



Life Skills - Information and Activities for Leaders



Leaders' Activities

Gifts for Peace helps young people to engage with other Scouts to make a difference in their communities. To do this successfully they need to learn more about themselves and how they interact with others and they need to develop 'life-skills'.

Life-skills have been defined by the World Health Organisation as *'abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life'* (WHO 1993)

The information on Life Skills in this resource comes from a publication produced by Save the Children and Scouts in Bhutan.

In addition to the activities to develop Life-skills in young people there are activities for adults for each of the 10 core life-skills.

This resource focuses on ten core life skills:

1. Self Awareness

This includes our recognition of ourselves, of our character, of our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us recognise when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is also often a pre-requisite for effective communication and interpersonal relationships as well as for having empathy for others. This comes from the most difficult question to ask of one's self

'Who am I?'

Your Turn:

Answer the question - Who am I?

2. Coping with Emotions

This involves recognising our own emotions and those of others; being aware of how emotions influence our behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions like anger or sorrow can have negative effects on our well-being if we do not react appropriately. Conversely, happiness and excitement may also have direct effects on our well-being. This can emanate from the questions

'How do I feel? What do I feel?'

Your Turn:

People and situations react with different emotions in different circumstances. Let's think about **the four basic emotions**, happiness, sadness, fear and anger.

What makes you happy and how do you cope?

What makes you sad and how do you cope?

What makes you angry and how do you cope?

What frightens you and how do you cope?

3. Coping with Stress

This is about first recognising our life stressors and the sources they come from. Recognising this stress affects us, as we act in way that help to control outlevels of stress, for example by making changes in our physical environment or lifestyle. Or it may meaning learning how to relax, so that tensions created by unavoidable stress do not give rise to life threats.

Your turn:

What are your stressors? Where do they come from? What increases them? What decreases them?

4. Empathy

This is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person, even in a situation that we may not be familiar with.

Your turn:

**What do you think when..
A teenager feels humiliated?**

A friend has some bad news?

A colleague feels when not given the opportunities that you have?

5. Decision Making

This is about going constructively through with decisions about our lives. Decisions we can make can have great consequences, in both the long, medium and short terms. Assessing different options and consequences affect different decisions.

Your turn:

Write down the most difficult decisions that you have ever made at different times in your life and how you came up with the decision?

When you were a child under 12 years old?

When you were a teenager?

Now that you are an adult?

6. Problem Solving

Problem solving, like decision making, enables us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical, emotional, social, and even spiritual strains.

Your turn:

List (at random) five different things/situations that you consider as problems and possible solutions for each problem.

Problems	Solutions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

7. Creative Thinking

Creative thinking contributes to both decision making and problem solving by enabling us to explore the available alternatives and various consequences of our actions or non-action. It helps us to look beyond our direct experience, and even if non problem is identified, or no decision is made, creative thinking can help us to respond adaptively and with flexibility to the situations of our daily lives.

Your turn:

Go back to your list of solutions above and list down 2 more solutions to the problems.

Problem	Solution B	Solution C
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

8. Critical Thinking

This is an ability to analyse information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to positive living by helping us to recognise and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressure and the media.

Your turn:

Go back to your list of solutions A, B and C and list down possible consequences if you employ them.

If I ...	The most likely consequences will be....
Solution A	
Solution B	
Solution C	

9. Effective Communication

This means that we are able to express ourselves both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations.

This means being able to express opinions and desires, but also needs and fears.

This begins with the reflective questions *'What is it that I want/need to convey? And why?'*

It moves to *'In what ways can I express what I want to convey?'* and ends with *'What results do I see as a result of conveying this?'*

Your turn:

When expressing your thoughts and feelings, what communication methods do you usually employ to get desired results?

10. Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills help us to relate in positive ways with people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep family relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping good relationships with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may mean being able to end relationships constructively.

Your turn:

List down the groups of people in your life and the quality of the relationships with them on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 lowest, 5 highest).

People in your life	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
(e.g. family)					