



# What are communities and why do we need them?



Mesha feels very fortunate. She has just had the all clear from breast cancer. Her family live far away and so when she was ill, Mesha's local community really rallied around her. They helped take care of her kids. They also brought her cooked meals and fed and walked her dogs whilst she was in hospital.

**Discuss: What do we mean when we talk about a 'community'?**



Many people who helped Mesha were fellow Sikhs, from her gurdwara, but she was also helped by neighbours who lived in her street too. Why do you think both groups chose to help Mesha out?

*I think both groups helped Misha because...*

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## Learning outcomes:

Describe the importance of real-life communities (as opposed to online communities) and why participation in communities is important.

Explain why it's beneficial to our mental health to participate in real life communities.

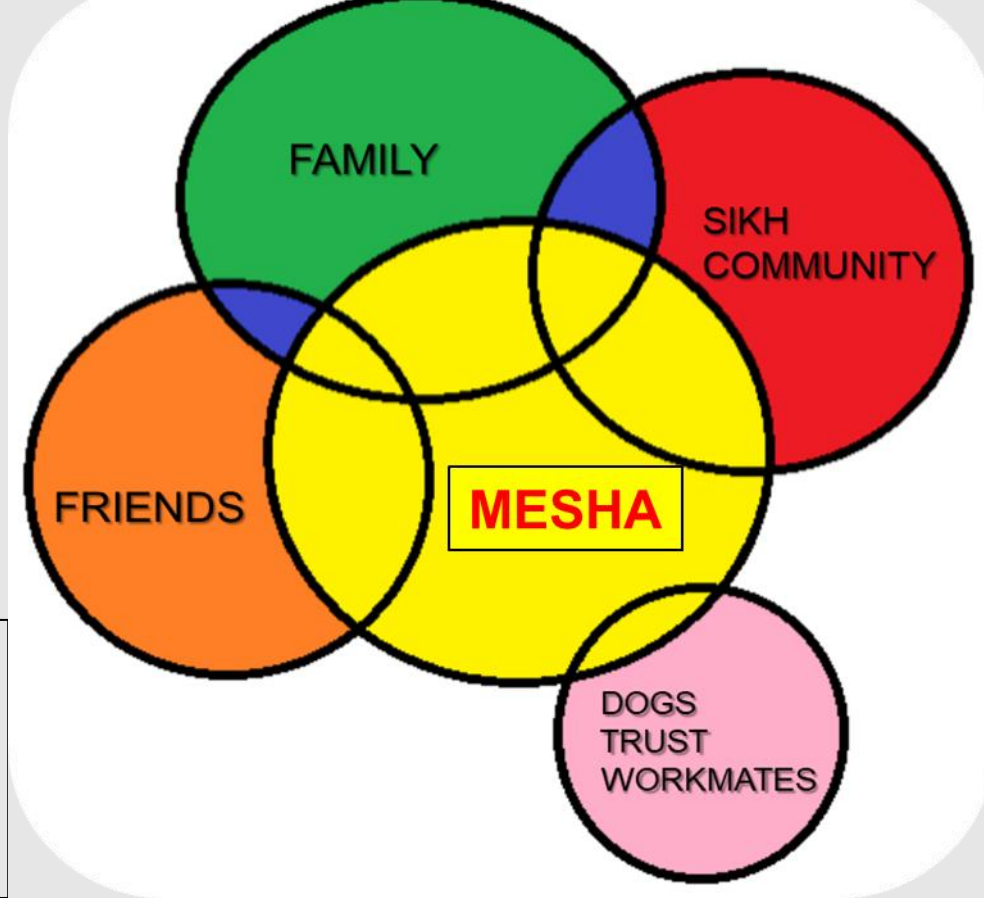
**Community** - a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. A community can be online or off-line.

**Introvert** - someone who is shy, quiet, and prefers to spend time alone rather than often being with other people.

**Extrovert** - a person who tends to enjoy being with other people



Here is a Venn diagram of how Mesha is a part of many communities. Some of Mesha's communities overlap (seen in blue). This is because some of the people in them belong in two of Mesha's community groups.



We are all part of at least one community. For instance, we are all part of the same school community. Some of our communities may overlap (for example, some people from your school may also live in your local neighbourhood or be part of your sports team).

**Discuss:** Study Mesha's community Venn diagram and then spend five minutes drawing your own. It would be great to see some of these once you've finished.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCbpFKX6WCA>

**Why exactly do humans need to socialise with each other in real life?  
Watch the clip carefully and complete your table.  
We'll go through the answers together as a class afterwards.**

Why do humans need to socialise off-line?	How do we know this?



**Let's go through our ideas together now. Don't forget to add in any new information you may have missed at the time.**



<b>Why do humans need to socialise off-line?</b>	<b>How do we know this?</b>
<p>We meet people with a variety of opinions. Those who spend too much time online are more likely to fall into groups with extreme ideas, such as conspiracy theories as they don't hear a broad range of opinions.</p>	<p>We know this because throughout history humanity has organised itself into collective groups and communities.</p>
<p>We need to be able to form a coherent view of the world around us. We can't do this if isolated.</p>	<p>Humans don't naturally tend to live in isolation. This has always been the case in every society throughout history (although you may get rare cases of individuals doing this, for example for religious or spiritual reasons)</p>
<p>Although the amount of socialisation needed changes from person to person, because we are all humans, we do all need some.</p>	<p>Even your average introvert still feels the need to socialise, even on a smaller scale, sometimes.</p>
<p>Since the beginning of humanity, we have socialised. There must be strong evolutionary reasons for this, or else more of us would live in isolation.</p>	<p>We know that solitary confinement can lead to damaging mental health symptoms. Even long-term hospital patients, who aren't isolated, can be affected.</p>

You may by now be thinking, well, surely no-one actually withdraws from every real-life community available to them – what about work, or school, or family? But in truth, some people actually do.

Watch the short clip about the Japanese ‘hikikomoris’ and then complete your task four worksheet.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMKZjsDVKks>



**Akio's story – read what happened and finish the ending. Is it too late for Akio?**

Then, complete the questions underneath each box.

<p>Akio is an only child. He lives with his parents just outside of Tokyo. After a period of being bullied in school, and Akio not wishing to enrol in another school, at age 16, his parents decided to let him enrol on online courses and continue his education at home.</p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>	<p>With a laptop and phone in his room and his mother cooking for him, Akio began spending more and more time just in his bedroom. The temptation of online gaming was always competing with schoolwork. Eventually, Akio dropped out of online schooling.</p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>	<p>Akio's parents started to worry about him a lot. He barely left the house and when questioned, he would just say he felt no need to. Akio's parents had a psychologist visit, who diagnosed Akio with depression. He recommended anti-depressants and regular exercise outside.</p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>
<p>Akio took the anti-depressants, but not the regular exercise outside. He no longer seemed depressed but instead didn't seem to really express any emotions at all, negative or positive.</p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>	<p>At age 23, Akio still spent most of the time in his bedroom. He could see on social media people from school going to parties, starting university and travelling. His parents were very confused about why Akio didn't seem bothered about doing such things.</p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>	<p><b>Write an ending:</b></p> <p><i>Why did this happen?</i> This happened because...</p> <p><i>What could have happened instead?</i> What could have happened instead is...</p> <p><i>What would you advise next?</i> What I would advise is....</p> <p>I would say this because....</p>



# Akio's story – read what happened and finish the ending. Is it too late for Akio?

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 **Write an ending:**

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## Useful mental health helplines and charities

**Young Minds**. Child and adolescent mental health charity. Call: 0808 802 5544 (parents' helpline)

**Samaritans**. Samaritans provide 24-hour online and phone support to people in distress. Call: 116 123

**SANE**. National out-of-hours mental health charity offering emotional support, guidance and information. Call: 0300 304 7000 (4.30pm to 10.30pm)

**<https://mensadviceline.org.uk/contact-us/>** Men's advice and support site

**<https://www.youngwomenstrust.org/get-support/additional-support/>** Women's advice and support site

## Reporting a Concern at Thornden School

- It is important to us that all of you feel safe, happy and belong at Thornden.
- We also know that sometimes it is not as easy as simply telling a member of staff
- It could be:
  - A friend you are worried about
  - Someone being unkind to you
  - Something you have heard and think we should know



### How can you report anything you are worried about?

- Speak to a member of staff or parent / carer
- Visit the Well Being Den or Head of Year area
- On Satchel each week you will be sent a link to a form to share any worries you have
- On our school website homepage there is a 'Report a Concern' link.
- In the Student Bulletin there is a 'Report a Concern' link
- On all school desktops there is a 'Report a Concern' logo to click and report anything

# Need Support? You're Not Alone



If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.

## **Mental Health & Low Mood**

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>

Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

## **Apps That Can Help**

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.

Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.

Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).

MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

## **Talk to Someone**

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.

Wellbeing Team and School Nurse

Report a Concern on Satchel

Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

## **Eating Concerns**

Beat Eating Disorders –

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>

NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>

## **Healthy Lifestyle**

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>

Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>