

Introduction

Focusing on Success: High School and Beyond

Welcome to Level III of the 180 Degrees Curriculum! Level III is designed for junior and senior high school students. As emerging young adults, you have important decisions to make about your future. Whether you are considering college, vocational school, or finding gainful employment, this curriculum will help you to make informed choices as you learn how to effectively and successfully manage your life.

As in previous 180 Degrees courses, you will work with other students as you clarify your values, examine your beliefs, and explore how you can make a difference in your community. You will sharpen your critical thinking skills, and you will have the opportunity to practice self-reflection and develop a deeper understanding of the connection between reflection and learning.

At the center of the 180 Degrees Program are five social and emotional learning competencies. Identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL),¹ these core competencies can help you gain essential skills for school work; employment; relationships with your teachers, peers, and family; and with successfully meeting your future goals and dreams.

Listed below and on the next page are the five core competencies and associated skills that you will gain in this course.

Self-Awareness

- Clarifying your personal values and identifying personal qualities that are consistent with your values
- Assessing your strengths and your limitations in different areas of your life
- Naming your emotions and making connections between your emotions, your attitudes and your behaviors
- Engaging in ongoing self-reflection

Self-Development and Management

- Deepening your skills in controlling your emotions and impulses, particularly when experiencing pressure and stress
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Setting and achieving goals
- Resolving conflict
- Understanding what motivates you, and developing fortitude and determination in accomplishing your goals

¹ <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies>

Positive Decision-Making

- Making positive choices and evaluating circumstances appropriately to understand the consequences of your actions
- Understanding how to engage in safe behaviors
- Resisting negative social pressure

Relationship Skills

- Establishing healthy relationships with others in a diverse and changing world
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Developing effective communication and collaboration skills
- Helping others and seeking help when needed
- Recognizing family, community, and school support systems and resources

Social Awareness and Responsibility

- Developing an awareness of your community and an understanding of your social environment
- Developing safe technical and media skills
- Engaging in perspective analysis
- Deepening your consideration and empathy for others, and your acceptance of and respect for diversity



How Will Our Group Operate?

What ground rules, guidelines or class agreements would make it comfortable for you to speak up during discussions? What behaviors would make it uncomfortable for you to speak up during discussions? Rather than give you a list of what *we* think are essential rules for discussion, let's find out what *you* think.

Write down rules, guidelines, or agreements that you believe will create a safe and comfortable class environment for discussing issues and topics that will arise in this program.

Write your response here.

After you create your list, pair up with someone and share your lists. When you do this, agree on your top three collective guidelines and present them to the class.

Top Three:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Once all guidelines have been posted, decide as a group what the final group discussion guidelines will be for the duration of the 180 Degrees Program. Have someone write the guidelines on a poster and hang them up in the room. Refer to this list throughout the program.

Let's begin!