

Ability to show students the monthly video (www.everymondaymatters.org), if appropriate.

Prep time: 5 mins.



As this is the first Monday of the month, we recommend presenting this Monthly Kick-Off activity and if appropriate, the monthly video. Or, at a minimum, offer highlights from this activity plan.

MONTHLY KICK-OFF

- 1) **SHARE THIS MONTH'S THEME WITH STUDENTS: "MONDAY GETS EMPOWERED"**
- 2) **SHOW STUDENTS THE "MONDAY GETS EMPOWERED" VIDEO.**

- The "MONDAY GETS EMPOWERED" video can be found at www.everymondaymatters.org. Click on "MONTHLY VIDEOS" on the homepage.

- 3) **ASK A FEW OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO WARM STUDENTS UP ON THIS MONTH'S FOCUS:**

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **What does the word "EMPOWERED" mean?**
 - Answer: To have the knowledge and confidence to make decisions and act for yourself
- **Have you ever felt "EMPOWERED" before, or like you had the power or permission to do something that you wanted?**
- **What is it like to feel "EMPOWERED"?**
- **How do you act when you are "EMPOWERED"?**
- **Have you ever known someone who is really "EMPOWERED"?**
 - What were they like?
 - How did they act?
 - Were you ever inspired by them?
- **Have you ever been "EMPOWERED" by someone else, or have you had someone who made you feel confident and strong?**
 - What was it like to have that person "EMPOWER" you?
- **Have you ever "EMPOWERED" other people?**

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- How can being “EMPOWERED” make a real difference in your life?
 - Can you imagine what your life would be like if you lived it in an “EMPOWERED” way going forward?
 - How might things change for you if you did this?
 - How does knowing your purpose in life help you to “GET EMPOWERED”?
 - Have you ever felt so strongly about something that you wouldn’t give it up?
 - What is it like to fail at something—but then get back up and try again?
 - Why is it important to celebrate your work and effort at something, even if you don’t succeed in the way you would like?
 - Have you ever felt like you could be an inspiration for other people?
 - How might really knowing deeply that YOU MATTER help you to “GET EMPOWERED”?
 - Do you think you can “EMPOWER” others and help them know that they MATTER?
 - What would the world be like if we all “GOT EMPOWERED” more often?
 - How might we remember that WE really do MATTER?

4) SHARE THE MONTHLY SITUATION AND CHALLENGE (PAGE 3) WITH STUDENTS BY READING IT OUT LOUD OR ASKING A STUDENT TO DO SO:

- Consider having students use this information as the foundation for a writing prompt. Let them form their own questions or provide them one or two to answer, using the challenge that lies ahead of them for the month

5) CONSIDER SHARING THE MONTHLY FACTS (PAGES 4-6) WITH STUDENTS.

- This can be done now or throughout the month
- The MONTHLY FACTS are an integrated learning tool for you to use, as desired and appropriate

6) SHARE THE UPCOMING WEEKLY THEMES WITH STUDENTS.

- Monday, September 2 - “DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE”
- Monday, September 9 - “BE TENACIOUS”
- Monday, September 16 - “GET BACK UP”
- Monday, September 23 - “CELEBRATE THE EFFORT”
- Monday, September 30 - “BE THE INSPIRATION”

7) GET STUDENTS EXCITED ABOUT MAKING SEPTEMBER ALL ABOUT “MONDAY GETS EMPOWERED” AND SEEING HOW A LITTLE COURAGE, STRENGTH, AND “EMPOWERMENT” CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN THEIR LIVES AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS, BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

8) ENJOY THE FIRST WEEK’S THEME AND ACTIVITIES: “DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE”

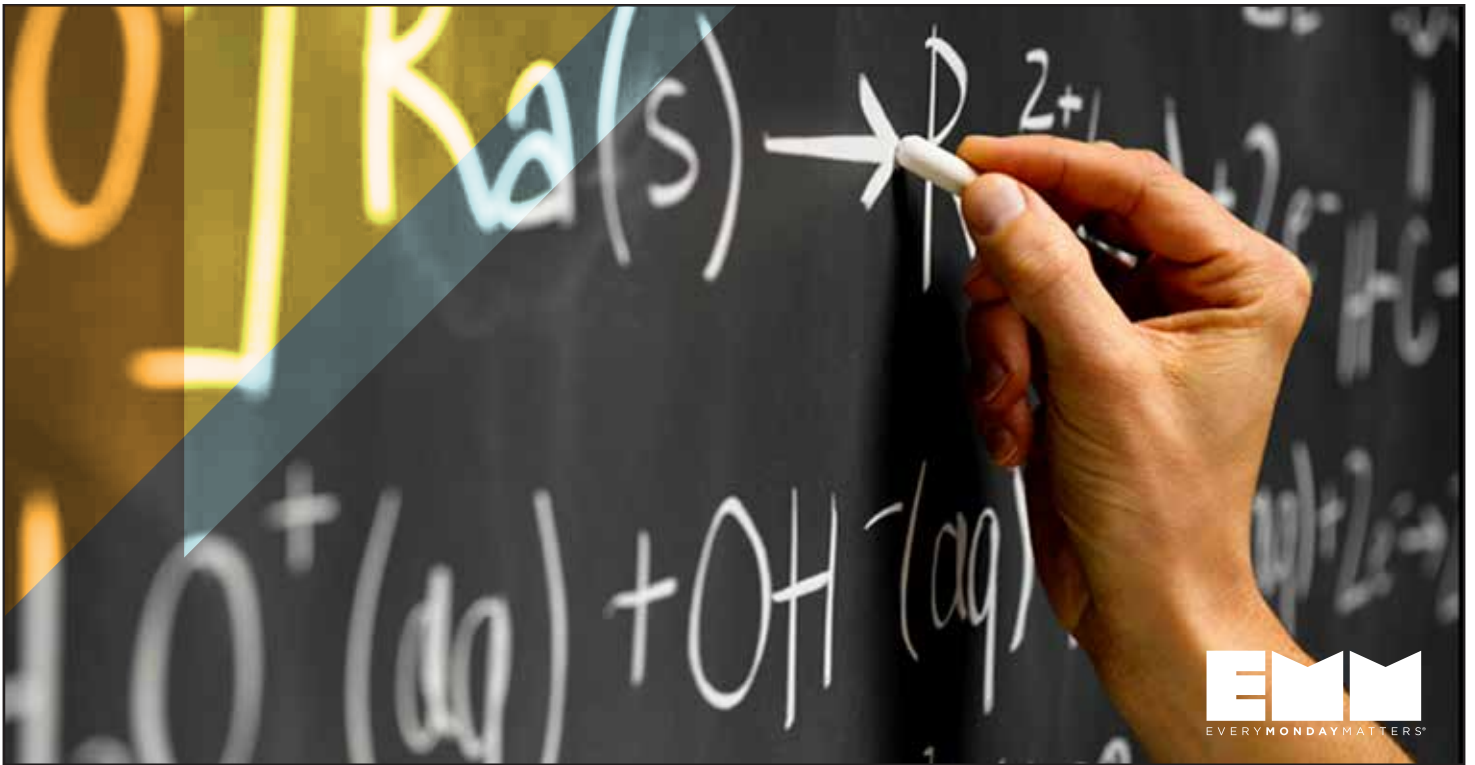


THE SITUATION

It feels good to be empowered—to have full confidence in what we’re doing, even if it’s a challenging thing to do. It feels good to know that we can do the things we want to in life. A lot of times, we look to others for that empowerment and for the permission to do those things instead of looking to ourselves. The amazing thing is that we have the power and strength in us to do these things already, and we don’t need anyone’s permission to bring it out. This month, we’re all about getting empowered and knowing that we deserve to go after what we want in life in every single moment of every single day. Join us as we get empowered.

THE CHALLENGE

Over the next few weeks, we’ll discover what it means to get empowered. That is, we’ll discover how we can step into our own lives and follow our very own paths in life. We’ll remember that we have a voice and we’ll use it to say what we want to go after and what’s important to us. We’ll decide to overcome our anxieties and fears about our present and future, and realize that we’re strong enough to not be held back by those fears. We’ll learn about resilience and celebrate the steps we take toward our larger goals in life. And, along the way, we’ll remember that we have friends, cheerleaders, and fans that can help us out—and we’ll be friends, cheerleaders, and fans to other people who are important to us. Being empowered isn’t about creating just one inspirational moment; it’s about raising the bar on how we live every single day. Start building your empowered and powerful life right... now. Getting empowered matters.



MONTHLY FACTS

EMPOWERED (ADJECTIVE): HAVING THE KNOWLEDGE, CONFIDENCE, MEANS, OR ABILITY TO DO THINGS OR MAKE DECISIONS FOR ONESELF

-www.merriam-webster.com

“TO EMPOWER SOMEONE IS TO GIVE THEM THE MEANS TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING.” IT MAKES THEM STRONGER AND MORE CONFIDENT, READY TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR LIFE, AND TO ALSO BE AN ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES.

-Marshall, Margaret; What Does Empowerment Mean to You?; Huffington Post; December 2017

HOW CAN YOU, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, LIVE THE MOST EMPOWERED LIFE POSSIBLE? ... IF YOUR INDIVIDUAL LIFE IS EMPOWERED, IT CAN ONLY HAVE AN EMPOWERING IMPACT ON ALL THOSE WHO SURROUND YOU.

- 1. OPEN TO POSSIBILITIES**
- 2. FOCUS ON WHO YOU ARE**
- 3. RUN YOUR OWN RACE**
- 4. TRUST YOURSELF**
- 5. LOVE WHAT YOU DO**
- 6. HOLD YOURSELF WITH GRACE**
- 7. EMBRACE IMPERFECT MOMENTS**

-Campbell, Sherrie; 8 Steps to Personal Empowerment; Entrepreneur; January 2017

FOR DECADES, PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE STUDIED HOW LONG-TERM, MEANINGFUL GOALS DEVELOP OVER THE SPAN OF OUR LIVES. THE GOALS THAT FOSTER A SENSE OF PURPOSE ARE ONES THAT CAN POTENTIALLY CHANGE THE LIVES OF OTHER PEOPLE, LIKE LAUNCHING AN ORGANIZATION, RESEARCHING DISEASE, OR TEACHING KIDS TO READ... MANY SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT PURPOSE ARISES FROM YOUR SPECIAL GIFTS AND SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER PEOPLE—BUT THAT’S ONLY PART OF THE TRUTH.

IT ALSO GROWS FROM OUR CONNECTION TO OTHERS, WHICH IS WHY A CRISIS OF PURPOSE IS OFTEN A SYMPTOM OF ISOLATION. ONCE YOU FIND YOUR PATH, YOU'LL ALMOST CERTAINLY FIND OTHERS TRAVELING ALONG WITH YOU, HOPING TO REACH THE SAME DESTINATION—A COMMUNITY.

-Smith, Jeremy Adam; How to Find Your Purpose in Life; Greater Good Magazine; January 2018

WE CAN'T THINK OUR WAY INTO OUR LIFE'S PASSION AND PURPOSE, WE HAVE TO DO OUR WAY IN. THIS MEANS TAKING STEPS TOWARDS WHAT YOU WANT, AND REMOVING THOSE THINGS IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU DON'T WANT... IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR YOUR PURPOSE AND PASSION, STOP LOOKING AND START DOING. THESE STEPS WILL HELP YOU.

- 1. GET MORE ACTION: INSTEAD OF OVERTHINKING IT... START TAKING STEPS TOWARD YOUR GOALS AND START TRYING NEW THINGS. THIS WILL HELP YOU GET OUT OF YOUR OWN WAY.**
- 2. DROP FROM YOUR HEART TO YOUR HEAD: YOUR HEART IS YOUR BEST TOOL TO ACCESS YOUR TRUE PURPOSE AND PASSION. ASK YOURSELF WHAT YOU LOVE? START TAKING STEPS TO DO WHAT YOU LOVE.**
- 3. BREAK UP WITH THE "ONE": MANY OF US STRUGGLE BECAUSE WE TRY TO FIND THAT ONE THING THAT WE ARE MEANT TO DO; BUT TRYING TO FIND ONLY ONE THING IS THE REASON WHY WE FEEL LIKE SOMETHING IS MISSING... THAT FEELING THAT SOMETHING IS MISSING GOES AWAY WHEN YOU LEAD A PASSION-FILLED LIFE. THE NEED TO SEEK OUR PURPOSE COMES FROM A LACK OF PASSION.**

-Kaiser, Shannon; 3 Unexpected Ways to Find Your Life Purpose; Huffington Post; April 2014

BUT THE TRUTH IS, TENACITY ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE LITTLE GUY, THE UNDERDOG, OR THE OVERLOOKED... BEING PERSISTENT, PASSIONATE, AND NEVER GIVING UP IS A SKILL THAT EVERYONE HAS THE CAPABILITY OF DEVELOPING, BUT IT SEEMS THAT FEW ACTUALLY HAVE. MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE NOT EVERYONE CARES ENOUGH TO BE TENACIOUS? MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE APATHY HAS SET IN AND PEOPLE ARE FOOLED INTO BELIEVING THAT "GOOD ENOUGH" IS IN FACT, GOOD ENOUGH. EITHER WAY, WHEN TENACITY IS AT PLAY, MIRACULOUS THINGS HAPPEN. PEOPLE ACHIEVE THINGS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR COMPANY THAT THEY NEVER DREAMED THEY COULD DO.

-Eades, John; 4 Reasons You Should be More Tenacious; LinkedIn; July 2015

IT'S TIME TO DEVELOP GREATER RESILIENCE SO THAT YOU CAN RECOVER FROM WHATEVER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE KNOCKED YOU DOWN. BEGIN DOING THIS BY INCREASING YOUR SELF-AWARENESS. THE MORE YOU UNDERSTAND YOURSELF IN A POSITIVE LIGHT, THE GREATER SENSE OF WELL-BEING EVEN AS YOU FACE EMOTIONAL STRUGGLES. THIS WILL ENABLE YOU TO THINK CLEARLY ABOUT YOUR SITUATION AND HOW BEST TO PROCEED. ADD TO THIS THE RESOLVE TO BE PERSISTENT IN YOUR EFFORTS, AND YOU HAVE RESILIENCE.

-Becker-Phelps, Leslie; Feeling Knocked Down? How to Get Back Up; Psychology Today; February 2018

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN KNOCKED FLAT, YOU'VE GOT TWO CHOICES. YOU CAN EITHER LIE THERE ON THE GROUND, WHICH MIGHT FEEL LIKE THE EASIEST OPTION, OR YOU CAN CATCH YOUR BREATH AND MAKE YOURSELF VERTICAL AGAIN... BUT THERE ARE STILL THE GOOD BITS OF IT TO REMEMBER. WHINING ABOUT HOW MISERABLE IT IS MIGHT FEEL GOOD FOR A WHILE, AND THAT'S OKAY. GO FOR IT! FIND A FEW PEOPLE WHO WILL COMMISERATE WITH YOU. BUT THEN YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE THAT BIG BREATH AND

DIVE IN AGAIN, KNOWING THAT EVERY TIME YOU DO THIS, YOU ARE LEARNING MORE ABOUT YOUR STRENGTH.

-Forrest, Liberty; How to Get Back Up When Life Knocks You Flat, Again; Huffington Post; January 2014

WE DON'T CELEBRATE STORIES OF PASSION GONE AWRY, BUT LOOK CLOSELY AND THEY'RE ALL AROUND. IT USUALLY GOES SOMETHING LIKE THIS: YOU START AN ACTIVITY AND DEVELOP A LOVE FOR IT, SO YOU DO IT MORE OFTEN. OVER TIME YOU IMPROVE AND BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE POSITIVE RESULTS. YOU RECEIVE PRAISE, RECOGNITION AND REWARDS. SUBTLY, MAYBE WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT, YOU START TO BECOME MORE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE EXTERNAL VALIDATION YOU GAIN FROM DOING THE ACTIVITY THAN THE ACTIVITY ITSELF.

-Stulberg, Brad; The Right Way to Follow Your Passion; The New York Times; March 2019

HAS ANYONE EVER INSPIRED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE IN A SIGNIFICANT WAY THAT MADE YOU HEALTHIER, HAPPIER, OR MORE FULFILLED? IF SO, YOU UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE THAT POSITIVE INSPIRATION CAN MAKE IN A PERSON'S LIFE. INSPIRATION IS POWERFUL, BUT IT ISN'T EASY. WOULD YOU LIKE TO RETURN THE FAVOR BY MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, OR CO-WORKERS? IF YOU WANT TO BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE CAPABLE OF INSPIRING YOUR LOVED ONES TO BECOME BETTER VERSIONS OF THEMSELVES, PLEASE CONSIDER THESE... WAYS TO INSPIRE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.

- 1. CARE**
- 2. BE ENTHUSIASTIC**
- 3. EARN TRUST**
- 4. BUILD PEOPLE UP**
- 5. STAND YOUR GROUND**
- 6. ADMIT YOUR FLAWS**
- 7. BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER**
- 8. REACH FOR THE STARS**
- 9. TREAT EVERYONE EQUALLY**
- 10. STAY CALM AND COOL**
- 11. ACKNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHERS**
- 12. KEEP YOUR PROMISES**
- 13. STAY TRUE TO WHO YOU ARE**
- 14. EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS**

-Wallen, Daniel; The Simplest Ways To Inspire People And Change Their Life; Lifehack.org

WHO INSPIRES YOU TO IMPROVE YOURSELF? IS IT YOUR KIDS, YOUR SPOUSE, YOUR FAMILY OR YOUR FRIENDS? ONCE YOU'VE FIGURED OUT WHO IS INSPIRING YOU TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE, YOU CAN INSPIRE OTHERS BY INTEGRATING THE TRAITS AND BEHAVIORS THOSE PEOPLE HAVE INTO YOUR OWN LIFE. THIS CAN BE A GREAT WAY TO FIND ANSWERS OR NEW TECHNIQUES FOR DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT THAT YOU MAY NOT HAVE EXPERIENCED. SELF-IMPROVEMENT IS A JOURNEY YOU MAY SPEND YOUR ENTIRE LIFE ON, SO WHILE YOU'RE LEARNING HOW TO BE THE BEST PERSON YOU CAN BE, YOU CAN ALSO INSPIRE THOSE AROUND YOU TO BE THEIR BEST AS WELL.

-Matthews, Kayla; How to Inspire Others Through Your Own Self-Improvement; Huffington Post; January 2017