



ONE TEAM

GRADE 6-7

**FRIENDSHIP
ACTIVITIES**

✓
**THERE FOR
THE JOURNEY**

Krystina Alogbo, Water-polo



TEACHER OVERVIEW



Eric Radford, figure skater

NADIA POPOV

(<https://olympic.ca/one-team/oneteam-nadia-popov/>)

Nadia competed on the Canadian Women's rugby team at the Toronto 2015 Pan American Games, helping the team to a gold medal performance. In her blog, she speaks of her struggles with mental health issues and feeling alone. As she explains, "athletes struggling with mental health or their sexuality (or both) often feel immense pressure to keep their struggles hidden due to fears of not being accepted, and how that will impact their athletic dreams." She shares how she isolated herself during these difficult times, and eventually found peace through the support of friends, teammates and professionals.

ANASTASIA BUCSIS

(<https://olympic.ca/one-team/oneteam-anastasia-bucsis/>)

Anastasia is a two-time Olympian in Long Track Speed Skating. Years prior to the lead up to the Sochi Games, the loneliness she felt was a feeling she didn't want others to experience. That's exactly why she came out – "I struggled to accept myself to the point of having very unhealthy and negative thoughts" recalls Anastasia. "Regardless of orientation we all feel lonely; it's one of the tough things about being human."

THEMES

- The normalcy of difficult mental and emotional times.
- The value of friendships during difficult times and the virtue of journeying alongside a friend in need.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will reflect on the nature and normalcy of internal struggles.
- Students will reflect on how they can support a friend during a struggle.

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WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

We all go through difficult seasons and face times of feeling alone. These times are normal, but that doesn't make them easy. As you read through the blogs, think about how the athletes went through times of struggle and loneliness, and how friends helped them pull through. Friendship is about being there for someone and supporting them through their struggles. It's about caring enough to journey with them in the good times and hard times.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

- Maybe you are wrestling with difficult times, feeling accepted, a loss, or questions about who you are. Internal struggles are part of being human, and friends are part of your journey.
- Perhaps you have a friend that is going through a tough time. Maybe they are dealing with a great loss, or not feeling like they fit in. You can help them in their journey. You can be there for them in their time of need.

TALK ABOUT IT!

As a class, discuss how you feel, think, and act when you are going through a difficult time? How did Nadia and/or Anastasia work through their struggles?

WRITE ABOUT IT!

In difficult times, having a good friend can make all the difference. Write about what it means to be a good friend for those going through a hard time. What do you do to support your friends? What do you need your good friends to do to support you?

SHARE ABOUT IT!

With a partner, create a poster that describes what it takes to be a good friend during hardship.



"I ISOLATED MYSELF FROM THE PEOPLE AND THINGS I LOVED AND IT MADE ME FEEL UNBEARABLY ALONE. ONCE I BEGAN OPENING UP TO THOSE CLOSE TO ME, A WEIGHT WAS LIFTED OFF MY SHOULDERS GIVING ME THE ENERGY I NEEDED TO GET BETTER."

—Nadia Popov, Women's Rugby Pan Am Games gold medalist