

2017 Innovative Schools Summit

Las Vegas

Girl Bullying Conference
School Climate & Culture Forum

Developing Bold Compassionate Youth

When youth are presented with an opportunity to actually feel the impact of connection and discovery, they begin to speak and act from a compassionate heart place rather than a reactionary mind place. In this they become catalyst's for compassionate relationships and in turn the solution to relational aggression and bully behaviors.

The results are extraordinary.

Presenter

Lori Woodley, MS

All It Takes
Founder and Executive Director
Ventura County, California

Using the Notice Choose Act® formula and language along with easy to facilitate experiential activities, youth are empowered to be the solution to school climate and culture challenges. Emboldened and confident, students choose to look out for one another rather than go after each other, changing the dynamic across campuses.

All It TakesSM Youth Leadership Trainings
FacelessSM Activity

To CONSIDER:

It's challenging to find someone who will argue over the increasing emotional distance our youth

It's challenging to find someone who will argue over the increasing emotional distance our youth have with one another. There are multiple 'reasons' for this and a case could be made that it's primarily due to a dramatic shift in preferred communication methods. While an entire workshop could devote its time to this, for the purpose of our time we will say the reasons do not matter, the IMPACT is what matters.

The IMPACT:

1. Youth are unable to read the emotions of others, thereby missing opportunities to support, celebrate and empathize;
2. Youth's emotions are unable to be recognized, therefore needs are not recognized or addressed;
3. Authentic communication of what's *real* is underplayed or exaggerated;
4. Accountability for the impact we have on others is seriously compromised;
5. A false sense of autonomy is experienced and the risks are not weighed;
6. In general a FacelessSM culture is exponentially increasing.

SOLUTIONS:

Experiential education - learning through experiencing - is an enormously powerful tool that allows youth to feel the impact of their actions, feel the impact of others contributing to them, and then to choose, on purpose, how they want to show up moving forward. The Golden Rule was taught to just about every child by the time they hit kindergarten. The problem is that 'knowing' a rule of behavior does not necessarily translate to 'living' it. 'Feeling Impact' drives choices for positive or negative - it drives *choice*. Creating opportunity for youth to experience a *feeling* and having them process the results puts them in purposeful control of their next steps. We want to inspire them to be in control and accountable for their choices.

One activity from the All It Takes Youth Leadership Training that takes place with middle school students on the first day, right after drop off and initial intention setting, is an *eye contact experience*. This is done with strangers - students from different schools or classes, different socio-economic circumstance and lunch table. It is also powerful for students who are at odds with one another, students who are looking to grow their leadership skills, and for students who have a hard time relating to others; the outcomes and benefits are unique for everyone.

Non-verbal communication is the direct line to this message:

You Matter or You Don't Matter

If communication never has a non-verbal component, we lose the ability to deeply understand, read, and relate to another person. We miss the humanity in one another.

PROCESS:

Speak about non-verbal communication and its different types; i.e., body position, voice tone, eye contact, etc. If time permits, you can demonstrate some of these - like arms crossed versus open, lean in rather than out, snappy vs warm voice tones, etc. Say, "I care about you," in two different ways and ask which one they believe. *The words are the same and the delivery changes the believability.*

1. Have students sit knees to knees facing one another, open body position with hands on their

1. Have students sit knee-to-knee facing one another, open body position with hands on their knees. Let them know they will be doing an activity that will likely be uncomfortable at first, however it gets much easier and they will be very clear in the end why it is a powerful tool for them to experience and learn. Let them know they will be not be sharing anything out loud. *This is a silent activity all the way through.*
2. Demonstrate 'staring' vs 'seeing'. We all know the difference.
3. In silence, have students choose a partner A and a partner B.
4. Talk about the 'giggles' that will likely show up. Just let them be there, take a breath and quiet them.
5. Ask them to make eye contact, hold this for somewhere between 30-120 seconds. You must give the time for them to get mostly past the giggles and wondering eyes. In quiet tones remind them to stay 'with' their partner, remind them that their partner is not on the floor or on the ceiling, but in front of them. Bring them softly back to focus as they squirm their way through the process.

a) Round One

- i. While remaining connected, ask partner A to think of a story, a real true story...depending on what you want to accomplish the story can be some of the following:
 1. A sad or difficult time in their family
 2. A time when they felt betrayed by a friend at school
 3. A time when they experienced someone else hurting deeply and they felt helpless to make a difference
 4. A time when they were very angry or furious
- ii. With eyes only, (all non-verbal), have partner A 'share' their story. Encourage them to go deep and truly commit to letting the other person know what the impact of the story was on their life, on their heart, for their family, or others they love. Keep this going until you experience the shift from squirmy to connection. Continue to remind them to come back to their partner as they shift their eyes around the room. Remind them to stay in open body position. You will get deep sighs, maybe watery eyes, some will want to quit. *Stay the course.* Remind B that it is their job to 'connect' with A, to help A feel like they are important, that they matter.
- iii. There are times when you might ask them all to close their eyes and by raising hands ask them to share the following: Do you feel your partner is giving 100% attention and effort? Get a general count by percentage, have them open their eyes and continue. Tell them, 'about 50% of you shared that you do not feel connected to your partner.' Give them more time and soft encouragement to get there.
- iii. Once you feel that they have it and have shared and received have them relax, without talking and switch to partner B.
- iiii. Partner B now silently shares their story. Repeat through.
- v. Wind down once you feel impact has grown.

1. Round Two

1. Round Two

- i. Make eye contact once again...this time A finds a story that falls into one of these categories:
 1. A very exciting event
 2. A victory or accomplishment
 3. One of the best days of your life
- ii. Partner A shares silent story again for a while. Keep reminding students to stay in open body position, come back to eye contact if wandering, set the giggles aside, and get back to connection.
- iii. Partner A wraps up and B takes a turn sharing the exciting story. A is reminded to stay involved, stay connected, let B know they care.
- iiii. Wrap up round two.

2. Round Three

- i. Partner A will go through the steps of Round One, however this time partner B will hold a piece of paper or their phone up in front of his/her face.
- ii. Partner A is told they must continue, they must try to find a way, using eyes only and not touching the other person, to make sure the other person 'notices' them, that they feel important.
- iii. Continue until it the impact is felt deeply. The frustration is clear.
- iiii. Switch and repeat with opposite partner roles.

3. Round Four

- i. Both partners leave the papers/phones to the side of them. They silently share their excitement stories at the same time. Offering an opportunity to share and receive, again all silently.

Process the Activity: (ask any of these questions or others)

- a. What did you notice?
- b. What were you surprised by?
- c. How does the Faceless effect show up in your life? With parent, with siblings, with friends, with classmates, on teams?
- d. What stands out that you can take away from the experience?
- e. What might you do differently after this activity?

Grudges Activity

To CONSIDER:

We are all human; therefore we have all said or done numerous things that others are angry or hurt by. The greatest challenge in this is when we can't move past things others have said or done and we carry it forward as a grudge for long periods of time.

The IMPACT:

1. Pain continues to burden hearts;
2. Grudges tend to come with retaliatory actions;
3. Non-forgiveness creates victim status;
4. People tend to 'take up' for their 'wronged' friends;
5. Unkind and straight up bullying behavior is highly likely.

This simple conversational activity helps students to experience their own, 'Ah Ha!' moment and take ownership for their process, their actions, and their next steps.

In any size group, (more than one person is preferable), or even one-on-one, this can be impactful.

1. First, ask students to raise their hand if they have ever been hurt, disappointed, let down, betrayed, etc., by a friend, family member, classmate, teacher, coach, etc.
 - a. Hands go up...ask for them to really raise them high. As a facilitator, always participate as you lead...your hand goes up too!
 - b. Ask them to look around and Notice how many others feel the same way
 - c. Hands down
2. Next ask students to raise their hands if they have themselves ever let someone down, hurt their feelings, caused pain?
 - a. Hands go up...give space for all hands to go up, maybe repeat the question in a different way. Acknowledge those who brave the truth first...
 - b. Ask them to look around and how many are raising their hands.
 - i. It should be everyone, we are all human and mess up sometimes.
 - c. Hands down.
3. Ask students to raise their hands if they would like the people they have hurt to forgive them. If they hope that they could be seen as human with vulnerabilities, who make mistakes and be allowed a new opportunity to be great rather than seen as what they once said or did.
 - a. Hands go up...look around notice how many people you are in the company of.
 - b. Notice that most/all everyone in the room would like to be forgiven for the things they do that cause pain or discomfort for others.
4. Next ask students to raise their hands if they are holding something against someone who did something 2 weeks or longer ago. Something held onto that is still burning in your heart and mind. Ask if there is someone they used to be friends with who is now an enemy because of something they did...ask if they are resentful, jealous, upset, burdened by something another person said or did. Change the word to Grudge at some point, ask if there are multiple grudges they might be holding onto...
 - a. Hands go up, sometimes slowly at first. Give them time to sit with it, repeat

person said or did. Change the word to Grudge at some point, ask if there are multiple grudges they might be holding onto...

- a. Hands go up, sometimes slowly at first. Give them time to sit with it, repeat statements, re-word them, hands always start making their way up.
- b. Most all people in the group, whether in a full classroom or small group will raise their hands.
- c. They do not need to look around this time.
- d. Hands down.

5. Now the '**Ah Ha**' moment....say the following, in order, waiting a beat between each one, let it sink in, create impact.

- a. All or most people in this group have said that they have created hurt and pain for another person sometime in their life.
- b. All or most people in this group have said that they want others to forgive them, give them another chance. Treat them fresh and new rather than from the past.
- c. All or most people in this group have said that they are holding at least one grudge, over 2 weeks old, against another person(s).
- d. Pause....
- e. Say something like, "What occurs for me here is that what we want from others is something we are not willing to do ourselves." We want to receive forgiveness and new chances yet hold onto grudges.

Process the Activity~(ask any of these questions or others)

- a. How do you feel about others expecting from you what they won't give you? Reverse.
- b. Are you surprised by anything that came up?
- c. What are some of the negative impacts grudges create?
- d. What is something you can take away from this activity?
- e. What can be different now and how will it be positive for you and others?

All It TakesSM Leadership Trainings Synchronized Shoulders Activity

To CONSIDER:

With the escape and distraction of media technology, an exponential number of today's youth are feeling disconnected from their peers when it comes to social-emotional communication and group problem solving. When a group of peers take on a collective task, differences in skill, belief, perspective, and priority often create road blocks that become the group's operating focus, leaving the task at hand unsolved. The micro-communities of homogenous mindsets that social media gives us access to escalate this problem even further, creating a social atmosphere in which youth do not recognize the value of each other's differences. The intuitive connection that manifests among members of a well-functioning team takes intentional effort, practice, and an empathetic understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses. In this it is valuable to find our own relationship with being imperfect or 'messing up.'

The IMPACT:

The IMPACT:

1. Youth feel disconnected and relationship building challenging.
2. Numbness and blind eye becomes a way of being, ignoring impact created by unkind behaviors.
3. Youth isolate themselves within their micro-communities.
4. Youth lose out on opportunities to grow and succeed when they close off pathways to other perspectives.
5. Personal accountability is decreases or is non-existent.

This simple but tricky activity inspires teams to quickly tune themselves into a collective energy. Every team member is responsible for staying on task, paying full attention to the actions of every other member. The collective goal of completing the task, which can only be accomplished with 100% full participation, gives students an understanding of what a well-functioning team looks like, and how it isn't always easy to get there.

This activity is ideal for small groups or teams, up to 25 works well.

1. First, the group creates a perfect circle, standing up facing in. Remind participants that in a circle no one stands in front or in back of another and everyone can see each other's face.
2. Explain the guidelines as follows:
 - a) The collective goal of the group is to count to 20 without messing up.
 - a) The first person to start (can be anyone) begins with 1. On their turn they can tap their right shoulder, passing it on to the person to their right, or on their left shoulder, passing it on to the person on their left. Participants say their number loudly as they pass it on.
 - b) When the count gets to 5, the fifth person claps their hands together and shoots the count across the group to another random player.
 - c) The sixth person passes it to the left or right, and then the seventh person must place one arm above the other, left on bottom, passing it on to the next person on their right or left. On Seven it passes from the upper hand, on Fourteen it passes in the direction of the lower hand.
 - d) The eighth person continues the count where it left off and says "8".
 - e) The count continues as normal until 10, where it is clapped across the circle once more, and then the count continues.
 - f) The fourteenth person parallels their arms and the lower hand passes it.
 - g) The fifteenth person claps the count across the group again and it continues as normal until 20, where the final person claps and shoots it in another direction across the circle.
3. The primary challenge lies in the pace of this activity and accuracy of the activity. The process starts back at 1 every time there is a mess up or too long a pause. When this happens, and it will, follow these steps:
 - a) The person who messes up must immediately put their hands up and say, "My

happens, and it will, follow these steps:

- a) The person who messes up must immediately put their hands up and say, "My Bad."
- b) That person then starts the count over immediately.
- c) Lesson here is that everyone makes mistakes, it is in owning them and moving on that freedom from self criticism grows and group interaction becomes more synergic and trusting.
- d) This means the group will start over quite a bit, likely creating tension.

Summary of Rules:

- Count 1-20.
- Intervals of Five: (5, 10, 15, 20): Clap hands together and send the count to a random person on the opposite side of the circle.
- Seven and Fourteen: parallel arms, on Seven the upper arm passes it the direction hand is facing and on Fourteen the lower arm passes it.
- All mess-ups and brief pauses result in starting the count over again.

Process the Activity~(ask any of these questions or others)

- a. What did you Notice about the way the group functioned?
- b. Are you surprised by anything that came up for you and about you?
- c. What are some of the traits the group can work on to be accomplish things like this even quicker?
- d. What is something you can take away from this activity?
- e. Did you Notice any new strengths or weaknesses about yourself?