



MAKING AGREEMENTS 1. STOP NEGATIVITY

Objective: Students will be able to identify negative emotions, learn how to deal with them, and find the best way to transform them into positive ones to avoid having disagreements.

WARM UP

Ask students to imagine they are having a bad day (maybe they arrived late for school, or they had a difficult pop quiz). Invite them to mimic the emotion they feel. Then tell them you are going to play *Simon Says*. Remind students that they have to follow the instructions only if they listen the phrase *Simon Says*. Give them instructions to run in their place, jump, raise their arms, sit down, stand up, etc. Once they finish exercising, ask them how they feel. Tell them that aerobic exercise lowers the level of stress and helps us cope better with negative emotions.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure every student has a copy of the printed handout to work with.
- 2 Ask students to close their eyes and imagine themselves as happy and successful individuals in the future. Invite them to brainstorm positive attitudes that could help them reach that goal. Then, they should circle with a blue color the positive emotions they find in the handout. Ask: *Do you think negative emotions will help you become a better version of yourselves in the future? Why?* Invite them to circle with a red color the negative emotions they need to avoid to become their ideal selves.
- 3 Invite students to reflect on the positive affirmations and help them draft their own affirmations with a brainstorming activity about what they do to struggle with negative emotions.
- 4 Encourage students to remember negative emotions they have recently had and to choose one. Go through the PATH section with students and invite them to complete it

using the negative emotion they chose. Remind them that when we notice the good things in our lives, it is easier to ward off negative emotions. For the *Help* step, you could share with the class which activity helps you manage negative emotions and why. Finally, invite them to share their PATH organizer and discuss how everyone deals differently with emotions. You could ask your students which are the best ways to manage negative emotions.

WRAP IT UP

- 5 *How can positive feelings and positive thinking help you manage negativity? What happens if you deal with negative emotions inappropriately? Why? Can a negative emotion ever be healthy for you? Why or why not?*

Ask students to discuss the questions in small groups. Elicit from them the importance of dealing with negative emotions so they don't affect us. For the last question, explain that negative emotions can be beneficial because they alert us that something needs to change, and they also motivate us to make that change. Emphasize the fact that positive feelings create a sense of happiness and well-being, and that noticing the good things in our lives, even when we are feeling bad, can help us transform negative emotions into positive ones.

TEACHING TIP

Envisioning your best possible self and what that would look like is a great exercise that lifts your mood and creates a sense of optimism. It can be done as a visualization technique that consists of imagining the best possible life you can live in the future, the best possible version of yourself. Try to practice this exercise yourself before doing the activity in the classroom so you can convey the benefits to your students. Research has shown that people who engage in this activity for five minutes a day for two weeks, experience an increase in optimism and a more positive mood. It is definitely worth a try.

MAKING AGREEMENTS 2. CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE

Objective: Students will be able to control their emotions during a conflict taking a timeout and consequently, change their behavior for the better.

WARM UP

Divide the students in small groups and tell them they are going to play a game called *Frozen!* Write on small pieces of paper some situations that can generate conflict. For example, *one of your team mates arrived late for the presentation, one of your team mates didn't do his / her part, or you had to do all the tasks in the teamwork, etc.* Ask a group to come to the front, give them a piece of paper and explain that when they read the content, they have to mimic their reaction. The rest of the class shouts: *Frozen!* The members of the participating group have to change their angry faces to happy ones immediately.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure every student has a copy of the printed handout to work with.
- 2 Invite students to think of five negative attitudes that usually arise during a conflict. Ask: *How do you feel and how do you react in a conflict? Can you control your behavior?* Then ask them to write the ways they behave on the space provided in the handout.
- 3 Have pairs share common behaviors and come up with suggestions for ways to avoid or improve those behaviors.
- 4 Tell students to remember a recent conflict they had with their classmates during teamwork and what their reaction was. You could ask: *Did you feel frustrated? Did you say something you regretted later?* Invite students to answer the questions on the appropriate column of the table, trying to remember every detail possible of their behavior during the conflict.

- 5 Remind students that taking a timeout means interrupting everything to be alone and to empty your mind for a few minutes. Then ask them to think of the recent conflict again and to imagine what would have happened if they have used the timeout technique. Ask them to answer the questions on the third column of the table. Tell them that analyzing a past negative behavior could help them avoid it in the future. The key is to know when to apply a timeout.

WRAP IT UP

- 6 *Why is it important to be calm during a conflict? What do you think is the best way to control your emotions? What other ways do you know of changing your attitude for the better?*

Ask students to discuss the questions in small groups. Tell them that when you remain calm during a conflict, it is easier to control your emotions and be reasonable. On the contrary, if you lose your temper, you could say something you might regret. Encourage students to think of other ways to control their emotions. Invite some volunteers to come to the front and share their answers with the class. Ask: *Do you know another effective technique different from timeout?* Highlight the fact that being in control of our emotions allows us to have a more objective point of view.

TEACHING TIP

You could extend the description of a timeout and explain it is a psychological technique of behavior modification which seeks to eliminate undesirable behaviors. Suggest using it every time students consider it necessary, at school and at home. Remind them that controlling their emotions will also help them in their future working life.



MAKING AGREEMENTS 3. GOOD COMMUNICATION

Objective: Students will be able to improve their communication skills and promote a better understanding in their relationships.

WARM UP

Tell students you are going to play *Chinese Whispers*. Make them sit in a circle (if the group is large, form two or three teams) or stand in a straight line. They need to be close so that whispering is possible. Then, the first student in the circle, or line, whispers a phrase into the ear of the classmate sitting or standing to his / her right. Students keep whispering the phrase until it reaches the last player. Ask the last player (or players of each team) to say the phrase out loud to the whole class or team. Everyone will have the opportunity to hear how much the phrase changed from the first whisper at the beginning of the circle or line. Ask students: *Do you think this communication process was effective?*

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure every student has a copy of the printed handout to work with.
- 2 Ask students to work in groups of four. Remind them that the process of communication is the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver. Ask: *Can you see the sender and the receiver in the picture? What attitudes do you think correspond to the person who is talking? And to the person who is speaking?* Give them some time to assign the attitudes to the sender and the receiver. Encourage them to mention other useful behaviors for the communication process.
- 3 Draw students' attention to the photo. Then invite them to discuss and answer the questions and to share their opinions.
- 4 Tell students to read the Four Player Model and to complete the table based on what they did in Step 3. Then ask volunteers to share their answers. Ask students if they know other communication skills to enhance teamwork.

For example, learning to listen carefully, avoiding dancing around the issue, making affirmative responses to tell the sender you are paying attention, etc. Invite them to mention as many skills as possible.

WRAP IT UP

- 5 *What are the benefits of being a good communicator? Are listening skills also important? Why? Do you think communication is one of the basic skills of teamwork? Why?*

Ask students to discuss the questions in small groups. Invite them to give some examples of how good communication skills could help them with any relationship. You could mention that one of the biggest problems in communication is that we usually don't listen to understand, but to reply. When they are discussing the last question, you could mention that it is difficult to understand the meaning of *teamwork* if we are not capable of basing communication on the power of listening, understanding, and reflecting on what we communicate.

TEACHING TIP

Having good communication skills is important not only at school but in everyday life. For teenagers, being able to develop these skills is a vital step in their development because it enhances their ability to listen to and understand other people. Suggest that, when they are listening to someone, they put aside distractions, such as cell phones, because this behavior can disrupt the process of listening and give a message to the speaker that they are not interested. Once your students master these skills, they will be able to express their ideas clearly and to understand people better.



MAKING AGREEMENTS 4. RESPONSIBILITY

Objective: Students will be able to act in a responsible way, thinking of others and accepting the consequences of their own actions and decisions.

WARM UP

Start the activity by sharing a short fictional anecdote about a pilot who forgot to set his alarm clock and arrived very late at the airport. Encourage students to say if they think the pilot thought of others or about the consequences of his action. Elicit their own definition of *reliability*.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Make sure every student has a copy of the printed handout to work with. Ask students to work in pairs and to read the sticky note from the handout carefully. Then, you could ask them to give their own definition of *responsibility*. If they get stuck, say: *Does it have to do with making decisions with full knowledge? Or does it have to do with accepting the consequences of your own actions?*
- 2 Then invite them to read the situation in the handout and to say if they have ever had a similar experience. Give them enough time to answer the questions.
- 3 Invite students to read the statements in the pennants and to discuss the possible order for the steps in the stairs. Remind them that these steps have to do with reaching common objectives. Ask: *What would be the first step for you?* Don't forget to acknowledge your students when they are performing the activity in a collaborative way or applying the good communication skills from the previous handout. Give them enough time to discuss the best order for the six steps. When they have finished, ask them to share their step order with other pairs. It is possible to have different answers. Highlight the importance of diversity of opinion.

WRAP IT UP

- 4 *What is the importance of making commitments and assuming responsibilities? Is it better to look more for what brings us together than for what separates us? Why? What could happen if someone in the team does not fulfill his or her responsibilities?*

Ask students to discuss the questions in small groups. Invite them to remember a recent school project where they had to work as a team. Ask them: *Were you completely satisfied with the result?* Then as a class, have students listen to all of their classmates' answers and invite them to reach a general conclusion of why being responsible is a skill that they must learn and work on. Highlight the importance of everyone's participation in collaborative work. Close the activity by reflecting on how, in teamwork, every responsibility has the same level of importance, and that if someone does not fulfill his or her part, the whole outcome can be affected.

TEACHING TIP

You could suggest creating a "Responsibility Chart" for their next team project. On a three-column chart they must write on the first column, the different tasks; on the second column, the names of the students who are in charge of each one. The third column will be used to write down if the student fulfilled his or her task. Point out that the idea is not to blame anyone in the team, but to help the students that did not fulfill their tasks to be conscious of their behavior, face the consequences, and suggest a solution to repair the damage.