**Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Homeroom**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Turning Compassion into Action***

**Directions:** Read the passage from Leslie Jamison’s newspaper opinion piece “On Empathy,” and answer the questions that follow.

In the following excerpt, Leslie Jamison reflects on

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| **“On Empathy”by Leslie Jamison**  Empathy can give us a dangerous sense of completion that something has been done because something has been felt. It is tempting to think that feeling someone’s pain is necessarily virtuous[[1]](#footnote-1) in its own right. The peril[[2]](#footnote-2) of empathy isn’t simply that it can make us feel bad, but that it can make us feel good, which can in turn encourage us to think of it as an end in itself rather than a catalyst[[3]](#footnote-3) for compassionate action. |

1. Identify who the word “it” is referring to in this sentence: “*The peril of empathy isn’t simply that* ***it*** *can make us feel bad, but that* ***it*** *can make us feel good, which can in turn encourage us to think of* ***it*** *as an end in itself…”*

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1. In one artful sentence, summarize the main difference(s) Jamison sees between empathy and compassion. Try to include the word “catalyst” in your response.

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1. In which situation in which you would *not* want to take compassionate action to help someone in need? Why would it be wise to avoid taking action in this case?

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***Turning Compassion into Action* Reflection Questions**

**Directions:** In your neatest handwriting and in complete sentences, answer the following questions.

1. Describe a time when a friend or family member showed you compassion. What impact did it have on you?

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1. Reflect on a time when you (or a loved one) felt empathy for a friend in need, but for whatever reason, you did not respond with compassionate action.
   1. What prevented you (or your friend) from taking such action? What were the consequences?

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* 1. What could you (or your friend) have done in that moment to show compassion? What would be the consequences?

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| **25 Acts of Kindness**  One of the best ways to build your skills at compassion is to perform weekly acts of kindness. Research shows that performing kind actions like the ones below can have lasting positive effects on your health and mental well-being—four, five, or even six months down the road.   1. Offer one nice compliment a day to a friend, teacher, or family member. 2. Write a letter to someone explaining why you are thankful to them 3. Send a positive text message to five different people 4. Visit the grandparents from a safe distance or video chat with them 5. Offer to help tutor a younger sibling in a subject that you feel confident in. 6. Offer to babysit younger siblings so the adults in your household can enjoy some quiet time. 7. Help a sibling or friend with their homework assignment. 8. Clean out your closet and separate the clothes you are no longer wearing. Donate them to a local shelter near you! 9. Offer to do any of the following for the adults in your household: cooking dinner, mowing the lawn, or cleaning the garage. 10. Stand up for a friend who is being mistreated or bullied. 11. Tell a teacher, a parent, a guardian, a youth pastor, or anyone influential in your life that they are important to you, and why. 12. Call a relative that you haven’t spoken to in a while, or text them to say “hello” and to share how much you miss them. 13. Let someone go in front of you in line. 14. Leave extra change in the vending machine. 15. Use your manners. Say please, thank you and excuse me. 16. Pick up litter around school, on the bus, or in your neighborhood. 17. Drop off old books to your local library. 18. Help around the house without being asked to. 19. Give blood.  Go to the [Red Cross](http://www.redcross.org/) website for information 20. Help someone carry their groceries home from the supermarket. 21. Collect [Box Tops for Education](http://www.boxtops4education.com/) for your school. 22. Go to [DoSomething.org](https://www.dosomething.org/us/campaigns) and [GenerationOn.org/teens/pick-project](http://www.generationon.org/teens/projects), find a cause that matters to you and read what you can do to help. 23. Smile at one stranger per day this week. 24. Volunteer to care for animals at a local shelter 25. Write a close friend a list of things you love about them. |

**Plan to *Turn Compassion into Action***

**Directions**: Read through the “acts of kindness” list and identify TWO kind acts that you want to commit to using or adapting in your daily life (Or add one of your own!) Use the table below to develop a plan for executing each act of kindness.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Act of Kindness** | **How/With Whom?** | **When?** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Stamp Your Learning for *Turning Compassion into Action***

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Which act of kindness are you most excited to try this week? What will the impact be on the person who you’ll be doing this for?

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1. How can you apply what you learned from this lesson to your everyday life?

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1. In the future, what can you imagine might prevent you from acting with compassion towards someone in need? What could you say or do in that moment that would motivate you to take action?

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1. **virtuous**: morally good [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **peril**: something that is likely to cause harm [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. **catalyst**: a person or event that quickly causes change or action [↑](#footnote-ref-3)