



CREATING BOXES FOR JOY AND SELF-LOVE | *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.

In *The Upstanders*, we learn about the acronym, D.O.S.E., which stands for the four chemicals in the brain that contribute to a felt "happiness":

- Dopamine: Contributes to our short-term sense of pleasure
- Oxytocin: Related to connection and touch
- Serotonin: Spurs a sense of accomplishment and motivation
- Endorphins: Released with physical exercise and pain

These brain chemicals shape our connection with others, sense of satisfaction, and the ability to push through discomfort. While the science behind our brain chemistry may be a bit inaccessible for young learners, this activity is designed to identify stimuli for wellness. So, in this activity, participants represent their sources of joy through objects and writing.

Aims

In this activity, viewers of the film reflect on and establish a series of concrete actions and things that contribute their sense of self-love and joy.



Materials

- ★ A small or medium-sized cardboard box with a lid
- ★ Art supplies, such as markers, stamps, bits of colored paper, glue, and other decorative items
- ★ Copies of the "Cards for Joy and Compassion" (see below)

Getting Started

Tell participants that they will be creating a box that represents their sense of joy and compassion.

Activities

- ★ Ask participants to go on a scavenger hunt in their home and on their digital spaces. They should find objects or images that reflect the following:
 1. Health: A sense of bodily wellness, including bodily movement, energy, fitness, nutrition, and energy.
 2. Connection: The happiness that comes from being connected with others.
 3. Gratitude: The appreciation we have for the people in our lives.
 4. Joy: What gives us a feeling of joyfulness, spontaneity, and fullness.
- ★ Gather all participants to talk about their four objects or images (if needed, encourage participants to print them out).
- ★ Prompt participants to pick one object among their selections. Tell them to turn to someone next to them and talk about this object. They should spend a few minutes talking through why this object reflects one of the above categories.

Note: Importantly, the facilitator of the activity should note that each person has their own level of comfort in disclosing personal information. Encourage participation at their own comfort level. Participants should only share voluntarily.



- ★ Ask if anyone in the group would like to share out about their object.
- ★ Take some time to hear responses.
- ★ Next, direct participants to place all of their objects and images in a box. They should take some time to decorate the box in any way that they see fit. Let them select all of their needed art supplies and materials.
- ★ Give participants plenty of time to make their boxes using the art supplies.
- ★ Finally, as a final gesture, pass out the "Cards for Joy and Compassion." Direct each participant to finish the prompt on the card. The cards should be cut and placed in their boxes.

Wrapping Up

Ask participants to gather once again as a group and to reflect on their boxes. With the whole group, they should share:

- One of their objects
- How they chose to decorate their box
- One of their cards for Joy and Compassion

Appendix



Cards for Joy and Compassion

<p>One thing that makes me happy is...</p>	<p>One act of kindness that I can commit to is...</p>
<p>When I see wrongdoing against a peer, I will...</p>	<p>One thing that I like about myself is...</p>