

Character Action Media

Journey in Nepal to Self-Discovery and Helping Others

Lesson Goals

- Help students to see the value of integrity in being true to oneself.
- Help students to appreciate the importance of humility in realizing that we don't have all of the answers and the value of learning from others, often in unexpected ways and settings.
- Illustrate to students an example of someone living with empathy and compassion that leads to generosity and action.
- Develop students' understanding that everyone can have hope, regardless of their circumstances.
- Help students see that solidarity can begin with the generosity and love from one person.

Primary Virtues

Caring: to help others; a caring person lives with empathy in trying to understand another person's situation, compassion in desiring to help others, and then with generosity in acting to help others

Humility: realizing that we don't have all of the answers and being open to learning from others; modest opinion of one's own position; an honest self-appraisal of one's strengths and weaknesses; a lack of false pride

Integrity: being true to oneself; steadfast adherence to a moral or ethical code

Secondary Virtues

Compassion: feeling of sympathy for the distress of others, with the desire to help

Empathy: trying to understand another person's situation, entering into the feeling or spirit of others and imagining yourself in another person's situation

Generosity: giving freely of our own possessions, time and/or talent

Hope: confident expectation of the fulfillment of a goal or wish

Love: to freely give of ourselves for the betterment of another person, without expecting anything in return

Solidarity: unity from a shared common purpose and / or interest; active loyalty within a group; mutual support within a group

Leader Introduction to the Video

Today we're going to learn about someone who through being honest about herself and what she has been called to do has positively impacted the lives of hundreds of others, and in the process has found a life of joy.

Featured Video

<http://www.blinknow.org/pages/our-history> - film clip is the second picture from the top

Discussion Question Options

(discussion prompts / answers are in parentheses if needed)

Before beginning our discussion let's read over the virtues and their definitions (included within the online lesson as a separate document)

1. How did Maggie live out the virtue of integrity after graduating from high school?

(she was true to herself in honestly examining herself and concluded that she wasn't yet ready to attend college, and instead was called to travel to learn more about herself and to serve others)

2. What was Maggie's initial reaction and feeling when she experienced the desperate poverty of the people of Nepal and especially the children orphaned from the war?

(anger and disappointment that she had lived for years without realizing that other people were suffering to this degree)

3. What person in the story enabled Maggie to move beyond the anger and to act?

(Hima)

4. What do think it was about Hima that inspired Maggie to act in helping her and so many others?

Potential answers:

- Hima's resiliency in her willingness to work hard to provide for her family, even at the age of 6, possibly inspired Maggie that she too can and should help others

- Hima's ability to maintain a joyful attitude despite her poverty and hard life possibly inspired Maggie to get over her anger and move forward

- Maggie simply was moved to help someone who was doing so much to help her family by empowering them with education)

The idea that a 6 year old poor girl from Nepal could teach an American 19 year old so much and change the course of her life was possible because Maggie lived out which virtue? (humility in being open to learning from others)

5. Maggie learned that the people in Nepal had hope, despite their poverty. Can you think of someone you know, a famous or historical person who lives / lived with hope to overcome obstacles in his/her life?
6. At the end of the video Maggie had a "main message" for us. What is her message?

(To follow our hearts and find what we love to do and bring it to the world. We all have something that's really special to give. We don't have to travel to far-away lands to help others, we can do it right within our own community)

7. Maggie states that the life of service to others has given her so much joy. Why do think this is?

Journal Writing Options

1. In the video, Maggie said, "We all have something special to give." Explain what you would like to give in time, talents or resources to help others.
2. Maggie built solidarity between her home community in New Jersey and the people of Nepal by sharing information about their needs and her efforts to empower them. Which aspects of Maggie's story and the people of Nepal cause you to feel the most empathy and / or compassion and desire to help?

Extended Activities Options

1. On the board chart out the path of Maggie's venture with arrows to and within Nepal and ask students to identify within each turning point the virtues she and others lived out to reach their goals. First Maggie leaves NJ for India (draw an arrow on the board from NJ to India and above the arrow the virtue that made this happen - integrity in being honest with herself), next Maggie leaves India for Nepal (next to that arrow empathy and compassion for the plight of the refugees and desire to learn why they were fleeing Nepal), next Maggie moves from "anger to action" and pays for Hima to attend school (humility in learning from Hima and generosity), next Maggie decides to build a home for the children and school (fullness of caring), next Maggie returns to NJ to raise money to build the home and school (solidarity in spreading the story and building empathy and compassion for the people of Nepal)
2. Maggie mentions in the video that it's not necessary to travel across the world to change what we don't like. She states, "There's so much to do if we just open up our eyes and start to see it."

With this in mind, divide your group into teams of 3-4 students. Within each team discuss what you would like to change within your school, community, and beyond. Next to each of these targeted changes, record at least one idea on how to make a positive change.

3. Within the teams, think of ways you can raise money for the BlinkNow Foundation that runs the children's home and primary school in Kopila Valley and is building a new high school <http://blinknow.org/get-involved>. Each team then presents its best idea to the class and the class then votes on which idea you think would be the most effective. Even a small amount of money can make a big difference in Nepal. For example \$100 can buy new sandals for all 50 students in the primary school.

Character Action Media

Connecting Virtues to Our World

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