on how our friends and family are feeling.

ASK: What do you do when you are on the playground and a friend does not want to play with you?

Possible responses – Eye, voice, smile

ASK: What do you do if you are told you have to wait until dinner to eat? No snacks.

Possible responses – Eye, voice, smile

ASK: What do you do, if you have to go watch your brother/sister play a “sport” and you do not really want to go?

Possible responses – Eye, voice, smile

SAY: In these situations, your parents/grandparents/caregivers are paying attention to your eyes, your voice and your smile and they can tell how you are feeling without saying a word. It is important that we start to pay attention to these three things. The adults, teachers and your friends are sending you cues. Think of them as a ray of light. When we pay attention, just like when you are watching TV, you can notice when someone is happy, sad or hurt.

ASK: Where/why is this important to you?

Possible responses – We want to be nice/kind, we want to be friends with them, we want to have fun together.

GOAL:

To teach the idea of making life easier- for someone else – this is an introduction to civility and we want the child to assume the best of people, e.g., think about what might have caused the situation.

Activity B – Cause and Effect Pictorial Situations

Situations to explore:

- a) A dog roaming the street without an owner
- b) A person sleeping on a park bench
- c) People waiting in line for food
- d) An ambulance

- e) Burial
- f) Train stopped on the railway tracks

DO: Walk through one of the examples with the children. Say to them, there is no one reason for a situation to occur, there are many. We are going to explore together reasons why these pictures have occurred.

Move to another picture and ask the question below.

ASK: Why do you think there is a?

- a) A dog roaming the street without an owner
- b) A person sleeping on a park bench
- c) People waiting in line for food
- d) An ambulance
- e) Burial
- f) Train stopped on the railway tracks

SAY: When we see something, it is important to not assume we know what has happened. Keep an open mind – these are opportunities for us to learn about people and the world around us.

Activity C – Open Mind, Open Heart

SAY: We often look at a situation based on what we know. As we get older we will have the chance to see and experience new things. When we see new things, it is important to keep our mind open.

ASK: How can we keep an open mind?

DO: Handout

Source Image: <http://thenewagemovement.com/main/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Open-Mind-Open-heart.png>

DO: Read the question on the handout - Draw a picture or write down words which represent an open mind?

DO: Once the children are done, ask them to hang up their pictures for everyone to see.

SAY: Can we all stand up and look at our friend beside us and give them a big smile.

SAY: Thank you for being here with us today. See you next week. Stay safe and be kind.

Activity for the Older Learner

Activity D) Leopard in His Tree

Note: Handout

Overview of the story a Leopard in His Tree

There are many valuable lessons within the story. The one that stands out is about “apathy” and how someone is unwilling to take action, especially over something that is important because they are not impacted by the action.

In this case, lack of action resulted in allowing the culprit to continue with his/her crimes that not only impacted the community at large, the bystander also became a victim and the impact was bigger. Apathy actually contributed to the degree of the issue. It also highlights that it is never too late to do the right thing and work in the best interest of society as a whole and not just on what only impacts them.

Questions for the older learner:

- 1) What message do you take away from the story?
- 2) Why do you believe action was not taken?
- 3) How does the message apply to our daily lives?
- 4) How does this story practice – Open mind, open heart?

Story source: http://www.storybud.org/leopard_in_his_tree.htm

Permission was kindly given to use this story from Free stories for kids.

Story – Leopard in His Tree

There was once a leopard in the jungle, and a very nocturnal leopard he was too. He could hardly sleep at night and, lying on a branch of his magnificent tree, he spent his time watching what was happening in the forest at night. This is how he came to learn that there was a thief in that forest. He would watch the thief go out every night with empty hands and return loaded up with his stolen loot. Sometimes the thief had nabbed the senior monkey’s bananas, other times he had filched the lion’s wig, or pinched the zebra’s stripes. One night he even snuck home with the big elephant’s false tusk, which the elephant had been secretly wearing for quite some time.

However, as the leopard was a very quiet sort of cat, who lived at the margin of everything, he didn’t want to say anything to anyone. He didn’t see it as his business, and, if truth were told, he rather enjoyed discovering these little secrets. And so, thanks to the stealthy thief, quite a stir was being created in the world of the animals: the elephant felt ridiculous without his false tusk, and the zebra now looked like a white donkey, not to mention the lion who, now as bald as a lioness had lost all respect. Most of the other animals were in some similar position too. They were furious, confused or ridiculous, but the leopard lay quietly in his tree, each night enjoying the thief’s escapades.

However, one night the thief went on vacation, and after having waited a long while for him to appear, the leopard grew tired and decided to sleep for a while. When he woke up he found himself in a place very different from his usual tree, he was floating on the water of a small lake inside a cave, and around him he could see all those objects which, night after night, he had seen being stolen... the thief had cut down his tree and stolen his entire home along with the leopard himself! Well this was the last straw, so the leopard, taking advantage of the thief not being there, ran out and went straight to see the other animals to tell them where the thief had hidden all their things...

They all praised the leopard for having discovered the thief and his hideout, and allowing them to recover their possessions. In the end, the animal who lost most from all this was the leopard, who couldn't replant his magnificent tree and had to make do with a much inferior tree located in a very boring site... and he regretted having not been concerned at the problems of the other animals, now seeing that in the long run those very problems had become his own.

The end.

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