

## Positive Mental Attitude

Month: Feb.

Week #: 22

Day: b. Tues. Time: 30 min.

# Half Full or Half Empty?

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### Objectives/Aims

The students will: learn that worry can often be a destructive feeling that does not help solve problems; identify strategies for dealing with worry and stress.

### Materials

clear glass, a pitcher of water

### Illustration

Is your glass half empty or half full?

### Background

Excessive worry can cause undue anxiety and stress leading to physical ailments such as headaches, constipation, upset stomachs and even ulcers and heart attacks. Learning how to constructively solve problems can reduce worry and the associated stress. However, there are certain aspects of life that we simply have no control over (e.g. an asteroid falling on our head). In these instances we need to learn to simply 'let go' and be happy. This is sometimes easier said than done. :)



### Group Activity

1. Place an empty glass in the center of the circle of students. Pour the glass half full of water. Place the pitcher two or three yards away from the glass, but still in clear view, and then leave the circle.
2. Return to the circle in an agitated state, pick up the glass water and exclaim in an exaggerated manner, "Oh no! The glass is half empty! I'm going to run out of water! Woe is me! I'm so thirsty I could die!" Put down the glass down without drinking any and slowly crawl out of the circle as you die of thirst (You don't really have to die unless you feel so inclined! :)
3. Return again to the circle this time in a very calm manner and state, "I see that the glass is half full. I'm thirsty." Slowly drink the water and then smack your lips saying, "Boy, did that hit the spot!" Examine the glass and say, "It looks like I need to refill the glass." Go get the pitcher and calmly fill the glass to the brim. Return to your place with a smile on your face.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. What happened here? What was different about the two situations?
2. What do you think the question, "Is the glass half empty or half full?" is supposed to teach us?
  - A: That our perspective, or how we see things, is often determined by our state of mind.

### **Group Discussion Questions (continued)**

3. Why was the person in the first act unable to see the nearby pitcher of water whereas the person in the second act readily saw it?

A: Worry and fear can cause us to see things in a negative light and can blind us to a possible solution.

4. The second person not only quenched their thirst, but was able to fill the glass to the brim. Why do you think this was possible?

A: When we see life's problems in a positive light we are often able to find solutions. In solving these problems we become stronger, better and smarter people. We end up having more than we had before and filling our lives to the brim.

5. Can the fear of something be worse than what actually happens?

A: Yes, like a 150 plus pound person scampering onto a chair in fear of a 2 ounce innocuous mouse, fear can turn a mouse into a monster.

6. What did Winston Churchill, the prime minister of England during World War II, mean when he said, "There's nothing to fear but fear itself."?

A: If the people of England had become incapacitated by fear, they would have never been able to deal effectively with the threat of the Nazi invasion.

7. What do the words pessimistic and optimistic mean?

A: Pessimistic means that you see the glass as half empty (a negative, fear laden attitude towards life) , optimistic means that you see the glass as half full (a positive, hopeful attitude towards life).

### **Conclusion**

Say, "How we choose to see a situation can determine how we both feel and react. Do you see the glass as half empty or is it half full? Do worries and fears get in the way of how you deal with difficult situations? Be strong. You do have the inner strength to deal with seemingly impossible situations. Solving life's challenges can make stronger, better and smarter people. And yes, you might not always be successful, but at least you'll know that you had the courage to stand steadfast in the face of fear."

Feb. 22 b. Tues.

**Positive Mental Attitude: Half Full or Half Empty?**



*Lucas Bonassi  
7/3/09*

**Is your glass half empty or half full?**