

# ***LIFE SKILLS AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR SUSTAINING LIFE***

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## **Abstract**

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India is a multicultural democratic society where an individual face multifaceted challenges and to deal with such challenges the individual must be well equipped with life skills. Life skills are the abilities that help young people navigate everyday life challenges and contribute to positive behavior. Today's Discover and Explore link is all about Life Skills. The kinds of life skills an individual will need to be successful in our classroom and even beyond the classroom vary based on their age and developmental readiness. The best assessment for life skills is observation. Take time to observe the students and as we do so, make a written or even a mental list of life skills that the children are ready to tackle and then consider how they will be able to best master those skills. Young people require an intra and inter personal skills to face the complexities of life. This article focuses on the importance of life skills as a tool in sustaining life.

**Keywords:** Life Skills, Core Life Skills, Challenges, Benefits.

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## **Introduction:**

The concept of education is preparation for future life, learning and work is introduced in the better teaching and learning process. Life Skills are psychosocial competencies which enable an individual develop adaptive and positive behavior so as to deal effectively with challenges and demands of everyday life. The development of Life Skills is a lifelong process that starts in early childhood and continues throughout one's life.

Life skills are behaviors used appropriately and responsibly in the management of personal affairs. They are a set of human skills acquired via teaching or direct experience that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life. The subject varies greatly depending on social norms and community expectations

The key factors of life skills that improved the quality of life, as an individual, in relationships, and in the wider world are as follows:

- Learn handy and usually quite fast techniques to assist another person after a shock, injury or other distress.
- Learn simple methods for expanding our awareness on a daily basis.
- Gain a deeper understanding of what a relationship is, and how to strengthen and nurture it.

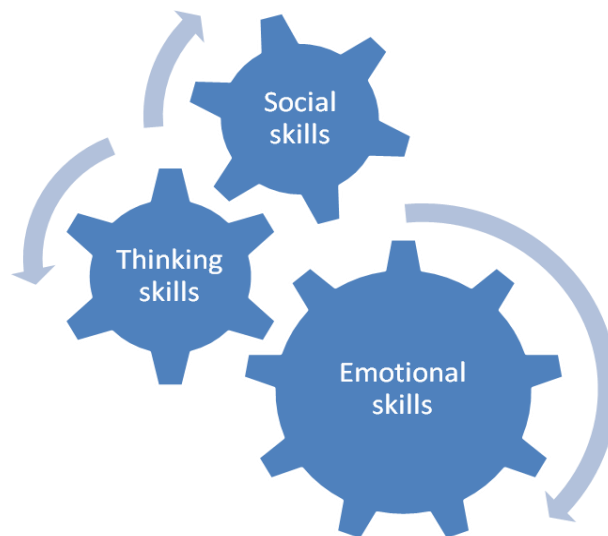
- Learn the components of successful communication, what causes communication to break down, and how to repair breakdowns.
- Gain vital keys to understanding those behaviors of other people that have previously been inexplicable to us.
- Gain the ability to more accurately predict certain patterns of human behavior, and to be more effective in dealing with the negative ones.
- Learn an effective tool for making important life decisions.
- Explore human potential.

### **Life Skills as Described by Different Organisations;**

There are many different understandings of life skills but no definition is universally accepted. Life skills, according to the **World Health Organization**, are “abilities of individuals to adapt and develop positive behaviors that empower them to manage challenges in their day-to-day lives.” Essentially, life skills are capabilities that help individuals strengthen themselves against the realities of life. Life skills are important as they enable individuals to think rationally and take positive actions to ensure personal well-being and productive social relationships.

Different organisations attach different meanings to the term. **The International Bureau of Education (IBE)** derives its understanding from the Delors four pillars of learning - learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together - and defines life skills as personal management and social skills which are necessary for adequate functioning on an independent basis.

**UNICEF** has defined life skills as psychosocial and interpersonal skills that are generally considered important. The choice of, and emphasis on, different skills will vary according to the topic. For example decision making may feature strongly in HIV/AIDs prevention whereas conflict management may be more prominent in a peace education programme. According to UNICEF it is ultimately the interrelations between the skills that produce powerful behavioral outcomes, especially where this approach is supported by other strategies such as media, policies and health services.



The core set of skills (WHO 1997: p.1)

**The 10 Life Skills Categorized under Core Set of Skills:**

<b>Social skills</b>	<b>Thinking skills</b>	<b>Emotional skills</b>
Self Awareness, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationship, Empathy.	Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Decision making, Problem Solving.	Coping with Stress, Coping with Emotions.

**Importance of Life Skills**

The importance of life skills vary from person to person. It includes all the aspects of life like mental, physical, social, psychological, spiritual and environmental. In other words, the more we know about life--work, play, social, and so forth, the better we will adjust and the more we will learn. Life skills are found through living, school, work, family, environment and the world around us. Reading, working and volunteering are wonderful ways to seek and find life skills. Life skills help us in knowing how to fit in well with the populace. This is where family comes in as we will learn from them what is right and what is not acceptable. Things as simple as how to care for our clothes, how to shop correctly, personal hygiene and how to talk to people without being offensive are some of the life skills that we need to become part of society.

**Challenges Faced by an Individual**

- Psychological e.g. preparing for examinations, peer pressure, etc.
- Social e.g. peer pressure, inter-relationships, etc.
- Economic e.g. lack of resources (such as finance, basic necessities), excessive resources.
- Emotional e.g. anger management, hormonal influences, etc.
- Spiritual e.g. exposure to conflicting religious beliefs.

**How Life Skills Help us in Sustaining a Better Life**

Life skills act as an important tool for sustaining peaceful and better life only when we have the proper knowledge of them. We must be aware of communication skills, decision making skills, and self management skills money management skills.

**Communication and People Skills:** Interpersonal skills are crucial to succeed personally, professionally and in society. It is only with good communication skills that we can express ourselves to others. Both verbal and non-verbal communication skills are important. Assertiveness and the ability to say "no" when needed are key skills to help us exercise our rights. Negotiation skills are necessary for conflict management. Empathy is a key interpersonal skill that enables us to understand the other person's point of view. To be empathetic, we need to be an active listener and feel respect for others around us.

**Decision-Making Skills:** People encounter complex problems almost on a daily basis, and it is important they make rational decisions for problem resolution. An individual must also be good at assimilating information in order to be a good decision maker. Acquiring information enables an individual to deal with facts, explore alternatives, analyze advantages and disadvantages and come up with the best solution available

for the problem. The ability to analyze the consequences of current decision-making on the future is also an important aspect of decision-making.

**Self-Management Skills:** Self management is important to exercise control over oneself and move on without falling apart. Coping with everyday emotions is crucial to survive and attain the objectives. Self-awareness skills enable us to analyze our self and understand our strengths and weaknesses. Self-esteem building and goal-setting skills are also part of self-management. Managing anger and coping with anxiety and loss are essential for emotional well-being. Time management skills and the ability to relax and think positively contribute to stress management.

**Money Management Skills:** Managing of money is important as it is an unavoidable fact of life. We require basic math skills to calculate what we have and understand what we need to do to save wisely. Budgeting skills, whether for our household or for the nation, are important. Analyzing, prioritizing and deciding where the funds should go are necessary to allocate existing funds, save and make wise investments for the future.

### **Benefits from Life Skill Education:**

<b>Educational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens teacher pupil relationship</li> <li>• Leads to desirable behavior change</li> <li>• Improves discipline in schools</li> <li>• Reduces learner problems such as truancy, absenteeism drug and substance abuse and teenage pregnancies</li> <li>• Helps learners to improve their performance</li> </ul>
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves the socialization process among learners such as relating to others in a friendly way</li> <li>• Enables learners to choose good and reliable friends</li> <li>• Helps learners to use their leisure time properly</li> <li>• assists learners to recognize and avoid risky situations</li> <li>• Bring about meaningful interaction among learners, teachers and the school community</li> <li>• Helps in character building</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables people to adopt and maintain meaningful cultural practices and avoid practices that may put self and others at risk</li> <li>• Promotes harmonious interaction between people of different cultures</li> <li>• Helps in the clarification of values in the society</li> </ul>

<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads to prevention and control of diseases such as STIs, HIV and AIDS</li> <li>• Contributes to a person’s general well being (physical, mental, emotional and social)</li> <li>• Leads to less strain on health facilities</li> <li>• Helps people to be responsible for their own and other people’s health</li> </ul>
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<b>Economical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It leads to high productivity due to a motivated, strong and energetic labour force</li> <li>• Savings are increased as money used e.g. on management and control of HIV and AIDS can be invested elsewhere. Resources such as time and money are saved as learners acquire skills to manage themselves and their environment.</li> <li>• rehabilitation of drug and substance abuses</li> <li>• repair of damaged property</li> <li>• buy teaching learning resources</li> </ul>
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**Conclusion**

Education plays an important role towards the overall development of human beings. Life Skill education helps in the formation of a sound personality of an individual. Life Skill education can broadly be classified as Social Skills, Thinking Skills and Emotional Skills. Today, more and more societal pressures, greater complexity, uncertainty and diversity, rapid changes in the environment and continued deprivation put individuals at the crossroads of their lives facing an uncertain future in facing the responsibilities of adulthood and to enter the world of work. During the 21st century, life, globally, is undergoing significant transition and change. Core life skills play an essential part in the lives of individual which are the future of our country. This article explores life skills as an important tool for sustaining peaceful life.

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