

face future

A game about the future of empathy

A guide for
**Ambassadors
to the Future**

PLAY THE GAME! November 13-14, 2016



INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE



FACING
HISTORY
AND
OURSELVES

www.FaceTheFuture.org

game@facinghistory.org

FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES

Facing History and Ourselves, an international nonprofit organization that helps eradicate bigotry through education, reaching more than 4.8 million secondary school students around the world every year. Through a network of more than 120,000 educators, Facing History teaches that people make choices, and choices make history. Learn more at facinghistory.org.

INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE

The Institute for the Future is an independent, nonprofit strategic research group with nearly 50 years of forecasting experience. The core of our work is identifying emerging trends and discontinuities that will transform global society and the global marketplace. We provide our members with insights into business strategy, design process, innovation, and social dilemmas. Our research spans a broad territory of deeply transformative trends, from health and well-being to technology, the workplace, and human identity. The Institute for the Future is located in Palo Alto, California. Learn more at ifff.org.

THE ALLSTATE FOUNDATION

The Allstate Foundation supports organizations dedicated to addressing three issues: Domestic Violence, Youth Empowerment, and Teen Safe Driving. Since 1952, they have invested more than \$400 million in funding across the country to address key social issues. For more than 10 years, the Foundation has partnered with Facing History to fund a nationwide series of Community Conversations. These events feature prominent speakers who engage the community in discussions on the themes of tolerance, social justice, and civic participation. Learn more at allstatefoundation.org.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Dear Ambassador:

Thank you for helping us to spread the word about the launch of **Face the Future: A Game About the Future of Empathy**.

Face the Future is an entirely new kind of conversation. It's an online game for social change that will convene students, educators, and community members from around the world imagine what a better future might look like.

Every community has ways to connect and support one another, but how will new technology change how we relate to each other? How will it impact our choices? We believe that by empowering our youth to make ethical choices, now and tomorrow, will allow them to become upstanders, rather than bystanders. They will change the world for the better.


As an ambassador, your task will be to help us rally the enthusiasm and participation for this exciting online event and prepare participants to think critically about the future we will inhabit, our choices, and the impact our decisions will have in the year 2026.

Over the next several months, you will help us get educators, students, and the wider community to participate in this broad-based conversation and online event about the future of empathy. This is your guide to sparking the conversation—to recruiting educators, classrooms, schools, and community members to play the game and make the future.

For the 30 hours of the online game, taking place from 6pm EST November 13 through 11:59pm EST on November 14, we are asking our community to pivot from facing history to facing the future and ourselves.

Thank you in advance for your efforts on behalf of Facing History and the future.

Warmly,



Roger Brooks
President and Chief Executive Officer
Facing History and Ourselves

The guide includes:

CALL TO ACTION

Hone your “elevator pitch” for the game.

AMBASSADOR'S OVERVIEW

Orient yourself to the game and understand the basics of how the game works.

AMBASSADOR'S CHECKLIST

Organize your efforts to support the game.

FAQ

Anticipate questions—and have the answers at your fingertips.

RESOURCES

See projects that have successfully used this approach elsewhere and explore how research-based foresight will inform the game scenario.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Call to Action

Face the Future: A Game About the Future of Empathy



You're in a world where you can feel what other people feel. Now what?

When we imagine the future together, what we're really doing is participating in the process of anticipatory history. We imagine what we might do in a world of new possibilities, so we can prepare to act ethically and responsibly. We think about the difficult decisions that we'll have to make in the future, and how those decisions will affect others. By thinking about that future now, we give ourselves more time to consider our response. More time to figure out how to become upstanders when change is happening fast. In other words, thinking about the future today prepares us to make history, tomorrow.

—Jane McGonigal, Director of Game Research + Development, Institute for the Future

From November 13 at 6:00pm EST through November 14 at 11:59pm EST, Facing History will pioneer an online, global game for social change that will convene hundreds, even thousands of students, educators, and community members from around the world to imagine what a better future for society might look like in 2026.

We will challenge each other to radically reimagine the future of empathy and civic participation, taking people outside the bounds of daily modes of thinking. The experience encourages collaboration to build shared visions and meaningful conversation about what the future might provide for us all.

**Join us in this powerful opportunity to engage young people and adults alike
in our shared mission of creating a better future.**

The 30-hour future-making event will consist of two key components:

1. THE ONLINE GAME

Face the Future: A Game About the Future of Empathy.

For just 30 hours, from November 13–14, hundreds of players from across the country and around the world will join together for an online game and conversation to challenge their assumptions and imagine the new kinds of choices we will be making in the future. **Join us at FaceTheFuture.org**

2. COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Presented by Facing History and Ourselves and The Allstate Foundation.

Jane McGonigal, *New York Times* bestselling author, and world-renowned designer of games for social impact—including the one we will be playing—will be featured in a Community Conversation on the evening of Sunday, November 13. Tune in online or join us in person as she explores the power of futures thinking to start making history today.



FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

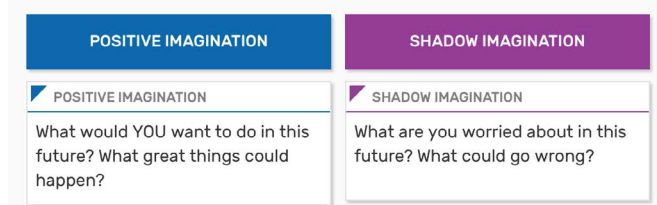
Ambassador's Overview

On November 13–14, the Facing History community is invited to join an online game-like event called **Face the Future: A Game About the Future of Empathy**. The goal is to engage educators, students, and the broader public to think about the choices we will be making ten years from today.

The game will take place primarily on an online platform called Foresight Engine™, developed by Institute for the Future, a 48-year-old non-profit research organization, to engage large numbers of people in fast-paced sharing of ideas about the future. Here are some of the basics about the game:

THE GAME BEGINS WITH A SCENARIO. This short movie provides a peek into a possible future and is designed to be provocative; to invite players to think about how the world is changing and how those shifts might alter opportunities, choices, and our most important social institutions.

GAME PARTICIPANTS “PLAY CARDS.” *Positive Imagination* cards will invite players to answer, “What do you want to do in this future? What great things could happen?” while *Shadow Imagination* cards will focus on “What are you worried about in this future? What could go wrong?” Players then build on these starting-place ideas with *Predict*, *Act*, *Cheer*, *Investigate*, and *Rally*. “Cards” are described more fully on the game platform



EACH IDEA IS A MICRO-CONTRIBUTION.

140 characters that capture the basics, like a tweet. Multiple players build on these ideas with additional cards, creating long chains that develop the ideas. Players win points whenever anyone builds on their ideas, so you can see how other people respond to what you've shared.

A DASHBOARD KEEPS TRACK OF THE FLOW OF IDEAS.

Want to find the highlights? Visit the game blog, which highlights ideas that are rising to the top, or search for keywords that are meaningful to you. Challenges and awards will be issued throughout the game to focus energy on certain topics and issues.

THE GAME WILL BE FACILITATED BY A SKILLED GROUP OF GAME GUIDES FROM IFTF AND FACING HISTORY.

They will mark cards as Super Interesting, or call a card out as Conventional Wisdom if it doesn't push beyond the current boundaries. They will also synthesize the themes, highlight exceptional players for special recognition, set challenges for the group, and give awards on the game blog.

The online game will take place in a limited, 30-hour window, but we encourage teachers and classrooms to get a head start. Teachers will be able to download the **Educator Toolkit** to learn how to integrate gameplay into their curriculum, and how to structure conversations with their students. It only takes 30 minutes to participate meaningfully, but we often find that players get sucked in for hours! During the game event, classes are encouraged to use their own hashtag to make finding classmates' comments easier while they engage in digital conversations amongst themselves and with others from around the world.

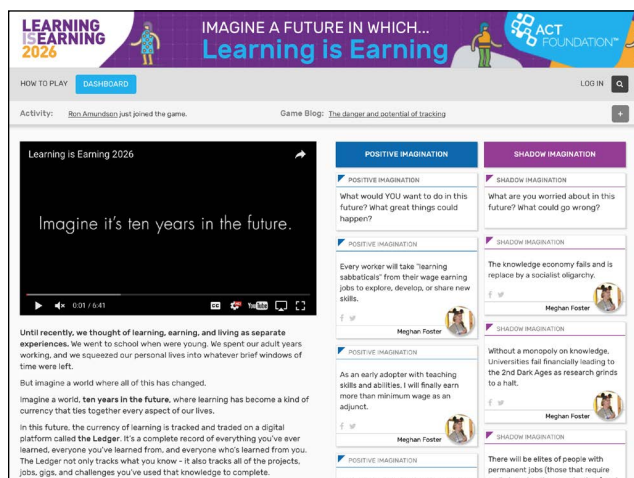
Your task: help spread the word, pre-register as many participants and classes as possible at [FaceTheFuture.org](https://www.FaceTheFuture.org), and help get everyone ready to make the best possible contributions to the game. **And don't forget to participate, too!**

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Ambassador's Checklist

□ EXPLAIN THE PROJECT

Face the Future is a game of ideas: a 30-hour event to uncover innovative ideas and spark meaningful conversations across the country and around the world about the future of empathy. Using IFTF's Foresight Engine platform, the game will give each participant an opportunity to post their thoughts in short, tweet-like "micro-contributions." They earn points by building on one another's ideas to create long chains of innovation. While players can meaningfully participate in only 30 minutes, many find themselves playing for hours on end. Expect a tone of urgent optimism and fast-paced interaction online, with game moderators highlighting the boldest ideas to push beyond the obvious.



Example from *Learning is Earning 2026* online Foresight Engine game.

□ PRE-REGISTER EVERYONE YOU CAN

Encourage the people in your network to sign up for game updates at FaceTheFuture.org. Pre-registering will ensure that they get all the information they need to play the game and take on the challenges come November. Whether people pre-register or not, they can create a player on the game site FaceTheFuture.org at launch on November 13, 2016.

□ ENLIST TEACHERS AND CLASSROOMS

Student participation is at the core of **Face the Future**. Teachers can run day-of gameplay sessions in their classroom, or even assign gameplay as homework! The Foresight Engine platform provides a new (and fun!) avenue into important conversations. The **Face the Future** game will only be open for 30 hours (6:00pm EST, November 13–11:59pm EST, November 14) and we want to involve as many voices as possible during that time. As the school year is starting up, make sure you, your colleagues, and community get **Face the Future** on their calendar! Later in the fall we will be releasing an **Educator Toolkit** with the resources to help teachers and students participate.

□ GET TO KNOW THE PLATFORM

Participating in a Foresight Engine engagement is a unique experience and sometimes you need to see it to believe it. Head to LearningIsEarning2026.org, a game that took place earlier this year, and poke around the website. While our live game will be quite different—with ideas flying by in real time—it's a great way to get your feet wet. Still have questions? Many Facing History staffers played the *Learning is Earning 2026* game. Reach out and ask about their experience by emailing game@facinghistory.org.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Ambassador's Checklist (cont.)

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE GAME

- **Distribute flyers:** Download and print our flyer. Distribute to your educator and community networks to post schools, classrooms, and in your community.
- **Tweet** about it using #FacetheFuture
Sample messages:
 - Join me to #FacetheFuture with @FacingHistory this November. Register today: <http://bit.ly/2bAjvtu>
 - I'm playing #FacetheFuture to imagine the future of empathy. Join me: <http://bit.ly/2bAjvtu>
 - Play a game about the future of empathy with @FacingHistory: <http://bit.ly/2bAjvtu> #FacetheFuture
 - Imagine you are in a world where you can feel what other people feel. Now what? <http://bit.ly/2bAjvtu> #FacetheFuture



From live event for Envision UCDavis online game.

EXTRA CREDIT: RECRUIT GAME CHAMPIONS

If you are, or if you come across anyone who is, particularly enthusiastic about the game, you can recruit them to help spread the word even further! There are two extra-credit roles that you can take on:

- **Blogger:** During the 30 hours of gameplay, bloggers watch and engage with the ideas coming into the platform and then synthesize themes on the live game blog. While the blog will be written primarily by Facing History and IFTF staff, we would love to integrate guest posts by educators, students, and community members as well! Interested in writing a guest blog post? Let us know before, during, or after the game at game@facinghistory.org!
- **Organize Day-of Gameplay Sessions:** This is for the super committed. Educators, students, and community members can organize an event anytime during the 30 hours of play, to bring a group of people together to play in person. The group can be 5 people, or an entire school assembly. Anyone planning a gameplay session or event can apply to receive a \$200 Participation Grant. The game can provide you with funds for game activities like food, prizes for participation, transportation costs, or organizing an onsite game play for staff at your organization. Educators, students, and community organizations are encouraged to apply! Start by pre-registering at FaceTheFuture.org and we will send you the application. Let us know if you are thinking about planning an event, and we can help to share some ideas.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Frequently Asked Questions

Q | WHAT IS THE FACE THE FUTURE GAME?

Face the Future is a 30-hour massively open online game and conversation that will invite hundreds of educators, students, and Facing History community members to consider the future of empathy, in the year 2026. The game will be taking place November 13–14, on an online gaming platform, found at [FaceTheFuture.org](https://www.FaceTheFuture.org). Both individuals and classrooms will be invited to participate and interact with each other on the gaming platform by watching a video scenario and then submitting Twitter-length micro-contributions or “cards” considering both the positive and shadow sides of the scenario, and interacting with other players. **Face the Future** is a new kind of Community Conversation that aims to engage the Facing History community in new and meaningful ways.

Q | WHY PLAY A GAME TO ENVISION THE FUTURE OF EMPATHY?

As innovators, we want to use a new and exciting approach to maximizing inclusion and idea generation. This gamified approach is designed specifically to gather many diverse ideas to be shared across a large number of people. Games take people outside the bounds of daily modes of thinking. When we want to think about the future, it's important to loosen these bounds so that we can anticipate the plausible, but not yet realized. Games also encourage both competition and collaboration—both can be very useful in building shared visions of the future. Finally, games are fun and through play, we can generate meaningful conversations about the future. For more information, check out www.iftf.org/foresightengine.

Q | WHY FOCUS ON THE FUTURE? ISN'T THIS FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES?

When we imagine the future together, what we're really doing is participating in the process of anticipatory history. We imagine what we might do in a world of new possibilities, so we can prepare to act ethically and responsibly. We think about the difficult decisions that we'll have to make in the future, and how those decisions will affect others. By thinking about that future now, we give ourselves more time to consider our response. More time to figure out how to become upstanders when change is happening fast. In other words, thinking about the future today prepares us to make history, tomorrow.

Q | WHY ONLY 30 HOURS?

One of the most exciting elements of Foresight Engine games is how many people are on the platform and in conversation at the same time. This real-time engagement with hundreds of other people who you have never met before creates an atmosphere of excitement, possibility, and anticipation. One of the best ways to get so many people on at the same time? Limiting gameplay to only a small window of opportunity. This drives up enthusiasm and momentum and allows for the maximum amount of fun and engagement.

At the end of the 30 hours, the website will stop accepting new ideas. However, the website and game archive will remain live. You will still be able to browse the conversations and search for players, ideas, and inspiration.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q | HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO PLAY?

Watching the scenario video and adding your first response will take less than 10 minutes! However, the magic of the platform isn't just adding your idea in, it's interacting with hundreds of others in conversation and exchange of ideas, and seeing how those ideas evolve over time. Based on previous gameplay, Facing History staff estimate that 30-45 minutes is enough to get comfortable and engaged on the platform. If you leave after 30 minutes, however (which is actually pretty hard to do—gameplay is addictive and we really aren't kidding when we say people get sucked in for hours!), we'd encourage you to come back again later to check out how conversations have grown and changed and what new ideas are trending.

Q | HOW MUCH TIME ARE WE ASKING OF TEACHERS AND THEIR CLASSROOMS?

There are various levels at which teachers and classes can participate in the Face the Future game. Our recommendation is that teachers consider 1-2 class periods for prep, a HW assignment for Sunday, Nov 13, and one class period of play on Monday, November 14. They can also offer an optional huddle/game play session during lunchtime or after school, or a homework assignment for Monday night. More details on participation will be available in the Educator Toolkit.

Q | WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE GAME? WILL WE SEE THE RESULTS?

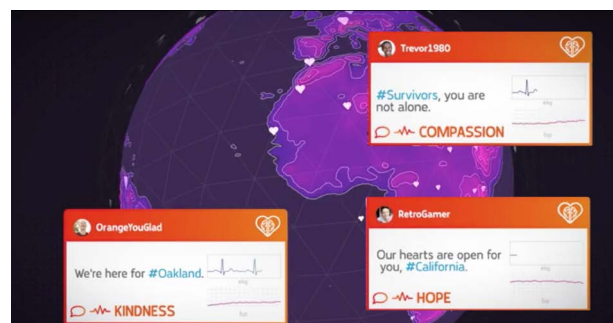
Yes, you'll see the results in multiple forms:

- Live analysis will highlight key themes and winning ideas via the game blog and Twitter as the game progresses.
- A post-game memo will be released approximately two months after the game (depending on the number and type of responses), with game results analysis and synthesis. It will be shared with Facing History's network and across our social media platforms.

The key themes and findings from the blog and post-game memo will be processed, analyzed, and summarized to help inform Facing History's work moving forward. This will include a series of participant reflections, blog posts, and classroom activities for Facing History educators around the world.

Q | WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE PROVOCATIVE FUTURE VIDEO? ISN'T THAT JUST ONE VIEW OF THE FUTURE?

Sometimes one good story about the future is the best way to explore all the possible innovations. This video is designed to be provocative, to immerse us in the world of 2026 and to challenge our familiar concepts of individuality, communication, intimacy, and understanding. These challenges encourage us to think outside the familiar conversations of today and to consider the wide range of forces that will impact our day to day interactions ten years down the line. While the video scenario may seem far out, it was created based on research around real things that are happening today. Given the drivers of change that will shape empathy, how will we respond as individuals and as a society?



FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q | WHAT IF TEACHERS WANT TO TRACK THEIR STUDENTS' CONTRIBUTIONS? HOW WOULD THEY DO THAT?

In order to track participation, classrooms or schools can develop short hashtags to add to the end of all of the cards they play (ex: #FHSperiod3). In the past we have seen this as a nice way to promote gameplay, to track your impact, promote a certain issue you care about, and to easily locate and respond to or observe cards coming in from others that you know. Using the class hashtag, teachers can track cards submitted by their students (if this were a homework assignment, for example). In terms of individual students contributions, teachers can either ask students to use their real name as their username or to send them the username they are using. Even if they do ask for student usernames, we would still recommend a class hashtag. It is the easiest way for a group to find and “talk to each other” on this open and fast-paced platform.

Q | HOW IS THIS A GAME? IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY GAME I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE.

Face the Future is a game of ideas. It comes from a genre called “serious games”—games that aren’t designed solely for entertainment purposes but rather, have a larger goal they are trying to accomplish. The Foresight Engine platform is, in essence, a massive gamified conversation. It incentivises certain behaviors by awarding players points. The gamification elements in the Foresight Engine are designed to promote conversation and collaboration. A player doesn’t win any points for posting an idea. What they do get points for, however, is when other players respond to and build on their ideas.

Q | ARE THERE PRIZES AND INCENTIVES?

Challenges and awards will be issued throughout the game to focus energy on certain topics and issues. These awards will be announced during the game through blog posts and on social media. Participants will also be recognized on social media when their contributions hit a certain level of engagement.

Facing History will be supplying as many of the participating students classrooms and schools with t-shirts as we can. We are also offering Participation Grants. Educators, students, or community members who are planning a Gameplay session or event, can apply for a \$200 grant to support those activities. Just pre-register to learn more at FaceTheFuture.org. Or email us at game@facinghistory.org.

Q | TECHNICAL AND REQUIREMENTS

The game can be played on a computer, tablet, or smartphone—all you need is a reasonably recent version of a web browser and an Internet connection. Players can also contribute idea cards to the game via Twitter by tweeting with one of two hashtags:

- **#FeelThatPositive** to contribute a new Positive Imagination card.
- **#FeelThatShadow** to contribute a new Shadow Imagination card.

Q | WHAT HAPPENS TO STUDENT DATA? HOW SECURE IS THE GAME?

No contact or private information of any sort will be shared with anyone outside the Institute for the Future and Facing History and Ourselves. Ever.

The full *Privacy Policy and Terms of Use* is included on the following page.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Privacy Policy & Terms of Use

Public, Sharable, and Reusable

The Foresight Engine is a public good. Everything created or contributed here is added to a public database that can be freely accessed by anyone, anywhere. The Foresight Engine operates under principles of the Creative and Science Commons. All content created in the lab is automatically published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 license.

Privacy

Our privacy policy is simple. We won't share your contact or private information with anyone outside the Institute for the Future and Facing History. Facing History may contact you to alert you to future games or invite you to participate in focus groups or other engagements for subsequent phases of research into the future of empathy. You are not obliged to participate in any further activity after you have finished playing this game.

Community Standards

First and foremost, be kind to one another. The Foresight Engine is a forum for individuals to express their hopes, concerns, and personal predictions about the future. In order to ensure that it remains a community that is welcoming and open to everyone, we ask that everyone follow these community norms:

NO...

Hate Speech

Sexually Explicit or Graphic Content

Violence or Threats

Bullying or Harassment

The Foresight Engine is a place for your imagination to run wild. While we invite you to challenge default ideas about the future, we do not permit discrimination against groups or individuals based on sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, medical condition, national origin, legal status, or religion. We reserve the right to remove any content that violates these standards. We encourage participants to report inappropriate behavior by clicking the flag icon on any card. Please note that this will send the card to a moderator for review but does not guarantee that it will be removed from the site.

We May Quote You

Anything you create on the Foresight Engine may be quoted in whole or in part in forecasts or future reports by the Institute for the Future. Anything we quote will be attributed to your Foresight Engine player name. You are not required to use your real name as your player name. Many players choose to play anonymously or pseudonymously.

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Resources

PREVIOUS FORESIGHT ENGINE GAME—see what the game platform looks like!

Learning is Earning 2026 www.learningisearning2026.org

SAMPLE VIDEO SCENARIOS—see what a future video looks like!

Learning is Earning 2026 www.learningisearning2026.org

UCSF2025 www.iftf.org/ucsf2025

Connected Citizens www.iftf.org/our-work/people-technology/games/connected-citizens

TALKS BY JANE MCGONIGAL—see what the game’s designer (and our Community Conversation speaker) is all about!

Gaming can make a better world (TED talk)

www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_gaming_can_make_a_better_world?language=en

The game that can give you 10 extra years of life (TED talk)

www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_the_game_that_can_give_you_10_extra_years_of_life

The future of imagination www.aspenideas.org/session/aspen-lecture-future-imagination

SIGNALS OF CHANGE—see how the future of empathy is already being created today!

“The future is already here—it’s just not evenly distributed” —William Gibson

Change doesn’t come out of thin air. While there is no way to know exactly what the future may hold, what we can do is look at innovative tools and practices that are happening around us today, at futures in the making—at signals of change.

A *signal* is typically a small or local innovation or disruption that has the potential to grow in scale and geographic distribution. A signal can be a new product, a new practice, a new market strategy, a new policy, or new technology. It can be an event, a local trend, or an organization. It can also be a recently revealed problem or state of affairs. In short, it is something that catches our attention at one scale and in one locale and points to larger implications for other locales or even globally.

Curious about how empathy is changing? Check out these signals:

Sensing your feelings

[Open your mind to “brainware”](#)

[Wearable brain scanner tells your computer when you’re overwhelmed](#)

[Smart band-aid measures the stress hormones in your sweat](#)

[New sweat sensors can detect biomarkers of PTSD](#)

[Smartphone app detects mood swings by analyzing your voice](#)

[Painless, 24/7 measurement of blood-sugar will help explain your mood](#)

[Muse, the brain-sensing headband](#)

[Dress measures your adrenaline levels, changes shape in response](#)

[Brain-sensing device for dogs could translate their feelings into speech](#)

Sharing your feelings

[Millions share their personal biodata with friends and family](#)

[The next generation of fitness trackers will be bio-trackers](#)

[Within 10 years, it maybe possible to share your feelings telepathically](#)

[Wireless brain sensor can stream real-time data for 48 hours on a single AA battery](#)

FACE THE FUTURE THE GAME

Resources (cont.)

Feeling other feelings

[The science behind the new wave of electrical brain stimulation](#)

[Thync neurostimulation kit allows you to pick an emotion, then feel it](#)

[Neurostimulation caps are “Fitbit for your brain”](#)

[Non-invasive technology so you can stimulate your own vagus nerve](#)

Collective feelings

[Emotions seem to be detectable in air \(so you can measure a crowd's collective feelings\)](#)

[Global body map shows 20 billion biometric data points like heart rate and blood pressure of users worldwide](#)

[Band collects heart rate data from fans to create more engaging sets](#)

Tracking your body

[Sensors embedded in workout clothes track every muscle you move](#)

Streaming personal data for social justice

[Livestreaming the death of Philando Castile and police brutality across the US](#)

RELATED FORESIGHT FROM INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE—see some of IFTF's recent strategic foresight research related to the topic of empathy!

As Fitbits for Feelings Emerge, Withers Empathy? www.iftf.org/future-now/article-detail/-f5ec347044/

Superstruct Strategies www.iftf.org/uploads/media/strategy%20cards_READER.pdf

The Happiness Kit www.iftf.org/our-work/global-landscape/ten-year-forecast/2010-ten-year-forecast/happiness-kit/