**Lesson 13: Compassion Lesson Plan**

*Modified from the Ruhi Grade 1 Curriculum*

**PRAYERS:**

Blessed is the Spot

Prayer Sharers

Review of prayers

New prayer:

“Thy name is my healing, O my God, and remembrance of Thee is my remedy. Nearness to Thee is my hope, and love for Thee is my companion. Thy mercy to me is my healing and my succor in both this world and the world to come. Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

- Bahá'u'lláh

Play song of this (Julie Iraninejad and Shabnam Cyrus, Tender Years CD, Short Healing Prayer- available at ITunes)

**Today we are learning about compassion. What Is Compassion?**

Compassion is understanding and caring about someone who is in trouble or has made a mistake.  It is being kind and forgiving because another person really matters to you.  It is feeling sorry when someone is hurt and needs someone to understand.  It is forgiving someone who hurt you because you understand why they hurt you and care more about that person than your own hurt.  It is feeling the pain of someone who is in trouble even if you do not know that person.  It is caring deeply and wanting to help - even if all you can do is to listen and say kind words.

**Why Practice Compassion?**

When people feel bad or find themselves in trouble, they usually feel very much alone.  Feeling alone can make things even worse.  At such times, people start to believe no one understands or cares about them at all.

Being compassionate tells a person that they are not alone.  It makes you a friend when someone needs a friend.  It gives you a good feeling and makes you useful at the same time.  It helps you to understand other people and yourself.

Without compassion, the world is a hard and lonely place.  With compassion, we are all connected and hard times are much easier because others understand and care.

**How Do You Practice It?**

Compassion begins by paying attention to yourself and to others.  Notice when someone looks sad or is having some trouble in his life (it could be an animal or a person).  Go up to that person and show you understand care by:

* Sitting close by, letting him know that you are there and that he is not alone
* Listening if he wants to talk
* Sharing your own experience if you have a similar one
* Understanding and forgiving him if he hurt you without meaning to
* Doing what you can to help - it might just be praying for him

When we have compassion, we feel sympathy for someone and then we get involved. Sometimes we get involved directly, and other times we might get involved by sending money or gifts to help people in need. Compassion is more than just feeling sympathy; it also involves doing something that helps someone else.

**Story 1:** A man was walking along and fell into a pit. It was just deep and steep enough so he could not climb out. He called and called and ﬁnally someone heard him. He explained what happened and the person said, “Man, I feel your pain!” and sat down and started crying over the situation (Sympathy). Shortly another person came by, saw the ﬁrst person sitting on the edge of the pit crying, heard the man calling from below and looked over the edge. The man in the pit saw him, told him what happened and the second person said, “Oh man, I feel your pain!” and jumped in (Empathy). A short time later a third person came by, saw the one sitting at the edge of the pit crying and heard the second man in the pit calling out. He leaned over and the man who ﬁrst fell into the pit explained what happened. The third person said, “Man, hold on, I will be right back.” The third person (Compassion) went to get a rope and pulled both out of the pit. Everyone rejoiced! Compassion took action while Sympathy and Empathy could not see past the pit.

**Comprehension Questions:** When we are compassionate, we see everyone as part of our big human family. Questions to ask ourselves to help us be more compassionate are: How would I feel if I were them? What do I think I would need if I were them? How can I help make this better?

**What would compassion look like if...**

* Your dog is caught up in his leash
* A friend is confused about what a teacher said?
* Someone is sad because their mother is sick in the hospital?
* A new student is lonely and feels left out?
* Your father seems very tired after work?

SERVICE PROJECTS- consult with your parents- bring ideas to our next class in 2 weeks.

**SONG:** Listen by Red Grammer

Be Fair from Ruhi Grade 1 Children’s Class (http://www.ruhi.org/resources/songs.php)

Other song requests

**GAME: Bean Bag Pick Up:** Everyone gets a beanbag and they walk around with the beanbag on their head (not touching it). If it falls they have to freeze, someone else has to carefully bend down, without dropping their own bean bag, and put it back on the person’s head for them to be able to be unfrozen and move again. Cheer the children on when they help others! You can make it more difficult by having them walk faster, jump, walk backwards, etc. So fun! You can even have music in the background.

**Memorizing Quotation:** God is the Most Compassionate, the All-Merciful. In times of difficulty, we turn our hearts to Him and ask Him to comfort and strengthen us. So, too, must we show compassion to others. We must be compassionate and kind with everyone, under all conditions, like the rain that pours forth its life giving waters on all, regardless of who they are or how they act.

Bahá’u’lláh says:

 **“ No soul should be hated, none neglected; nay, rather, their very imperfections should demand greater kindness and tender compassion.”**

**“The Kingdom of God is founded upon equity and justice, and also upon mercy, compassion, and kindness to every living soul.”**

Founded

1. The doctor was concerned about the health of children in the villages, and so he opened a clinic to care for them. The clinic was founded out of his love for children.

2. Jenna and Marisol have been friends for a very long time. They always study together and share with each other useful things they have learned. Their friendship is founded on kindness and love.

**Story 2:** Lua Getsinger, one of the early Bahá’ís of America, tells of an experience she had in `Akká. She had made the pilgrimage to the prison-city to see `Abdu’l-Bahá. One day He said to her that He was too busy today to call upon a friend of His who was very poor and sick. He wished Lua to go in His place. He told her to take food to the sick man and care for him as He had been doing.  Lua learned the address and immediately went to do as `Abdu’l-Bahá had asked. She felt proud that `Abdu’l-Bahá had trusted her with some of His own work. But soon she returned to `Abdu’l-Bahá in a state of excitement. “Master,” she exclaimed, “You sent me to a very terrible place! I almost fainted from the awful smell, the dirty rooms, the degrading condition of that man and his house. I left quickly before I could catch some terrible disease.”

Sadly and sternly `Abdu’l-Bahá gazed at her. If she wanted to serve God, He told her, she would have to serve her fellow man, because in every person she should see the image and likeness of God. Then He told her to go back to the man’s house. If the house was dirty, she should clean it. If the man was dirty, she should bathe him. If he was hungry, she should feed him. He asked her not to come back until all of this was done. `Abdu’l-Bahá had done these things many times for this man, and He told Lua Getsinger that she should be able to do them once. This is how `Abdu’l-Bahá taught Lua to serve her fellow man.

Does anyone know what the Golden Rule is? We find it in all religions! This is what is means to show compassion- introduce craft.

**Arts and Crafts:** Illuminate Golden Rule poster

Other options: Wishing tree craft

Compassion Writing

(see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under Ruhi Grade 1 Lesson on Compassion)

**Closing Prayer-** ask a child to say closing prayer

**AFFIRMATION**

I have compassion.  I notice when someone needs attention and freely offer my help.