

Avoiding Conflict: Week 1

Month: Sept.

Week #: 4

Day: e. Fri. Time: 30 min.

Keep a Lid on It!

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Objectives/Aims

The students will: recognize the consequences of losing one's temper; they will also learn some strategies for dealing with one's anger.

Materials

pencil, scrap of paper, a clipboard or something hard and smooth to draw on

Illustration

What happened in this picture?

Number 7 seems to be really mad! So he took his anger out on a pillow instead of his friend... Is that good or bad?



Background

All of us have had the unpleasant experience of losing our temper and the associated negative consequences. In our society, one only has to look in the newspaper to see examples of 'crimes of passion' where somebody really lost his or her temper, was totally out of control and is now staring at three gray walls and one with bars in it. Losing one's temper is probably one of the leading causes of violence in our culture.

Group Activity

1. When the students come to group time, ask them to bring a piece of scrap paper, a pencil and something to draw on.
2. When everybody is seated say, " 'Going ballistic.' 'Losing your cool.' 'Blowing your top.' What do you think these colorful phrases are referring to?" A: Losing your temper. "Now I want you to close your eyes and think of a time that you really lost your temper and got really angry. Try to clearly see the situation in your mind's eye. Where did it happen? Who did you get mad at? What were the consequences, or what happened, because you lost your temper? Okay, now open your eyes. Now I want you to do a quick pencil sketch of this situation. This does not need to be a perfect drawing. It just needs to convey what happened at the time. You have about five minutes to do this drawing."
3. After about five minutes say, "Is there anybody that would like to show his or her drawing and explain what happened when you lost your temper? Remember, we are going to show respect to each other and not laugh at their drawing." If nobody shares, you can share several instances in your own life when you lost your temper to get things going. After several students have shared their pictures, ask the following questions:

Group Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the negative consequences or bad things that can happen when people lose their temper?

A: People can get hurt, things can get broken, the situation can be made worse, etc.

2. Is it okay to have angry feelings?

A: Yes, everybody is going to get angry at times; it's how those angry feelings are expressed in words and in actions that can cause problems. (Some people believe it is that it is possible to mitigate these feelings by understanding the other person's perspective and then not taking the attacks personally.)

3. What can you do when you feel on the verge of losing your temper?

A: Count to ten, leave the situation, go write in your journal, kick a pillow, etc.

Variations/Extensions

1. Have the students act out various scenarios in which people lose their temper.

2. Instead of drawing, write narrative essays about a time when they lost their temper. This is especially good for 9 - 12-year-old students.

Conclusion

Say, "We can all 'go ballistic,' 'lose our cool' or 'blow our top,' but there can be some very real, negative consequences when we lose control of ourselves. We can hurt our friends both physically and emotionally, break and destroy things, and in general, make the situation worse. Walking away, counting to ten, or any other way that helps you to cool down can help prevent a conflict from becoming violent. After we cool down, then we can work on solving the problem."



Lucas
Boreis -
Columb
July 27
2009

**What happened in this picture? Number 7 seems to be really mad!
So he took his anger out on a pillow instead of his friend... Is that good or bad?**