

#ComHeroes Life Lessons Curriculum Framework

Course Intro:

Congratulations, hero-in-training! We, the community and the world, are so glad to have you along as we head out on a Hero's Journey. So buckle your belts and hang onto your capes! The most important life lesson – the thread throughout this curriculum--is that the biggest gift you can give is the gift of you! The goal here is to spark your passion, have fun and explore within our flexible framework the many paths through which to find the hero within you. Yes, YOU. We all are born with superhero talents, whether it be in sports, communicating, reading, writing, or math -- it's that thing that makes you light up. Through the stories of everyday real-life heroes, you'll be inspired to dig deep, find your inner hero and use your power to help others.

Note:

*These classes are not in a specific order. It's a flexible framework and a guide from which you can pick and choose. There are *no rules*. The goal is to spark fun, inspire empathy, generosity, kindness and action in all heroes-to-be.

*The best class will be organic. Don't go in as a facilitator with expectations. Let the conversation and inspiration flow. Feel free to go off this framework if you are feeling it.

Life Lessons (Core Values): Compassion, empathy, generosity, kindness, respect, happiness, mindfulness, responsibility, bravery & gratitude.

The HERO program:

H: hero's story

E: everyone's story

R: rally the heroes

O: our actions matter

1. **H: Hero's story:** In each class, you'll be introduced to a new real-life hero through a video. Chief Inspirator Toan Lam will bring you a story about an everyday hero doing what they can--using their own unique power--to help others. Everyone who has done something great in their lives has had a hero they look up to, or someone they call a role model, mentor, or the person that lights the fire inside them. The people featured in these videos are examples of how a regular person is doing what's within their power to help their community. Because of the unique way the stories are told, they resonate with everyone. The featured hero's acts may be small, but can become mighty and ripple out to big changes. It all starts here. This is where the spark – or the hook – happens.
2. **E: Everyone's story:** After watching the video, you'll be guided with prompts/questions to discuss the hero's story. The activity in each class will include a brainstorm session. Talk about how this story resonates with you or someone you know. We believe that an open forum to share thoughts, ideas and personal stories connects the participant/viewer to the cause and activates their inner hero.
3. **R: Rally the heroes:** Now that we've shared our own personal stories about how the hero's story has touched us, it's time to brainstorm! What can we do to help? Get your thinkin' caps on!

4. **O: Our actions matter:** Some of the ideas will lead to discussions and greater awareness and understanding – and others will lead to all that PLUS community action! The Group leader(s)/facilitator(s) will help connect the group to local community causes/organizations and show the power of collective action! We will suggest action items and examples about what individuals, groups, organizations or places you could help and crowd source ideas from participants/viewers. Pow!

Student Outcomes:

- Exposure: Watch video, example – authentic stories that stir your emotions and excite you to help. (Through storytelling, you'll explore new heroes/real world examples of heroes.) Range of experiences/emotions/engaging empathy through the heroes and person(s) they help. Videos activate student's affiliative action.
- Critical Thinking: Building real world connections and skills by brainstorming around the video, calling upon collective resources and talents (power) and using *your* power to help and create impact.
- Empathy & Compassion: Putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Identifying with someone in the video (hero or the recipient of hero's action). Even if some participants aren't ready to take action, this exposure leads to more kindness and compassion toward one another.
- Emotional Contagion: Connecting the story and hero to a situation/something in your life. Getting excited and getting others excited to help. This leads to contagious compassion, a sophisticated level of learning, caring, sharing and action.
- Action: Engaging in and exploring a range of positive social activities.
(*NOTE: Warning! This is equally, if not more inspiring for the facilitator.)

Activities:

- Discussion: This is where we prompt participants with eye-opening questions. How did that make you feel while watching? What did the hero do? What were the special circumstances around the hero? How were people s/he helped affected?
- Group shares how this story connects to their own personal stories or references.
- Brainstorm: Individuals talk about ideas of how they can help. Some could be small actions, such as random acts of kindness. Others could be larger projects, such as a collection drive or fundraiser around the issue/topic discussed.
- Take action: Strategy and practical ways to help. The important role for the facilitator here is to help guide practical actions, and to gauge the level of interest in pursuing a larger action. NOT to control the outcome. Organic, open, authentic guidance is key. The desired outcome: The overall feeling of excitement, accomplishment, purpose, passion, gratitude and JOY.