

UNIT 3

LIFE SKILLS

1. Life skill development & Definition of Life Skills, Importance and application of life skills
2. Component of life skills
3. Interpersonal Skills:
 - a. What is interpersonal skills,
 - b. Empathy, Power of Empathy, Steps to practice empathy,
 - c. Active Listening, Barriers to Listening
 - d. Positive Affirmation.
 - e. Positive Communication: Power of Self Talk.
4. Concepts of resilience, Types of Resilience & Developing resilience

1. Life Skill Development:

Why are Life Skills Important?:

- The **1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** linked life skills to education, stating that education should be directed towards the development of the child's fullest potential.
- The **1990 Declaration on Education for All (EFA)** included life skills among the essential learning tools for **survival, capacity development and quality life**.
- The **2000 Dakar World Education Conference on EFA** also documented that all young people and adults have the "human right to benefit from an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be and included life skills in goal 3 which talks about '**promotion of life skills for young people and adults**' and goal 6 which highlights 'improvement of the quality of education in all aspects', aiming for a situation where men and women, boys and girls can achieve excellence."

What is Life Skills:

Life skills are defined as "a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build

healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner.



In Simple Words: Positive behaviour to deal the demands of everyday' s Life Challenge. Positive ACTION to Protect Themselves & PROMOTE health and Positive social

relationship. Skills form part of essential learning systems, no matter where you are and what you propose to do. Life Skills are skills that we learn and teach throughout life - whether at home, at school, at college, at the university, at work, or at play. Some skills help us live better, learn better to live better. These skills are for and from life.

Definition:

Life skills, as defined by World Health Organization (WHO) are **"the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable the individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life"**

The UNICEF has also defined life skills as "a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: **"Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills"**.

In other words, life skills are the personal competencies that help an individual to deal with challenges of life effectively and lead life successfully and satisfactorily and thereby realize his/her infinite potential as a human being.

Life skills include psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help human beings make informed decision, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy interpersonal relationships, empathize with others, and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner.

Bearing the WHO definition in mind, the proposed definition for Life Skills in Azerbaijan, is as follows:

The Basic life skills package for Azerbaijan Youth Houses offers direct instruction in **3 main areas:**

- The skills of knowing and living with oneself (**self-awareness**)
- The skills of knowing and living with others (**interpersonal skills**)
- The skills of making effective decisions (**thinking skills**)

Each of these areas are “transferable skills” that can be applied, directly or indirectly, to a diverse array of daily challenges and life experiences.

The WHO (Geneva, 1997) has identified ten core life skills that in brief include

1. Self-Awareness,
2. empathy,
3. Critical Thinking,
4. Creative Thinking,
5. decision Making,
6. Problem Solving,
7. interpersonal Skills,
8. effective Communication,
9. Coping with Stress, and
10. Managing emotions

Self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence are essential tools for understanding one’s strengths and weaknesses

2. Components of Life Skill:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) categorizes life skills into the following

Three components:

1. Critical thinking skills/Decision-making skills
2. Interpersonal/Communication skills
3. Coping and self-management skills

a) Critical thinking skills/Decision-making skills:

- a. Include decision making/problem solving skills and information gathering skills.
- b. The individual must also be skilled at evaluating the future consequences of their present actions and the actions of others.
- c. They need to be able to determine alternative solutions and to analyze the influence of their own values and the values of those around them.

b) Interpersonal/Communication skills:

- a. Include verbal and non-verbal communication,
- b. active listening, and the ability to express feelings and give feedback.

- c. Also in this category, are negotiation/refusal skills and assertiveness skills that directly affect ones' ability to manage conflict.
- d. Empathy, which is the ability to listen and understand others' needs, is also a key interpersonal skill.
- e. Teamwork and the ability to cooperate include expressing respect for those around us.
- f. Development of this skill set enables the youth to be accepted in society.
- g. These skills result in the acceptance of social norms that provide the foundation for adult social behaviour.

c) Coping and self-management skills:

- a. Skills to increase the internal locus of control, so that the individual believes that they can make a difference in the world and affect change.
- b. Self-esteem, self-awareness, self-evaluation skills and the ability to set goals are also part of the more general category of self-management skills.
- c. Anger, grief and anxiety must all be dealt with, and the individual learns to cope loss or trauma.
- d. Stress and time management are key, as are positive thinking and relaxation techniques.

3. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:

YouTube Video: [What are Interpersonal Skills | Explained in 2 min \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Interpersonal skills are the behaviors and tactics a person uses to interact with others effectively. People use interpersonal skills all the time when dealing with others, whether in the workplace, in social situations, or within a family.

EMPATHY:

Has anyone heard of the word empathy before?

*Definition: Technically speaking, the "em" means "in" and "path" means "suffering" – **empathy is simply feeling the suffering of someone else.***

More easily put, Empathy is the ability to consider and understand what someone else is going through. It is putting ourselves in someone else's shoes.

For example, if you heard that a friend's family member had died, you would understand that they feel very sad and you might do something to try to make them feel better.

Empathy may also be one reason we give to charity. We know that many people live in hunger, and we want to help them because we understand how hard that must be.

Empathy may also lead us to interrupting children or bullies who abuse animals and children. We know that it is cruel and that the children or bullies are inflicting harm onto another – and it is not right. The right thing to do is to intervene so no one – not even animals -- experience suffering.

Being empathic – is to have empathy – and it is the opposite of being selfish or self-centered. Being empathic requires that we soften our heart so we can feel what others are going through. "It is doing unto others as you would like them to do unto you." It is a vital part of connecting with others!

Power of Empathy

- **The Power of Empathy**

- *Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. It's a crucial skill that helps build strong, meaningful relationships and fosters a supportive community. Here are a few ways empathy can make a difference:*

1. **Improves Communication:** *When we empathize with others, we listen more attentively and respond more thoughtfully. This leads to better understanding and fewer conflicts.*
 2. **Strengthens Relationships:** *Empathy allows us to connect on a deeper level, showing others that we care about their experiences and emotions.*
 3. **Enhances Problem-Solving:** *By seeing things from another's perspective, we can come up with more effective and compassionate solutions to problems.*
 4. **Promotes Kindness:** *Empathy encourages acts of kindness and generosity, creating a more positive and supportive environment.*
- *Practicing empathy can be as simple as actively listening, asking open-ended questions, and showing genuine concern for others' well-being. It's a small effort that can lead to significant positive changes in our personal and professional lives.*

Five Steps to Practice Advanced Empathy

1. **Most often we are so blinded by our own strong opinions and our need to be right that we never even attempt to see another's perspective.** "Let go" of your ego's need to be right – and

instead be curious as to someone else's point of view (It does not mean that you need to agree with their point of view – but be curious!).

2. **Become aware of your filters– Most of our biases are completely unconscious.** When we listen to others we don't realize that we're listening with judgment. Our unconscious biases are like the water fish swim in. We don't see the water because we have never seen anything other than the water. We take our stances on various issues very personally. We make these labels part of our identity.
3. **See the whole human – See the person beyond their crisis, habits or current situation.** Like you, they are a human-being. They may be a mother, daughter, sister, brother, father, son to someone – and their story is much wider than what you can see in brief snapshot.
4. **Practice active listening** – We will learn more about this in the next lesson, but active listening is key in promoting empathy. Active listening is listening while being *present -- without giving advice or talking about yourself. This is the best way to understand the details of what someone is going through.*
5. **Check in to be sure you are understanding and perceiving their experience correctly.** *Following active listening, check in to be sure that you understood what they said/ are experiencing. Paraphrase and ask questions. Be open to being corrected. The point is to understand the other person – the purpose of true empathy is not expressing your own views, talking about yourself, judging someone or change that person's views or behaviours.*

Listening: Active Listening

We listen to understand what the other person is saying, without imposing your own judgement

We listen to : enjoy your interaction and appreciate that the person is sharing a part of himself or herself with you.

We listen to: learn more about the other person, including the person's thoughts, feelings and opinions.

We listen to: help which involves paying particular attention to ways in which you can assist the person or provide support.

Active listening is a necessary skill for building relationships. It requires that you be fully engaged in the process of communicating and aware of the listening blocks you just identified. It also means responding with your words, body language, and eye contact
- all ways of indicating that you're engaged in the conversation

Barriers to Listening:

Some of the most common barriers to listening:

- Excessive Talking:
- Prejudice: What the seniors say about a guest speaker's preference for moral lessons can be a source of prejudice.
- Distractions: Hunger can be one. Can you think of anything else?
- Misunderstanding:
- Interruptions: Think of examples. Can you relate this to distractions?
- Fake attention: Can you think of a listener's fake attention and a speaker's fake attention in trying to appear interested?
- Emotions:
- Noise:
- Fear:
- Judgements:
- Closed mind: Who is responsible for this?
- Sudden change of topic:
- Selective listening:
- Daydreaming:
- Jumping into advice:

Positive Affirmation

- *Positive affirmations are simple, yet powerful statements that can help reshape your mindset and improve your overall well-being. Here's why they matter:*
1. **Boosts Self-Esteem:** *Repeating affirmations like "I am capable" or "I am worthy" can help build your confidence and self-worth.*
 2. **Reduces Stress:** *Positive affirmations can help counteract negative thoughts, reducing stress and promoting a more relaxed state of mind.*
 3. **Enhances Resilience:** *By focusing on positive statements, you can build mental resilience and better cope with challenges.*
 4. **Improves Mood:** *Regularly practicing affirmations can lead to a more positive outlook on life, improving your overall mood and happiness.*
- *To get started, choose a few affirmations that resonate with you and repeat them daily. For example:*
 - *"I am strong and capable."*

- "I deserve happiness and success."
- "I am in control of my thoughts and emotions."
- Incorporating these affirmations into your daily routine can make a significant difference in how you feel and approach life's challenges

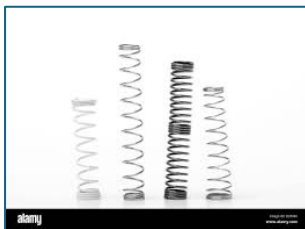
Positive Communication: SELF TALK

*Self Talk: Extensive research has shown that one of **the most powerful ways to change our feelings and actions is by changing our thoughts.***

Everyone engages in self-talk. Self-talk is our inner voice that tells us how we're doing and what we're thinking. Sometimes that voice is positive, negative or neutral.

Positive means that our self-talk is encouraging, nurturing and kind.

4 RESILIENCE



Definition: The American Psychological Association ([2014](#)) defines resilience as "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress"

4 Types of Resilience

Physical Resilience: Ability to Meet physical hardship like – Accidents, physical ailments / injuries – How we adapt – Recover – challenging environment, sustain energy, strengthen and stamina –

Accomplishes physically demanding task, healthy diet and lifestyle, getting enough sleep and relaxation techniques can help to improve it.

Psychological Resilience: Ability to meet psychological hardship like – fear, facing uncertainty, loss of a family member, etc...

Coping Strategies positive thoughts and Mental Education programs will help to build resilience.

Emotional Resilience

How well we control our emotions reactions and responses to stress & adversity and manage our negative emotions, such as sadness, jealousy.

Emotional resilience will drive through challenges to prevent the negative impact of life.

We can build with Optimism, emotional awareness & intelligence, acceptance and perseverance

Social Resilience

- *It is our ability to socially connect with others in our community.*
- *It is about how we relate and respond to others and deal with individual and collective challenges like natural disaster, economic hardship, climate change, together as a community.*
- *It involves certain core elements, such as respect, acceptance, tolerance, diversity and trust.*

Being socially resilient also involves our ability to make and maintain friendships, network be social work as a team support our family and help in improving the community.

The 7 C's of Resilience developed by Dr. Kenneth Ginbuge and Dr. Anthony Rostain, at University of Pennsylvania.

Competence

Confidence

Connection

Character

Contribution

Coping

Control

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Read more here: <https://mind.help/topic/resilience/#1-physical-resilience>