

Conflict Resolution

Month: Oct.

Week #: 6

Day: c. Wed. Time: 30 min.

'I' Statements

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Objectives/Aims

The students will: learn to state their grievances with an 'I' statement instead of the an accusatory 'you.'

Materials

a sheet of paper with a large 'I' on the front, 'YOU' on the back

Illustration

Johnny is telling the Lisa what the problem is and how he is feeling. He's not using the word 'you' so that she won't become defensive. Instead, he's using called an 'I' statement.



Background

When we are standing up for ourselves, using the word 'you' and labeling another person can put that person on the defensive. In contrast, the other person is more likely to hear us if we state the problem and our feelings with an 'I' statement.

Group Activity

1. Say, " I'm going to tell you a story. It's about a student, Johnny, who's very upset with his friend Lisa. She's

been teasing him about his last name and it's been hurting his feelings. I'm going to tell this story twice in two different ways. Listen carefully to see which way you like best. I'm also going to give you some clues about their differences with the signs I hold up." As you tell the story, hold up either the 'I' or 'YOU' sign whenever you use those words.

The 1st way: (firm, strong voice) Lisa, YOU are so mean. YOU keep making fun of my name! All YOU do is hurt other people feelings.

The 2nd way: (firm, strong voice) I am very mad and hurt, Lisa. I don't like it when people make fun of my last name.

Group Discussion Questions

1. What did you notice that was different about these two ways?

A: The word 'YOU' was used in the first way and 'I' was used in the second way.

2. Which way did you like better and why?

A: The word 'I' because it didn't feel like they were accusing me of something.

3. When did I hold up the signs? What do you think they mean?

A: To emphasize the words 'YOU' and 'I'. 'YOU' is accusatory and 'I' is standing up for yourself.

Group Discussion Questions (continued)

4. If you were Lisa, would you like to be labeled as being mean? Do you think that Lisa might have just been trying to be funny?

A: No, she probably wouldn't want to be labeled as being mean. Yes, she might have been trying to be funny, but it wasn't in a good way.

5. What did you learn from this activity?

A: By using the pronoun 'I', a person can stand up for themselves instead of putting the other person on the defensive with the accusatory 'YOU'.

Variations/Extensions

1. Pair up the students and give them different situations (ask the class for suggestions) in which one student needs to stand up to the other using 'I' statements.

2. Ask for volunteers to role play their situation in front of the class.

Conclusion

Say, "When we are standing up for ourselves, using the word 'you' and labeling another person can put that person on the defensive. In contrast, the other person is more likely to hear us if we state the problem and our feelings with an 'I' statement."



Johnny is telling Lisa what the problem is and how he is feeling. He's not using the word 'you' so that she won't become defensive. Instead, he's using what's called an 'I' statement.