LIFE SKILLS

### Introduction

In this Unit, you will read a passage on ‘Life Skills’. You will discuss what life skills incorporate and the importance of learning them with your partners. Understanding the concept, you will engage in activities that help you develop your speaking, reading and writing abilities. Besides, you will consolidate the note-making skill you have been introduced in ‘Communication Skills I’.

### Unit Objectives

Students are expected to:

* identify different components of ‘life skills’ so that they can actively apply them in life;
* become successful in living a community successfully and endeavor to execute skills to solve problems that may occur in their community;
* develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing abilities in different areas including ‘life skills’.
* know the future tense forms and use them in their speech and writing, when appropriate.

#### Activity 1.1: Answer the following questions before you read the passage below.

1. What are life skills?
2. What are the basic elements of life skills?

3. What is the importance of knowing about life skills? --------------------------------------------

4. Did you have life skills training? If you had, please share what you were trained about and how you were trained to your group.

5. How did the training help you to manage your life? ------------------------------------------

In practice, the term life skills is also used in several other ways, including to refer to livelihood skills, such as how to set up a business; to refer to practical self-care skills such as how to plan and prepare healthy meals or how to brush one’s teeth, etc.; to refer to skills used to deal with specific risk situations, such as saying “no” in the face of peer pressure etc.

The concept life skills involves personally responsible choices. These skills enable people to maximize their own choices, to enhance their personal well-being and to improve their quality of life. When people are being personally responsible they are in the process of making choices that maximize their happiness and fulfillment. Personal responsibility is a positive concept wherein people are responsible for their well-being and for making their own choices within the givens of their existence. Life skills therefore, are the component skills through which people assume – rather than avoid – personal responsibility for their lives. These skills enable people to make positive contribution which can lead to improvement of their lives.

Elias (1990) as mentioned by WHO (1994) notes that life skills are skills to carry out effective interpersonal relationships and to make choices and resolve conflict without resorting to actions that will harm oneself or others. Adding to this, WHO (1994) further defines life skills as skills that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. This generic type of skills includes decision-making, problem-solving, self-awareness and communication skills. TACADE (1990) views life skills as personal and social skills required by young people to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the wider community.

Peck and Hong (1988) cited in Tsatsi (2001) state that life skills are skills which enable people to care for themselves in a supportive environment, and are concerned with independence in self- care, understanding the environment and living with others. Skills also enable people to make decisions concerning life situations. From a practical point of view Peck and Hong (1988) as mentioned by Tsatsi (2001) outlined the following life skills. Firstly personal skills, which refer to those skills that are necessary to establish and maintain a network of appropriate and meaningful relationships, interests and support systems e.g. developing friendships, leisure interests, environmental and road safety, communication, social life, sexual relationships and marriage. Personal skills are also of great importance for especially young people to fully understand the influence of peer pressure. Secondly, home management skills, which include theoretical and technical knowledge necessary to live safely, comfortable and healthy. Skills such as budgeting, nutrition and hygiene may serve as examples. Thirdly, self-reliance skills, which include those skills, which are necessary for the individual to be able to organize his/ her own life and to maintain and utilize the resources, they need.

The effective acquisition and application of life skills influence the way people feel about themselves and others, and equally influence the way people are perceived by others. According to WHO (1997) life skills contribute to peoples’ perceptions of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem. Life skills therefore, play an important role in the promotion of individuals’ mental well-being. The promotion of mental well-being contributes to people motivation to look after themselves and others, the prevention of mental disorders, and the prevention of health behavior problems. Life skills open doors and enable people to help themselves (Potgieter, 2004).

Life skills are also framed as “abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” (WHO, 1997). Described in this way, skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings.

However, analysis of the life skills field suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart to skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of children and adolescents (Brack & Hill, 2000).

In the context of this study life skills are self-helping skills that enable people to help themselves. As such they are aimed at empowering people. People who possess life skills are more adequate to fulfill their potential and meet their needs. Potgieter (2004) notes that a wide variety of skills can be selected for inclusion in a life skills program for adolescents. The selection depends largely on the target condition, which the client system faces. For this study life skills include acquisition of self-reliance skills such as decision-making, problem solving, critical thinking, self-awareness, assertiveness training, communication conflict resolution etc. A detailed what level or dimension, must include the ability to facilitate a sense of belonging. Belonging plays a key role in the growth and development of self-esteem, social skills and initiative while creating a sense of belonging does not mean being a “buddy” and always getting along, it does mean that a person is always welcomed into a group as long as they do not try to harm or disrupt the group. It also means that assertive communication and truth exist. It includes a sense of safety, both physical and emotional (Brack and Hill, 2000; Anderson & Okoro, 2000).discussion of these skills will follow later in this chapter.

A final topic of interest in conceptualizing the concept life skills is the place of belonging in defining life skills. Both the WHO (1994) and American School Counseling Associations (ASCA, 1994) as mentioned by Anderson and Okoro (2000) imply that all life skills no matter at The need for belonging is also emphasized by Alfred Adler (1870-1937) as cited by Brack and Hill (2000: 24) who concluded that, as part of human nature there is a strong innate potential for kinship and belonging to the human race. Each person is born with a natural desire to belong to a group, such as family or culture, and to contribute to the growth and well-being of that group. It is a genetic need or genetic potential and it simply exists in everyone at birth. As noted above, an innate or genetic potential is a potential capability, which is likely to be developed if a person is given the right opportunities. Without the right opportunities this need can be distorted or destroyed (Baron & Byrne, 2003; Brack & Hill, 2000).

According to Brack and Hill (2000) what is important to note here is that belonging, the ability to pursue meaningful relationships and contribute to society, is not automatic, it needs to be consciously developed and when it is developed, it is intrinsically rewarding. However, people have to actually learn ways of trusting others, giving and accepting care and being sincere. Adler (1870-1937) as cited by the above-mentioned authors, states that learning these skills is intrinsically rewarding because the skills fulfill a genetic potential. Furthermore, because this need is rooted in a strong genetic potential the fulfillment of the need for belonging is also a prerequisite for emotional well-being. When the need for belonging is not met, a person may easily become aloof, manipulative and self-centered. When the feeling of belonging and interpersonal connectedness develops, a sense of social interest, co-operation and equality emerges. Belonging is met by obtaining results, which provides closer relationships with others, and competence is met by obtaining results, which are useful in many ways.

Basically belonging consists of forming a bond with other individuals. Belonging is a social component of normal human development. It allows a person to express his or her social interest in a healthy and mutually reciprocal manner that builds upon strength of all group members.

**Activity 1.2**

**Instruction:** *Write ‘true’ if the statement is correct and ‘false’ if the statement is incorrect according to the passage.*

1. Life skills lead to dependency on others because interpersonal communication promotes dependency on others.
2. Life skills are hardly important for people to develop interpersonal skills because they lead people more to develop personally responsible choices..
3. According to the information in the passage, one who is good at life skills is effective in organizing and leading his life.
4. Innate or genetic potential cannot develop after birth.
5. The fulfillment of emotional well-being is a pre-requisite to belonging.

**Instruction:** *Choose the most appropriate alternative based on the information in the passage.*

* 1. Making personally responsible choices includes all except one.
     1. Maximizing choices to improve one’s life.
     2. Avoiding personal responsibility.
     3. Taking responsibility for one’s well-being.
     4. Making choices for enabling one’s happiness.
  2. One of the following is an example of home-management skills.
     1. Developing friendship c) Marriage
     2. Road safety d) Budgeting
  3. What will happen when the need for belonging is not fulfilled? A person may be
     1. assertive c) self-centered
     2. happy d) communicative
  4. Potgieter (2004) mentions that life skills include the skill of:
     1. decision-making c ) creating conflict

a) critical thinking d) A&B

1. According to the American School Counseling Associations (ASCA, 1994), all life skills must incorporate the ability to enhance:
   1. A sense of belonging c) Critical thinking
   2. A feeling of responsibility d) empowering people
2. As stated by Brack and Hill (2000), what kind of ability will be intrinsically motivated if it is well developed?
   1. Problem solving c) Pursuing meaningful rapport
   2. Assertive d)Decision making

**Instruction:** *According to the passage, what do the following words/pronouns refer to?*

1. ‘these’ (paragraph 3, line 1)
2. ‘they’ (paragraph 3, line 3)
3. ‘those’ (paragraph 5 line 6)
4. ‘their’ (paragraph 9, line 3)
5. ‘this’ (paragraph 11, line 7)
6. ‘it’ ( paragraph 13, line 2)

**Instruction**: *Guess the meanings of the following words as they are used in the reading passage.*

1. well-being (Para 3, line 5)
2. self-awareness (Para 4, line 5)
3. peer pressure (Para 5, line 10)
4. self-efficacy (Para 6, line 3)
5. self-esteem (Para 6, line 7)
6. framed (Para 7, line 1)
7. innumerable (Para 7, line 3)
8. core (Para 8, line 1)
9. kinship (Para 11, line 3)
10. pursue (Para 12, line 2)

# Speaking

### Activity 1.3

**Instruction:** *The purpose of this activity is to have you think about your own problem solving experiences either in your village or in a school situation. Read the scenarios given to you below, think about what your steps can be and tell problem-solution to your group members.*

1. Senait’s friend is stressed about an upcoming test. Senait already took the test and got 100%, so she knows all the answers already. Should she:
   1. Just give the answers to her friend
   2. Use her knowledge to coach her friend
   3. Not get involved at all
2. Zelalem overhears two students bragging about having posted some inappropriate images of a female student online for a joke. Should he:
   1. Mind his own business
   2. Report the incident to the school principal
   3. Confront the boys and defend the student
3. A friend tells you that he/she has been receiving anonymous bullying messages online. You suspect that certain people are guilty. Would you:
   1. Tell your friend just to ignore them
   2. Encourage them to report the abuse
   3. Risk confronting the ones you suspect

**Writing**

### Activity 1.4 Discuss the problem you encountered at school; and then write it in a short paragraph

**Instruction:** *In your group, ask each other about a time when you encountered a problem at school. Answer the questions below given as facilitation steps to your discussion. Did you follow the same process to solve the school-related problem?*

* What kind of problem was it?
* What happened?
* What factors did you have to consider when finding a solution?
* What steps were taken to resolve this problem?
* Who made the decision about how the problem was resolved?

## Grammar: Future Tense

### Activity 1.5:

**Instruction:** *Answer the following questions in groups.*

1. What are future tenses?

2. What are the different forms of future tenses?-----------------------------------------------------

3. Read the following passage on the ‘Mystery Guest’ and underline the future tense indicators.

### The Mystery GUest

Justin and Megan have a surprise for their two children, Sally and Timmy. They are going to have a special guest soon. "Can you guess who it will be?" Megan asks.

Sally and Timmy take turns guessing.

"Will Grandma visit us soon?" Timmy asks. Megan tells Timmy that Grandma is not going to visit soon.

"Is Uncle Bill going to stay with us again?" Sally asks. Justin tells Sally that Uncle Bill is not going to stay with them again.

Justin and Megan give their children another hint. "She is going to arrive in about 6 months," Megan says. "And she is going to stay with us for a very long time."

"Where will she sleep?" Sally asks. Megan and Justin tell Sally that their special guest is going to sleep in their bedroom at first. Then, she will have her own bedroom.

Sally and Timmy ask a few more questions, but they cannot guess who the special guest will be. "Who is going to visit us?" Sally and Timmy ask at the same time. "Well," Justin says, "you probably haven't noticed yet, but your Mother is pregnant! She is going to have a baby!"

"You are going to have a new little sister in 6 months!" Megan exclaims. Timmy and Sally

cannot believe what they hear!

Sally is excited. She knows that she is going to be a good big sister. "I am going to have a sister!" Sally shouts.

Timmy groans. "I wish I was going to have a brother," he says.

Megan and Justin hug their children and laugh. They know that Sally and Timmy are going to love their new little sister!

.4. Now discuss the forms of the future tense in your group. Can you guess the meaning of each of the future sentences?

### Notes

In the following table, you are provided brief notes about the different forms and functions of the future tense in English with examples. Read and understand them.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tense** | **Uses** | **Examples** |
| **Present progressive** | **Arrangements** | I am meeting Eliza at 4:00 tomorrow afternoon. Rick is not attending the meeting.  Is Julia coming to the event? |
| **Be going to** | **Intentions** | I am going to start eating healthier foods.  We are not going to miss a single episode this season! Are you going to clean your room? |
| **Predictions based on current circumstances** | Be careful! You are going to spill your tea!  There are no clouds in the sky. It is not going to rain.  The light is red. Is the car going to stop? |
|  | **Promises** | I will pay you back tomorrow.  We will not forget Mom’s birthday. Will you take the dog for a walk? |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Simple future** | **Instant decisions** | I am bored. I will take a short break.  It is too cold. I will not go outside. Will you have juice or tea? |
| **Predictions** | I think you will enjoy this book.  Caroline will not arrive on time.  Will people take vacations in space someday? |
| **Future facts** | Wendy will be 30 next week.  The sun will not set before 7:00 tomorrow evening. What time will the sun rise tomorrow? |
| **Simple present** | **Time tables and schedules** | All aboard! The train leaves in five minutes. Academic activities do not begin until February.  Does Theodore’s plane arrive soon? |

### Activity1.6:

**Instruction:** *Write the words in brackets in the appropriate forms of the future tense****.***

## A Wonderful Plan

Allison and Nate, a brother and sister, live together in an apartment. They attend university in the same city, so they live together to share expenses. Their parents live in a different city, but they are visiting their children this weekend. In fact, they (arrive) at the airport in about an hour!

Nate and his older sister talk about all the arrangements they made for their parents’ visit.

“Okay, so we (go) to the concert tonight, right?” Nate asks.

“That is right,” Allison replies. “We are seeing the orchestra at 7:00pm.” “Are we (go) to the museum tomorrow, then?” her brother asks.

“Yes, I reserved tickets for the special exhibition on mummies,” Allison says. “Are you coming with us or are you meeting with your study group?”

“No, I am definitely going with you to the museum,” Nate answers. “I love mummies! All right, so we are picking Mom and Dad up in about an hour.”

“Yes, I (leave) in five minutes,” Allison says.

Nate is confused. “What do you mean? We are both (go), right?”

“Of course not!” Allison laughs. “Look at this place! I was very busy making all the reservations and getting all the tickets. We did not clean at all!”

“Oh no, you are right!” Nate looks at the messy living room and remembers all the dirty dishes in the kitchen. “What will we do?”

“Do not worry, my dear brother,” Allison says, smiling. “You know I always have a plan.” “Is a cleaning service coming?” Nate asks. “Are Mom and Dad staying in a hotel?”

“No, silly!” Allison replies. “No one (come) to help us clean.”

“Then what is your wonderful plan? What are we doing to get the apartment clean? Mom and Dad are arriving in just forty-five minutes!” Now Nate (get) really nervous.

“Not to worry,” Allison reassures her brother. “I am driving to the airport to pick them up, and then we are all going to a new art gallery that just opened. We are taking a guided tour for an hour.”

“How does an art gallery tour get the house clean?” Nate wonders.

“That does not clean the house! Remember that you (stay) here, little brother,” Allison says, giving him a hug before she walks to the door. “This way you will have lots of time! I (go) out to have fun with Mom and Dad because I am a wonderful daughter, and you (stay) here to clean the whole apartment because you are a wonderful son!”

### Activity1.7

**Instruction:** *Construct as many future sentences using be+ going as possible based on Sara’s schedule given in the table below. Write sentences as the example given.*

#### Sara’s Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| **Morning** | doctor’s appointment | meet with boss | return  library books | attend conference | go to gym |
| **Afternoon** | buy groceries for the week | go to gym | go to gym | attend conference | buy food for party |
| **Evening** | movie with Dave | do work reports | dinner with girlfriends | do the ironing | dinner with parents |

*Ex.* What is Sara going to do on Sunday morning? She’s going to visit her grandmother*.*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**Activity 1.8:**

**Instruction:** *Choose the correct word from the list below to complete the sentences using the “going to” structure.*

### hang / wear / practice / get / ask / visit / write clean / study / exchange / quit / take / give / fix

**Ex.** My brother sent me a letter last week. I’m going to write him back tomorrow.

1. My house is very dirty. I it tomorrow.
2. Miriam is going to a party next Saturday. She her new red dress.
3. Robert bought a new painting at the art show. He it over the sofa in his living room.
4. The hockey championship is next month. The boys every night next week.
5. Jack hates his job. He next week.

### Activity1.9 :

**Instruction:** *Write the following sentences using ‘will + inf.’ to indicate a future action. Do the exercise as in the example given.*

**Ex***. Bob is going to take his driver’s test tomorrow. He didn’t practice.*

*He’ll probably fail. or He probably won’t pass.*

1. It’s raining. Worku doesn’t have an umbrella.
2. Zinash has a very bad cold.
3. Sileshi didn’t sleep well last night.
4. Elias loves movies. There is a new movie playing at the theater tonight.
5. Selamawit ate too much dessert last night and now she has a stomachache.