

Positive Mental Attitude

Month: Nov.

Week #: 12

Day: T - F Time: 30 min.

Whiny Wendy and Wow William

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Objectives/Aims

The students will: learn that their thoughts alter their perception of reality and affect how they feel; learn that they have the power to change their attitude.

Materials

none

Illustration

Why is it that William, who has only twigs and sticks to play with, is happy while Wendy, who has tons of store-bought stuff, is unhappy?

Background

John Milton said, "The mind can make a hell out of heaven or a heaven out of hell." This famous quote means that what we think alters our perceptions of reality, affecting how we feel and act. In other words, our attitudes affect our lives.



Group Activity

Note: Five days of activities are possible when the Variations/Extensions are utilized.

1. Tell the students that you are going to tell them a story about two students. They need to listen carefully to find out what is different and similar about them.

Story:

Whiny Wendy and Wow William

Once upon a time, there were two, very bright and capable students. They both came from loving homes and they lacked nothing. Let's watch and listen closely to them as they go through a typical school day.

"Oh Mom, do I have to go to school?" whined Wendy, "It's too hard and my hair is a mess!"

"Yes you do," replied Mom. "You're very bright and capable," she added.

"Oh, if I have to...," whined Wendy and stomping her foot.

Meanwhile, William was up and out of bed already with a big grin on his face. "Wow, I can't wait to go to school. I've finished that neat homework project and I get to play basketball with my friends in P.E. today!" exclaimed William.

After he finished his breakfast he grabbed his jacket, gloves and boots and hurried out the door since he had a three block walk to get to his bus stop. Outside, the wind was howling and freezing sleet pelted his face. To amuse himself on his walk, he imagined that he was on a distant frozen planet called "Ice Egg," and he was being chased by a frozen lumbering lummo. It was very exciting!

Meanwhile, Wendy, who was about to leave for school whined, "Why do I have to wear this ugly

Group Activity (continued)

old coat?” The coat she was complaining about was actually only two months old and came from an expensive, fashionable boutique.

“It’s very cold and windy today, dear,” replied her mother. “It’s time to get in the car.” With that, the two of them went out to the attached, heated garage and got into their Mercedes Benz, which is a luxury car.

“This seat is too hard and this seat belt hurts my neck!” whined Wendy. “Why can’t we get a different car?”

Meanwhile, William, who had to wait an extra half-hour for his late bus, clamored onto the overly-hot bus and took a seat right over over the back tires. As the bus set off, it hit a large pot hole and William bounced so high out of his seat that his head almost hit the ceiling. “Whoopee!” he exclaimed, “This is just like riding a bucking bronco!”

As time allows, continue on through the day with Whiny Wendy continuing to whine (In a very whiny voice) at every ‘imagined’ bad situation. Meanwhile, have Wow William continue to have a fantastic day even when not so fantastic things happen to him (be sure and interject a lot of ‘wows!’). End the day with Wendy whining about her lousy day and William exclaiming, “Wow! What a fantastic day!”

Group Discussion Questions

1. John Milton, a famous English poet, historian and scholar said, “The mind can make a heaven out of hell and a hell out of heaven.” When he uses the word ‘hell’, he is not swearing, but referring to a very bad place. What do you think this quote has to do with Whiny Wendy and Wow William?

A: Even when bad things happened to William, by thinking positive thoughts, he changed his perception of the situation, and it resulted in happy feelings. Wendy, on the other hand, thought so negatively about her situation that she complained and felt sorry for herself even though good things were actually happening to her.

AND/OR

1. Dr. Thomas Tokarz, who is an expert in the area of mental attitude said, “You don’t have bad thoughts because you feel bad. Rather, you feel bad because you have bad thoughts. By improving the thoughts, you improve the feelings.” What is he saying?

A: Bad thoughts equal bad feelings, not bad thoughts equal bad feelings. In this case, the ‘egg’ (bad thoughts) came before the ‘chicken’ (bad feelings)

2. What does the word ‘attitude’ mean?

A: It means that what we think alters our perception of reality, affecting how we feel.

Variations/Extensions

1. Tell a story similar to the told before, but instead have Wow Wendy and Whiny William. Help the students to understand that one’s attitude is not gender specific.

2. Students can write and illustrate their own stories, which they can then share with the class.

3. Tell the story, or some variation of it, using ‘people puppets’ where you tell the students the words to use and model both the intonation for their voice and different gestures to use.

4. Students can write scripts and then act out their plays for the class.

Conclusion

“So who are you going to choose to be today, a Whiny Wendy or a Wow William? By the thoughts you choose to think, you can make your life (and most of you live very privileged lives) into a nightmare or a fantastic adventure. Think about it... Think positively about it... And you might feel



Why is it that William, who has only twigs and sticks to play with, is happy while Wendy, who has tons of store-bought stuff, is unhappy?

Positive Mental Attitude

Objectives/Aims

By the end of this unit, your child will learn that their thoughts alter their perception of reality and affect how they feel and they will also learn that they have the power to change their attitude.

Background Information for Parents

John Milton said, "The mind can make a hell out of heaven or a heaven out of hell." This famous quote means that what we think alters our perceptions of reality, affecting how we feel and act. In other words, our attitudes affect our lives.

The story used in this lesson is purposely exaggerated to emphasize the differences in attitude represented by these two distinct life views.

Once your child has learned this lesson, you can remind them about an appropriate attitude by asking them, "Are you going to be a Whiny William/Wendy or a Wow William/Wendy today?" The physical reminder of putting their pointer finger to their temple can also help them stop and reflect on appropriate thoughts.



Day 1

1) Explain the picture to your parents. Why is it that William, who has only twigs and sticks to play with, is happy while Wendy, who has tons of store-bought stuff, is unhappy? P.I. _____

Day 2 & 3

1) On the back of this paper draw a cartoon where you are either a Wow William/Wendy. (Parents can help divide the paper into cells.) The other character in the story can be the Whiny William or Wendy. Show the two characters making a good or bad day. Older children can use 'thought balloons' to show what the characters are thinking. Younger children can explain to their parents what the characters are thinking. P.I. _____