

HomeTalk

Thoughtful Conversations for Families
and Schools

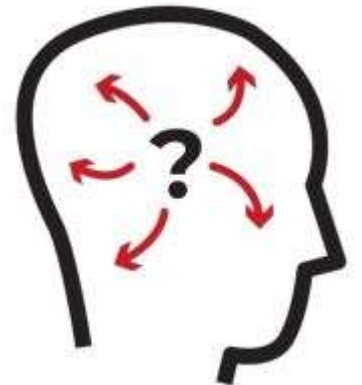
Issue 25 - Compassion



Note to parents/carers and teachers

This pack contains links to external websites. Whilst we take every care to make sure these are suitable, you may want to check the content before showing them to children

Thinking
Moves



This week's focus is compassion

"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."

Dalai Lama



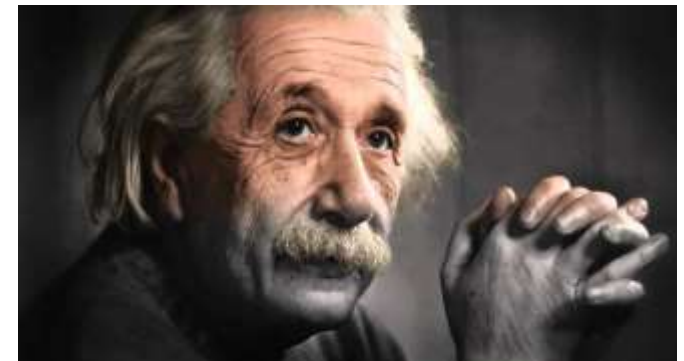
"True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring."

Martin Luther King



"Our task must be to free ourselves ... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

Albert Einstein



For notes on compassion, empathy and sympathy, see the final slide in this pack

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Quote: "True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring."



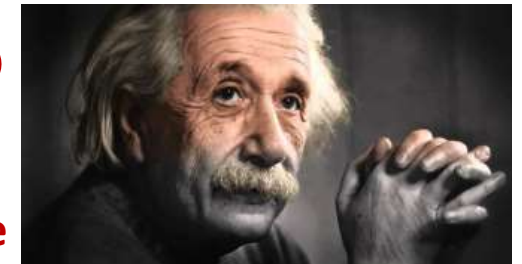
Statement: **It is not society that produces beggars; it is individuals**

Quote: "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."



Statement: **Humanity will not survive unless everyone becomes more compassionate**

Quote: "Our task must be to free ourselves ... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."



Statement: **You cannot show compassion to the whole of nature**

Caring thinking

- How can feelings affect our thoughts?

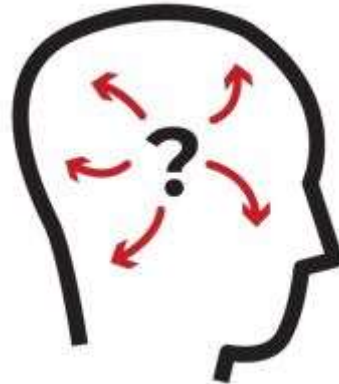


Collaborative thinking

- Is all listening a sort of compassion?

Creative thinking

- People say: 'Necessity is the mother of invention'. Does all creative thinking arise from some sort of need and suffering?



Thinking Moves

Critical thinking

- How can our thoughts affect our feelings?



Think AHEAD

Whom might you show compassion to today?



Think BACK

.. to a time when someone showed you extra compassion and kindness



CONNECT

What does 'compassion in farming' mean?



DIVIDE

What is the difference between pain and suffering?



LISTEN/LOOK

Look out for 3 examples today of others showing compassion



ZOOM (in/out)

What does 'being kind' feel like?

How important is kindness?

HomeTalk discussion suggestions

For age 3 – 5 years



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxTvliokPm4>

Compassion song – based on the Jungle Book’s song, ‘Bear Necessities’ (also worth playing):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08NIhjpVFsU>.
 Some explanation might be needed.

Talking Points

- The ‘Bare Necessities’: What are the most important things people need? What couldn’t you do without?
- How would you feel if you did not have some of these things?
- Can you imagine how people feel in other places, where they do not have some of these things? Would you help them if you could?

Activity

- Find, or make, pictures of as many necessities as you can. Then put them in an order from most important to least important.
- Find, or make up, a story about someone who helps a person in need.

HomeTalk discussion suggestions

For ages 6 - 9



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAFq6PcFYgl>

Compassion in action: What it is, and what it looks like – a simple animation. (Too simple? Well, it packs a lot into a short space. Worth pausing and reflecting every now and then.)

Talking Points

- Do your family always understand you? Do you always understand them?
- How can we all understand each other better?
- How can caring for others' feelings need courage?
- What turns listening into *really* listening?

Activity

- From memory, list the little things that the film gave examples of compassion in action. Then see if you can add some examples of your own.
- Check out: <https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/>. See if you can do something to help other children.

HomeTalk discussion suggestions

For ages 10 +



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgOvQXGQMI8>

The Thief – a story about compassion. A Buddhist tale in a modern setting.

Talking Points

- Could seclusion (isolating yourself) help you to be more compassionate? If so, how?
- What did Bankei teach his students? Was it the right lesson? Did he teach it in the right way?
- Do you think that thieves and others who do wrong, don't really know it? Or do you think they know it, but just can't help themselves? Could you help someone like that by showing them more compassion?

Activity

- Compassion is very important in the Buddhist way of thinking. Find out more about the **Buddha** and what he taught or find out more about the **Dalai Lama**, who teaches about compassion and wisdom. Then share some lessons with your family or friends.

HomeTalk discussion suggestions

For ages 10+



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-UZ0hn_Tpc

What is compassion? – a film with explanations, examples and challenges.

The background music is Bill Withers' famous song, 'Lean on me'.

Talking Points

- *'A problem shared is a problem halved'*. Do you agree?
- How do your problems and troubles compare with those of someone living in a war-torn country?
- In some Covid cases, relatives were not allowed to hold the hands of the dying. How painful do you imagine that would be for everyone?
- Is compassion the main element of being fully human?

Activity

- Find out who Mother Teresa was, and why people admired her so much.
- Research the song, 'Lean on me'. Could you learn the lyrics and then sing the whole song yourself?

HomeTalk discussion suggestions

For ages 10+



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBI2TVtI>

Random acts of kindness – a film viewed by over 22 million people.

Talking Points

- How many acts of kindness do you see in a typical day? How many do you do yourself?
- Is kindness the same as compassion?
- *'Sometimes you have to be cruel to be kind'*. Do you agree? Is it possible to be **too** kind?
- What steps do you think could be taken to increase the amount of compassion in the world?

Activity

- List as many acts of kindness as you can remember from the film. Are they all very similar, or do some stand out as being specially kind?
- Find out what is meant by *'compassion fatigue'*, and write a story or an opinion about it.

Notes on compassion, empathy, sympathy...

COMPASSION = *suffering* (Latin: *passio*) *with* (Latin: *com*)

or in modern English: ***'sharing someone's suffering – and wanting to take it away'***

EMPATHY = *feeling* (Greek: *pathos*) *in* (German: *ein*)

or: ***'imagining what someone else is experiencing, including how they are feeling'***

SYMPATHY = *feeling* (Greek: *pathos*) *together* (Greek: *syn*)

or: ***'fellow feeling, especially when someone else is in sorrow or trouble'***

N.B. People make various distinctions between these words, but some of them are rather forced.

The root meanings of all three are essentially the same.

Nevertheless, some reasonably sound distinctions, or different emphases, are:

- **COMPASSION** is always focussed on real suffering and can be thought of as a *'deep' feeling, or a general attitude*, often linked to *benevolence* (wishing others well) or *charity* (love).
 - **EMPATHY** can be used for a *range* of negative feelings, e.g. sharing someone's frustration and anger, but *also for positive ones*, e.g. sharing someone's ambition or joy. It can be real and deep, but one can *'empathise'* with fictional characters, and with people's everyday experiences and feelings.
- **SYMPATHY** tends to be used when the feeling is not so deep; it can be more of a *recognition* than a *'replay'* of emotions. But it can result in genuine, supportive *action*, e.g. when strikers *'come out in sympathy'*.

More ideas.....

<https://dialogueworks.co.uk/HomeTalk/>



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#P4C and #thinkingmoves



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