

Positive Mental Attitude

Month: Feb.

Week #: 22

Day: c. Wed. Time: 20 min.

Change Your Physiology!

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Objectives/Aims

The students will learn to change their attitude by changing their physiognomy.

Materials

none

Illustration

Look at the girl wearing the stocking cap. How is she holding her body?

What expression is on her face?

Compare her to the pigtailed girl.



Background

One way of changing one's attitude (or how one thinks and feels) is by changing one's physiology, or bodily state. When we hold and use our body in a certain way, it releases different hormones (adrenaline, endorphins, etc.) that affect our mood. This will be somewhat unique from person to person, but generally speaking it will involve one's breathing, physical posture, facial expressions, pace and strength of bodily movements (gestures), and voice inflection and strength.

Group Activity

1. Say, with voice inflections that reflect the different states, "By a show of hands, how many of you would rather be bored and tired (yawn)... or excited and energized about life? Yes, we'd all rather be excited and energized about life because being bored and tired all the time is rather... boring... and tiring. I'm going to show you how to do this with a two act play. Watch and listen closely for the differences between the two acts in the play."

2. In the first act of the play, imagine you've invented a really cool machine or discovered a new variety of butterfly or climbed a high mountain, etc... Anything that would truly get you excited and energized in real life. However, in this first act, when you enter the scene, walk with shuffling feet, slumped shoulders, arms hanging limply at your side, a down turned head and a passive look on your face. When you talk about what you've done, talk in a soft, low voice with very little inflection. In essence, portray yourself as a very bored and tired person. When done, say, "Now for Act Two."

3. In the second act of the play, do exactly the opposite of act one. This time, walk in with a spring in your step, shoulders back, head up, arms and hands emphatically gesturing as you speak with a big smile on your face. When you talk, speak clearly, powerfully and excitedly about what you've done in a faster cadence than the first time. In essence, portray yourself as a very excited and energized person. Discuss Group Discussion Question 1.

Group Activity (continued)

4. Have the students practice going between a bored and tired state and a excited and energized state following your lead. It's best if they can imagine a real life situation to act out (e.g. scoring a goal, drawing a fantastic picture, mastering a hard work, going on a cool trip, going on a sleep over). Tell them to pay special attention to those physical changes they make that really get them excited and energized. Discuss Group Discussion Question 2.

Group Discussion Questions

1. What was different between the first and second act?

A: I changed my physiognomy, or bodily state: breathing, physical posture, facial expressions, pace and strength of bodily movements (gestures) and voice inflection and strength. (Draw out each specific difference. Return to the above section and do Group Activity 4.)

2. How did you feel after the first way as opposed to the second way?

A: Bored and tired as opposed to excited and energized.

3. How can this help you in school?

A: By picking up the pace of work, I'll be less bored. Changing my physiology will make me less bored and tired and a better student.

Variations/Extensions

1. Play the theme song from Superman or some other adrenaline producing song, and have the students strike a pose of strength and determination.

Conclusion

Say, "By changing your physiology, or the way you hold and use your body, you can change your attitude. When you change your bodily state, your body releases various chemicals or hormones that can affect your mood in a positive way. Instead of being bored and tired, you can be excited and energized!"

Feb. 22 c. Wed.

Positive Mental Attitude: Change Your Physiology!



Look at the girl wearing the stocking cap. How is she holding her body? What expression is on her face? Compare her to the hippie girl.