

# Discussion Questions: Climate & Culture Transformation

Use the questions to guide in-class discussion, or post them to the Collaboration Corner.

## Unit 1: Health & Safety

### Peer Conflict

#### How to Be Assertive

1. Is it easy to be assertive? Why or why not?
2. What are some examples of responding aggressively and passive aggressively?
3. What are some back-pocket comments you can use to be assertive and end a situation before it escalates?

#### Communicating Effectively

1. When are “I-statements” helpful or beneficial?
2. How do you usually communicate how you feel to others?
3. How do you feel when it seems like someone is blaming you for doing something wrong, rather than communicating how the situation made him/her feel?

#### Addressing Unfriendly Classmates or Friendships

1. When have you had to address an unfriendly classmate or friend? How did it turn out?
2. What is the best way to relieve a situation where someone is being unfriendly?
3. How can you stand up for others effectively when you see someone getting picked on or bullied?

#### Don't Fight Fire with Fire

1. Do you have to respond with anger or aggression just because the person you're interacting with is?
2. What are some ways you can remain calm when someone is pushing your buttons or trying to make you react?
3. When have you “fought fire with fire?” How did it end?

#### Assault and Battery

1. Have you ever considered the legal risks involved in fighting, verbally or physically?
2. What should you do if you really can't step away or resist engagement?
3. How can you protect yourself if you find yourself in a situation where a fight may arise?

### Social Media Safety

#### Staying Safe

1. Who do you have on your social media friends lists? Do you accept people you don't know?
2. What is usually the purpose behind what you post on social media?
3. What can happen if you're not careful about what you're posting online?

#### Protecting Your Reputation

1. How can/do you use social media to promote your interests?
2. How does perspective play a role in how your social media posts are interpreted?
3. What are some ways in which social media can both help and hurt you?

#### Sending Inappropriate Pictures

1. How might peer pressure play into sending inappropriate pictures?
2. Who can get in trouble for sending/receiving an underage inappropriate picture?
3. What are the potential consequences of sending/receiving an inappropriate picture, aside from legal trouble?

Warning Signs

1. How can sharing your personal routines on social media put you in an unsafe position?
2. What are some other ways you can protect yourself on social media?
3. How can you protect others on social media as well?

Protecting Your Identity

1. What does “identity theft” mean and how could it relate to social media?
2. How cautious are you about what you post online?
3. What do you think is more important: protecting your personal safety, or keeping your social media friends in the loop? Why?

Dating and RelationshipsThe “Talking” Stage

1. What does the “talking stage” mean to you?
2. What types of things should you try to figure out about the person you’re interested in during this stage?
3. How can you show someone that you’re interested in them?

Self-Respect

1. What does it mean to have self-respect?
2. What might self-respect look like in a romantic relationship?
3. What are your standards and morals for yourself and others?

Love is an Action

1. What does it mean when someone says, “Love is an action?”
2. How do you show your love to others, rather than just communicate it?
3. What does love mean, in your opinion? Is it unconditional, supportive, non-judgmental, for example?

Recognizing Unhealthy Behaviors

1. What are some examples of healthy behaviors that you want to have in your relationships?
2. How do you know if behaviors are healthy versus unhealthy? Is there a way we can recognize it in the moment?
3. What steps can you take if you notice unhealthy behaviors, either for yourself or someone else?

Communication & Compatibility

1. What does “compatibility” mean?
2. What are some qualities that you look for in a partner?
3. What traits do you think complement yours?

Stressful Life EventsSchool, Homework & Test Stress

1. How do you deal with homework and test stress?
2. Do you think you are handling your obligations and responsibilities well? Why or why not?
3. Who can talk to about tips for balancing school stress?

Breakups

1. What are some fun things that you enjoy and can focus more on if you have extra time for yourself?
2. What are your strengths? What do you want to become better at?
3. What does it mean to “focus on yourself”?

Talking to Parents

1. How can talking to parents or guardians be different for each person?

2. How often do you talk to your parents or guardians?
3. Do you feel comfortable talking to your parent or guardian? Why or why not, do you think?

Overcommitment

1. Why is it better for everyone involved to say you can't commit to something, rather than to take on more than you can handle?
2. Have you ever felt like you took on more commitments than you could handle? What happened, or how did you feel?
3. How do you keep a balance in your life?

Being Unprepared

1. Do you plan out your days, weeks, or months?
2. How does planning make you feel in the end, even if it seems like a chore in the moment?
3. How can you get better at planning to reduce stress? What are some practical habits you can adopt to help you with this?

## Unit 2: Relationship Support

### Talking to Our Parents

#### It's Never Too Late to Start

1. What is the communication like between you and your parent(s)/guardian(s)?
2. Why might using open-ended questions to initiate conversation be easier than specific topics?
3. How can you have a stronger relationship with your parent or guardian? What steps can you take to start building that bridge?

#### Parents Are Here to Help

1. What does it mean to think of your parent/guardian as a human, rather than just a parent/guardian?
2. Do you think your parent/guardian would be able to relate to what you're going through? Why or why not?
3. What might we find out about our parents/guardians if we take the first step to opening up to them?

#### Raising Difficult Topics

1. How might sharing good news with your parent/guardian more often make it easier to share bad news when it happens?
2. When was the last time you shared good news with a parent/guardian? What reaction did you receive in return?
3. Is the disappointment you could receive from telling a parent/guardian bad news worse than if you had not told them and they found out about it through someone else? Why or why not?

#### How to Talk So Parents Will Listen

1. What difference do you think it makes when you own up to your mistakes and accept the repercussions of your actions?
2. Do you consider how your words are being interpreted from your parent/guardian's point of view when you engage in conversation with them? Why might this be important?
3. How important is perspective when it comes to listening and comprehending?

#### When Talking to Your Parents Doesn't Work

1. Which adult(s) in your life do you feel comfortable talking to about your personal life or problems?
2. If you don't already have a trusted adult in your life you can confide in, is there someone you have the potential to develop this type of relationship with?
3. What groups or clubs can you seek out that will provide you with more opportunities to develop a close relationship with an adult?

### Talking to Adults

#### Dealing with Intimidation

1. What do you think Eddie meant when he said, "Are you giving up sensitive information that you hold dear to your heart?" Depending on the adult you're talking to, how might this have an impact on the information you're comfortable with sharing?
2. Why do you think talking to adults is sometimes intimidating?
3. What are some conversation starters you can use to ease into conversation with an adult to make the interaction less intimidating?

#### Overcoming the Age Gap

1. Do you think the best way to "overcome the age gap" with an adult is to simply be your age, without trying to act older than you are?

2. Do you tend to forget that adults were once your age, too? How can you try to relate to their inner youth, rather than their current ages?
3. What are some questions you can ask an adult to open up conversation that you can both relate and speak to?

#### The Power of Thoughtful Questions

1. What do “thoughtful questions” mean to you? What thoughtful questions would you ask an adult you don’t know yet?
2. Why can personal questions be a good way to get to know people on deeper levels?
3. Why is it important to be respectful when asking personal questions? Give an example of a personal question someone could ask. How should that question sound when asked respectfully?

#### Wisdom

1. What is the most important wisdom that anyone has ever given you?
2. What is the most important wisdom that anyone has ever given you?
3. Can everyone benefit from wisdom? What is some wisdom that you’d currently like to receive?

#### R-E-S-P-E-C-T

1. How do you show respect to adults? What gestures seem to be the most important, based on your experiences?
2. How is respect like a two-way street in relationships with adults? Can you expect to just get it, without giving it back?
3. How important is listening in terms of being respectful? Why?

#### Compassion & Empathy

##### Living with Compassion

1. When have you had compassion for others? What difference did it make?
2. When has someone used compassion to make a difference in your life?
3. What would the world be like if everyone had compassion? Do you think we are close or far from achieving that in the world now?

##### Empathy

1. Do you find it easy or hard to empathize with others? Why?
2. How important do you think it is to be able to empathize with others? What impact can you make by doing so?
3. Do you have to be able to relate to someone’s situation in order to be empathetic? What are some conversation techniques you can use to help support people in situations that you’ve never been through?

##### Giving the Benefit of the Doubt

1. What does it mean to give someone the “benefit of the doubt”?
2. Do you tend to give people the benefit of the doubt, or do you assume they are acting based on your personal expectations of them?
3. Has anyone ever misinterpreted your behavior? How did it feel?

##### Love Always Wins

1. Have you ever responded to negativity with positivity, rather than reciprocating the negativity? How did it make you feel about yourself and the situation?
2. What does it mean to act out of love and positivity?
3. How do you teach negative people how to treat others when you respond to them with love and positivity?

Random Acts of Kindness

1. What do you think a random act of kindness communicates about the person giving it?
2. Has anyone done a random act of kindness for you? Have you ever done one for someone else?
3. What would the world look like if everyone did more for others without having a reason? Do you think it's done enough?

Finding a MentorFinding Those Who Inspire

1. Who inspires you? What about them inspires you?
2. Do you have a mentor? If not, where can you find one? If you do, where did you find them?
3. How can we take advantage of building relationships with the adults who see potential in us?

Studying Those We Admire

1. What does it mean to “study” someone we admire?
2. What is a skill you have that you would like to teach others who look up to you? Why do you think this trait is important to have?
3. In your opinion, which is more important in choosing a role model: success or experience? Why?

Learning Life as We Go

1. Do you think you have all of the answers in life at this moment? How could it actually be a good thing that we don't?
2. What are some of the benefits of having an older person help you find some of the answers you don't know yet, as opposed to just finding them out on your own?
3. What are some lessons you've recently learned that would have changed your past if you had known at the time?

You Don't Need to Figure Everything Out Alone

1. In your opinion, is it harder to ask for help or figure out your struggle alone? Why?
2. How can adults help you navigate new or unfamiliar areas of your life? What can their own experience provide you with?
3. Is it okay that you don't know everything yet? Is this ever something to be ashamed of?

Expand Your Life Vision

1. How would you describe your life vision as it is right now?
2. Where can you find inspiration for your life vision?
3. How can a mentor help you sculpt or perfect your life vision?

## Unit 3: Social Awareness

### Understanding Social Differences

#### Ethics and Values

1. What are ethics?
2. How can ethics differ based on different backgrounds?
3. What are some of your ethics and values that guide your behavior?

#### Personality Types

1. How would you describe your personality type?
2. Why is understanding the different personality types important? How can it help you relate to others more easily?
3. What is the complete opposite of your personality type? Does this resemble anyone you know?

#### Emotional Intelligence

1. What is emotional intelligence, and why is it an important aspect of life?
2. In your opinion, is EQ as important as IQ? Why or why not?
3. How would you describe your level of emotional intelligence?

#### Social & Cultural Intelligence

1. What is the difference between social and cultural intelligence?
2. Do the people in your close peer group have the same culture as you? How would you describe the difference between you and others you surround yourself with?
3. What makes you different? How can you celebrate those unique differences?

#### Perspective-Taking

1. What does perspective-taking mean?
2. Why do you think very successful people tend to have great perspective-taking skills? How could such a skill be important in life?
3. How can you be better at perspective taking? What things should you consider?

### Refusal Skills & Strategies

#### Being Willing to Be Awkward

1. What is your awkward? Do you embrace it as much as you should?
2. What personal value do we lose when we try to fit in with everyone else?
3. How are you unique? When have you been proud of your differences and were willing to be a bit awkward?

#### Different is Valuable

1. What is your unique talent or gift that you can do very well? How can you use this talent to set yourself apart from others?
2. What activity makes you happiest? Is it similar to or different from the activities most of the people around you?
3. What is one thing you can do more of at home or on your own time to get better at, even if you don't have a specific end goal in mind for how you will use it yet?

#### Trust Your Discernment

1. What is discernment?
2. Is your "gut feeling" always right? How can becoming more aware of it help judge whether or when you should trust it?

3. When have you gotten a “gut feeling” about something and trusted your discernment? How did this affect the outcome of the situation?

#### Perseverance & Hope

1. What does it mean to have perseverance and hope?
2. How can perseverance and hope be used to help our refusal skills?
3. Explain a time when you had perseverance and hope during a high-pressure or stressful situation. How did that experience change you? What did you learn about yourself?

#### The Decisions Made: Goal Settings

1. What are some of your long-term goals?
2. What are some of your short-term goals?
3. What would be on your vision board?

#### Giving Simple Respects

##### Saying Please & Thank You

1. How can saying “please” and “thank you” transform relationships?
2. What is the difference between saying “please” and “thank you” out of habit and out of authenticity? Why is this an important distinction?
3. How do you show your respect for someone by saying “please” and “thank you”? How do you feel when others say it to you?

##### Giving Gratitude Towards Life

1. How does gratitude help us break away from negative emotions, such as sadness, anger, or fear?
2. What are three things you are most thankful for right now?
3. How often do you show gratitude towards life? How can you be more intentional about remembering the things you’re grateful for?

##### Respect for Elders, Leaders, and Peers

1. Why is it important for a true leader to be able to respect everyone, regardless of whether they are below or above them?
2. How can respect transform a relationship, regardless of age, association, or context?
3. Describe a time when you gave someone respect, and that person reciprocated it. Should you respect everyone, regardless of whether you think the person deserves respect?

##### Eye Contact & Nonverbal Responses

1. Why is eye contact sometimes uncomfortable?
2. What are nonverbal responses and how can you be more aware of yours?
3. What are some nonverbal responses you’ve noticed from others that gave away what they were truly thinking? How do these subtle, simple actions represent attitudes?

##### A Strong Handshake or Warm Hug

1. Why does the way you shake someone’s hand or give them a hug matter? What does it say about you?
2. What are some examples of when a handshake would be appropriate? What are some examples of when a warm hug would be appropriate? How might cultural norms impact whether it would be appropriate or not?
3. Can you think of anyone who is particularly great at giving warm hugs or firm handshakes? What makes them so special and memorable?

## Purposeful Communication Techniques

### Conflict Resolution

1. How does conflict resolution differ based on the person you are interacting with? How might the appropriate method of resolution differ between that of a friend and a teacher?
2. In your opinion, how often do misunderstandings play a role in conflict?
3. How does tone of voice, nonverbal communication, and the words we use each play a role in conflict resolution?

### Negotiation

1. How do negotiation skills play into lifelong success?
2. When have you had to negotiate with someone? What did you have to give, and what did you get in turn?
3. How do negotiation skills impact your daily life? How often do you use them, maybe without even realizing it?

### Collaboration

1. What are ways you can collaborate with others better? Do attitude and level of communication impact how well a team is able to work together?
2. What does it mean to have a “team mentality”?
3. Describe a time when you used collaboration to achieve a goal or complete a task. How did collaborating with others make time more effective than if you had tried to do it alone?

### Letting Go of Your Ego

1. What does it mean to listen to understand? Why do you think we have a tendency to make conversations that are supposed to be about others, about ourselves?
2. How can opening up to others help us in ways we may never expect until we try?
3. Have you ever opened about something you were embarrassed or ashamed of, and received advice or feedback you would have never anticipated?

### Asking for Help or Support

1. When have you had to ask for help or support? How did receiving it help you get through the situation better than if you had tried to do it alone?
2. Why can asking for help or support be hard? Does doing so make you less “tough”?
3. Do you think you are approachable? In other words, do you think people would feel comfortable asking you for help or support?

**Unit 4: Equity, Anti-Racism & Diversity**LGBTQStudents Coming Out

1. How can you create a comfortable and safe environment for those who are thinking about “coming out” or already have?
2. How do you think the expectations of how others will react plays into whether individuals decide to “come out”?
3. Whose business is it whether someone “comes out”? How can you be compassionate while still respecting people’s boundaries and privacy wishes?

LGBTQ Bias-Based Bullying

1. How powerful is your voice? How can we use our voices to teach people how to treat us?
2. In the video, Elijah said “I’m not coming to school to be bullied, I’m here to learn.” In your opinion, how might your school culture change if everyone used their voice like this when it was necessary?
3. How can using your voice to protect others make a difference? Do you have to be the one receiving the bullying in order to step in? Why or why not?

History of the LGBTQ Community in Society

1. How much do you know about the history of the LGBTQ community in society?
2. How can learning the history of something change our perspective of it? How important is history to you in regard to how you view the way something is today?
3. Do you think societal norms play a role in how history tends to play out? In other words, should we expect the history of the LGBTQ community to be similar to the way it is now, even though the attitudes of society have drastically changed? Explain.

The Value You Bring

1. How is your perception of reality different from everyone else’s, even the people sitting next to you? How do our experiences play a role in how we think, feel, and behave?
2. What are three things that you love about yourself? How often do you celebrate yourself for these things?
3. Is your best friend the same person as you? How do these differences make them even more special and unique?

Being Comfortable in Your Own Skin

1. What makes you happy and flourish? What is one thing that you are comfortable with about yourself?
2. How are you different from your friends and family? What makes you unique?
3. Have you ever felt unaccepted? How did you overcome the feeling of not belonging?

EquitySocial Equity

1. What does it mean to “be a voice for others”? Have you ever been a voice for someone who was not being heard?
2. Do you think there is true social equity in the world? What about your community?
3. How can there be more social equity in both the world and your community? What can you personally do to create more of it?

Racial Equity

1. What does racial equity mean?
2. How has racial equity changed over time? Do you know anyone who has had an experience related to racial equity or inequity?
3. How can we all be mindful of racial equity, even if things look equal from our point of views? How might reality look different for each person, and how can we learn more from others?

### Stereotyping and Prejudice

1. What is a stereotype? What is an example of a common stereotype that you hear?
2. What is the difference between a stereotype and prejudice?
3. Where do stereotypes and prejudices come from? What negative effects do you think they have on society?

### Advocating for Others

1. Have you ever advocated for someone else? Has anyone ever advocated for you?
2. Why is it important to be an advocate for others who need it? What difference do you think it makes when you stand up for things that are right?
3. How can you be an advocate for others, even when others aren't necessarily noticing or paying attention? How can even small instances create a better culture?

### Becoming Considerate

1. What does it mean to be "considerate"? Who is the most considerate person you know?
2. How is keeping your word being considerate? How is it respectful?
3. How does being considerate to others make you feel, even if it means having to prioritize it over your own wishes or circumstances?

## Anti-Racism

### Understanding Systemic Racism

1. Why do you think systemic racism is an issue we are still dealing with today? What should have been done differently?
2. Can you think of any examples of systemic racism that you've noticed or experienced in your personal life?
3. Taking history and how much has changed/will change into consideration, how do you imagine the future in terms of social and racial equity?

### Being Anti-Racist

1. Why do you think there is a distinction between being "anti-racist" and just being "not racist"?
2. If someone saw someone getting bullied (a bystander), would you consider the bystander responsible for standing up for the person being bullied? Would you say the same concept applies to a bystander witnessing racism?
3. How can you be anti-racist in a safe, peaceful, and respectful way?

### What Does it Mean to Be an Ally?

1. Why are allies important when it comes to fighting oppression?
2. What difference do you think allies can make in society?
3. How can you be an ally in your school or community?

### Examining My Own Racism

1. Why are microaggressions harmful, even if they seem harmless?
2. Why is it important to examine unconscious biases?
3. Where do you think we learn to believe what we believe and respond to things the way we do?

### Becoming a Better Ally

1. Have you done any research on your own about systemic racism and racial privilege? What did you learn and where did you learn it?
2. Why is listening so important to becoming a better ally?
3. How can all sides help create better allies?

## Diversity

### Bringing It All Together

1. What does diversity mean to you?
2. What is the diversity like in your school or community? Do you think this is similar to or different from the diversity throughout the rest of the country? Explain.

3. How has diversity impacted you? How do you think diversity will affect you in the future?

#### Celebrating Differences

1. What would the world be like if everyone was just like you? What would the positives and negatives of that be?
2. When have you been exposed to cultures and lifestyles different from your own? How did this change your perspective?
3. How can you introduce yourself to other cultures and lifestyles, based on where you are now?

#### Igniting a Spark of Safety

1. How can rumors or the judgments of others affect the way we approach different people and situations? How can this be both a good and bad thing?
2. Have you ever ignored what others have said about someone or something and pursued your own investigation? How did it turn out, and what did you learn?
3. What do you think others think or say about you? Is there anything you wish other people knew about you?

#### Ethics & My Life

1. Why are ethics something you should check in on periodically?
2. How have your ethics or opinions changed over time?
3. Do you reflect on your actions? What can be learned by revisiting your past decisions and opinions?

#### Cultural Norms

1. How does your culture and background impact the way you dress and behave?
2. What are some cultural norms that you see in others, but don't necessarily understand? What is more important in those situations: being able to relate, or being able to respect?
3. How can cultural norms change based on location? Have you ever visited another state and noticed their norms or lifestyles were different from yours?