

Community Audit



Compassion

Empathy

Citizenship

Activity taken and adapted from ASC Toolkit: *Play Your Part: Improve Your Community.*



Active Compassion: Taking action motivated by compassion and the desire to ease someone else's suffering.

Activity 1

The Egan Wheel – what is a good community?



Aim(s)

- To introduce the Egan Wheel and what makes a good community.



Resources

- *The Egan Wheel* Power Point. **OPTIONAL**
- The Egan Wheel Paper.
- Flipchart paper or whiteboard to generate ideas.



Delivery Guide

Part I

Ask the young people to think about what community means. What is a community?

Things that might come up include:

- A group of people like you
- Where you feel you belong
- People who like the same things
- A town, village, or city
- Your neighbourhood or estate
- Your school
- A place

- People of the same religion or race
- An online group

A community is commonly seen as a group of people who share something in common; such as values or identities, and often a particular place (for instance, a village, town, or neighbourhood).

Ask the group to think about the virtue of compassion as explored in the last activities. What role does compassion play in a community? Does a community need to involve compassion and empathy?

Some of the things that might come up include:

- Empathy allows you to think about what other people might need, especially those who are different to you.
- Being compassionate means you care about all people and you need that in a community.
- Compassion makes a community a nicer place.
- Compassion and empathy help people feel they belong.
- Compassion can motivate you to make changes or work hard to help the people in your community who are suffering.

What would a community **WITHOUT** compassion and empathy look like? Answers may include:

- Nobody would care about each other.
- Nobody would be able to understand each other.
- Everyone would focus on themselves.
- Nobody would get any help.

Part II

What communities do they see themselves as belonging to (if any)?

- Their friends?
- The street?
- The local estate?
- A youth club or sports club?
- Their religion?
- The neighbourhood?
- The postcode?
- The town?
- The city?

They could draw a diagram with them in the centre and the other circles representing communities they belong to. An example is on the Power Point.

Is there a community that they belong to that is the most compassionate? Their community of friends? Their neighbourhood, where people help each other out if they need it?

Introduce the Egan Wheel using the Power Point, or print them as worksheets. The Egan Wheel was created by Sir John Egan to represent the things that make up a good community:

Governance	Is it well run? Are the people in charge making the right decisions in the right way? Does everyone have a say?
Transport & connectivity	Are there good transport links? Are they affordable? Can people get around and reach their jobs, friends and other services?
Environmental	Is it damaging the environment? Are there places to recycle? Are people encouraged to make sure they don't waste water or power?
Equity	Is it fair for everyone, and can everyone be included? Is it accessible for disabled people?
Economy	Are there enough jobs for people? Can people earn enough money to be able to meet their basic needs as well as luxuries?
Housing & buildings	Are there enough houses and are they suitable for the people living in them? Do all the buildings look attractive and welcoming? Are they in a good state? Is it easy to get around? Is it safe and clean?
Social & Cultural	Are there lots of different things to do and events to take part in? Do people feel welcome in the community? Are they proud of their community?

Go through them and check for understanding. Is there anything else that the young people think is important to consider? Has anything been left out?

They may not like the Egan Wheel and may think there is a better way to describe a 'good' community. An alternative 'checklist' for a good community is on the Power Point (slide 3). You can choose to create a whole new version, or adapt the current one.

Where would compassion and empathy fit? Would they need a separate category?

Points to highlight

- Compassion and empathy are important parts of a community. Without them, communities don't really work.
- A good community/neighbourhood needs lots of different factors to be successful.
- It needs to cater to lots of different people, not just one type of person (ie. it could be an amazing community for skateboarders, but it may not be so welcoming to elderly people).

Activity 2

Community Audit

Aim(s)

- To audit their own community using the ideas of the Egan Wheel.

Resources

- The Egan Wheel (adapted as necessary in the previous activity).
- *Community Audit Sheet*.
- Pens.
- Camera. **OPTIONAL**

Delivery Guide



You can do this as a small group or as one large group.

- ! The following activities are mostly focusing on geographical community: neighbourhood, town, street, city, etc. It may be helpful to have a discussion about the geographical communities they think they are a part of.

Introduce the idea that they're going to 'audit' their own geographical community to find the strengths and as well as the gaps or needs.

Part I

What community?

What community do they want to audit? Decide as a group the area they will focus on; it could be their home neighbourhood, the whole town, the streets around their home or the organisation they're attending.

Part II

Plan the community audit.

Once the group have decided what community they will be considering, you can decide whether you are going to do the audit in small groups or as one large group. If you're doing it in small groups, you could give each person a particular part of the community (a couple of streets, for instance) or allow each group to do the whole audit, in order to see the different conclusions each reached.

Hand out the *Community Audit* and look over it – ensure everyone understands what they are looking for. It can be helpful to look at a map of the area and work out where they need to look; do they need to look at the whole area? Are there particular areas they think they will need to visit?

- ! If you have decided to edit the audit and use an alternative to the Egan Wheel, you may need to create a different audit sheet.

Part III

Complete the community audit.

Completing the community audit can be done by taking the paper audit and pens outside with them, or it could be completed by taking a camera out and taking pictures of the relevant areas. The photos can then be compared to the audit when they are home.

- ! Be aware that some places may not take kindly to people taking photos there, and that the young people should not take photos of people without their consent.

Part IV

Report back

If they've worked in small groups, get them to report their findings back to the other groups.

Points to highlight

- Celebrate what they've done; going out and surveying the community. This kind of action is often motivated by compassion – in order to see where people are suffering or losing out, and trying to make things better.
- All communities have strengths and weaknesses.

Activity 3

Love My Community

Aim(s)

- To look at their community strengths.

Resources

- Paper and pens and any other craft materials.
- A camera. **OPTIONAL**

Delivery Guide

Looking at their community audit, ask the young people to identify the strengths of their community. What is good about their community?

Create a poster, a film or a presentation advertising the community; why should people come and live there? What's good about it?

(There will be an opportunity to look at the needs of the community and to try and improve it.)

Points to highlight

- Looking closely at the community often uncovers strengths that aren't immediately apparent.