

Climb the Mountain of Learning

Month: Oct.

Week #: 9

Day: c. Wed. Time: 30 min.

Where There's a Will There's a Way!

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: learn that making good choices and following through with consistent action is known as *will power* and it is just as important as the gifts and talents we are born with.

Materials

rope or hose (if you decide not to use students to make the mountain)

Illustration

This is Johnny. Can you believe that he is really, really smart? How can he be so smart and end-up a couch potato?

Background

At some point in their academic life, many students will think that they are 'dumb.' The truth of the matter is that we all have our strengths and weaknesses. Another way of saying it is that we might be really smart at some things (e.g. getting along with others, sports, reading), average at most things and really dumb at a few things. We have no control over the strengths or weaknesses we were born with, but we do have a choice in how we develop what we do have. This



exercise of making choices and following through with consistent actions is known as *will power*. How we utilize this *will power* will probably be a greater determinant of the successes or failures in our lifetime than our inherent gifts and talents.

Group Activity

1. Directions for play set up:

- Setting: Arrange all but three of the students into the shape of a mountain. Or you can take a long rope or hose and make an outline of the mountain on the floor. Have the three actors at the base of the mountain at stage left.

- Actors:

Sally - is of average intelligence, but a hard worker; successfully climbs the mountain of learning; sometimes has to repeat works, but never stops trying; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Johnny - is gifted intellectually, but is very unmotivated; has to be prodded to get works done; thinks learning is boring; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Jane - is severely dyslexic (i.e. has an extremely hard time learning language art skills of reading, writing and spelling); works extremely hard doing lots of remedial work; has positive attitude towards learning, self and life in general; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Note: You can choose any names for the actors, just not one of the student's names. You now can choose less experienced/younger actors since they got to observe the previous day's play. Instruct the actors that they will be 'people puppets,' meaning you will give them the words to say and tell them what to do. Tell them to try and copy the inflections in your voice. Encourage older, experienced actors to ad-lib, but stay within the context of the story. Remind the actors that they are portraying fictitious (pretend) people, and that the actions of the characters in no way reflect upon who they really are.

2. The play: **Where There's a Will There's a Way!**

Ad-lib a play similar to the original "Climb the Mountain of Learning." This time however make several distinct variations:

- Introduce Sally saying, "Sally is of average intelligence, like most of us." Have her struggle on some subjects, like math and gym, and have her excel at other subjects such as reading and art. At times she will struggle with her difficult subjects, but she always perseveres and usually succeeds in the end. Highlight the idea that her success is primarily because of her will power.
- Introduce Johnny saying, "Johnny is very smart in the academic areas of math, science and language arts." Show Johnny to be a very unmotivated student no matter what the task is. Have him move tiredly, with slumped shoulders and dragging feet. Have the class try and encourage him by saying, "Come on Johnny, you can do it! In the end, have Johnny get stuck about a third of the way up the mountain.
- Introduce Jane saying, "Jane has a condition that is known as dyslexia, which makes it hard for her learn how to read, write and spell." Show Jane to be an amazing student that works hard and always does her best job possible. Her favorite subject is writing even though it is difficult for her. A person with dyslexia has to work much harder than the average person to make the same progress. She has accepted her disability and has learned to compensate for it by using spell checkers and getting extra tutoring before school and during summer vacations. Extremely well-liked and respected by her peers, she is always quick with a smile and willing to help others. One of her favorite sayings that she made up is, "You're only dumb if you think you're dumb."

Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of Sally?
 - A: She was a really hard worker; she had a lot of will power.
 - A: She's like me in that she's good at some things and bad at other things.
2. What did you admire the most about Jane?
 - A: Even though she had a handicap, she never gave up and did her best job possible.
 - A: She had a very positive attitude about learning and life in general.
 - A: She had a positive self-concept, realizing that even though she was dyslexic, she wasn't stupid. In fact, she saw herself as being extremely capable.
3. Why do you think Johnny had so much trouble in school?
 - A: He was sad because of emotional problems (e.g. divorced parents, death in the family) that got in the way of his learning.
 - A: He was spoiled when he was young by having everything done for him so he never learned how to apply himself or (Use his will power).
 - A: He gets a lot of negative attention by being lazy. It has turned into a bad habit for him.
4. What do you think the title of this activity means?

Group Discussion Questions (continued)

A: By making good choices and taking consistent action, a person can overcome almost any obstacle. This is called using your will power.

Conclusion

Say, “By a show of hands, how many of you wish you had powers like super heroes? Since we are humans, we don’t have super powers. However, we do have a power inside us that can help us overcome almost any obstacle. It is called our *will power*. By making good choices and taking consistent action you can do almost anything.”



July 21, Lucas
2009 Borcia
Holcomb

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