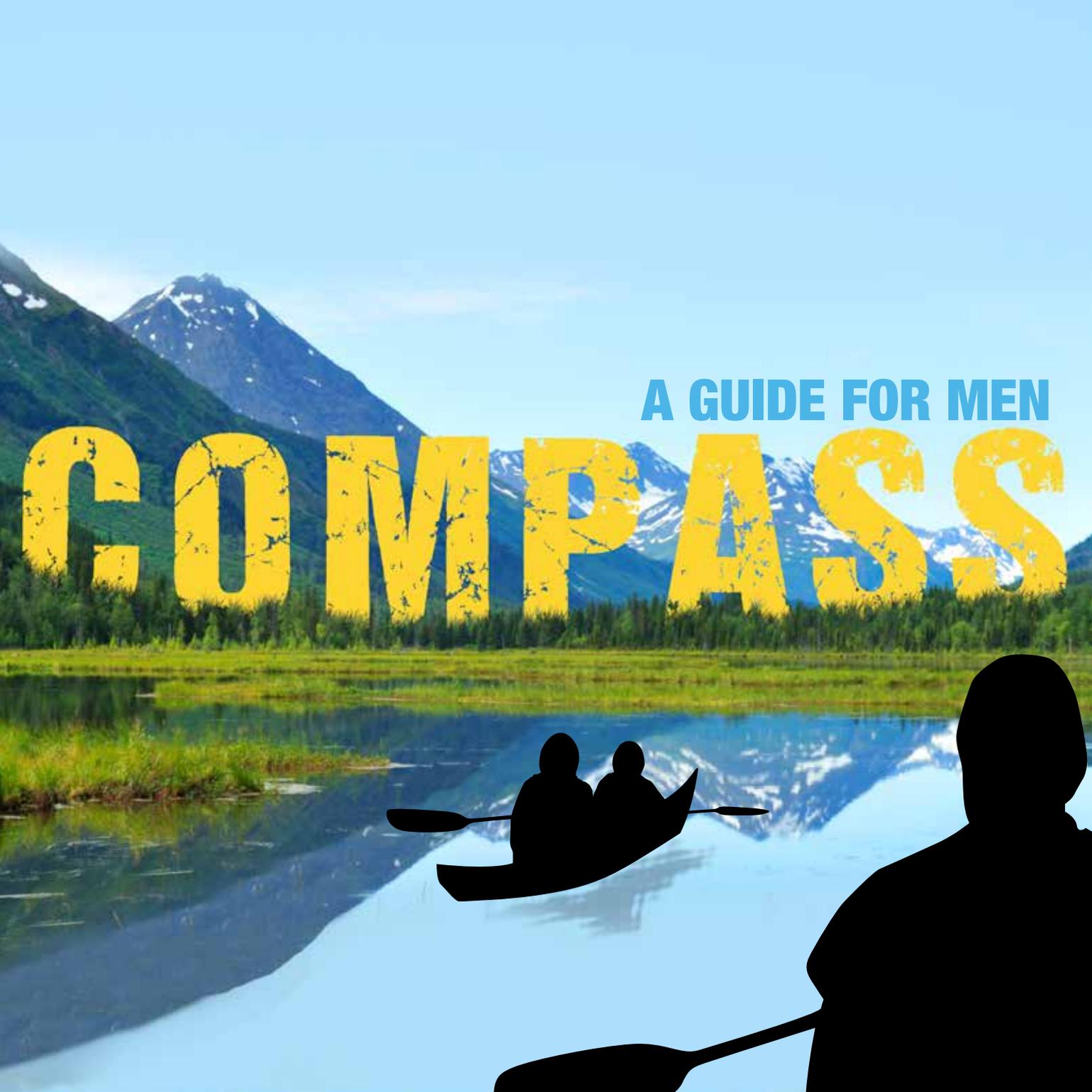


**A GUIDE FOR MEN**

# GO COMPASS



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# INTRODUCTION

*COMPASS: A Guide for Men* is a resource for adult male mentors who work with young Alaskan men aged 12 to 18. *COMPASS* presents mentors with opportunities and activities designed to support young men as they explore and identify their values, goals and unique identities. The activities, teachable moments and discussions described in the guide create a safe atmosphere for men and boys to learn about and practice healthy lifestyles. In addition, these strategies are designed to be easily incorporated into the day-to-day interactions that already exist between mentors and youth in team sports, camping, hiking, fishing, hunting and other activities. Ultimately the guide promotes meaningful conversations between men and male youth that promote healthy identities, build positive relationships, and strengthen communities.

## BACKGROUND

Incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking and child sexual abuse in Alaska are widespread and continue to reflect some of the highest per capita rates in the nation. These forms of violence are complex and impact the health and wellness of Alaska's individuals, families and communities. In order to address these forms of violence and erase them from our landscape, Alaskans are working together to support the implementation of prevention programs that are community driven, culturally informed and research based. *COMPASS* is one such tool and is intended as a resource for male mentors working with male youth aged 12 to 18.

ALASKA MEN CHOOSE  
**RESPECT**

*COMPASS* provides male role models an opportunity to redefine masculinity and help young men explore healthier, nonviolent models of manhood. The use of this tool will assist mentors in providing young men with safe, structured and supportive settings to explore concepts of masculinity, healthy relationships and respect. The guide provides mentors with information, tools and activities to connect with young men around topics that impact their relationships, families and communities.

*COMPASS* was developed in response to the requests received by the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault from coaches, guides, camp leaders, cultural leaders and many others. The requests highlighted the need for a resource that could be used by men in their conversations with youth on the challenges faced by young men in Alaska.

*COMPASS* is a direct result of the work accomplished by volunteers from across the state who stepped forward to look at promising materials, considered the cultural and geographic contexts of Alaska, and worked together to develop and pilot aspects of *COMPASS*. Their efforts resulted in materials with a natural structure that offers stories, discussion starters, reflections, activities and teachable moments in seven key areas: Knowing Who You Are, Knowing Your Emotions, Respect for Self, Respect for Others, Communication, Conflict Resolution and Becoming Men.

## **CREATING A SAFE & RESPECTFUL SPACE**

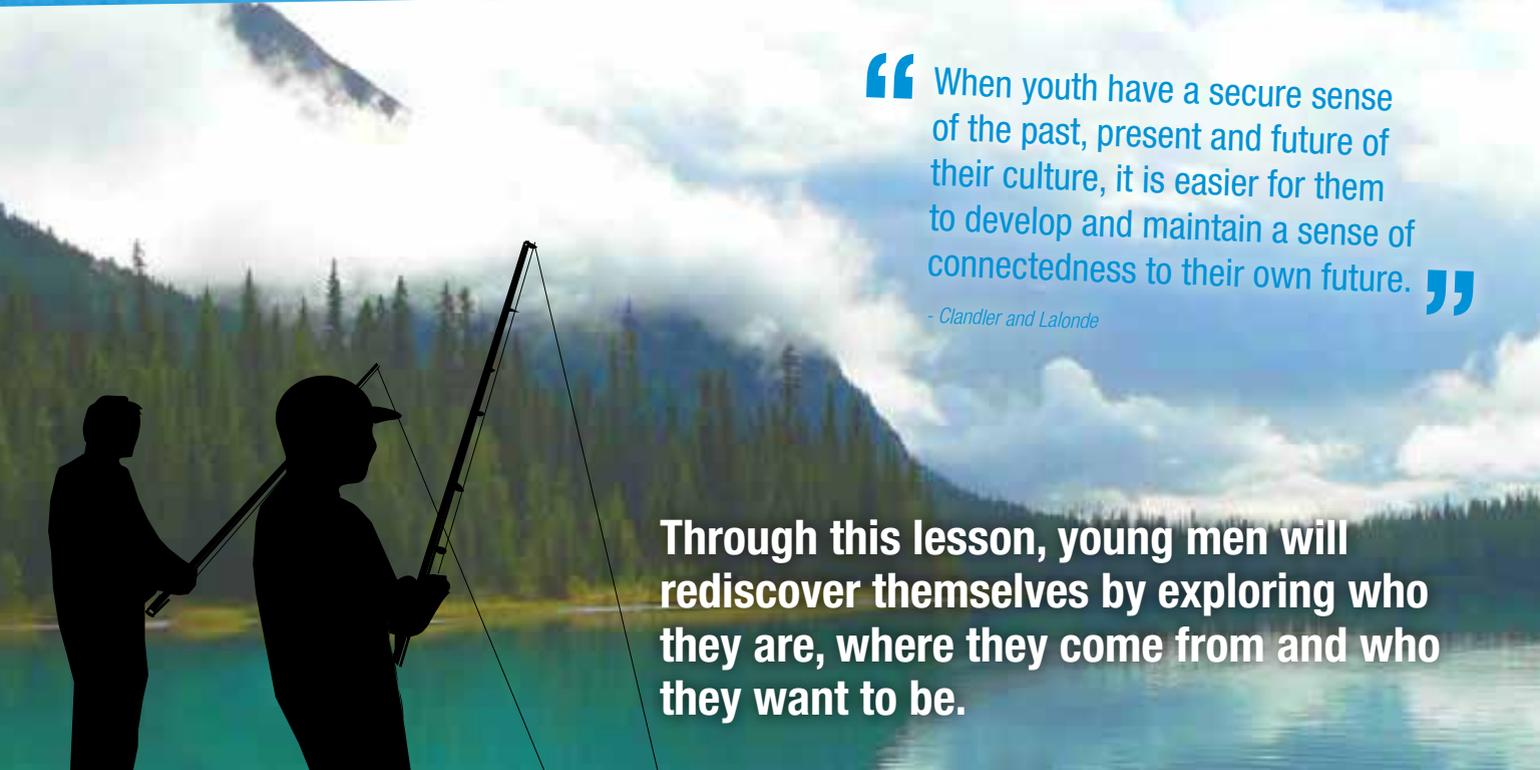
When developing this guide for mentors and young men, *COMPASS* collaborators worked to develop materials that could generate authentic conversations. Creating a safe and respectful space to explore being men and boys in our society is central to the success of *COMPASS*.

- Creating this open, safe and genuine space starts with honesty within the group. This includes learning from past mistakes that help us grow and develop.
- It is essential to set the tone of the conversations and create guidelines or an agreement so that expectations and respectful interaction is understood.
- Make certain that young men are able to have meaningful roles including setting guidelines and leadership roles.
- Consider yourself a mentor and a facilitator creating the space that is necessary to have open and honest discussions.

# KNOWING WHO YOU ARE

“ When youth have a secure sense of the past, present and future of their culture, it is easier for them to develop and maintain a sense of connectedness to their own future. ”

- Candler and Lalonde



Through this lesson, young men will rediscover themselves by exploring who they are, where they come from and who they want to be.

## REFLECTION

- What cultural, family and/or religious traditions are important to you? How do these shape who you are?
- How do you find mental, emotional, physical and spiritual balance?
- What are some of your own identities?

There are many positive and negative influences telling us who we should be and how we should act. These include our culture, media, family, values, spirituality, community, struggles, triumphs and all of the individual experiences throughout our lives. Through each new experience we are discovering and rediscovering ourselves.

# KNOWING YOUR EMOTIONS



“The way to free your feelings is to simply feel them.”

- Shaeri Richards

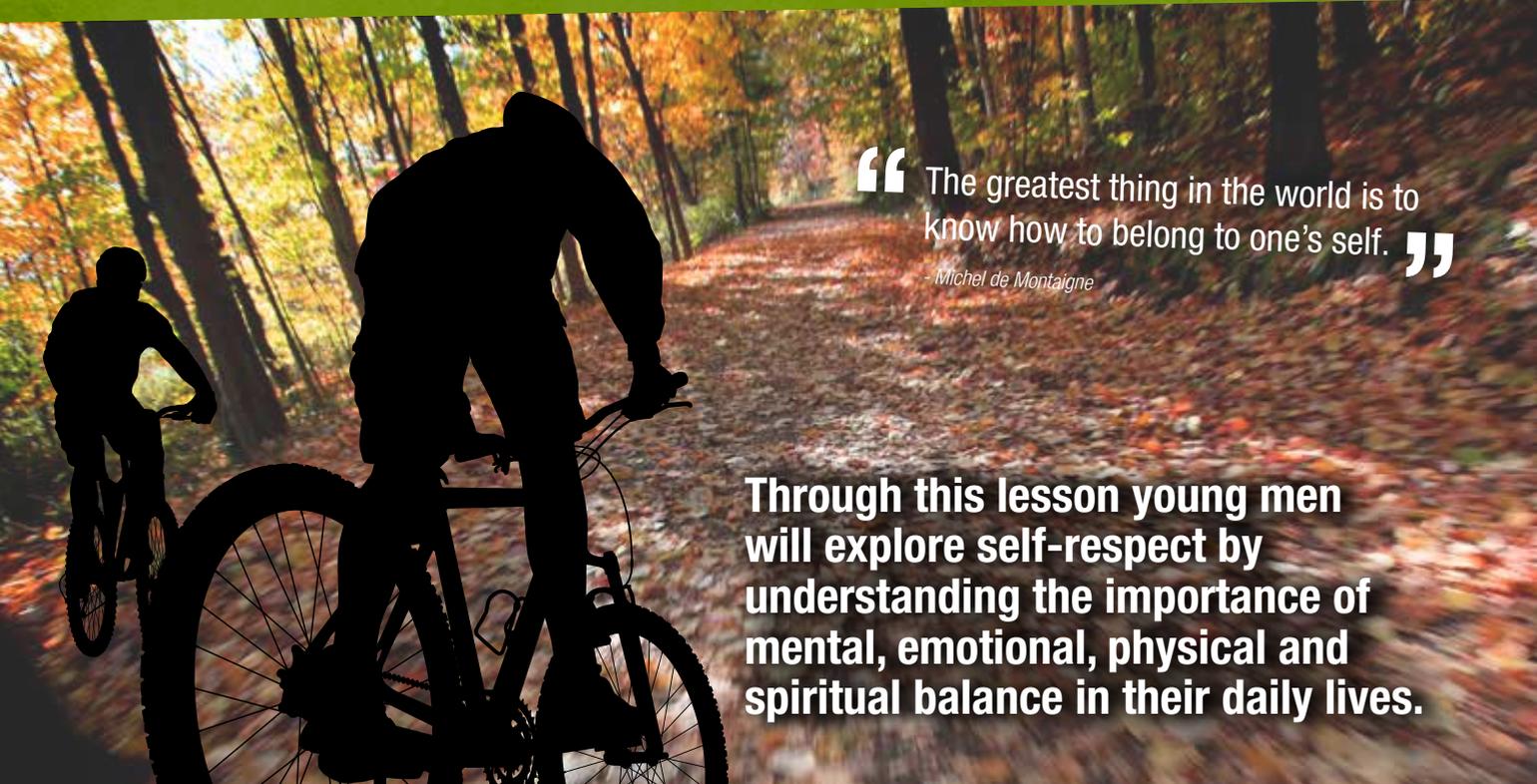
**Through this lesson, young men will be able to understand the range of emotions that men experience and gain skills to confidently express those emotions.**

## REFLECTION

- What emotions are you comfortable expressing?
- Do you think negative emotions can be experienced without negative consequences?
- Why do you think we sometimes choose not to express our emotions?

As role models and mentors we have a chance to help young men identify and safely express their emotions. This includes how to know what they're feeling; how to talk about feelings; and healthy choices for expressing emotions. Knowing our emotions makes us strong, caring, healthy and successful. Emotional balance is one of the four key areas of balance: physical, mental, spiritual and emotional. All of this allows us to have stronger and deeper relationships with family, friends and dating partners.

# RESPECT FOR SELF



“ The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to one’s self. ”

- Michel de Montaigne

**Through this lesson young men will explore self-respect by understanding the importance of mental, emotional, physical and spiritual balance in their daily lives.**

## REFLECTION

- How do you take care of your whole self? (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual)
- What gives you a sense of purpose? How do you live up to the standards you set for yourself?
- What supports or challenges you to live up to your own standards?
- How can you encourage or motivate young men without using shame?

Self-respect is about knowing your values and truly accepting who you are. It comes from finding mental, emotional, physical and spiritual balance. It is about how we live our lives each day; how we find meaning. Only we can define and complete ourselves by setting boundaries, asking for what we want and need, and taking care of ourselves. Self-respect is something that we all deserve.

# RESPECT FOR OTHERS

“The future, our mutual future, the future of all the peoples of humanity, must be founded on respect.”

- Leonard Peltier



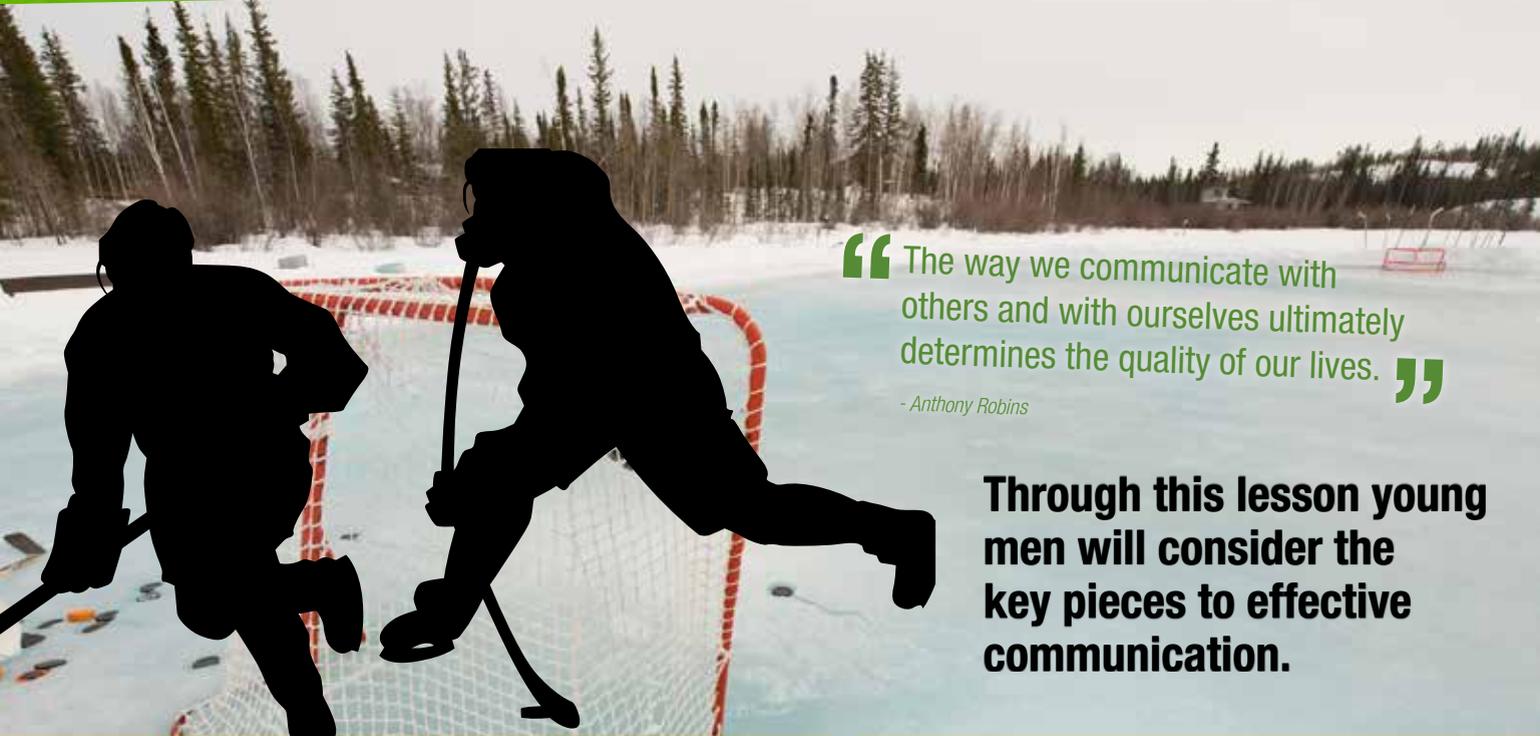
**Through this lesson young men will explore respect for others, including understanding boundaries.**

## REFLECTION

- Who are the people in your life that you respect?
- How do you show respect to people around you?
- How do you show respect to those who have opinions that differ from yours?
- What are the objects/things you respect? Why?

Respect means recognizing the humanity and value of each person regardless of differences. Differences may include what you can see on the outside; how they dress, how they talk, their mannerisms, but also what is not seen; how people feel, different ideas and worldviews.

# COMMUNICATION



“ The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives. ”

- Anthony Robbins

**Through this lesson young men will consider the key pieces to effective communication.**

## REFLECTION

- How do you communicate your belief in and respect for youth and others?
- Are you aware of how you communicate with others?
- What does your body language say when you are communicating with others?
- Do you communicate differently with your co-workers, friends and family? Why?

Through intentional and unintentional spoken words, visual cues, signals, behaviors and actions, we share information, messages, ideas and feelings. Communication is a key part of our relationships with family, friends, dating partners and others. And while some conversations are easy, others are more difficult and uncomfortable — it is the most difficult conversations that are the most important.

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION



“ If war is the violent resolution of conflict, then peace is not the absence of conflict, but rather, the ability to resolve conflict without violence. ”

- Anthony Robins

**Through this lesson young men will build skills to settle conflicts successfully.**

## REFLECTION

- How do you handle the conflicts in your own life?
- What techniques do you use to cool-down conflict situations?
- What conflict resolution skills do you admire in others you know?
- In which situations is it best to remove yourself from a conflict situation?

Conflict is actually a normal part of life. Some people think conflict means fighting or arguing. But when there is conflict there are many ways to find a solution and can be an opportunity to understand another's point of view and make decisions that work for everyone. This will help our relationships with family, friends, dating partners, colleagues, or any time you are working as a team.

# BECOMING MEN



“For most people born male in this culture, we do not have a choice whether we will become men. We do, though, have a choice about what kind of men we will become. And that makes all the difference.”

— Patrick Lemmon

Through this lesson we want to create a space for young men to safely explore what it truly means to be a healthy human being, and how society places unrealistic expectations on men, young and old.

## REFLECTION

- What does being a man mean to you?
- What men were your role models growing up? Why?
- Who are the young men who now look to you as a role model?
- What does society tell you about being a man?

Transitioning from young men and boys into adult men is deeply influenced by how we define manhood and masculinity. Messages young men and boys receive can be in conflict with what it truly means to be a strong, healthy man. As adult men and role models, we can help young men to recognize the unrealistic pressure and expectations that create “the man box”.