SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
STRIVE Mini-Lesson
SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Objectives:

- Students will define Social Intelligence.
- Students will reflect on where actions fall on the social intelligence spectrum.

Procedure:

1. Define Social Intelligence.
   - the ability to get along well with others
   - being aware that what we say and do affects others
   - "people skills"
2. Read the following story, pausing to answer the question as a group.

   A group of American soldiers in Iraq was paying a visit to a minister to get his help in distributing relief supplies. The local people feared the well-armed soldiers. They were afraid they were going to arrest their cleric or disrespect their mosque. A mob quickly surrounded the soldiers.

   How can the soldiers calm the mob and communicate their peaceful mission?

   One can imagine what would have happened should a soldier, threatened by a gesture, shoot off a gun.

   No one got shot and no one got hurt. In fact, the mob encounter ended amicably due to the social intelligence of Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Hughes, who gauged the various social factors involved in record time and implemented a series of steps designed to defuse the situation: he ordered his men to kneel on one knee, point their weapons at the ground, and—most importantly—smile.

   Since a smile is a universal expression of friendliness, the confused Iraqi people began to smile back. The reverential posture and the signal that the weapons were not to be used also reassured them. Some of the now peaceably departing Iraqis even dared to pat the soldiers on the back.

   What could have been an ugly incident of resounding personal and international repercussions turned into a positive one because of the leader's instinctive social intelligence.

3. Ask the students the following questions.
   - Socially intelligent people are attentive to emotional cues and listen well. What did the formation of the mob tell the soldiers and how was that in conflict with the actual mission?
   - Social intelligence means that you show sensitivity and understand others' perspective. What action from the soldiers demonstrated they were there on a peaceful mission?

4. Share the social intelligence spectrum.

   Karl Albrecht classifies behavior toward others as falling somewhere on a spectrum between

   "toxic" effect   and   "nourishing" effect.

   Toxic behavior makes people feel devalued, angry, scared, frustrated, guilty or otherwise inadequate. It is considered low social intelligence.

   Nourishing behavior makes people feel valued, respected, safe, affirmed, encouraged or competent. It is considered high social intelligence

5. Apply the spectrum to the following scenario.
   - A little girl finds her puzzle frustrating. She asks her <u>busy</u> mother for help…
   - What are two opposite reactions the mother could have?
   - What message does each reaction send the child?
   - The mother does not want to send the message that her "busy-ness" is more important than her daughter however a quick response without thinking of the effects on the daughter is an easy mistake to make.

6. Discuss the following two scenarios – use think-pair-share or general discussion and brainstorming strategies.

   At school:

   - What are some toxic behaviors that a teacher might exhibit toward their students?

   - What are some nourishing behaviors?

   - Which ones get better results? Why?

   - Put yourself in their shoes – why might a teacher resort to toxic behavior?

   At home:

   - What are some toxic behaviors that a teenager might exhibit toward their parents?

   - What are some nourishing behaviors?

- Which one is likely to get the teen more cooperation from their parents? Why might that be beneficial?

- Put yourself in their shoes – why would a parent react better to nourishing behavior?

7. Share the following quote.

The Bible is the "social skills training manual."

Think of how "socially skilled" a person would be if they were as the Bible teaches--kind, forgiving, generous, gracious, thoughtful of others, hospitable, cheerful, humble, loving, honest, hard-working, and trustworthy!