

This appendix offers specific practices and processes which support a culture of empathy and emotional safety. These suggestions will give you a foundation in many of the ideas presented in the body of *Teaching Empathy*. Page references in the appendix will direct you to specific ideas in the book.

Culture-Building Rituals That Promote Empathy

Rituals help create new habits of thinking and acting. When the rituals are interconnected, promoting caring and compassion, then a cultural way of empathetic thinking and acting will be felt. The following rituals are examples of cultural practices that teach empathy.

- Start each day or week with a *class meeting* for "checking in" and to practice listening to each other (page 80).
- Run a fishbowl when a pressing issue, conflict, or concern needs to be addressed (page 84).
- Have students write journal entries on a variety of reallife experiences (page 75).

- Practice moral dilemma scenarios on a regular basis (page 31).
- Read a quote or poem each morning (or once a week) to your students and spend 10 minutes exploring its meaning.

Increasing Emotional Literacy (page 62)

The most critical kind of emotional intelligence for empathy is the skill of listening. Emotional literacy requires high-level listening, which incorporates three different listening perspectives:

- 1. Listening to the emotions of the speaker (the true feelings).
- 2. Listening to the thoughts of the speaker (the opinions and reasoning).
- 3. Listening to the intentions of the speaker (the motivations or expectations).



Teaching Frameworks

Within the cultural dynamics of emotional safety that this resource helps to create, it is critical to teach a structured step-by-step procedure for applying the skill of empathy. I call the structured process presented here Event-Empathy-Action or EEA.

Event-Empathy-Action (EEA)

I created Event-Empathy-Action (EEA) as a three-step, advanced listening approach that teaches students how to respond to others empathically. When something unfortunate, disappointing, or sad happens in another person's life—such as a family separation, doing poorly on a test, not being invited to a party, or being embarrassed in front of others—a person using the EEA method asks him- or herself the following open-ended questions:

- What happened? (the event)
- How is that person feeling? (*empathy*)
- What will I do? (a specific action)

Initially, students are led through these questions by the teacher. The hope is that in time they will learn to naturally (or automatically) respond to others by thinking through the three questions.

The EEA method is presented to the group using *empathic situations*—hypothetical scenarios a class can discuss in order to explore various empathic responses.

Sample empathy scenarios:

- A classmate just found out that she has to move because her father was transferred.
- A new student has just arrived in school today and he is sitting alone in the cafeteria.

You can create additional empathic scenarios or brainstorm some situations with your class. Daily school events provide a rich palette of challenging social situations. For a detailed sequence of lessons to teach EEA, see part 4 of *Building Class-room Communities* (Levine, 2003).

The Four Phases of Empathy

Goldstein presents the four phases of empathy training by Keefe in the book *The Prepare Curriculum* (Goldstein, 1999, paraphrased from Keefe, 1976). Keefe's process provides a framework to consider when teaching empathy and other prosocial skills. The four phases are as follows:

- 1. **Perceptual:** This phase focuses on teaching the students how to effectively read a social cue such as facial or body expressions. This is best taught by teaching observational skills for the purpose of providing observational feedback.
- 2. **Reverberatory:** Once a person has successfully perceived that something is going on with another through their observation of social cues, he or she is able to "feel" that the other person needs support in some way. In essence the other person's place of need is reverberating or echoing back to the empathizer. This can be facilitated by asking students the question, "Who has ever felt this way?" This question helps the listener reflect on a specific episode in his or her life. This episodic reflection is



ingrained into a person's memory by having him or her attach an emotion to the episode.

- 3. Cognitive and affective responses: This phase helps the empathizer sort out the feelings which are being expressed (not necessarily through words but more so through actions). For example, if a person has a furrowed brow and raised voice in the middle of a stressful situation, the empathizer is able to reason from the social cues that the other person is angry. Once this is understood, the empathizer can decide what the best response would be for the angry person.
- 4. **Communication phase:** In this phase the empathizer provides feedback to the other person either through active listening or direct information. For example, the empathizer could say, "You seem really upset. Would you like to sit down and talk about it?"

Symbol Name Aim Plan: The SNAP Approach to Team Building, Consensus, and Planning

Symbol Name Action Plan (SNAP) is a student planning model which integrates strategic planning, team building, creative problem solving, and social skills practice. It was initially developed by teacher, social worker, and trainer John Eddington and is used here by permission. John presents his own version of SNAP in *First Survive*, *Then Thrive* (see the Additional Resources section on page 213).

SNAP uses the following steps:

Step One: Identify the Problems

Students brainstorm concerns that exist within the class-room or school. Select problems that students could help solve. Some sample concerns which students can influence include:

- There is no formal welcome for new students who move into our school during the school year.
- The orientation program for incoming sixth graders to our middle school is "lame."
- There are not enough extracurricular activities for those kids who do not like sports.

An example of a concern they do not have influence over would be their dislike of food in the cafeteria.

Step Two: Select a Problem

Once a list has been brainstormed and clarified, each student can vote for two or three problems he or she thinks are



the most important. Allow students only one vote per item. A facilitator or group leader slowly reads the list and the votes are offered. This is called an "energy vote" because this voting process helps identify where the energy of the group is focused. After each person has voted, the two items with the most votes are voted on again with each person only voting once. The problem with the most votes will be the focus of the planning group or team.

Step Three: Analyze the Problem

Have the team divide a sheet of paper into two columns. On the left side, the team identifies causes of the problem. After a few causes have been offered, an effect for each cause is written on the right side next to the accompanying cause. For example, if the *problem* is that a new kid has a difficult time coming into a new school, a cause might be "no one knows the new kid" and the effect might be "no one talks to him." The next cause could be "no one talks to him" and the effect would be "he feels alone and disconnected."

Step Four: Brainstorm Solutions

Students brainstorm ideas for solutions, keeping in mind that these are ideas and not strategies. Confusing ideas with strategies is a common planning error at this point as students try to plot out the exact plan (the strategy) before having a focus (the idea). An example of a strategy offered as a solution is:

• Let's make sure we include the new kid by inviting him to eat lunch with us.

This might instead come later as a strategy for a chosen solution such as:

• Let's create a program for new students in which we include them in everything we do at school.

Encourage students to brainstorm unique and creative solutions which could impact the problem. After 8 to 10 solutions are offered, the facilitator reviews the list and clarifies any answers if necessary.

Step Five: Choose a Solution and Create a Symbol and Name

Students vote on the solutions by using the "energy vote" process outlined in step two. Once the solution is chosen (a student-led orientation program, for example), students are divided into groups of three or four that are assigned different tasks. A few groups will create "symbols" that represent the solution, other groups will create names that clearly express the solution, and still other groups will write slogans. This is a good time to teach the class about acronyms (such as the acronym SNAP).

When the names and slogans are created, post all of them on a blank sheet of paper. A spokesperson from each group then explains the concept or meaning behind his or her group's creation and together the class either chooses a symbol and name or (preferably) synthesizes as much of the symbols and names as possible to create a combined offering.

The synthesis process: The idea is to synthesize the concepts and not necessarily to literally combine all the symbols or names or slogans. For example, one group may have come up with *The Welcoming School*, and another may have come up with an acronym such as HALL: Helping All Listen and Learn. These two names could be combined into the Welcoming Hall of Fame.



Some symbols might show an older student shaking hands with a younger one or a bridge connecting an elementary school with the middle school. A combination would show a bridge connecting the two schools with two students standing on the bridge shaking hands with the title The Welcoming Hall of Fame with the slogan, "We Help New Kids in the Hall."

Step Six: Write the Aim Statement

The aim statement is a refined way of expressing the solution. This statement identifies the problem, who it affects, the desired outcome, and how it will be addressed. The aim statement is a template to be completed.

Here is a sample aim statement for a Welcoming Hall of Fame:

Our aim is to <u>create the Welcoming Hall of Fame</u> (the solution) to help <u>incoming students to our school</u> (target population) so <u>they will feel welcomed and comfortable</u> (the outcome). This program will <u>make our school a place where all new students can learn to their best ability</u> (the overall goal).

Step Seven: Create the Plan

After creating the symbol, name, and slogan, and writing the aim statement, students now focus on the strategy or strategies for implementing their solution. In our example, the strategies for implementing the Welcoming Hall of Fame could include:

- Doing team-building activities with the new students
- Identifying where the activities will occur
- Ensuring new students know where they can find welcoming activities

 Understanding what information will be shared to help the newcomers feel comfortable in the middle school

After the planning strategies are completed, the class organizes them into a strategy chart that "unpacks" each strategy into action steps in order for them to be completed.

Following are the headings which must be completed to make sure the plan will take place effectively:

Strategy	Steps	Who Is Responsible?	Do By
Activities to do with	1. Use the book <i>Playfair*</i>	Jodi	April 15
new kids	Try some activities	The team	April 22
	3. Pick favorites	Gideon and Sam	April 30

^{*}Playfair: Everybody's Guide to Noncompetitive Play by Matt Weinstein and Joel Goodman (1980)

SNAP is an efficient planning process that acts as a team builder as the students work together to synthesize their ideas for the symbol, the names, and the slogan. They can be used to promote the program around the school on posters, T-shirts and stickers. The symbol, name, and slogan give the plan and the student group an identity.







Let Me In

Please let me in; don't push me away.

I need you to listen to my words today.

You don't even know what I've seen or where I've been.

Please, please, will you let me in?

I don't know why you all treat me this way.

First you call me names: then you say it's just play.

I feel like I did something wrong or committed a sin.

Please, please, will you let me in?

Please let me in; don't push me away.

I need you to listen to my words today.

You don't even know what I've seen or where I've been.

Please, please, will you let me in?

Every day people are walkin' around this school.

Some are treated like stars; others like a fool.

It's time that we stop, look inside at the person within.

Why can't we just let them in?

Please let me in; don't push me away.

I need you to listen to my words today.

You don't even know what I've seen or where I've been.

Please, please let me in.



We All Have A Gift

We all have a gift, our place in the world. Each one helps the tribe. There's a lot that we can do. (sung twice)

Like an eagle, some fly high, soaring in the sky.
The inventor tries new things, imagines what they'll bring.

We all have a gift, our place in the world. Each one helps the tribe. There's a lot that we can do. (sung twice)

If ever people fight, the deer makes things alright. Peacemaker they shall be, helps communicate and see.

We all have a gift, our place in the world. Each one helps the tribe. There's a lot that we can do. (sung twice) Everything has its place. Bear will keep the space. Organizer, solid friend, you can count on them.

We all have a gift, our place in the world. Each one helps the tribe. There's a lot that we can do. (sung twice)

When the day has come and gone, buffalo gets things done; has energy times ten, tomorrow will do it all again.

We all have a gift, our place in the world. Each one helps the tribe. There's a lot that we can do. (sung twice)

There's a lot that we can do.



Lift Me Up

Lift me up, don't put me down. Lift my feet up off the ground. If I'm lost, help me feel found. Lift me up, don't put me down, down, down.

Down, down, down.

Lift me up.

Did you ever wake up and have a bad morning— Didn't know if you were coming or going? You need a friend to bring you

around—

lift you up, not put you down.

Lift me up, don't put me down.
Lift my feet up off the ground.
If I'm lost, help me feel found.
Lift me up, don't put me down,
down, down.

Down, down, down. Lift me up.

Say in class you give the wrong answer,

And you're met with foolish laughter.

Take your laughter and get out of town!

Lift me up, don't put me down.

Lift me up, don't put me down.
Lift my feet up off the ground.
If I'm lost, help me feel found.
Lift me up, don't put me down,
down, down.
Down, down, down.

Lift me up.

In the cafeteria for something to eat But you can't find a seat.
There's a smiling face says,
"Sit here friend."
Makes you happy once again.

Lift me up, don't put me down.
Lift my feet up off the ground.
If I'm lost, help me feel found.
Lift me up, don't put me down,
down, down.
Down, down, down.
Lift me up.

Every day as you make your choices, can you hear all the voices of the people in this town calling out a familiar sound:

Lift me up, don't put me down.
Lift my feet up off the ground.
If I'm lost, help me feel found.
Lift me up, don't put me down,
down, down.

Down, down, down. Lift me up.



Stop and Think

Stop and think.
Take a breath.
Check your feelings
before you act.
Stop and think,
don't hurt a friend.
Stop and think
if you get mad.

Once at lunch,
someone bumped me.
I dropped my tray.
I was steamed.
I stopped
and took a real deep breath.
Next thing I know she helped me out.

Stop and think.
Take a breath.
Check your feelings
before you act.
Stop and think.
Don't hurt a friend.
Stop and think
if you get mad.

When my team
lost a game.
I was angry
as could be.
My friend said, "Stop."
She smiled at me.
"Stop and think.

Just let things be."
Stop and think.
Take a breath.
Check your feelings
before you act.
Stop and think.
Don't hurt a friend.
Stop and think
if you get mad.

Every day
of your life,
you can choose
to do things right.
If you stop and think
instead of getting mad,
you'll feel better,
you won't feel sad.

Stop and think.
Take a breath.
Check your feelings
before you act.
Stop and think.
Don't hurt a friend.
Stop and think
if you get mad.





Music Credits

"Howard Gray"

David Levine, vocals and guitar Dean Jones, drums and piano Debbie Lan, vocals John P. Hughes, vocals Fooch Fischetti, pedal steel guitar John Parker, upright bass

"Courage"

David Levine, vocals and guitars Dean Jones, bass, drums, and percussion Fooch Fischetti, pedal steel

"Let Me In"

David Levine, vocals, guitar, and mandolin Dean Jones, organ, drums, bass, and percussion Fooch Fischetti, pedal steel guitar

"We All Have a Gift"

David Levine, vocals and guitar Dean Jones, vocals, drums, bass, and electric guitar Debbie Lan, vocals John P. Hughes, vocals

"Lift Me Up"

David Levine, vocals, guitar, and mandolin Dean Jones, drums and bass Debbie Lan, vocals John P. Hughes, vocals

"Stop and Think"

David Levine, vocals and guitar
Dean Jones, vocals, bass, and drums
(With special thanks to my good friend Jodi Palinkas who said, "Stop and think: just let things be.")

"Mrs. Lopez (I'll Never Forget You)"

David Levine, vocals and guitar Jay Ungar, fiddle Molly Mason, bass

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"Howard Gray" © 1992 by Lee Domann, Shuretone Music (BMI) and Renovation Music (BMI)

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"Courage" © 1988 by Bob Blue, Black Socks Music (www.the-spa.com/bobblue1/)
Used with permission.

Produced by David A. Levine and Dean Jones

All songs recorded and mixed by Dean Jones at No Parking Studios, Rosendale, New York, except "Mrs. Lopez (I'll Never Forget You)," the introduction to "Howard Gray," and the spoken lyrics to "Howard Gray" and "Courage," which were recorded by Chris Andersen at Nevessa Production, Woodstock.

Mastered by Chris Andersen at Nevessa

