

# Climbing Out

## 3. Card Shark

**Spatial Requirements:** Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

**Activity Type:** Object lesson

**Grades:** K-12

**Group Size:** 2 or more

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Introduction:** One of the most effective tools that peers use to keep us in the “pot” is manipulation, or trying to influence or control someone else. This activity is designed to help students learn to recognize when they are being manipulated, enabling them to avoid placing themselves under the influence or control of another.

**Materials:**

- 2 decks of cards
- 2 envelopes

**Activity:**

To prepare for this activity, you will need to divide one of the decks of cards into two groups: one with all the diamonds and spades, and the other with all the hearts and clubs. From the second deck of cards, remove the king of diamonds and the queen of clubs, and seal them in two separate envelopes. Make sure you can identify which envelope contains which card.

Choose an assistant to come to the front. Hold up the envelope containing the king of diamonds. Explain to the class that your assistant is going to read your mind and correctly guess what card you have placed in the envelope. Tell them that you know which card is in the envelope, but the assistant doesn't. Set the envelope somewhere where everyone can see it. Then hand the assistant the group of cards consisting of the diamonds and spades, and tell him/her to show the cards to the class. Ask the class to remain silent during the activity so as not to interfere with the assistant's ability to read your mind.

Ask the assistant to choose either red or black. If he/she chooses black, tell your assistant to remove all the black cards and place them on the table. If the choice is red, tell your assistant to keep all the red cards and place all the black cards on the table. In any case, the black cards will end up on the table. Ask your assistant to choose between the number cards (2-10) or the face cards (jack –ace). If they choose the numbered cards, then have them remove all the numbered cards and place them on the table. If they choose face cards, have them keep the face cards and place the number cards on the table. In any case, the numbered cards will end up on the table. Next have them select between the jack and queen or the king and ace. If they choose the jack and queen, have them place the jack and queen on the table. If they choose the king and ace, have them keep those two in their hand and put the jack and queen on the table. Finally, have them choose between the king and the ace. If they select the ace, tell them to place the ace on the table. If they choose the king, have them keep that card and place the ace on the table. Now have them open the envelope to reveal the enclosed card. If all goes well, it will be the same card (the king of diamonds) the volunteer is holding.

Do the activity again with the second group of cards, the second envelope, and a new assistant. This time, lead them to end with the queen of clubs in their hand. The secret is to always have them keep the cards that will lead them to the card in the envelope, and discard the cards that won't. Whenever they make a choice, you will have to determine whether you want them to keep the cards they chose or discard the cards they chose. Keep the process moving quickly or the secret might become too obvious.

At the end of the activity, explain to your class the secret to the trick. Explain that even though the volunteer was making the choices, you were manipulating them into doing what you wanted them to do.

**Processing the Experience:**

- What were you thinking during this activity?
- Did anyone figure out what was going on?
- Does it seem easy now you know how it was done? Do you think you could do it to someone else?
- What kind of tricks do people use to get others to do what they want?
- How is peer pressure a form of manipulation?
- What can you do to avoid allowing others to manipulate you?
- In what ways might peers use manipulation to keep their friends in “the pot?”