



PROCESSING OUR FEELINGS THROUGH COMICS CUBES | *THE UPSTANDERS*

Overview

This curriculum is part of a series of interactive activities associated with the documentary film, *The Upstanders*. In line with the mission of David Legacy's Foundation, the curriculum aims to support healthy habits and interactions among young people online. Partaking in these structured conversations opens up lines of communication among parents, caregivers, and their children, as well as within classrooms about the challenges of digital life. Activities in this series are designed to combat the mental health impact of cyberbullying on young people and advocate for inclusive and compassionate peer relationships.

Viewers of the film, *The Upstanders*, will show their mental state through a series of drawings. Sometimes, it can be hard to put our feelings into words or in a way that is easily communicable to others. This activity is inspired by the work of cartoonist Lynda Barry, who teaches the importance of creating art to support our creativity and mental wellbeing.

Aims

In this activity, participants interpret and represent their inner emotional state by drawing a series of comics.

Materials

- ★ Copies of the "Comics Cubes" handout (see below)
- ★ Art supplies, such as colored pencils, markers, or paints
- ★ Scissors
- ★ Glue or clear tape
- ★ A timer



Getting Started

Tell the participants that they will do a creative drawing exercise that will allow them a process to digest some of their day-to-day feelings and anxieties.

Activities

- ★ Pass out copies of the "Comics Cubes." Ask participants to grab a set of colored pencils or markers.
- ★ Tell participants to note that each box is numbered on the handout. They will be given a prompt for each box and, for three minutes in silence, they will draw a response. They should not worry too much about making the drawing "perfect" or "good"; rather, the drawing should be a free-flowing response, putting to the page whatever comes to their mind after hearing the prompt. The process of drawing is the most important part, not the final result.
- ★ Set the first timer for three minutes. Tell the participants to find the box labeled "1." They can represent your response in drawings, symbols, or lines. It doesn't have to be detailed or even "make sense."
- ★ For Box 1, prompt them to draw in response to: *"What is weighing heavily on you? What would you like to let go of?"*
- ★ After three minutes, ask them to stop. They should move on to the box marked with "2." In this box, they should draw for three minutes: *"What is the hardest part of being you?"*
- ★ Continue the process, timing the participants through the remaining four boxes:
 - *"In your life, what makes you feel good?"*
 - *"What makes you feel safe and loved?"*
 - *"What would you like to give to someone else? Or to the world?"*
 - *"What is something that you look forward to? That makes you feel hopeful?"*



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| Box 1 | <i>"What is weighing heavily on you? What would you like to let go of?"</i> |
| Box 2 | <i>"What is the hardest part of being you?"</i> |
| Box 3 | <i>"In your life, what makes you feel good?"</i> |
| Box 4 | <i>"What makes you feel safe and loved?"</i> |
| Box 5 | <i>"What would you like to give to someone else? Or to the world?"</i> |
| Box 6 | <i>"What is something that you look forward to? That makes you feel hopeful?"</i> |

- ★ After participants have had time to draw their responses, pass out scissors. Instruct them to cut out their boxes.
- ★ Finally, they should fold their cube on the dotted lines and tape and/or paste together the folded sides.

Wrapping Up

Ask participants to gather as a whole group. Then, give the option of sharing their Comics Cubes with the group or with a partner.

Importantly, the facilitator of the activity should note that each person has their own level of comfort in disclosing personal information. Each activity should begin with an encouragement to participate in those activities at their own comfort level. Participants should only share voluntarily.

Extensions

View [a video of cartoonist Lynda Barry](#) on the topic, "Writing the Unthinkable."¹ In this video,

¹ Barry, Lynda. "Writing the Unthinkable." Michael Green's Graphic Medicine Channel, YouTube, December 24, 2017. <https://youtu.be/GjofUnKK20M>



Barry provides writing exercises that use associative memory to help people to tell their stories. With a journal and pen or pencil in hand, try out one or more of the exercises presented in the video.

Appendix

Cube Pattern

Cut on solid lines - Fold on dashed lines

