



Y.E.S.— 4-H Youth Experiencing Success

A PROGRAM TO
DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM
Facilitator's Handbook



Virginia
Cooperative
Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State

Publication 388-350
Reprinted 1991



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no 388-350
1991
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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. James F. Johnson, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Clinton V. Turner, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg.

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YOUTH EXPERIENCING SUCCESS (Y.E.S.)

A PROGRAM TO DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM

OBJECTIVES

- A) To involve youth in a special interest program designed to enable a positive transition into adulthood through exploration of the following life-skill areas:
- 1) Recognizing and understanding self-victimizing thoughts and behaviors;
 - 2) Improving communication skills;
 - 3) Facilitating critical thinking in problem-solving;
 - 4) Constructively dealing with authority;
 - 5) Managing stress;
 - 6) Coping with separation and loss; and
 - 7) Building strong interpersonal relationships.
- B) To motivate youth to become Y.E.S. Teen Leaders.

FORMAT

Each session is roughly based on a 1½-hour format, and organized according to:

- “Purpose” and “Materials” - gives planning information
- “Warm-Up” - provides group focus
- “Lead-In” - provides introduction and content information
- “Activities” - describes how to conduct the learning activities
- “Wrap-Up” - provides closure for each session

USES FOR THE PROGRAM

1. Special Interest.

The Y.E.S. program can stand alone as a special interest program. Marketing strategies may be planned to appeal to the social needs of the adolescent. Innovative delivery techniques are encouraged! Examples are incorporating Y.E.S. into a camp or retreat curriculum.

2. Leadership Training.

Leadership skills are strengthened as a result of building a positive self-concept. Therefore, the Y.E.S. series can be used to supplement the training of youth leaders. Used with county councils, Honor Clubs, and 4-H club officers, the program works to strengthen attitudes toward personal leadership ability as well as self-esteem.

3. Team Building with Groups.

The Y.E.S. sessions focus on helping individuals learn about each other. Much positive interaction occurs to help the group unite as a team. It is possible to use the activities independently with different groups: County Council; Advisory Committee; or Leaders' Association.

4. Adaptable to many audiences.

The basic special interest program is designed for youth aged 13 to 19. A possible secondary objective with this age group is that they become teen leaders to a group of peers or a younger audience of 9- to 12-year olds. Other audiences for the program could include at-risk, low income, and handicapped youth.

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Youth Experiencing Success (Y.E.S.) Facilitator
PURPOSE:	Arrange learning experiences for youth through specific group activities.
RESPONSIBILITIES:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Become familiar with and develop a working knowledge of the Y.E.S. components.2. Facilitate an open learning environment characterized by information sharing, respect for others, and self-discovery.3. Maintain an open, self-disclosing, honest, and accepting attitude.
QUALIFICATIONS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Belief in youth.2. Ability to communicate diplomatically and enthusiastically.3. Ability to commit sufficient time to fulfill responsibilities.4. Willingness and time to take necessary training.5. Interest and/or skill in specific group activities.
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Y.E.S. Coordinator
TIME REQUIREMENTS:	2½-hours at planning meeting 7½-hours of group facilitation 2½-hours at evaluation meeting

EVALUATION

The Y.E.S. evaluation is designed to answer the following questions: (1) Were the educational objectives met; and (2) Can the program be improved?

- (A) Administer the Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) to assess attitudes toward self in a Pre-test (prior to starting the first Y.E.S. session) and Post-test (after the Y.E.S. series is completed). Comparison of group averages on the Pre-test to group averages on the Post-test will provide a measure of self-esteem change.
- (B) Administer the Y.E.S. member evaluation to assess impact of the program on participants. To maximize your response rate, have participants fill out the evaluations during the last session.
- (C) The Y.E.S. Facilitator Evaluation is designed to provide feedback on orientation, subject matter, and delivery system.

In addition to the formal evaluation methods, the value of informal feedback cannot be emphasized enough. A suggestion for facilitators is to keep a diary of group feedback - what worked, what didn't - in order to simplify the final evaluation process and to share with other facilitators if there are several Y.E.S. groups.

Y.E.S. Scale

Please place number 1, 2, 3, or 4 in the blank next to the following statements.

1. Strongly agree

2. Agree

3. Disagree

4. Strongly Disagree

- _____ 1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
- _____ 2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- _____ 3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
- _____ 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- _____ 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
- _____ 6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
- _____ 7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- _____ 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- _____ 9. I certainly feel useless at times.
- _____ 10. At times I think I am no good at all.

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head

Y.E.S. Scale

Facilitator's Guide

Please place number 1, 2, 3, or 4 in the blank next to the following statements.

1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly Disagree

_____ 1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others. (1,2)

_____ 2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. (1,2)

_____ 3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (3,4)

_____ 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. (1,2)

_____ 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (3,4)

_____ 6. I take a positive attitude toward myself. (1,2)

_____ 7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (1,2)

_____ 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (3,4)

_____ 9. I certainly feel useless at times. (3,4)

_____ 10. At times I think I am no good at all. (3,4)

Numbers in parentheses refer to high self-esteem responses.



heart

Y.E.S. MEMBER EVALUATION

1. What is the most significant thing you have learned about yourself?
2. What did you learn that might help you improve relationships with others?
3. What did you like the most? Why?
4. What did you like the least? Why?
5. What would you change about the group?
6. Would you recommend this group to others? Why or why not?
7. Would you consider being a group leader at one or more future Y.E.S. sessions?
8. What other topic would you like to see in future Y.E.S. sessions?



hands

Y.E.S. FACILITATOR EVALUATION

1. In what ways would you modify the orientation session for Y.E.S. Facilitators?
2. What Y.E.S. activities worked especially well with your group?
3. What Y.E.S. activities would you change?
4. What evidence of changes in behavior or skills have you seen in the participants? (You may attach notes, if you've kept them throughout the series.)
5. What was your most rewarding experience?
6. What was your biggest concern or problem? Was it resolved?
7. Please evaluate the time commitments that were projected. Were they realistic?
8. Other comments? Suggestions?

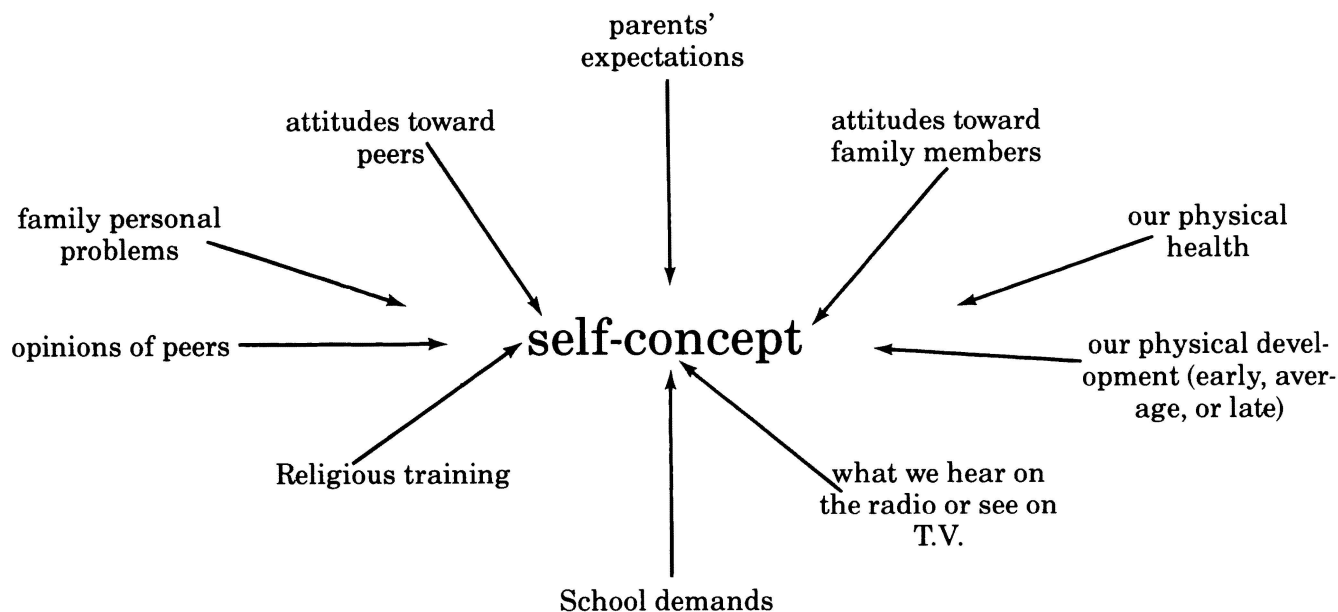


health

SESSION I

Developing A Positive Self-Concept

- Purpose** To encourage a safe and supportive environment for self-exploration.
To understand how a positive self-concept is developed through understanding and accepting one's own abilities and limitations.
To understand the importance of self-understanding as a foundation for understanding, accepting, and getting along with others.
- Materials** 3 x 5 cards
Paper, pencils, pins
"Personal Coat of Arms"
- Warm-Up** On a 3 x 5 card, have teens respond to the following three questions:
1) "I feel best when people"
2) "I am happiest when I"
3) "Something I'm really good at is"
Have teens share their responses with a partner and then with the group.
- Lead-In** Let's spend a few minutes discovering how self-concept develops. Self-concept is how we think about ourselves. It's how much we like, accept, respect ourselves. It develops from our unique experiences, relationships, successes, and failures. Our self-concept is a powerful force in how we grow and develop, because the way we act usually fits with the image we have created. This image is constantly changing with new experiences and relationships (See illustration 1).



Source: Hurlock, Elizabeth B., *Child Development*, 4th ed., New York: McGraw Hill.

Ask the group to give some examples of how self-concept can be influenced by each of the above areas.

Activities Have everyone make an “IALAC” sign and pin it on their shirt.

Each one of us carries around an invisible IALAC sign (pronounced I-ah-lack). IALAC stands for “I Am Loveable And Capable.” The size of our sign—how good we feel about ourselves—is often affected by how others interact with us. If someone hurts us or puts us down, then a piece of our sign is destroyed just like this (tear off a corner of the sign). Here is a story of how this can happen.

[Tell the IALAC story. Fill it in with your imagination, emotion, and drama, or make up one of your own!]

I Am Loveable And Capable*

A seventh-grade boy named Michael is still lying in bed three minutes after his alarm goes off. All of a sudden his mother calls to him, “Michael, you lazy-head, get your body out of bed and get down here before I send your father up there!” (rip!) Michael gets out of bed, begins to get dressed, and can’t find a clean pair of socks. His mother tells him he’ll have to wear yesterday’s pair. (rip!) He tries to brush his teeth and his older sister, who’s already locked herself in the bathroom, tells him to drop dead! (rip!) He goes to breakfast to find soggy cereal waiting for him. (rip!) As he leaves for school, he forgets his lunch and his mother calls him, “Michael you’ve forgotten your lunch; you’d forget your head if it weren’t attached!” (rip!) As he gets to the corner, he sees the school bus pull away and so he has to walk to school. (rip!) He’s late to school and has to get a pass from the principal who gives him a lecture. (rip!)

[Continue the story through the school day with appropriate examples. Some possibilities are:]

- Forgetting his homework
- Getting a 68 on a spelling test
- Being called on for the only homework question he can’t answer
- Making a mistake in reading so that all the kids laugh
- Being picked last to play ball at recess
- Dropping his tray in the lunchroom, with everybody applauding
- Being picked on by bullies on the way home from school
- Being referred to as “Hey you!” in gym class

[End the story by having Michael go to bed that night with his IALAC sign about as big as a quarter!]

Some questions to start the discussion are:

- How does your IALAC sign get torn up? What things affect you the most?
- What do you do that tears the IALAC signs of others?
- How do you feel when your IALAC sign gets ripped? When you rip someone else’s?

*Source: Simon, Sidney B. *I Am Loveable and Capable: A Modern Allegory On The Classical Put Down*. Niles, Illinois: Argus Communication, 1974.



WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP PEOPLE GLUE THEIR SIGNS BACK TOGETHER?

Let's stretch our bodies and our imaginations as we play "Human Compressor."

Pretend that your IALAC sign is now a balloon. When people are nice to us, it's like putting air in our balloons; when people hurt us, they deflate our balloons.

Have one teen volunteer to be the compressor. Have everyone else lie down and think of themselves as limp, uninflated balloons.

As the compressor starts to huff and puff and do deep knee bends (or anything else compressors do!), the balloons start to inflate. As the compressor begins to fill the balloons with air, the teens puff out their cheeks, stretch out their arms, and assume whatever balloon shapes they can imagine. Continuing in this manner the compressor then describes the events of the day to the balloons, who respond by inflating or deflating, depending upon how they view the positive or negative events. The compressor can now tie off the balloons and set them free to float, sink, bump into each other, and generally act balloony.

There are several ways to end this game:

1. The compressor can use an imaginary pin and pop the balloons one by one; or
2. All of the balloons can let their air out and spin, snap, shoot around, and make balloon noises.

When all of the balloons have been deflated, provide teens with a copy of "Personal Coat of Arms." Ask them to create their individual coat of arms by making a drawing in the appropriate section that expresses their thoughts regarding each of the following questions (or come up with some of your own):

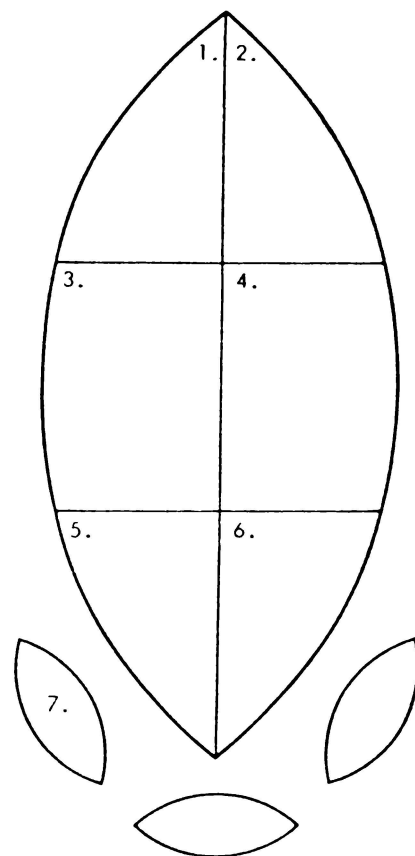
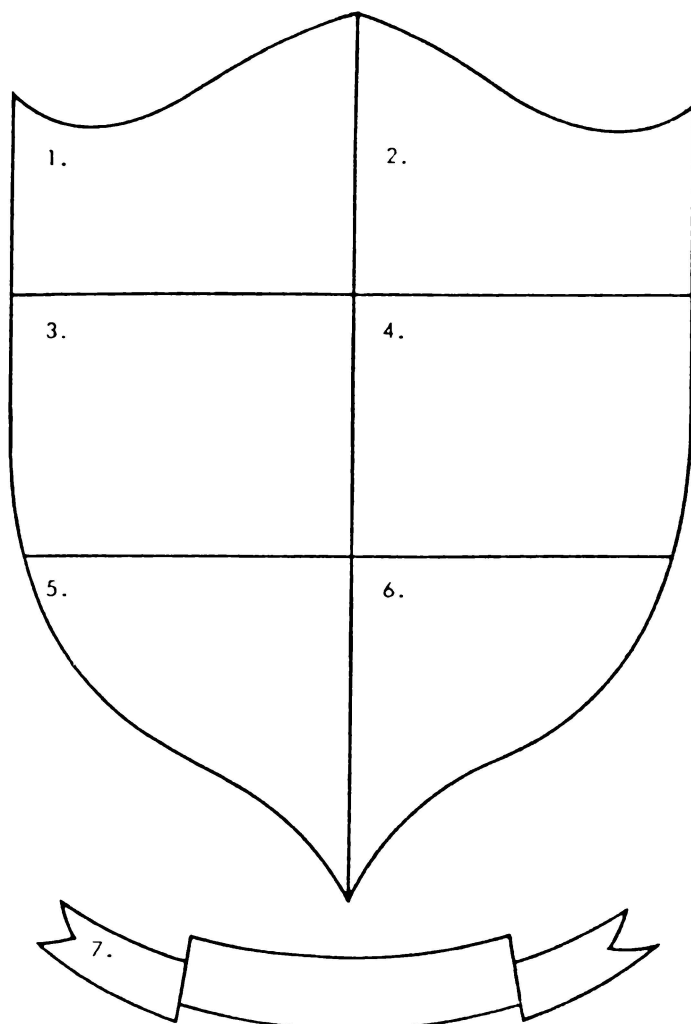
1. Express in a drawing the most significant event in your life from birth to age nine.
2. Express in a drawing your greatest success or achievement in the past year.
3. Express in a drawing something you would like to accomplish by the time you are sixty-five.
4. Express in a drawing your happiest moment last year.
5. Express in a drawing something you are good at.
6. If you had one year to live and were guaranteed success in whatever you attempted, what would you attempt?
7. Write your motto - what best describes your outlook on life.

Wrap-Up Invite participants to share their coat of arms with the group.

As we continue to grow and experience life, we learn from our successes as well as our mistakes. With this comes a sense of our own inner strength and a feeling of having personal control over our own lives. Instead of seeing our IALAC signs as targets of our own and other's words and actions, we see ourselves as the creative force in our own lives.



MY PERSONAL COAT OF ARMS



Caterpillar: . . . and who are you?

Alice: I . . . I hardly know, Sir, just at present—at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.

Lewis Carroll
Alice in Wonderland

SESSION II

Building Communication Skills

Purpose	To explore one-way and two-way communication and to relate their application to interpersonal and group settings. To explore how we communicate our feelings. To develop effective communication skills.
Materials	Paper, pencils matches one-way and two-way communication diagrams
Warm-Up	Lighted match exercise. One at a time, each participant lights a match and responds to the following statements: “The trouble with being honest is. . .” The catch is that you can only talk as long as your match is lit; when your match burns out, you have to pass the book of matches to the next person.
Lead-In	Communication is more than just what we say; it is also how we say it and how it is understood by others. “How we say it” includes all of the nonverbal communication signals that we are constantly sending—such as our facial expressions, gestures, mannerisms, and tone of voice. These signals are combined with our words and interpreted by others. By improving our skills in interpersonal communication, we can improve the quality of our relationships with others.
Activities	Let’s do an exercise that will help us see how the different parts of communication work together.

Select one teen to be the demonstrator and have him/her sit with his/her back toward the group. Hand out paper and pencils to the other participants and have them move so that they will not be able to see each other’s drawings.

Explain that this is an exercise in one-way and two-way communication. Give the demonstrator a copy of Diagram I with the instructions for drawing the squares. Tell the group to draw the squares exactly as the demonstrator tells them—asking *no questions* and making *no responses*.

When the demonstrator is finished, give him/her a copy of Diagram II with the instructions. Have the demonstrator face the group and direct them in drawing the squares. The demonstrator is now allowed to answer questions and repeat directions. When the participants have completed Diagram II, open the floor to discussion:

1. Why was Diagram I harder to draw than Diagram II?
2. What were some specific frustrations of the demonstrator? Of the participants?
3. In our day-to-day interactions, what gets in the way of good communication? What can we do to prevent this from happening?

Let’s practice our verbal and non-verbal skills by playing a game called “Hagoo.”

Did you know that it takes more muscles to frown than it does to smile? Based on that, Hagoo is a real test of strength!

Hagoo means “come here” in the language of the Tlingit Indians of Alaska. With “hagoo” they challenged each other to walk a laughing gauntlet without cracking a smile.

To form the gauntlet, divide the group into two teams and have them stand facing each other in lines about three feet apart. Two players, from opposing teams, face each other at opposite ends of the lines. They bow, say “hagoo,” and walk down the line—never breaking eye contact or their serious expressions. They pass in the middle and continue to the end of the line.

Diagram I: One-Way Communication

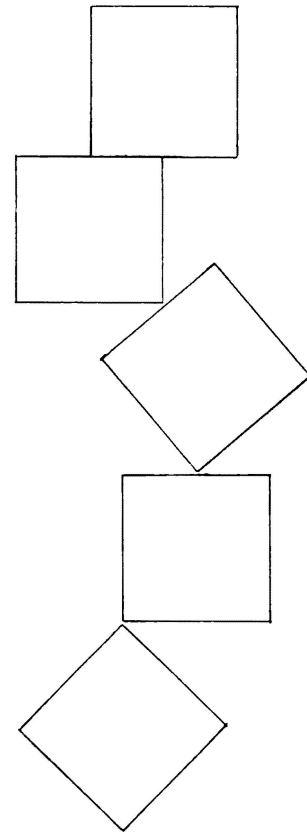
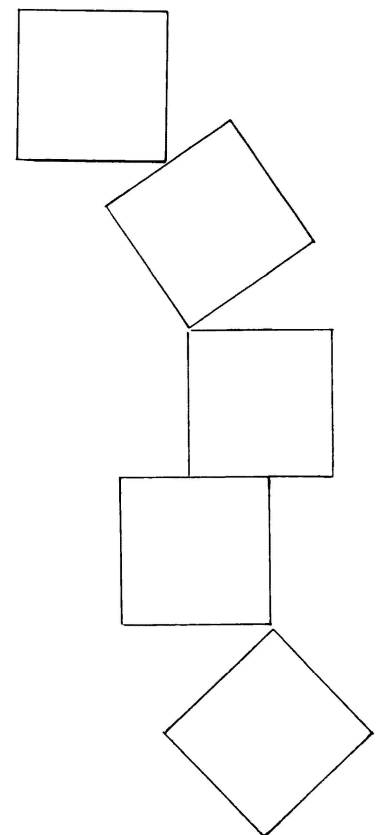


Diagram II: Two-Way Communication



While the challengers fight to maintain their composure, each team is trying to get them to smile—engaging in everything *except direct physical contact*. Successful challengers return to their team, while unsuccessful ones must now join the opposing team. The game ends when there is only one team left or when a serious face cannot be found!

Wrap-Up

Questions for group discussion:

1. How hard was it not to smile?
2. What did you think about to keep from smiling?
3. What kind of body language did you see?
4. What kind of body language do you consciously or unconsciously use to express yourself—to peers? family?



SESSION III

Building Problem - Solving Skills

Purpose	To promote confidence and skill in decision-making. To become aware of the role that values play in problem-solving.
Materials	Newsprint, magic markers paper, pencils hat
Warm-Up	Questions to start the group thinking: 1. Is there anything you value so strongly that if it were taken away you would leave this country? 2. If you found out that your year-old child was not yours, would you contact the hospital and get your real child?
Lead-In	Free-up your imagination and you've taken the first step toward building your decision-making skills. When we allow ourselves to step back from a problem and view it from several different perspectives, we are often pleasantly surprised to find more options than we ever knew existed.
Activities	Using the newsprint and magic markers, illustrate <i>The Drawbridge Story</i> while you are telling it to the group. After you have finished, ask each participant to rank the characters (from one to six) in the order of their responsibility for the death of the Baroness. Next, open the discussion by deciding on a <i>group</i> rank order for the six characters.

THE DRAWBRIDGE STORY*

As he left for a visit to his outlying districts, the jealous Baron warned his pretty wife: "Do not leave the castle while I am gone, or I will punish you severely when I return!"

But as the hours passed, the young Baroness grew lonely, and despite her husband's warning, decided to visit her lover who lived in the countryside nearby.

The castle was located on an island in a wide, fast-flowing river, with a drawbridge linking the island and the land at the narrowest point in the river.

"Surely my husband will not return before dawn," she thought, and ordered her servants to lower the drawbridge and leave it down until she returned.

After spending several pleasant hours with her lover, the Baroness returned to the drawbridge, only to find it blocked by a madman wildly waving a long and cruel knife.

"Do not attempt to cross this bridge, Baroness, or I will kill you," he raved.

Fearing for her life, the Baroness returned to her lover and asked him to help.

"Our relationship is only a romantic one," he said. "I will not help."

The Baroness then sought out a boatman on the river, explained her plight to him, and asked him to take her across the river in his boat.

"I will do it, but only if your can pay my fee of five marks."

“But I have no money with me!” the Baroness protested.

“That is too bad. No money, no ride,” the boatman said flatly.

Her fear growing, the Baroness ran, crying, to the home of a friend, and after again explaining the situation, begged for enough money to pay the boatman his fee.

“If you had not disobeyed your husband, this would not have happened,” the friend said. “I will give you no money.”

With dawn approaching and her last resource exhausted, the Baroness returned to the bridge in desperation, attempted to cross to the castle, and was slain by the madman.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE DRAWBRIDGE STORY

1. How do marriages and relationships today differ from those of the Baron and Baroness’s time?
 - a. How is “power” defined within a relationship? (by gender? financial status?)
2. What characteristics make up a nurturing husband? wife?
 - a. What happens when one partner grows and the other doesn’t?
 - b. How do individuals adapt to change?
3. How do individuals arrive at choosing a marital partner?
4. How does our self-esteem affect our relationship with other people?
 - a. What keeps people in “bad” relationships? (Low self-esteem, seeing themselves as helpless victims; lack of financial resources?)
5. Extramarital affairs have an impact on more than just the two parties involved. Who else is hurt by unfaithfulness?
 - a. What happens to our self-esteem when we hurt others?
6. Individuals become involved in extramarital affairs for different reasons: to hurt their partner; to make themselves feel better, etc. Considering these different motivators, what are the underlying needs that are not being met?
 - a. What are some responsible choices that individuals can make to get these needs met? (Communicate needs with spouse, seek counseling, leave the relationship, deal with the underlying self-esteem issues.)

*Source: Colorado Cooperative Extension Service, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado.

“Hats Off” is a game that requires brainstorming and problem-solving. Select a volunteer to wear the hat while the others develop strategies for getting it off. Although only one challenger may approach at a time, group members are free to verbally assist! When the hat is successfully removed, another victor emerges to wear the hat.

Wrap-Up

Questions for group discussion:

1. How did you arrive at your strategy?
2. What thinking steps did you go through?
3. Did you have to revise your strategy? Why?

Our imagination is our greatest natural resource—if we use it. New experiences bring new opportunities to practice our problem-solving skills.

1. Open yourself to new experiences.
2. File away what you learned.
3. Decide what needs to be acted upon.
4. Imagine the possibilities!

Homework: Start teens thinking about the next session on “Dealing With Authority,” while practicing their problem-solving skills. Read “The Pebble Story” to them and have them think about what they would do.

THE PEBBLE STORY

Many years ago, when a person who owed money could be thrown into jail, a merchant in London had the misfortune to owe a huge sum to a money lender. The money lender, who was old and ugly, fancied the merchant’s beautiful, teen-aged daughter. He proposed a bargain. He said that he would cancel the merchant’s debt if he could have the girl.

Both the merchant and his daughter were horrified at the proposal. So the cunning money lender proposed that they let providence decide the matter. He told them that he would put a black pebble and white pebble into an empty money bag, then the girl would pick out one of the pebbles. If she chose the black pebble, she would become his wife and her father’s debt would be cancelled. If she chose the white pebble, she would stay with her father but the debt still would be cancelled. But if she refused to pick out the pebble, her father would be throw into jail and she would starve.

Reluctantly, the merchant agreed. They were standing on a pebble-strewn path in the merchant’s garden as they talked, and the money lender stooped down to pick up the two pebbles. As he picked up the pebbles, the girl, sharp-eyed with fright, noticed that he picked up two black pebbles and put them into the money bag. He then told the girl to pick out the pebble that was to decide her fate and that of her father.

LISTEN TO THE MUSTN'TS*

Listen to the MUSTN'TS, child,
Listen to the DON'TS
Listen to the SHOULDN'TS
The IMPOSSIBLES, the WON'TS
Listen to the NEVER HAVES
Then listen close to me—
Anything can happen, child,
ANYTHING can be.

*Source: Silverstein, Shel, *Where The Sidewalk Ends*, New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

SESSION IV

Dealing With Conflict

Purpose	To acquaint members with alternative methods of coping with conflict. To examine individual styles of handling conflicts. To recognize the effects of particular coping methods.
Materials	None
Warm-Up	Have participants take turns sharing their thoughts on the following: "Which do you identify more with..." <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A Volkswagen or a Cadillac?2. Clothesline or kite string?3. New York City or Colorado?
Lead-In	Problem-solving can be approached in two ways: vertical thinking and lateral thinking. We typically find vertical thinking in the business world. It involves a logical, step-by-step approach, sometimes called "straight-line" thinking. Lateral thinking, as you might guess, is called "sideways" thinking. It involves collecting and examining all available information. Brainstorming is one example of lateral thinking.
Activities	Discuss individual solutions to "The Pebble Story": <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What would you have done if you had been the girl?2. If you had to advise her, what would you tell her to do?3. How did you reach your solution?4. What type of thinking helped us the most in finding solutions to "The Pebble Story"? Vertical thinking is limited to three solutions, all of which have negative consequences: 1) The girl should refuse to take the pebble; 2) The girl should show that there are two black pebbles in the bag and expose the money lender as a cheat; or 3) The girl should take a black pebble and sacrifice herself in order to save her father from prison. Vertical thinkers focus on the fact that the girl must choose a pebble. Lateral thinkers are concerned with the pebble that is left behind.

Solution: The girl in "The Pebble Story" put her hand into the money bag and drew out a pebble. Without looking at it, she fumbled and let it fall to the path, where it immediately was lost among all the other pebbles. "Oh, how clumsy of me," she said, "but never mind; if you look into the bag, you will be able to tell which pebble I took by the color of the one that is left."

Because the remaining pebble was, of course, black, it must be assumed that she had taken out the white pebble—the money lender dare not admit his dishonesty. In this way, by using lateral thinking, the girl changed what seemed to be an impossible situation into an extremely advantageous one. The girl actually was better off in this way than she would have been if the money lender had been honest and had put one black and one white pebble into the bag, for then she would have had only an even chance of being saved. As it happened, she was sure of remaining with her father and, at the same time, having his debt cancelled.

*Here are some difficult types of people and suggestions on how to cope with them:

HOSTILE AGGRESSIVES

Understanding them

What you can do

Bully, overwhelm, and attack.

They need to prove themselves.

Stand up for yourself. Give them time to run down. Look at them and get their attention carefully! (Drop something or call them by name.) Get them to sit down. Speak from your point of view; for example, "In my opinion..." Avoid head-on collisions. Be ready to be friendly.

COMPLAINERS

Understanding them

What you can do

Gripe, but never do anything about it.

They feel powerless and have an image of how things "ought" to be. Complaining causes them to appear blameless.

Listen, acknowledge, be prepared to interrupt with limiting responses. For example, they love the words "always" and "never." Pin down their complaints. Avoid getting into an accusation, defense, reaccusation circle. Move them into problem-solving. Stick to the facts. Expect frustration.

SILENT AND UNRESPONSIVES

Understanding them

What you can do

"Yep," "no," and grunt.

They use shy or aggressive behavior as a way of evading themselves.

Ask open-ended questions. Use a friendly, silent stare (expectant, quizzical). Remember that silence is "OK." Comment on what's happening.

SUPER AGREEABLES

Understanding them

What you can do

Funny, outgoing, no follow-through of words or deeds.

They have a need to be liked and to avoid conflict at all costs. They fear the loss of your approval.

Make honesty non-threatening; for example, "I value your friendship..." Be personable when you can. This promotes a feeling of acceptance. Help them to make realistic commitments, rather than unrealistic, global promises.

KNOW-IT-ALLS

Understanding them

What you can do

Condescending attitude.

Need to feel somehow "better" than others.

Do your homework: listen, acknowledge, question firmly without confronting. Take detours. Ask follow-up questions.

NEGATIVISTS

“It won’t work.” “It’s impossible.” Become more negative as people try to help them.

Understanding them

No one can do it as well as they can. They believe others are self-serving or don’t care.

What you can do

Avoid their trap by stating your own realistic optimism. Arguing is a waste of time. Go slowly when proposing solutions. State a worst case scenario: “What is the absolute worst that could happen?” Be prepared to go it alone. Use negativism constructively: play the devil’s advocate. Beware of creating negativism.

INDECISIVES

Stall major decisions until a decision is made for them.

Understanding them

They can’t make decisions because they’re afraid of hurting someone.

What you can do

Bring the issue to the surface—why are they stalling? Make it easy for them to be direct by helping them to problem-solve. Give support to their decision.

Wrap-Up

When we talk about coping, we are examining ways in which we can “right” the power balance. Coping is not acceptance or a long-term commitment to change someone’s personality.

Coping works by interfering with the “successful” functioning of the problem behavior. By responding in a way that is different from what the person has come to expect, both of you are able to change the old behavior pattern and move forward with healthy interactions.

*Source: Bramson, Robert. *Coping With Difficult People*. New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1982.



SESSION V

Coping With Stress

Purpose To examine some realities of stress as it relates to family, school, and inter-personal relationships.
To strengthen personal methods of coping with stress.

Materials paper, pencils, scissors
snack food
Health Style: A Self-Test

Warm-Up Have snacks out for the group to eat
Cut slips of paper (one for each participant) and write on all but one: EAT! TRY TO GET ANYONE NOT EATING TO EAT. On the last one write: DO NOT EAT. RESIST ALL EFFORTS TO GET YOU TO EAT.

After several minutes ask the group:

1. Was it easy to do what your slip of paper said?
2. What made it difficult or easy?
3. How did you feel? Were you under stress?

Lead-In What is stress?

- a natural part of life
- something that can be very good
- a condition that results from the way people respond to events in their life

Stress is not:

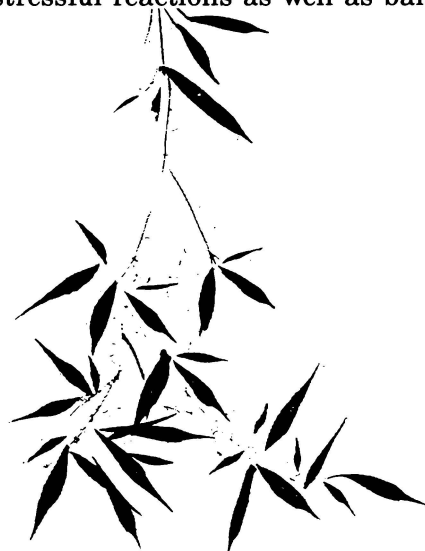
- nervous tension
- an emergency discharge of adrenalin
- necessarily the result of a negative event
- always bad
- something to avoid

There are two kinds of stress: distress and eustress. The unpleasant and/or harmful variety of stress is call *distress*. The kind of euphoric sensation experienced in watching your football team win is call *eustress*.

Stress overload is harmful - stress underload can also present problems. It's important to work toward minimizing distressful reactions as well as balancing eustressful responses.

Activities Discussion group format:

What causes stress for you?
Is it distress or eustress?
How does stress affect you?
How do you manage stress?



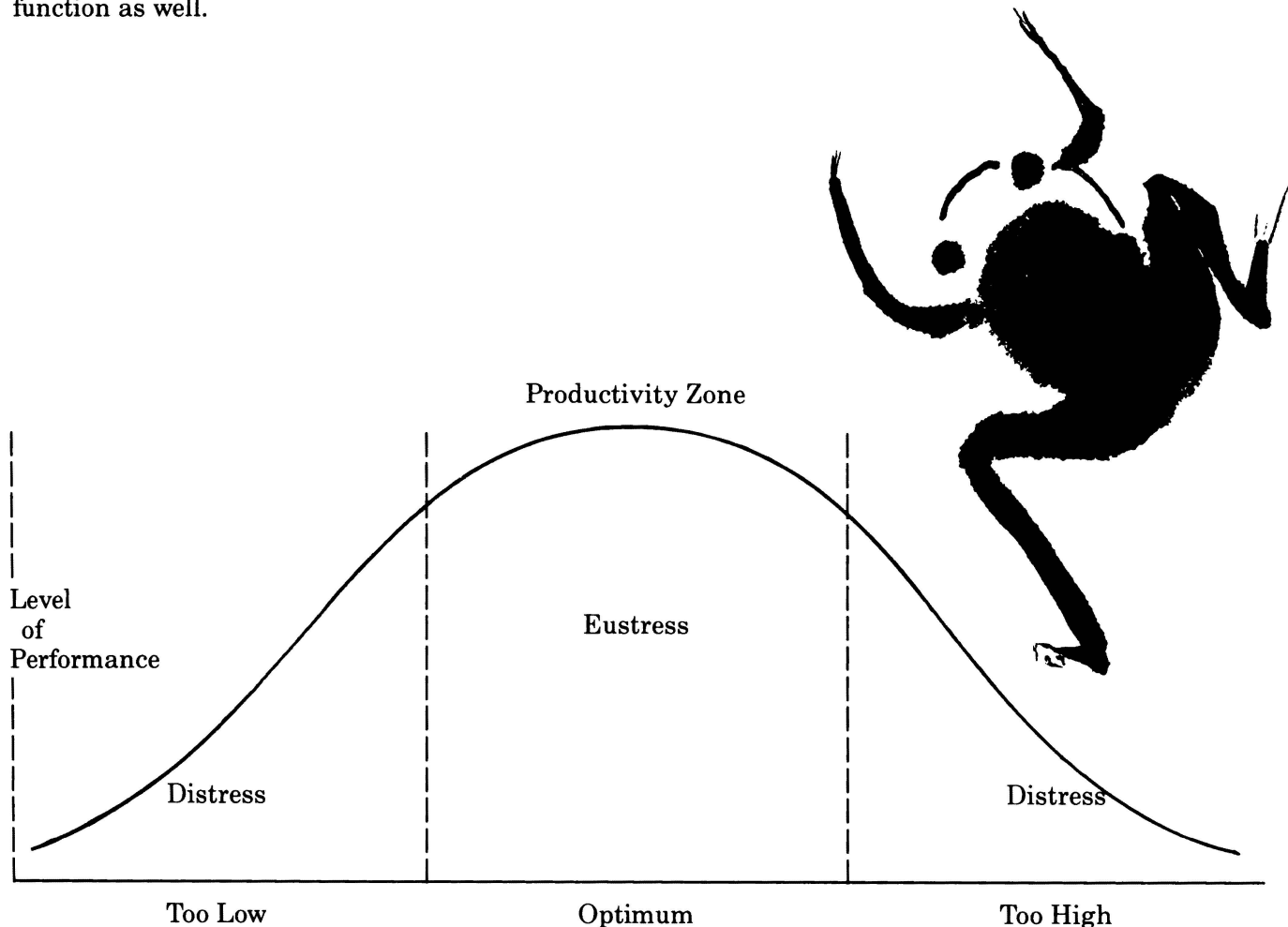
Some Physical and Mental Signs of Stress Are:

weight change
high blood pressure
lack of appetite
always hungry
difficulty sleeping
headaches (neck aches, shoulder aches)
muscle spasms
nervous energy
always tired

irritability
boredom
feeling unable to cope
morbid fear of disease
fear of death
sense of suppressed anger
inability to have a good laugh
a feeling of rejection
a feeling that you can't discuss your problems
with anyone

Rain. A great way to let go of tension! Have participants count off in pairs (A-B, A-B) and stand one behind the other. Tell "B" to rub their hands together and then begin to pat "A's" shoulders like little raindrops, continuing up and down "A's" arms. Up the tempo by calling out, "Hear the thunder? Here comes the hail!" ("B's" go harder) "The storm is almost over" ("B's" go softer) "The sun is out!" Have "A's" bend over and scream as they straighten back up. Do a big storm again and then STOP! Have "A" and "B" switch places and repeat the exercise.

The amount of stress in our lives affects how "on top of things" we feel. We function best when there are moderate demands being placed on us. If the demands get too low or too high, we don't function as well.



Wrap-Up

Imagery Exercise

For this exercise, a combination of several stress reduction techniques are used. With adolescent groups, using deep breathing, muscle-by-muscle (progressive) relaxation, imagery, and a form of autogenics (adding warmth and heaviness to the muscle relaxation) is most effective.

Dim the lights and have the participants lie on their backs on the floor (eyes closed, quiet, arms and legs stretched out straight). In a slow, soothing voice, instruct participants.

1. Be sure you are comfortable.
2. Take a deep breath - inhale, hold, and slowly exhale (repeat 2 or 3 times).
3. Clear your mind. Now imagine a special place—somewhere you feel good, comfortable, safe, and where you can go without any worries. This is your own special place. It could be a beach, a tree house, or your bedroom. It doesn't matter where you choose because it's your own special place—not anyone else's. Now imagine yourself at this special place., You feel warm, comfortable, and content.
4. Breathe deeply and slowly. Repeat.
5. Now tighten the muscles in your feet, curling your toes. Feel the tension. Hold the muscles tight. <Pause> Now relax the muscles in your feet.
6. Now tighten the muscles in your lower leg. Pull tighter. Hold. Gradually release the tension and feel the muscles relax. Repeat 2 times.
7. Your legs should be feeling heavy and warm.
8. Continue breathing deeply and slowly. With every breath you exhale, feel the stress moving out of your body.
9. Now concentrate on the muscles in the upper part of your legs and thighs. Tighten the muscles, hold, and slowly relax. Repeat 2 times.
10. Now tighten the muscles in your rear end. Pull them as tight as you can. Hold the muscles tight and feel the tension. Now release the tension and experience it flowing out of your body.
11. The muscles in the lower part of your body feel heavy and warm. They are relaxed and comfortable.
12. Breathe ever so slowly and deeply. Feel the air fill your lungs, then let it flow out of your body. Do it again.
13. Now again visualize yourself in your own special place. You are more relaxed than before. You feel lazy. Your legs are so warm and heavy you don't want to move them. You just want to remain in your place feeling comfortable.
14. Now concentrate on the muscles in your abdomen. Hold in the muscles. . tighter. Now slowly relax. Repeat 2 times.
15. Make fists with your hands. Squeeze your fingers tighter. Feel how tight the muscles are. Now gradually open your hands. Relax. Repeat 2 times.
16. Notice how slowly and evenly you are breathing. Your body is feeling warm and heavy.
17. Tighten the muscles in your arms. Flex the muscles. Hold and feel the tension. Gradually relax.
18. Move up the arms to your shoulders. Tighten your shoulder muscles. Press your shoulders down towards the floor. Feel the stress. Now slowly relax. Repeat 2 times.
19. Now tighten the facial muscles - squinting the nose and eyes, pulling the skin tight on your forehead. Notice the pressure points. Gradually relax the muscles and feel the tension flow out. Repeat 2 times.
20. Your body should feel totally relaxed, warm, and heavy. Just lie there feeling comfortable and think about yourself in your own special place. During this time, you have no worries or problems. There is no tension, only relaxation. Take a few minutes to enjoy this time and your own special place. When you are ready, gradually open your eyes and come back to this room and the group.

Discussion:

1. When could you use this exercise?
2. How could it help reduce stress?

Hand out *Health Style: A Self-Test* (Publication 352-001, Reprinted 1988), Virginia Cooperative Extension Service.



SESSION VI

Coping With Separation and Loss

Revised for the Y.E.S. Program by Nancy J. Breeding, Project Technician, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service

Purpose	To establish the fact that separation/loss is an integral part of living and that not all loss is bad To develop an understanding of the stages of death as they apply to separation and loss To encourage a healthy, non-threatening exploration of feelings associated with separation/loss.
Materials	Newspaper clippings of current events depicting death/dying Scratch paper Newsprint, blackboard or flipchart Pencils, magic markers, chalk
Warm-Up	Set the stage by asking how many participants have lost someone close to them. (Even if this is only a pet, it is important to the participant.) Surprisingly, most participants will have already experienced some type of loss.
Activities	Read aloud details from newspaper clippings. Have participants write down what they would think or how they would feel if they were a survivor of this happening. Have participants share their thoughts and/or feelings. (Role playing - victims/survivor - is a good way to initiate these thoughts/feelings.)

People pass through clearly defined stages in reconciling themselves to death:

1. **Shock and Numbness** - (Generally occurs during the first 7-10 days after a major loss.) This is nature's way of allowing us to shut down emotionally, providing a brief rest stop before we begin our journey through the agony of grief to a renewed sense of joy.
2. **Denial and Withdrawal** - We aren't ready for loss as a part of life. As a result, we often deny that a major loss has occurred. Physical signs of denial and withdrawal may be seen. Feeling weak/drained of energy, lack of appetite/overeating, lack of sleep/oversleeping, frequent dry mouth, aches and pains, lack of concern with personal hygiene/grooming, hallucinations, anger, and inability to perform routine tasks are all normal reactions to loss.
3. **Bargaining** - This stage of grief is common in people who have been diagnosed as being terminally ill, or in those whose loved one is terminally ill. Individuals bargain with God for more time. They promise to be good or to do something in exchange for another week or month or year of life.
4. **Acknowledgement and Pain** - Realizing that the loss is real and permanent. This realization often triggers additional periods of denial and withdrawal. Again, this is a normal part of grief recovery.
5. **Adapting and Renewal** - At this time you stop asking "Why" and begin to ask "How can I grow through this tragic event to become a better person?" You will have a new sense of selfworth and, at last, will be ready to carry on with life.

Participants may role-play the five stages. Discussion questions:

1. How would these stages apply to a divorce situation?
To moving to a new location?
2. What other separation/loss situations could these apply to?

Grief is a powerful emotion. It is a natural, healthy process of healing. The death of a loved one often shatters plans and dreams which, in turn, may shatter the self-esteem of the survivor. Usually, loss of self-esteem lasts only a while; however, one may begin to question self-worth and feel the need to “die.” This is when one must seek professional help. Sharing one’s feelings of grief is the best way to help the healing process.

STEPS IN HELPING SOMEONE WHO IS GRIEVING

1. **JUST BE THERE** - Don’t disappear because you feel as though you don’t know what to say or do. Giving a grieving person a hug, holding a hand, or simply sitting in silence show that you are there for support.
2. **LISTEN** - Survivors need to talk about their loss and share memories of a loved one. You don’t have to provide any “answers”—just listen.
3. **BE SENSITIVE** - A survivor has a need to be alone at times. Become aware of when you are needed and when to withdraw. Professional help may be needed if a survivor spends too much time alone.
4. **UNDERSTAND THE NEED TO GRIEVE** - Tears are necessary to healing. A survivor should feel as comfortable with crying in the presence of family/friends as they do with talking.
5. **SYMPATHIZE, DON’T EMPATHIZE** - A survivor’s grief is **his/her** grief. Don’t try to belittle this fact by saying things such as “I know how you feel.” Let the person know that it’s okay to feel whatever it may be that he/she is feeling.
6. **DON’T BE IMPATIENT** - The grieving process has no time limit. It may take anywhere from 1 to 3 years. A survivor will experience good days and bad days. Don’t expect everything to return to normal. Loss can be acknowledged, but may never be accepted.
7. **OFFER CONTINUING SUPPORT** - Acknowledgement of loss does not occur overnight. Survivors need friends and support throughout the grieving process.
8. **RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL HELP** - Depression can be devastating. Continued loss of self-esteem, an unwillingness to continue with life, constant crying, etc. are all signals that professional help is needed. Contact the survivor’s personal physician or a local mental health clinic if you feel the need is there.

Time Line. Tape a banner of newsprint to the wall. List participant’s name down the left margin, and block off the following years along the top: 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, and 80.

Throughout our lives we will experience many separations. Not all of them will be negative. In fact, many will be happy occasions, such as starting school, going away to camp, going to college, getting a job, and getting married. Record the separations and/or losses that each participant *has already had or anticipates* on the Time Line.

Wrap-Up

It takes much living, experiencing, reflecting, and searching to even begin to deal comfortably with separation, loss, and eventually, death. It is only through these introspections, however, that we gain greater insight into the meaning of our lives: our potential for love, for growth, and for caring.

SESSION VII

Understanding Our Interpersonal Relationships

- Purpose** To develop an understanding of self through our relationships with others.
To become aware of the complexity of interpersonal relationships.
To understand the importance of strength in a support system.
- Materials** paper, pencils
“Who Are All These Others?”
“My Declaration of Self-Esteem”
- Warm-Up** *Gift Giving.* Through our relationships with others we discover who we are. Hand out paper and pencils to each participant. Instruct them to respond to the following five columns:
1. List five people close to you
 2. List the last gift you gave them
 3. List a gift that you could give them that would dramatically change some aspect of their behavior (for example; being able to listen better or having more time)
 4. List a tangible gift that would help them achieve the gift in column 3
 5. List a gift that each of these people could give you that would change one or more of your behavior patterns.
- Have participants share some of their gift ideas with the group.
- Lead-In** All of us have people in our lives who mean more to us than others. Their opinions matter, their expectations of us matter, and we feel better knowing that they are there for us. These people make up our support group and they play a key role in how we feel about ourselves. They validate our feelings of “OK” or “NOT OK.”
- As we grow and develop with new experiences, our support group also changes:
1. Who had the greatest influence in your life when you were little?
 2. How did this change when you started school?

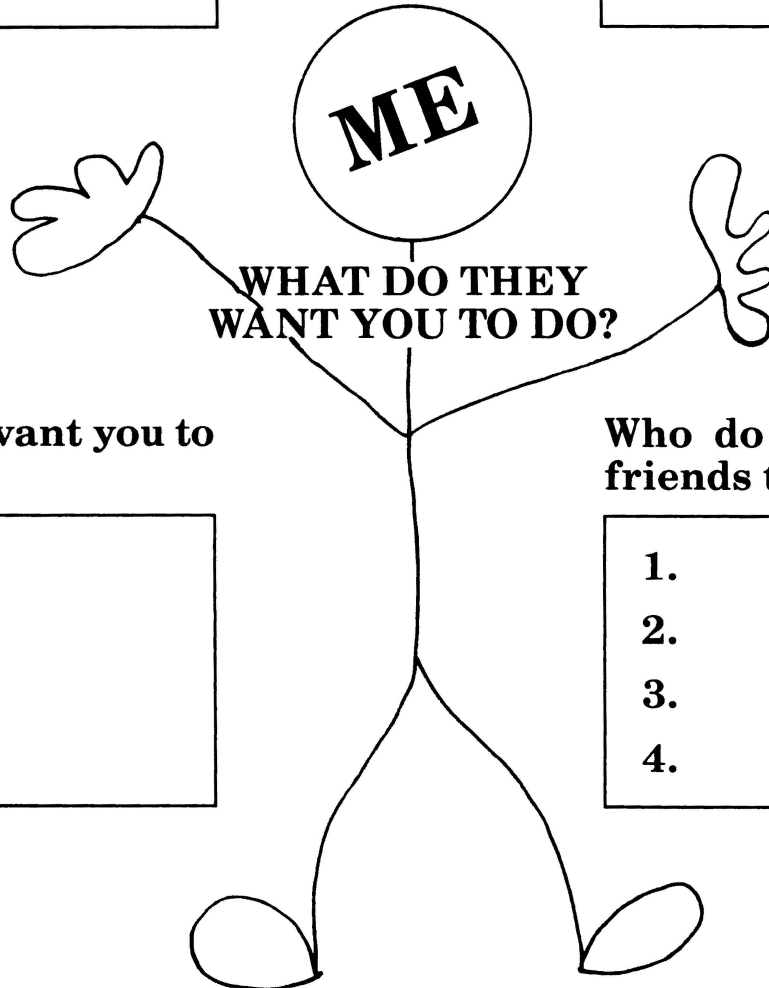


What demands do they place on you?

1.
2.
3.
4.

What do they want you to be?

1.
2.
3.
4.



What do they want you to think?

1.
2.
3.
4.

Who do they want your friends to be?

1.
2.
3.
4.

How do they want you to act?

1.
2.
3.
4.

Activities

The Lap Game. In this game we really become a “support” group! Have everyone stand in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Slowly turn to the right. Then, very gently, have everyone sit down on the lap (or knees) of the person behind them.

The “slow and easy” method is to have one person lie on his/her back with knees bent so the next person can sit on them, etc., until the whole circle is seated. The tricky part comes when the person on his/her back is lifted onto the lap of the last person who took a seat.

In the “fast and reckless” method, everyone sits on their neighbor’s lap at exactly the same time.

Once everyone is seated, you might try a caterpillar merry-go-round or a variation of “Simon Says.”

Hand out copies of “Who Are All These Others and What Are They Doing In My Life?” Instruct participants to write the name of someone in their support group in each square. Then for each person they have written down, have them list four things that person wants them to value:

1. What do they count on you for?
2. What demands do they place on you?
3. What do they want you to be, to do, to think?
4. What do they want you to value?

Next, ask everyone to underline each item that they also want for themselves. Now have them draw lines from these items to “Me” if they are things they are willing to accept for themselves.

Have participants share their insights with the group:

1. Did you underline many of the same values?
2. Where are the conflicts and how might you resolve them?
3. What items will require more work than others?
4. What items are you unwilling to accept, and why?

Wrap-Up

Positive feelings such as sharing, loyalty, joy, and fairness can be expected in relationships, as well as negative feelings of anger, jealousy, and resentment. The people that make up our support group, like all individuals, come to us with differing viewpoints, sense of humor, and appreciation of experiences. True friendship grows out of an acceptance of these differences.





MY DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM*

I am me.

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me - my body, including everything it does; my mind, including all its thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they may be - anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth, and all the words that come out of it, polite, sweet or rough, correct or incorrect; my voice, loud or soft; and all my actions, whether they be to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.

I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts. I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interest.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is me. This is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting. I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I can engineer me.

I am me and I am okay.

*adapted from *Peoplemaking* by Virginia Satir, p. 27-29, Science and Behavior Books, Inc., Palo Alto, CA, 1972.

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