

# Amazing People, Character Strengths and Conflict

Seeing the images and news coming out of conflict-stricken countries can be distressing and can increase anxiety. We can use these activities to take action to educate ourselves, support others and our own mental health.



## Albert Einstein

escaped Europe with the rise of Nazism in 1933. He arrived in America and founded the **International Rescue Committee**. They respond to the world's worst humanitarian crises and help people survive and rebuild their lives. Be curious, explore the work they do and perhaps share what you find out with others that you know.

**Kindness** – it can be hard to know how to show kindness to the people of Ukraine and others who have had to leave their country. Find out if areas near you are gathering useful items to send to those affected and see if you can help or contribute.

The Disasters Emergency Committee and the British Red Cross are two organisations raising funds to help. Can you work with others at your school to raise funds to support refugees?

## Volodymyr Zelenskyy

is the Ukrainian President and is currently showing great leadership. He was a comedian before he became a politician and still shows much humour.

Laughing is incredibly important for our mental health and in times of difficulty, it's even more important. If you're feeling anxious, seek out something or someone who makes you laugh – it doesn't mean you care any less.



**Empathy** – There may be refugees who have arrived from difficult situations near where you live. Educating ourselves can help increase our empathy towards others. Try reading: *Who are refugees and migrants?* Michael Rosen; *The Year the Maps Changed* Danielle Binks; *Songs of a War Boy* Deng Thiak Adut and Ben McKelvey; *The Treasure Box* Margaret Wild.

**Perseverance** - people who are displaced by war show incredible perseverance. You can show perseverance by writing to your local MP asking that they do everything in their power to help those who have left Ukraine and are seeking sanctuary elsewhere.

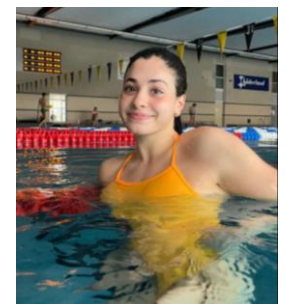


### Gulwali Passarlay

and his brother were forced to leave Afghanistan and search for safety abroad, when he was just 12. Separated immediately, he set out on a harrowing year-long journey on his own. Finally, he reached safety and was awarded refugee status in the UK. After studying, he now uses his book *The Lightless Sky* to raise awareness and he co-founded My Bright Kite to help other young refugees arriving in the UK.

### Yusra Mardini

became a refugee because of the war in her country, Syria. Overcoming incredible odds, Yusra qualified for the Olympic swim team, competing in 2016 and 2020.



**Mary Seacole** was a Jamaican British woman who travelled independently to help in the Crimea War. She showed courage by going to the front line and offering soldiers food, basic health care and kindness. Explore her story further and consider how you could show courage and kindness.



**Gratitude** - take time each day to think of three things that you are grateful for. Write them down in a gratitude journal. Practising an attitude of gratitude helps us recognise the positive things we have in our lives.



**Fairness** - many think that it is unfair that children are affected by conflict, because they are too young to be involved with the reasons behind it. Can you think of times in your life when you have been affected by events that are out of your control? If so, what were your thoughts and feelings and how did you deal with them?

