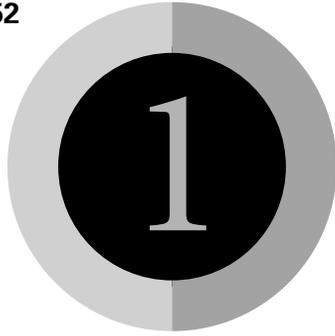


# 1 SESSION

## Creating a Community Vision

Overview of Lesson	National Standards for Civics and Government	National Standards for English	National Standards for Health
<p>Students identify what makes a safe community and practice effective communication skills. Students learn about <i>Community Works</i> and program expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The place of law in American Society (NSCG III.D.1)</li> <li>• Dispositions that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in public affairs (NSCG V.D.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes. (ELA 4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health. (NHES 5)</li> </ul>



## SESSION

### CREATING A COMMUNITY VISION

This session can be completed in two class periods.

This session helps teens learn how to work together as a group. Teens will discuss the kinds of treatment they want from each other in order to establish their own guidelines for working together. They will create a group vision for a safe community and learn what to expect from the *Community Works* program. They will have the opportunity to tell you about their interests.

#### TEENS WILL

- Get to know each other
- Identify their concept of a safe community
- Establish their group's guidelines and begin to work as a team
- Practice the skill of handling difficult situations assertively (not aggressively)
- Practice the skill of receiving criticism without getting upset
- Discover what *Community Works* is all about

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

These teaching strategies are included and described in this session:

- Icebreaker
- Small-group Puzzle
- Drawing
- Brainstorming
- Whole-group Discussion
- Journal Writing
- Role-plays

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Name tags
- Pencils and paper
- Markers or crayons
- Blank puzzles (small)
- Newsprint and markers
- Colored paper
- Handout 1: *Puzzle Messages*
- Handout 2: *Sneak Preview of Community Works*
- Handout 3: *Handling Difficult Situations*
- Handout 4: *Feedback Scenarios*
- Journal for Session 1



Ask a *Community Works* veteran or veterans (teens who have participated in the program during an earlier presentation or teens from another site) to speak to the new participants about their experiences. For example, they might discuss how they felt when working as part of a team to make the community a better place in which to live.

### SUMMARY OF STEPS

#### PART 1

##### Step A. Warm-up

##### Step B. Creating a Community Vision

*Sneak Preview of Community Works*



60 Minutes

#### PART 2

##### Step C. Setting Group Guidelines

##### Step D. Good Communication

##### Step E. Reflection



50 Minutes

### BEFORE THE SESSION

1. Read the session plan and gather all the materials you will need for both parts of Session 1 right at the start.
2. Cut up colored paper into different shapes for use when dividing teens into small groups during the Warm-up. Do not mix the pieces until you know the number of participants. (See icebreaker section in the Introduction.)

3. Write the puzzle messages (from Handout 1) on the blank puzzles for the Warm-up.
4. Write the puzzle messages on the newsprint or chalkboard and conceal them from the group's view.
5. For the Sneak Preview of *Community Works*, make one copy of Handout 2 for each participant.
6. Decide how you will involve teens in the session as helpers, leaders, or readers. For more ideas about facilitating teen involvement, consult the Introduction.
7. For Step D, make one copy of Handouts 3 and 4 for each teen.
8. Make one copy of the journal page for each teen.
9. Arrange chairs in a semicircle so teens can see each other.

## P A R T

## 1

## STEP A

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Icebreaker
- Small-group Puzzle



30 MINUTES

## Warm-up

1. Introduce yourself and welcome everyone to the session.
  - Ask teens to introduce themselves by stating their name and favorite activity.
  - Pass out name tags and have each teen fill one out.
2. Do the icebreaker: *Shapes* (See icebreaker section in the Introduction.)
  - Divide teens into small groups of three to five. Count the number of participants and select the same number of shapes so there are at least three and no more than five of each shape. Randomly hand out the shapes.
  - Have teens find their “fellow shapes” and come up with a creative way to form the shape once they are all together.
3. Give an overview of the program and today's session.
  - Give each group one set of puzzle message pieces. Instruct group members to work together to assemble the puzzle.
  - Circulate to monitor progress. Help when necessary.
  - When they have completed their puzzles, have members of each group read their message.
  - Summarize by reinforcing with the messages you wrote on the newsprint or chalkboard.

## STEP B

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Whole-group discussion
- Brainstorming
- Drawing



30 MINUTES

**Optional Idea**

If you feel that the teens would be more responsive using another strategy, you might try asking them to brainstorm a list of characteristics of a safe and secure community (e.g., "I know my community is safe when I can...") and then ask them to describe a scenario that demonstrates some of the characteristics (e.g., "I can ride my bike to the corner store without being harassed.").

**Service-learning Project Idea**

One idea for sustained involvement of young people in helping to solve school safety concerns is to establish a Youth Safety Corps (YSC) program (see Introduction for details). YSC creates a trained and active student group within the school setting that will work with faculty and other students to highlight youth leadership skills and develop projects to bring positive change to the school.

**Creating a Community Vision**

1. What does it mean to be safe?

Ask teens to brainstorm what it means to be safe. (You could write their answers on the board; if a board is not available, jot down their answers on a note pad so that you can refer to them later.) What is it like to feel safe? What types of activities could you do if you really feel safe? What impact would feeling that you are really safe have on your life? What impact would it have on your family members?

2. Ask teens to define "community." Help them reach a definition similar to the following:

*A community is a group of people who have something important in common; it may be geographical (such as a neighborhood or school) or a profession or interest (e.g., the scientific community or the religious community).*

- As an example, have youth consider what makes a school also a community.
  - Ask: What are some things we have in common that make our school a community?
  - Record the responses on a flipchart. (If the young people aren't participating, check out "Suggestions for Active Participation" in the Introduction.)
3. Ask teens to think about what makes a community safe and secure. Tell them that they are going to work together to create a vision of their "perfect" community.
    - Teens should break into small groups and select a reporter. Teens should then brainstorm some communities that they feel they are part of and make a list of what needs to be in place so that members of a community will feel safe and secure.
    - When each small group has developed a list, have the reporter read the list to the larger group.
    - Tell teens they will have the opportunity to draw a picture representing their vision of a safe community. As they work in their small groups, ask them to consider the following: What does the community look like? What is happening in the community? How are people feeling in their community vision? Hand out markers and sheets of newsprint (flipchart size).
  4. Have teens report back to the larger group.
    - Once teens have completed the vision drawings, have each group share its vision. Ask teens to put the names of group members on the drawings.
    - It is a good idea to keep these posters/lists hanging in the room where you meet because you will need them for the second part of this session and for the discussion on "Safe and Secure Communities" in Session 4.

## Wrap-up for Part 1

The purpose of this exercise is to give teens the opportunity to learn more about *Community Works* and what they can expect from the upcoming sessions.

- Give each participant a copy of Handout 2. Go around the room and have each teen read one of the session titles.
- Discuss the topics. Some questions for discussion might include the following: Which topics do the teens think will be most interesting? Which topics do they feel they already know some information about? Are there any resources that they know about that could be useful for any of the sessions?
- Part 2 of Session 1 will include discussions about working together and enjoying good communication.

P A R T

2

## REVIEW AND PREVIEW

Begin Part 2 by reviewing Part 1. Be sure to remind participants about the objectives for this session and give them an overview of what will be accomplished during this part of the session. (Hint: Use the objectives set out at the beginning of Session 1.)

### STEP C

#### TEACHING STRATEGY

- Brainstorming



15 MINUTES

## Setting Group Guidelines

1. How will we work together?

Remind teens that what they created during Session 1, Part 1 is called a *vision*. Explain that a vision is like a goal, a picture of how things would look in the best of all possible worlds. Remind them to keep this vision in mind because they are going to begin working toward making it a reality.

- One of the first things teens will need to do is decide how they will work together as a group.
- Give them a minute to think about the kind of atmosphere they want for each session. Ask them to think about how they want to be treated by other group members.
- Ask for a volunteer to be the recorder. This teen will make two lists.
  - First, solicit teens' thoughts about the kind of climate they would like to create for the program. Responses might include ideas such as a place where teens are encouraged to take the initiative; where they feel accepted; where people listen respectfully to each other; where they can take risks and discuss difficult topics; where they feel like a part of a group; where they can have fun, put differences aside, set goals, and accomplish valuable things; and where they're allowed to take time to think about a response before speaking.

**Tip**

To involve teens in upcoming sessions, ask for volunteers to post the guidelines at each session and review them.

- Second, take suggestions for the *guidelines, norms, rules, or operating principles* teens will need to make this happen. Examples might include starting each session on time, allowing only one person to speak at a time (without interruptions), and agreeing to treat others with respect and refrain from using insults.
- Try to emphasize the link between the way teens would like to be treated by each other and each guideline. If necessary, give an example (or ask teens to give one) of how following a guideline will lead to the kind of treatment they want from each other.
- Reread the guidelines and ask whether everyone agrees with them. Tell teens that you will post the guidelines at each meeting, and that they can revise their guidelines if necessary.
- You may want to suggest that teens sign their names to the final list of guidelines as a way of showing their commitment to follow them.

### SAMPLE LIST OF GUIDELINES

- Have fun.
- Start and end on time.
- One person speaks at a time.
- After you have spoken, you can't speak on the issue again until everyone else has had a chance.
- Each person speaks no more than twice on an issue.
- No sidebars—talk to the whole group.
- If you can't attend the meeting, let someone know you won't be attending.
- If you can't attend the meeting, send what you promised to bring.
- If you can't attend the meeting, call and find out what happened.
- Be open to inquiry (questions).
- Be hard on the problem, not on the person.
- Conflict is normal, so practice good conflict management skills.
- Respect differences.
- Listen.
- Support each other.
- If you can't get a project done, let someone know right away.

## STEP D

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Whole-group Discussion
- Role-plays



25 MINUTES

### Good Communication

1. Explain to teens that when people work together, they sometimes disagree and may even become angry. Session 1 aims to establish norms for working together. If we have already developed strategies for handling conflict, we can resolve problems more easily when they do occur. Learning good communication skills will help us in other areas of our lives as well.
2. Ask teens what they think the consequences might be if they don't lay down guidelines for communicating and problem solving. Responses may include the possibility of a fight breaking out, hurt feelings, and a negative impact on the project.

3. Explain that experiencing conflict is normal, but it often takes us by surprise and can be quite damaging to relationships when not handled responsibly. It is never easy to tell other people that you disagree with them or think they are doing something wrong. Likewise it is never easy to hear that you have disappointed someone or to hear your work criticized. But it is important for us to express our concerns and to hear the concerns of others. We are going to learn to stand up for our rights while respecting the rights of the person with whom we are in conflict. When we do this, we are far more likely to resolve conflict verbally rather than physically.
4. For the first scenario, explain that you are going to have some fun by demonstrating how not to react when someone finds fault with your behavior. Read the scenario below and ask for a volunteer to receive your negative concerns about his or her behavior. For your part in the role-play, speak in a loud voice, look upset, point menacingly at the teen, say he or she always behaves this way, etc.

**Note:** This is a hypothetical situation. Feel free to use another one if you think it will be more meaningful to your group.

### **Scenario**

*Whenever members of your project group get together to make decisions, one person in the group always makes mean remarks while others are brainstorming ideas. This person thinks it is funny to keep up a steady stream of commentary. Whenever someone complains about the rude comments, the person says that it was “just a joke” and he or she was just kidding. You sense that the group is getting very tired of this annoying behavior. You want the person to stop the behavior so the group can move on.*

5. Role-play the scenario for a few minutes with the teen volunteer.
6. Freeze the demonstration and ask the volunteer receiving your criticism to describe how he or she feels. Then ask the other teens for some ideas about how you might communicate better.
7. Next you are going to use the same role-play and model the steps in the process for handling difficult situations. Before you model the better method, use Handout 3 to discuss the steps in the process. At first, the steps will seem awkward so be sure to tell the teens that they will want to put the ideas into their own words as they get comfortable with the process. The important point here is to understand the process and then find your own way to express it.
8. Discuss Handout 3 (left column) using the following information:
  - Stay *CALM* and ask if you can talk to the person.
 

This is better than demanding or confronting in an angry way and makes it more likely that the other person will listen without losing his or her temper. It’s probably best to do this when there aren’t other people around.

- Say something *POSITIVE*, if you can.

This works best if you have an ongoing relationship with the other person (a fellow group member, acquaintance, friend, girlfriend or boyfriend, teacher, boss, co-worker, fellow student, or family member). It might make the other person more receptive to a negative message.

- *TELL* the person what's on your mind.

Use "I" statements as much as possible to convey your feelings. Describe *your* feelings and thoughts rather than place blame on the listener. When you use "you" messages (e.g., "you need to . . ." or "you always . . ."), the listener may feel blamed and judged. When you feel blamed, you respond in a defensive way and then you stop listening and start preparing to defend yourself. To be sure the person hears what is on your mind, use an "I" statement to keep the discussion open. Remember that the other person may not be aware that he or she has upset you and will be more likely to change a behavior once he or she knows that it is creating a problem.

- *ASK* if the person understands.

Make sure that the other person comprehends what you have said. This will make it easier for you to state what you want to see happen and for the other person to say how he or she feels about it.

- Ask for change.

Be as specific as possible about what you want the other person to *do*, not what you want the other person to think, feel, or be. You may need to think about exactly what it is that you want the other person to do. Or

- Ask how the person feels about it.

This shows that you are interested in the other person's response to what you are saying. This could result in the other person giving you some negative feedback, so stay calm and be prepared to listen carefully.

- *THANK* the person for listening, if you can.

This shows respect for the other person who has heard you out and makes it less likely that the other person will repeat the act that's made you angry.

Remind the teens that this process has the potential to bring about a change in someone else's behavior and to help you to feel better by getting an angry feeling off your chest.

9. Explain that when you tell others that you do not like their behavior, a new conflict may result if they then tell you something they don't like about your behavior. Handling difficult situations sometimes means we have to take a look at our own behavior, too.
10. Explain to the group that now we are going to change hats and consider how to respond when we are on the receiving end of someone else's criticism

about our behavior. Receiving criticism about our behavior means listening carefully and responding without getting upset. Good communication skills give us the ability to stand up for our own rights while respecting the rights of the person with whom we are in conflict.

11. Ask the group to look at Handout 3 (right column) to see the skills involved in receiving criticism. At first the steps will seem awkward, so be sure to tell the teens that they will want to put the ideas into their own words as they get comfortable with the process. The important point here is for teens to understand the process and then find their own words to express it in a way that makes sense to them.
12. Discuss Handout 3 (right column) using the following information:
  - Stay calm and *LISTEN* to what the other person has to say.
    - Listening calmly shows respect for another person's feelings and may help calm the person down.
  - *ASK* the person to explain something if you don't understand.
 

If you don't understand exactly what has angered the other person, it will be hard for you to agree to change what you're doing or explain your side.
  - *ASK* what the person wants you to do.
 

This shows that you're willing to consider the other's complaint or criticism, as well as his or her ideas for changing the situation. It also helps to soothe the person's anger.
  - Tell the person you *UNDERSTAND*.
 

This shows that you have listened.

    - Agree and apologize.
 

If you can understand and accept the other's viewpoint, simply apologizing and agreeing to the other's solution can help restore a friendship or keep trouble from breaking out. Or
    - Ask if you can explain your side.
 

This will give you a chance to correct any wrong information the other person may have about what you have said or done.
13. Ask for four volunteers to model these skills in the next role-play situation.
 

**Note:** See Handout 4 for possible scenarios or use another scenario that you think is appropriate.

  - Have two of the volunteers be the main characters in the scenario. They will be the ones engaged in the conflict. The other two volunteers will choose one of the main actors to concentrate on. The four youth will be changing roles after the first round so everyone will have a chance to try the skills.

- Clarify roles: the main actors are to use the steps outlined, and the two observers are to watch carefully to see if the steps are followed and be prepared to provide feedback to the actors.
  - Before the role-play begins, discuss some ground rules about role-playing that are important to keep in mind, such as no touching, shoving, swearing, or any other behavior intended to disrupt the role-play. Whenever the facilitator says “freeze” the role-players must stop the action.
    - As the teens do the role-play, coach them as needed by whispering reminders, pointing out a skill, encouraging, and praising.
    - When everyone has finished, ask for feedback first from the observers and then from the group.
14. Now ask the rest of the group to break into groups of four, choose a scenario, and role-play the skills with observers providing feedback to the actors on the process. After the first two actors complete the role-play and feedback, the observers should become the actors and repeat the process. Circulate and watch the role-plays, providing coaching where needed.
- Note:** If there are too many young people to do this activity, then ask the four-person groups to do it one at a time with the entire group watching (fishbowl style). Rotate through the group, giving as many people as possible an opportunity to try out their skills.
15. Bring teens back together and debrief.
- Ask teens how it felt to be the main actors and what they found most difficult about giving and receiving negative feedback.
  - Ask the observers what they think the main actors did well and which steps need more work.
  - Write comments (not youth names) on the chalkboard or newsprint under the following headings: *most difficult*, *did well*, and *needs work*.
  - Give all teens credit for good work in learning important and challenging skills.

**STEP E****TEACHING STRATEGIES**

- Whole-group Discussion
- Journal Writing



10 MINUTES

**Reflection**

1. Relate the session to teens' lives.
  - Ask teens what they learned about the *Community Works* program and what they will be doing in their meetings. (Listen for answers from the puzzle.)
  - Remind them that they all need to work together to create a safe community. Ask participants for some examples of how the guidelines and good communication skills will help them do this. Ask what they think the greatest challenge to the development of a safe community will be.
  - Invite teens to discuss how they feel about the communications discussions and in particular how they feel about handling difficult situations with each other. The process usually seems challenging when you first discuss it. Remind teens that they need to come up with their own words for the process so that it becomes natural for them.

2. Turn learning into action.
  - Remind participants that one of the core aspects of *Community Works* is the service-learning project. A service-learning project can be any project that offers an opportunity to serve the community. Because the ideas for the project should come from the group, this is a good time to begin to discuss ideas that might be on the minds of the participants.
  - Set up one flipchart area for posting ideas. Ask participants if they have any ideas that could be posted. (If possible, give some examples of previous projects.) Explain that some of the journal questions are meant to get them thinking about possible project ideas.
  - Remind them that they are a clever and energetic group and will eventually have lots of ideas. They will need to use good communication skills in order to decide on a group project.
3. Distribute the journals for this session.
  - Explain to teens that the purpose of the journal is to help them reflect on what they learned and to give you a place to respond to what they write. Be clear that you will not be correcting what they write—just reading and responding.
  - Ask teens to write their answers to the journal questions.
  - Ask teens if they are willing to share their thoughts with the group.
  - Collect their journals, review them after the session, and write short comments. Tell teens you will return their journals with your comments at the next session. This gives teens something tangible and provides them with a connection to previous sessions.
  - Thank everyone for coming.





## HANDOUT 1

### Puzzle Messages

1. Today, we are going to define a safe community and decide how we are going to work together for the next

\_\_\_\_\_.  
(*duration of program*)

2. We are going to develop skills to avoid being victims of crime, to help other people, and to make communities safer.
3. We will learn what other young people are doing to stop crime and violence in their communities.
4. We will select a problem in our community and figure out how we want to begin to solve it.
5. At our final session, we will \_\_\_\_\_.  
(*offer incentive*)

Or

A special activity will be

\_\_\_\_\_.  
(*planned activity*)



## HANDOUT 2

### Sneak Preview of *Community Works*, Volume One

**Session 1: Creating a Community Vision.** In the first session of *Community Works*, teens will get to know each other. They will discuss the kind of treatment they want from each other in order to establish their own guidelines for working together. They will create a group vision for a safe community and learn what to expect from the *Community Works* program. They will have the opportunity to tell the instructor about their interests.

**Session 2: What Is Crime?** This session introduces participants to the *Community Works* program. Teens will examine what crime is and how it affects them and their communities. They will explore the causes of youth violence and learn how different crimes vary in degree of seriousness.

**Session 3: Victims of Crime.** This session looks at the victims behind the national crime statistics, focusing on the effects of crime on individuals and communities. Teens will see that people in their age group are the most frequent victims of crime. They will practice ways to respond if a friend becomes a crime victim.

**Session 4: Safe and Secure Communities.** This session examines what it takes to create safe and secure communities. Teens will focus on effective crime prevention strategies and explore how they can be part of the solution.

**Session 5: Where Are We Safe and Unsafe?** In this session, teens will gather information to determine where people are safe and where they are unsafe in their communities. Teens will obtain a local map and crime statistics and use their experience, the map, and statistics from the local police department to see where crimes have occurred.

**Session 6: Our Community's Resources.** In this session, teens will learn what resources are available in their community to help prevent crime and to assist victims. The group will identify and locate a vari-

ety of programs and services. Teens can use what they learn to design group crime prevention projects and to call on these community resources for help.

**Session 7: Your Conflict Choices.** This session helps teens examine the choices they make when they experience conflict. Learning to resolve conflicts can help prevent deadly confrontations, and it can help young people develop interpersonal and leadership skills. Teens will benefit from knowing what conflict style to use and when to use it and from learning what triggers anger and how to manage it.

**Session 8: Conflict, Communicating, and Working Together.** In this session, teens will learn to use communication and negotiation skills to manage conflict. They will learn how to identify conflicting positions and interests and to generate and evaluate solutions to problems. Teens who develop these skills will be less likely to commit crimes or to become victims of crimes, and they will be better equipped to solve a variety of problems.

**Session 9: Planning a Project.** This session introduces teens to the exciting possibilities of youth-led, service-learning projects. They will begin their project by assessing the needs of their community and defining a specific problem to address.

**Session 10: Designing a Project.** In this session, teens will determine how they will work together to address a specific crime problem in their community.

**Session 11: Doing a Project.** In this session, teens will carry out their project plan, determine how they'll evaluate the project's success, and decide how to celebrate their accomplishments.



**H A N D O U T 3**

**Handling Difficult Situations**

***Giving Criticism***

1. Stay calm.
2. Say something positive, if you can.
3. Tell the person what's on your mind.
4. Ask if the person understands.
  - a. Ask for change.
  - b. Ask how the person feels about it.
5. Thank the person for listening, if you can.

**My Notes**

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***Receiving Criticism***

1. Stay calm and LISTEN to what the other person has to say.
2. ASK the person to explain something if you don't understand.
3. ASK what the person wants you to do.
4. Tell the person you UNDERSTAND
 

and

  - a. agree and apologize, or
  - b. ask if you can explain your side.

**My Notes**

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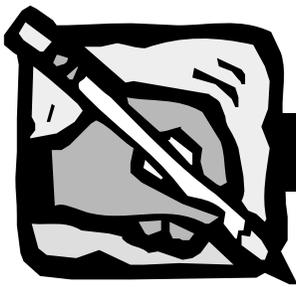
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## HANDOUT 4

### Feedback Scenarios

- A. You missed curfew for the second time this week. Now your dad says you won't be getting your allowance for the next month.
- B. Your best friend has a new girlfriend or boyfriend and is suddenly spending all of his or her free time with that person and ignoring you.
- C. Your brother or sister is playing a game online and you need the computer to complete a homework assignment.
- D. You are a half-hour late to meet your boyfriend or girlfriend at the movies. This is the third time this has happened. He or she is angry.
- E. You are one of two sisters or brothers who share a room. Your sibling leaves clothes and sports equipment on the floor and the chair. You like things to be neater, and you get angry when you see the messy room. You want the situation to improve.
- F. You are in class and your teacher tells you that because you did not turn in an assignment, your *B* just turned into a *C*. You remember turning it in and are very upset.
- G. Just as you are getting ready to pay for your movie ticket, someone you know cuts in line in front of you without even saying, "Excuse me." You have been waiting in line for a long time. You are angry and want to tell the person.
- H. Your parents allowed you to get an afterschool job as long as your grades did not suffer. They see that your most recent test scores are low and want you to quit working.



# JOURNAL

## Session 1

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

What I liked most about the vision my group created was

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Several communities that I am part of are

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I think my strengths in communication are

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I will probably need to really work on

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One future topic that I am really interested in is

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One service-learning project idea I have for my group is

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