

Celebrate and Share our Choose Love Awareness Month



Middle and High School Toolkit

Visit www.ChooseLoveMovement.org
to download Courage, Gratitude and
Forgiveness Toolkits, and
[register](#) for no cost programs.



CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH

Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action Illuminators vs. Diminishers – Summary



Illuminators are people who lift others up, help them grow, and make them feel valued. One of the most powerful skills they have is the “gift of attention”—truly seeing and listening to others, which answers the silent question: “Do I matter to you?”

Diminishers, on the other hand, often unintentionally stifle the potential of those around them. Their actions can lead to disengagement, reduced creativity, and missed opportunities for growth.

Why it matters:

Being an Illuminator strengthens relationships, builds trust, and empowers others. People are more motivated, engaged, and ready to contribute when they feel valued.

Being an Illuminator is about consciously choosing to empower others and create positive ripples in every interaction.

Every day we face Choice Moments: Will we ignore or include? Laugh or help? Turn away or step toward love? Choosing kindness and noticing when others need help creates a ripple effect—helping classmates feel safe, communities become stronger, and the world a little more peaceful.

Being an illuminator starts with you. Greet every student with a Hello and their name.



CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH

Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action

Illuminators vs. Diminishers – Summary



Diminisher vs. Illuminator

Illuminators

- Listen and actually pay attention
- Encourage different opinions
- Notice effort, growth, and strengths
- Include others and make space for them
- Make people feel confident enough to speak up

Diminishers

- Talk over people or shut ideas down
- Make jokes at someone else's expense
- Focus on mistakes more than effort
- Ignore or exclude others
- Make people second-guess themselves

Why it matters

- Diminishers make others feel smaller
- Illuminators create belonging and trust

Choice Moment

Before you speak or act, ask yourself:

- Am I shrinking someone, or helping them shine?



CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH

Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action Lesson - How to Shine Your Light



A true sense of belonging comes from being seen, accepted, and valued because of, not despite, our differences and imperfections. By Choosing Love, you become Illuminators who honor individual voices while upholding shared values that strengthen community. In times of both metaphorical and literal darkness, cooperation, kindness, and shared responsibility create light, sustain peace, and deepen belonging.

From Diminisher to Illuminator: How to Shine Your Light

1. Listen with Your Heart

- Pay attention when others speak and really try to understand their ideas.
- Ask questions and show that you value their perspective.

2. Share Responsibility

- Let others make decisions and take on tasks.
- Trust them and encourage them to own their work.

3. Celebrate and Encourage

- Notice when someone does something well and say something kind.
- Give helpful suggestions instead of just criticism.

4. Include Everyone

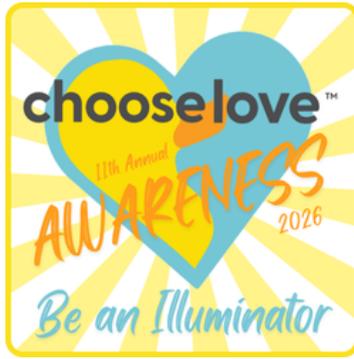
- Invite different people to share their ideas.
- Make sure everyone feels safe, respected, and part of the group.

5. Lead by Example

- Show empathy, kindness, and patience.
- Demonstrate a growth mindset, focus on learning and improvement.

Bottom Line:

Shifting from Diminisher to Illuminator is about changing how you act and think. By listening, including, encouraging, and leading with kindness, you empower others and help everyone shine.



CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH

Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action

Lesson: Illuminator vs. Diminisher



On a white board or poster board, make two columns labeled Illuminator on one side and Diminisher on the other. Ask students to brainstorm ways to be an Illuminator or Diminisher.

Here's some ideas:

Illuminator

- Makes others feel seen, safe, and valued
- Uses kind, respectful words
- Includes others and invites them in
- Listens actively and shows understanding
- Helps without being asked
- Stands up for friends or peers
- Offers encouragement and support
- Acts with compassion and empathy

Diminisher

- Makes others feel ignored, small, or left out
- Uses hurtful, sarcastic, or unkind words
- Leaves people out or excludes them
- Ignores or talks over others
- Refuses to help or walks away
- Laughs at or teases others
- Criticizes or discourages others
- Acts with selfishness or indifference

Diminisher

"Your friend is sharing a story and you immediately change the topic to yourself."

Illuminator

"Your friend is sharing a story and you ask, 'How did that make you feel?'"



BE AN ILLUMINATOR: COMPASSION -IN-ACTION

YOUR PATH TO BECOMING AN ILLUMINATOR

Compassion-in-action is the bridge between caring and empowering. By noticing, helping, and including others every day, you practice being an Illuminator, and make the world a brighter place, one choice at a time.

<p>Notice Others' Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being an Illuminator starts with seeing people, paying attention when someone feels left out, sad, or stressed. • Compassion-in-Action teaches you to look for opportunities to help rather than wait for someone to ask.
<p>Turn Kind Thoughts into Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not enough to just feel compassion, you have to do something about it. • Small acts like smiling, listening, inviting someone to join, or standing up for a friend are everyday ways to shine your light.
<p>Create Positive Ripples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each kind action encourages others to act kindly too. • When you help someone feel seen or included, you empower them to do the same, making your classroom, community, or group stronger and more supportive.
<p>Strengthen Relationships and Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion-in-action helps you build meaningful connections. • People feel safe, respected, and valued when you act with empathy, which makes it easier to collaborate, communicate, and grow together.
<p>Practice Makes It Habit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every time you consciously act with compassion, you're training yourself to be an Illuminator. • Over time, these small actions become a natural part of how you interact with others.



Name: _____ Date: _____

CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH
Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action
Journal Prompts



Journal Prompt 1: Noticing Needs

Write about a time you noticed someone needed help.
What did you see? What could you do to help?

Journal Prompt 2: Compassion in Action

What is one kind action you did (or can do) today?
How did your action help someone feel better?

Journal Prompt 3: Being an Illuminator

How can you be an illuminator at school or at home?
What's one way you can help others shine?



Name: _____ Date: _____

**CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH
BE AN ILLUMINATOR: COMPASSION
ILLUMINATING QUESTIONS**



Describe a conversation that felt "illuminating" or thought-provoking.

Describe a time when someone (teacher, friend, family member) made you feel truly heard and respected. What did they say or do?

Reflect on a time you might have acted like a diminisher. Why did you act that way, and how could you have been an illuminator instead?

In what ways can you make a quiet student feel more included?



Name: _____ Date: _____

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Be an Illuminator

Illuminator or Diminisher Worksheet

Brainstorm ways that make you an Illuminator or a Diminisher in each box.

Illuminator

Diminisher



Smiling.
Saying sorry.
Sharing.

Laughing at someone.
Blaming.
Not helping.





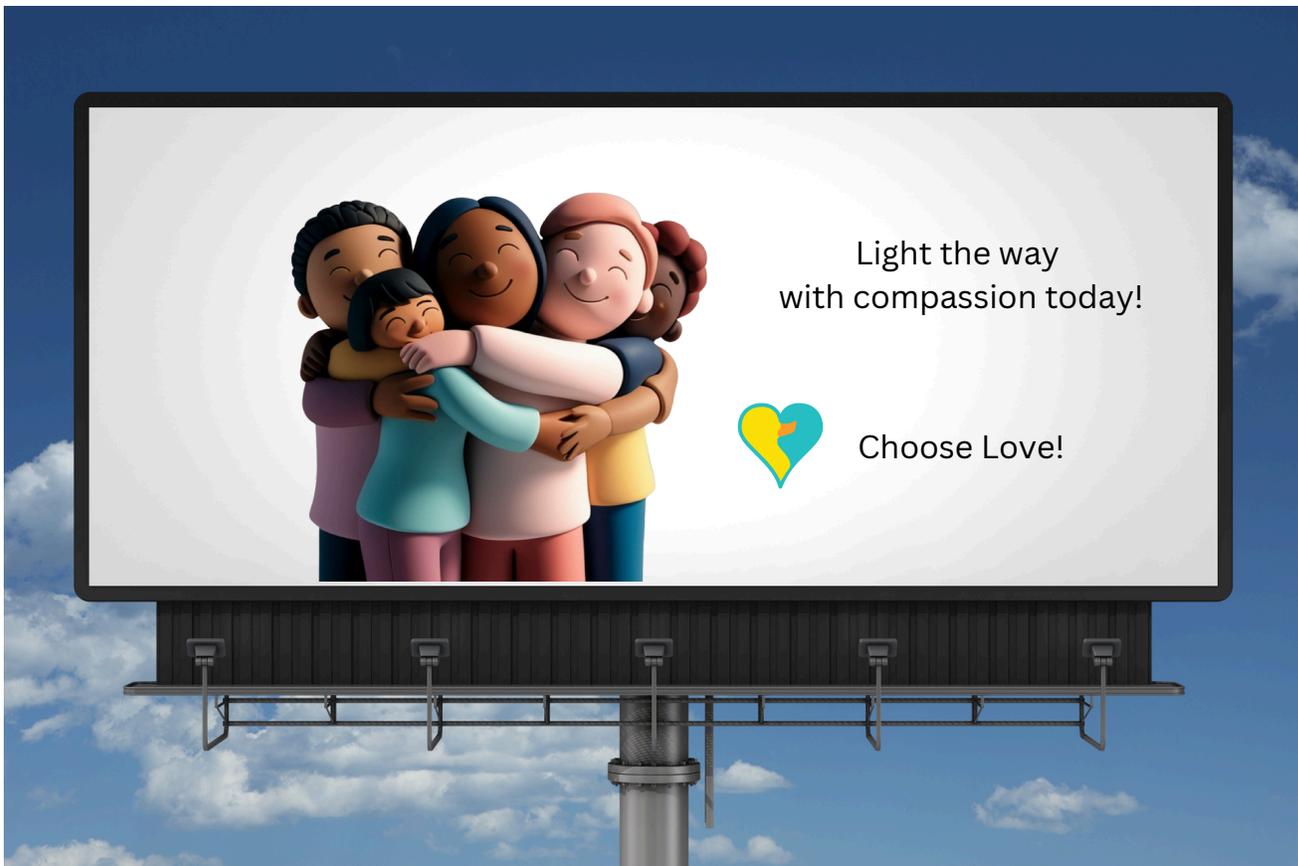
Name: _____ Date: _____

CHOOSE LOVE AWARENESS MONTH

Be an Illuminator: Compassion-in-Action

Illuminator Campaign

Create an ad campaign about using compassion-in-action to be an illuminator
Use one of these slogans or create your own.





CHOOSE LOVE FOR SCHOOLS IS THE ONLY PREK THROUGH GRADE 12 ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM BASED ON LOVE, NOT FEAR.

EACH GRADE HAS APPROXIMATELY 30 LESSONS FULLY SCAFFOLDED YEAR-TO-YEAR.

NO COST FOR EDUCATORS

WRITTEN BY AND FOR EDUCATORS

EASY TO TEACH AND EASY TO LEARN

INCREASES TEST SCORES

REDUCES BEHAVIOR ISSUES AND REFERRALS

IMPROVED ATTENDANCE & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

UPLIFTS CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL CULTURE

DECREASES BULLYING BEHAVIOR

LESSONS ARE FLEXIBLE TO BE TAUGHT ALL AT ONCE OR THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.

SCAN TO REGISTER

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for schools



CHOOSE LOVE IMPACT STORY



One of my most meaningful examples is Sebastian who often struggled to regulate his emotions, especially when he felt someone was speaking negatively about him. But through our Choose Love lessons, I've seen a remarkable shift. Sebastian now pauses, practices his breathing, and responds with much more control and maturity. Seeing him take ownership of his emotions has been incredibly inspiring.

Mr. AJ
Educator
MAS Charter School
Albuquerque, NM



choose love™
for schools

Choose Love Educators Reported



99%

believe the program is effective

83%

improvement in students' behavior

91%

benefitting personally from the Choose Love Program

82%

increase in academic performance

86%

improvement in classroom climate

71%

improvement with student attendance

Source: Educator Survey 2025

Choose Love Movement



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Choose Love workshops provide professional development and coaching that supports our Choose Love For Schools™ programming.

We'll show you how easy and rewarding it is to implement our programming and embrace the Choose Love lifestyle.

choose love™
movement

More info:

www.ChooseLoveMovement.org/workshops