

HOW TO END BULLYING NOW

Teach Perspective Taking Skills



Dr. Linda W. McQueen

HOW TO END BULLYING NOW workbook Series for
teens: VOLUME 2

This workbook is the second part of a series written especially for educators and parents to help our children develop their social and emotional intelligence. Emotions play a role in the way a bully acts both before, during and after a bullying incident.

This volume concentrates on Perspective Taking. Perspective taking is the ability to look beyond your own point of view, so that you can consider how someone else may think or feel about something.

Most of us develop perspective taking skills as children through natural development, without giving it much conscious thought. But for some children, these skills need to be explicitly taught.

When children have trouble with perspective taking, they usually have difficulty making or maintaining friendships, being on teams, or being a member of a school group.

This workbook will help you develop strategies To Teach Perspective Taking Skills to your students/children.

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Author's Note

The HOW TO END BULLYING NOW workbook series for teens is designed to provide accurate information in regard to helping children develop their social and emotional intelligence. This first workbook focused on Self-Regulation and Emotional Regulation. This workbook (Volume 2) Focuses on Perspective Taking. These workbooks are sold with the understanding that they are not intended for a substitute for counseling services.

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PART 1 - 45 MINUTES

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Perspective-taking is the act of perceiving a situation or understanding a concept from an alternative point of view, such as that of another individual.

Perspective taking (appreciating similarities and differences; recognizing and identifying feelings of others; understanding that feelings can change and are complex)

WHY IS PERSPECTIVE TAKING IMPORTANT

The key to successful relationships lies solely in our ability to take the **perspective** of **another**. **Perspective** taking is that all **important** skill of being able to **look at things** from a point of **view** other than our own. **Perspective** taking brings in the mindfulness of compassion and empathy to our relationships.

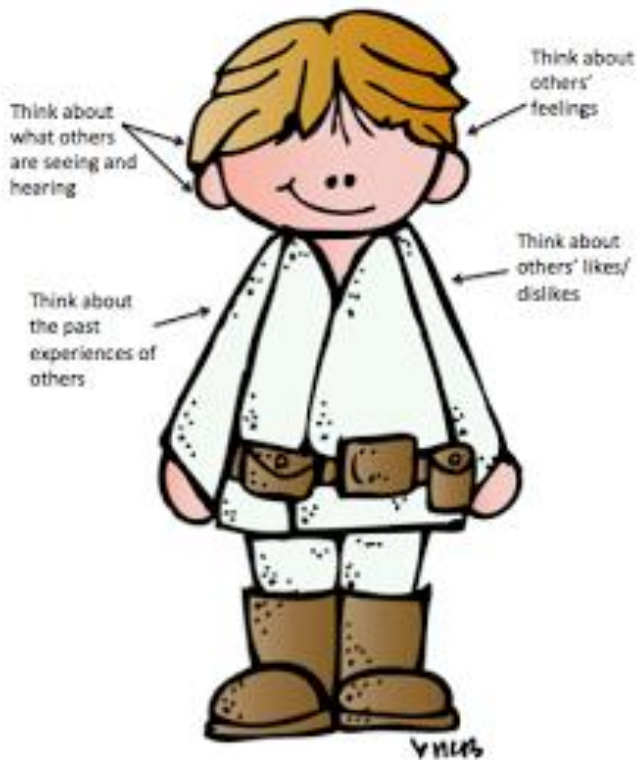
WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO SEE OTHERS' POINT OF VIEW?

When you try to understand other people, it helps to try to put yourself in their shoes. Before you say something, think about how you would feel if someone said that to you.

Treat others the way you want them to treat you. Don't judge people until you think about their point of view.

You have to be able to see other's point of view to understand yours better. Sometimes you need a fresh perspective to see the flaws in yours. However, sometimes, seeing someone else's opinion can also empower yours.

TAKE THE PERSPECTIVE OF OTHERS



WHAT IS YOUR POINT OF VIEW?



Transition ...

Introduction:

Today we are going to do a little experiment to see if everyone sees the same thing when we look at a picture.

- Ask students to find a partner or divide them into pairs.
- Distribute copies of the drawing above to each pair.
- Give pairs a few minutes to figure out how they would describe the appearance of the person in the picture. Is this someone they would like to get to know? What does she seem to be wearing?
- Ask volunteers for their descriptions.
- Ask students to describe their process in looking at the picture. What did they see first? Why did some people see an old woman at first and some a young girl? Can everyone now see both figures? Is there a "wrong" way to see the picture?

Summarize: People have different ways of looking at things. We call that having different "points of view." It

happens because we have different bodies, different kinds of families and different kinds of experiences.

Point-of-View Role Plays

Introduction: Many times the conflicts we experience in our own lives result from experiencing things in a different way from another person. To see how this works, we are going to do some role plays.

- Give two volunteers the role-play scene between Carlos and his mother, below.. Discuss the scene briefly with each one to make sure s/he understands the role before beginning the role play. Instruct them to begin an argument in the role play.
- When the argument begins to get heated, stop the role play and ask the actors (still in character) how they are feeling.
- Discuss with the class: What is Carlos's point of view? What does Carlos want? What is his mother's point of view? What does she want? Can anybody think of a

situation from his or her own life that is similar? What are the different points of view in that situation?

- Have the actors leave their roles and ask them how it was to play those roles. Have the class applaud them.

Repeat the process with other scenes from the scenarios provided or with scenes from the students' own lives.

ROLE PLAYS

Role play #1: Carlos & his Mother

Carlos:

The living room is messy. Some of Carlos's comic books are lying around. He's going through them because he wants to trade some of them with his friends. He also has a game on the floor that he started to play with his sister. He wants the game to remain there so he and his sister can finish it later. He likes being in the living room because there are usually other people around there. All the things that are scattered about are things he is using. The mess doesn't bother him.

Carlos's Mother:

The living room is messy. Carlos's comic books and game are lying around. She wants to keep the room organized because everyone in the family uses it and it is also the place where guests come. She thinks Carlos's things are in the way. She thinks he should pick up after himself and keep his things in his own room.

Role play #2: Joanne & her Father

Joanne:

Joanne's dad insists that she be in the house by 8 p.m. on school nights. But the weather is getting warm, her friends are staying out later in the street, and Joanne wants to be able to stay with her friends.

Joanne's Father:

The rule is that Joanne must be in the house by 8 p.m. on school nights. Joanne's father is concerned that it is not safe for her to be out after 8 p.m., and he worries about her. He

also wants to be sure she gets enough sleep so she is not tired in school.

Role play #3: Jason & the Teacher

Jason:

Jason was talking to his friend about what they were going to do on the playground at lunch time at the same time that the teacher was talking. The teacher told him that she was going to contact his parents and discuss his behavior with them. Jason is mad because he thinks the teacher is always picking on him. Other kids talk, he says, and the teacher doesn't do anything about it.

Teacher:

When she was explaining the homework assignment, Jason was talking instead of listening. She sees him talking all the time. When he doesn't have his homework, he says he didn't hear her give the assignment, and he didn't think there was any." Jason needs to start listening in class.

Role play #4: Sarah & her Mom

Sarah:

Sarah wants to wear jeans to school that have slashes cut in them and patches. She thinks it's a neat style. Her mother says she's not leaving the house in those rags.

Sarah's Mother:

Sarah's mother thinks students should be dressed neatly for school, and she worries that adults won't respect her daughter as much if she dresses sloppily. Sarah's mother went to a parochial school where students wore

uniforms, and she thinks the discipline was much better there because of the dress rules.

Role play #5: Raymond & Thomas

Raymond:

Raymond wants to play with his friend Thomas. Thomas, as usual, wants to play baseball. Raymond doesn't like to play baseball. He's not very good at it, and he'd rather play something else. He feels as if all Thomas ever wants to do is play baseball.

Thomas:

Thomas would like to play with Raymond, who is a good friend. He's on a Little League team, and he wants to practice baseball. He would also like Raymond to play baseball better, because then he might want to join the Little League team, too. Then they could spend more time together.

EVALUATION

Ask a few volunteers, what are some feelings you had about today's lesson and what are some reasons for those feelings?

Closing

Ask students to think about a time their own point of view has changed. Have them complete the sentence, "I used to, but now..."

END OF PART 1

PART 2 – 45 MINUTES

EXERCISE

INFUSION EXERCISE

The following 4 “I” stories are true stories retrieved from seventeen.com and pacerkidsagainstbullying.org. After reading these stories students will choose a story and rewrite it infusing their own points of view. They are going to infuse how they would handle the bullying situation. Genders can be changed in stories. Discuss changes with students.

Story 1

“I got **made fun of for being fat** in elementary, middle, and even high school. People would always go out of their way to tell me how fat I was and how unattractive that made me, especially in comparison to other girls. My nickname in third through fifth grade was ‘sumo wrestler,’ and once a boy drew a sumo wrestler on the blackboard and labeled it with my name. Even today, objectively knowing I am a pretty small person, I always feel fat. I’m working to **unlearn harmful beauty standards and body dysmorphia**, but years of bullying means I get triggered in the most unexpected ways, like when I’m at the beach or when a fat girl is made fun of in a movie.” — Amy, 22

Story 2

“My whole life I’ve had a **speech impediment** where my ‘R’s sound funny, but it wasn’t until middle school when I started getting bullied about it. My best friend’s name was Sarah and mean girls would make fun of the way I said her name. Fast forward to now, we’re all seniors in high

school. To this day my friends will still poke fun at my speech, and they don't know **how badly it hurts.**" — Ashley, 18

Story 3

"I was fresh off of moving to a new town and entering my freshman year in a high school where I knew nobody. Nobody likes '**fresh meat,**' especially girls. That first week I introduced myself in every class — so people would at least know my name — which severely backfired during gym. A guy started talking to me and the whole time, these two girls were whispering to each other while looking directly at me. I later found out that the boy was dating one of the girls. The girls **spread rumors that I was a slut** and I was hearing how I hooked up with all these boys after the first week. Mind you, I had never met any of the guys I had apparently hooked up with. So I had to pretty much **start from negative scratch to build a reputation I actually liked for myself** while everyone else was calling me a slut for unknowingly talking to someone else's boyfriend." — Elle, 22

Story 4

From Elementary to Middle School, I was bullied mentally and physically. It really hurt me knowing I was one of the only kids in those schools being bullied. Kids would only join in and never stick up for me, I was too scared to speak up to my parents or get help. I felt like it was my fault, and that i was all alone. The main thing to always remember is you are never alone. It caused me to become depressed and have anxiety. Only just now i have thought of getting help for it. Friends may be hard to make but it has saved me and got me out of the dark place bullying put me in my two closest friends have helped me so much. I guess a lesson I learned is you are never alone. **Anonymous**

Suggestion for Infusion

Writing:

Have students rewrite one of the "I" stories from above, and telling it from their point of view.



POINT OF VIEW EXERCISES

THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS ARE DESIGNED TO GET STUDENTS INVOLVED IN EXERCISING THEIR POINTS OF VIEW.

SCENARIO 1

HAVE STUDENTS WRITE A STORY ABOUT A CONFLICT THEY WERE IN. THEN ASK THEM TO TAKE THE OTHER PERSON'S POINT OF VIEW AND REWRITE THE STORY.



SCENARIO 2

HAVE STUDENTS TELL A STORY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A FISH IN A FISH BOWL WATCHING PEOPLE IN THE CLASSROOM.



SCENARIO 3

HAVE STUDENTS DESCRIBE THE EVENTS IN THE CLASSROOM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A MARTIAN VISITING THIS PLANET FOR THE FIRST TIME.



ROLE PLAY DISCUSSION

Discuss the student's story they wrote about each scenario above.

End of part 2

ROLE-PLAY ACTIVITIES

Establishing Role-Play Groups

To prepare for role-playing, divide students into several smaller groups, each with approximately the number of students required to act out each scenario.

You can change the gender of the students in the role-play scripts to match the genders of the students in each small group, or you could create small groups of all boys (for the “Joshua” role-play) and all girls (for the “Natalie” role-play).

If there are more students in a group than there are roles in the script, have some students act as bystanders. Another alternative is to have each group perform its role-play several times with different players so everyone has an opportunity to play a role.

Preparing for the Role-Plays

It is recommended that students stick closely to the script when you first start doing role-plays with your students.

Then, as students gain experience in doing role-plays, encourage them to be creative, develop a deeper understanding of their characters, and “give substance to their roles.” If possible, the groups should be assigned space in the room (or in adjoining rooms) so they can talk about their role-play without being disturbed by other groups. The groups should be given a reasonable amount of time to prepare for their role-play. Each student could prepare for his or her role by filling out the **Character Sketch Worksheet** This helps students better understand the bullying situation and the motivations or feelings of their characters.

Students could also discuss the following questions as a group as part of their preparation:

- What is Anthony (or Maria, or Natalie, or Joshua, and so on) really like?
- What is he or she thinking and feeling?
- Why does he or she act that way? What is driving this character?
- What kind of relationship is there between the students in the scenario?

- How do you think the relationships came to be this way?

- What are the other students in the scenario/class thinking about him or her?

- What is it like for him or her at home?

These types of questions can spark students' thoughts and emotional reactions to the bullying situation. By filling out the worksheet and having this group discussion, students will develop a stronger sense of their character, which they can then explain in the discussion after the role-playing.

When the students are more or less finished with framing their roles, they should also discuss where and how the role-play should be performed. Perhaps they can use some simple props to enhance the role-play.

Note: It is important that students not act out any physical bullying. Be sure to warn students to stop their role-play before it reaches that point.

Processing the Role-Plays

After each role-play hold a class discussion about the bullying situation and the characters in the role-play. At first you should have students act out the role-plays without talking about a solution.

In these cases, the goal is to help students understand the feelings and tremendous negative impact bullying has on the students involved. Once students develop empathy for the bullied student, move to talking about solutions to the role-play situations. As part of this activity, each student in a group could fill out the Role-Play Solutions Worksheet.

Role-Play 1

JOSHUA

Number of students needed: 5

(Joshua, Anthony, Tyler, Marcus, and a student to play the teacher)

Joshua asks the teacher for a pass to go to the restroom. He likes to go to the restroom during class. He thinks there

won't be as much of a chance that he will be bullied then. Unfortunately, that is not the case today. Joshua goes to the restroom. But **Anthony**, **Tyler**, and **Marcus** are in the restroom too.

Before Joshua can turn and leave, **Anthony** grabs his arm and pulls him into the restroom. "Hey punk," Anthony says, "Where are you going? I thought we told you never to come into this part of the school again."

"Leave me alone, Anthony," **Joshua** says. "You don't own the bathroom."

"Oh, he thinks he's a tough guy," **Anthony** says. **Tyler** laughs, but **Marcus** looks kind of uncomfortable.

Tyler shoves **Joshua** toward the sink, and **Anthony** sprays running water on him, getting him all wet.

A teacher yells in the door, "Hey, what's going on in there?" But the teacher doesn't come in.

Anthony gives **Joshua** one last push and says, “We’ll finish this later. You better not say anything about this.” Turning toward Marcus, he says, “You either, **Marcus!**” **Tyler** follows **Anthony** out the door.

The End

Role-Play 2

NATALIE

Number of students needed: 5

(Natalie, Tanya, Maria, Jennifer, and a student to play the teacher)

Natalie is walking down the hall at school. As she passes a group of girls, they look at her, then start whispering and laughing.

Natalie sees that Tanya is in the group. Tanya is one of her best friends.

Natalie says, “Hi, **Tanya**. Do you want to eat lunch together today?”

Maria, the leader of the group, says, “You can’t eat with any of us. We don’t hang out with people like you.”

Natalie looks at **Tanya**, but Tanya looks away and doesn’t answer. The rest of the group laughs at Natalie.

Later at lunch, **Natalie** sits down at a table to eat. It is near where **Maria**, **Tanya**, and the group of girls are sitting.

Maria walks over to **Natalie** and says, “You can’t sit there. You’re too close to our table. Find somewhere else to sit.”

The rest of the girls at Maria’s table start laughing. Tanya doesn’t say anything.

Jennifer, another girl at Natalie’s table, says, “Knock it off, Maria. She can sit wherever she wants.”

Maria gets in **Jennifer**’s face and says, “You want to make trouble for yourself too?”

The girls at Maria’s table laugh and cheer Maria on.

Jennifer becomes quiet and starts eating her lunch.

A **teacher** walks over and asks, “Is there anything wrong here?”

Maria gives **Natalie** and **Jennifer** a mean look.

Natalie says, “No, ma’am.”

Maria goes back to her table and sits down. After the teacher leaves, the girls at Maria’s table starts laughing.

The End

Character Sketch Worksheet (Print out for students)

To help you understand your role-play character better, fill out this worksheet. Then discuss your answers with your group.

Name of your role-play character:

1. How would you describe your character's personality?
What is this person like?

2. What do you think he or she is thinking or feeling in this situation?

3. Why do you think he or she is acting this way?

4. What is the relationship between this character and the other students in the scene?

5. What do you think might have led up to this scene?

6. What do the other students in the story think of him or her?

End of Part 3 - End of Session

Closing

Like all types of dynamic thinking, the process of appreciating and analyzing multiple and diverse perspectives is a developed skill that must be reinforced over time. Although there are numerous reasons to teach students the value of integrating and examining multiple viewpoints, the five reasons listed below will provide you with clear rationale for developing and teaching differing perspectives.

Critical Thinking

The ability to compare differing viewpoints is a cognitively complex process. Comparing, contrasting, analyzing, and interpreting are examples of the skills necessary for understanding multiple perspectives. In addition to thinking

critically, students will also need to employ meta-cognitive strategies such as visualizing and synthesizing. Like any other difficult and complex process, practice and sustained effort will lead to improvement. Over time, examining different perspectives will ultimately strengthen and build critical thinking and meta-cognitive abilities. Students may also learn to appreciate the importance of divergent thinking.

Problem Solving

The ability to understand and acknowledge a differing viewpoint is an integral component of conflict resolution. In order to be effective problem solvers, students need to be able to see the issue from multiple angles. . When students understand that there is more than one way to solve a problem, they can shift gears and look for different

strategies. Considering different ways of solving the problem will decrease the frustration involved with sticking to a certain thought process and struggling to try a new approach. In addition to benefits the student may experience as an individual, the effectiveness of cooperative groups often relies on the ability of the group members to work through whatever problems may arise.

Tolerance

An essential part of creating an inclusive learning environment includes providing students with a safe space where everyone is valued and respected. Enriching curriculum with an array of topics and issues that take into consideration differing viewpoints will give students concrete examples for incorporating tolerance in their own lives. Taken a step further, it is important to provide students with opportunities to learn from

the diverse and varied experiences of each other. Learning to appreciate differing circumstances will help students understand why groups or individuals may see the same event in different ways. Considering the globally connected world we live in, it is extremely advantageous for students to have a deep understanding of compassion and tolerance.

Flexibility

A flexible mindset takes into account the possibility of complex situations with multiple correct answers. Analyzing differing viewpoints is a way to teach students how to harness flexibility in their thinking. In turn, harnessing flexible thinking will enable students to adapt when confronted with change, generate solutions to problems, and adjust to the unexpected. Opening the mind to consider alternative ways of thinking can be a liberating and

creative experience for students, especially if they are new to the practice. In addition to stimulating creativity, flexible thinking also promotes resilience. Students who show creativity and flexibility in their thinking are able to solve problems and become more confident when making plans and asking for help. Because cognitive flexibility is a component of executive functioning, its development is a crucial part of success at school and in daily life.

Empathy

Mastering the skill of perspective-taking will help students to develop a stronger sense of empathy. Perspective-taking is the act of perceiving a situation or understanding a concept from an alternative point of view- a critical skill for all aspects of life. When

children can grasp another's perspective, they are more likely to be empathetic, anticipate other's behavior or thinking, handle conflicts peacefully, be less judgmental, value differences, speak up for those who are victimized, and act in ways that are more helpful, comforting, and supportive of others. Incorporating perspective-taking and the analysis of differing viewpoints into the curriculum will provide

students with situational context for learning the new skill. It is also a critical component for promoting a strong classroom community and establishing an empathetic learning environment.

Clearly, the cognitive benefits of analyzing and acknowledging differing perspectives are numerous. Along with the benefits, there are also many opportunities for implementation in the classroom. Graphic organizers are a great place to start. A differing perspectives graphic organizer enables students to build a visual frame of reference for comparing perspectives.

If you found this manual helpful, please visit www.endbullyingnow.org to view the rest of HOW TO END BULLYING NOW series for teens.

Acknowledgements

Images, Illustrations and Pictures

Dreamtime.com

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Teaching violence prevention: How much Does Bullying weigh?

John Blosnich and Ruth Kershner

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Linda McQueen is an International Certified Faith Based Counselor. She attended Graduate School at Liberty University studying M.A. in Human Services Counseling: Marriage and Family. She also holds a B.S. in Psychology: Addiction and Recovery; Minor: Christian Counseling from Liberty University.

She is recognized by the Mayor for outstanding contributions to enrich the lives of families in the Community through her Plays, Prevention and Intervention Educational Manuals and Instruction, Life changing workshops and forums. Her Bullying Prevention and Intervention Manual “End Bullying Using Social and Emotional Intelligence Training” is being utilized in NC Middle and High Schools.

Professional Credentials

Doctor of Women’s Ministry (Victory University)

Doctor of Youth Ministry (Victory University)

Minister of Christian Counseling (Universal Ministries)

International Certified Faith Based Counselor (IIFBC)

Addiction and Recovery – Caring for Kids God’s Way (AACC)

Anger Management Specialist I (AMS I)

Anger Management Counseling (International Theological Seminary)

Conflict Resolution Specialist (United Church of Christ)

Domestic Violence Specialist I (CDVS I)

Certified Life Coach (Life Breakthrough Academy)

Certified Career Management Coach (International Coach Federation)

Certified in Group Counseling Approaches and Strategies for Working with Criminal Justice Populations and Juvenile Sexual Offending (Forensic Training Institute)

Crisis Intervention (Center For Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse Wellness, LLC)

Certificate in Group, Family and Individual Counseling for Substance Abuse using the Matrix Model (PDEM)

Certificate in Managing Psychiatric Crisis (PDEM)

Microsoft Certified Professional

100+ CEU hours in MH/DD/SA related training

Dr. Linda McQueen has extensive experience working with at risk youth and adults, ex offenders and gang members in the area of facilitating group Educational Workshops, Empowerment Counseling, Life Skills, Social and Emotional Intelligence Training, Employment Readiness, Problem Solving Approaches that focus on Solutions. Family, individual and group Emotional and Behavioral Education, Primary and Secondary Prevention and Intervention strategies, and Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient utilizing The Matrix Program.

Dr. Linda McQueen is also a Microsoft Certified Professional and has held numerous Technology Workshops in the Community as well as prevention and awareness workshops and forums

www.lindamcqueen.org