

**Cowardice asks the question: is it safe?
Expediency asks the question: is it politic?
Vanity asks the question: is it popular?
But conscience asks the question: is it right? And there comes a time
when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, not
popular—but one must take it because it's right. *Martin Luther
King Jr.***

Activity

I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Time required: 45 MINUTES

Learning Objectives:

1. Give students the vision of themselves making a difference in others lives.
2. Helping students to feel the good feelings that come from focusing on others.
3. A chain reaction of caring for others has to go beyond the 'me, me, me' way of thinking to 'others' thinking.

Materials needed: Several short stories you can share of how individuals have made a difference in the lives of others. There are several stories included but be on constant lookout for others to inspire your group. Here are some examples you can share.

Story: Julie Leirich works as a cashier at a Los Angeles supermarket. After noticing that good food was being thrown away, she got permission from the store to collect it and take it to feed the homeless. Word got out and before long customers wanted to volunteer their time. Before long Julie and the others were distributing six tons of food a month! Think of how many little children went to bed each night with stomachs full of food instead of eyes full of tears. Julie is proof that one person willing to think of others can truly make a difference.

Story: 10-year-old Justin Lebo of Saddle Brook, New Jersey, inspired his entire school to think of others instead of just themselves. His heart went out to children in local orphanages. He spent all of his allowance, much of his summer vacation as well as weekends, fixing up old bikes. Within a couple of years Justin gave away more than 50 bikes! It doesn't take a lot of

money or power to affect the lives of others if a person puts their heart and mind to it.

Story: Trevor Ferrell from Gladwyne, Pennsylvania was in 6th grade when he saw a news program of homeless people staying warm by huddling over steam vents in the sidewalks. He asked his dad if people really lived like that. His dad said yes and if he wanted to see for himself, he would take him the next day after school.

Almost every night after that, along with his parents and his brother or sisters, Trevor brought soup, sandwiches, coffee and blankets. He came to know many by name and they called him “Little Buddy” and “Little Jesus”. Three months later the mayor of Philadelphia gave him a special recognition for his nightly visits. He then started asking churches and others to help and before long people were bringing piles of clothing and bedding to his front yard. Checks were sent to help in any way possible.

So far, more than 850 volunteers have joined Trevor’s concern for the homeless. An old building has been converted into a 50-bed shelter called “Trevor’s Place”. When Trevor was 15 he addressed the United Nations and met Mother Teresa and President Bush to talk about other ways to help the homeless. This story shows that when one person is filled with compassion for another, it often becomes multiplied by the compassion it inspires in others. You could be the one to start your own chain reaction by thinking of simple ways to reach out to others, right here in our school.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Say, “Now it’s time to put feet to what we have just learned. Please think of some specific act you could perform to make the world, specifically this school, a better place. Here are 101 suggestions of what other students have done after being inspired by being a part of “Everybody Matters”

Give them enough time to read through the list, and fill in the 5 things they are going to do, between now and the next meeting.

1. Look for a student who could use a friend and introduce yourself to them.

2. Smile and make eye contact with people as you pass through the halls.
3. Look around and be aware of people. Are they sad, hurt, depressed, or empty?
4. Ask your teacher who could use tutoring. Make a difference in their life by investing some of your time. You'll feel great!
5. Look for the good in everybody, always, no matter what.
6. Pick up paper around the school that you didn't drop.
7. Write a positive uplifting note to a teacher who could use some encouragement.
8. Find ways to compliment other students for good things you notice about them.
9. Choose to have a positive attitude each day no matter how things are going at home.
10. Refuse to talk negative about anyone, anytime, anywhere.
11. Hug a family member and friend every day.
12. Say 'please' and 'thank you'.
13. Be polite to everyone.
14. Realize one person, 'you,' can make a difference!
15. Don't encourage gossip.
16. Be big enough to ask for help.
17. Think of others.
18. Pull for every student when they give a report or speech.
19. If you love life, tell your face to look like it.
20. If you are having a difficult time in your life, get help, don't pass it on.
21. Do what's right because it's the right thing to do.
22. Wish at least 10 people every day to 'have a great day'.
23. Be nice to your little brother and freak out your mom.
24. Ask your teacher how you could be a better student.
25. Count your blessings.
26. Ask people about their interests and watch how many friends you get.
27. Listen twice as much as you talk.
28. Encourage students who ask questions.
29. Don't compare yourself against anyone; just be glad for what you have.
30. Don't wait for others to set a good example. Just do it!
31. Be friends with everyone.
32. Give out kindness no matter what you get in return.

33. Live today so you won't have regrets tomorrow.
34. People are more important than things. Respect people, use things. Not the other way around.
35. Leaders build people up. They never tear others down.
36. If you have a problem with someone go and talk directly with them.
37. Always give others the benefit of the doubt.
38. Treat others the same way you would like them to treat you.
39. Be thankful for school lunches. Millions of kids would die for those lunches.
40. Be a peacemaker.
41. Encourage friends to make up after a fight.
42. Never exclude anyone because of surface stuff like clothes or looks.
43. Strive more to be courageous not popular.
44. Make an underclassman feel special every day.
45. Offer to help with any students who have special needs.
46. Bake some cookies for the office staff.
47. Do at least one helpful thing each day and make sure you don't get caught.
48. Voice your opinion in class more often.
49. Refuse to yell at anyone.
50. Decide ahead of time to stand up for any student being bullied, laughed at, or ridiculed.
51. Never laugh at jokes that defame, putdown, or are full of profanity.
52. Be a shoulder to lean on.
53. Don't forget to be a leader when driving a car.
54. Sing when you are feeling down. Don't wait to feel good to start singing.
55. Develop the habit of saying 'good morning' even if it isn't.
56. Write yourself a letter saying how good you feel for trying to make the world a better place.
57. Send your mom flowers for no reason at all.
58. Ignore rude remarks.
59. Laugh at your friend's jokes. Never stop them and say, "Oh I've heard that one."
60. Take your Grandma or Grandpa to lunch.
61. Give your used clothes to someone who could really use them.
62. Donate some time at a elderly care center. Watch their eyes light up as you enter.

63. Decide to forgive everyone for old grudges.
64. Let your friend win the next game of chess or tennis.
65. Ask someone what his or her dreams are. They never knew anyone cared.
66. Consider a different point of view on something today.
67. Tell a friend how much you appreciate them.
68. Smile and wave at teachers when you see them.
69. Join the Big Brothers or Big Sisters when you turn 18.
70. Let another student cut in front of you in the lunch line.
71. Spread some joy everywhere you go just by being in a good mood.
72. When you talk with a friend focus totally on them. Don't look around at others.
73. Do something each day that takes effort. It will strengthen you.
74. Ask a friend if you can help them solve a problem.
75. Write an encouraging note to a fellow student whose parents are divorcing.
76. When you explain something, do it very patiently.
77. Live in such a way that everyone can trust you.
78. Refuse to cheat even if your grade will suffer.
79. Consider the source when taking advice.
80. Find the best teacher in school and ask questions. Listen. Learn. Grow.
81. Spend some time trying to understand your parents. Keep trying.
82. Share your lunch with a friend.
83. Say, "I respect you too much to argue" instead of raising your voice.
84. Decide to be an optimist all day today.
85. Don't give permission to anyone to make you feel bad about yourself.
86. Never send an angry letter. Never. Never.
87. If you forgive someone you must never bring it up in the future.
88. Don't demand others. Ask softly.
89. Become a center of peace.
90. Be genuine.
91. Find a frown and turn it upside down by offering hope.
92. Lift someone's spirits by telling them you are glad they go to your school.
93. Spend more time each day looking for the beauty in others, rather than your hair.
94. Decide today to be against anything evil or hurting.

95. Lighten up a little. Look at the funny side of things.
96. Find a reason to laugh each day.
97. Be contagious in a positive way.
98. Tell a counselor about someone who is depressed and needs help.
99. Never promise not to tell on a friend who threatens suicide or shooting someone. If you do make that promise, break it.
100. Take a picture of someone being kind to another.
101. Don't criticize or complain all week.

Procedure:

Have each student circle several statements from the list of 101 that they intend to put into place over the next few days. Have them fill in the five goals they have for themselves between now and the next meeting. They will then give you a copy of the goals they have chosen.

Name _____

Today's date: _____

By our next meeting on _____ I will do my best to accomplish the following goals:

Example: I will be nice to everyone I pass in the halls.

Example: I am going to ask my teacher whom I can help with tutoring.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____