

Climbing Out

10. Paper Clip, Eraser, Penny

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

Activity Type: Object lesson

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5-10 minutes

Introduction: Often, peers will manipulate us into participating in behaviors we don't really want to be involved in. This manipulative "magic trick" will help students better understand the realities of peer pressure.

Materials:

- 2 paper clips
- 2 pencil erasers
- 2 pennies

Activity:

To prepare for this activity, place one paper clip and one penny in your pocket. Place the eraser in your clenched fist so that students cannot see it. Place the other paper clip, penny, and eraser on a desk or table at the front of the room.

Invite one student to come to the front of the room. Tell the student and the class that you have one of the three items in your hand.

Ask your volunteer to grab your wrist with the clenched fist to make sure that nothing comes in or out the hand.

Ask the student to select one of the items and tell you without touching it.

If they pick the eraser, take the other two items and hold them in your other hand. Ask the volunteer, "Did we pre-arrange anything before class?" Then open your hand and reveal the eraser to the class.

If they do not pick the eraser, hand them the item they selected and have them pick one more. If their second choice is not the eraser, hand them that item as well. The eraser will be the remaining item on the table, and you will reveal the one in your hand. If they do pick the eraser as the second choice, you should still hand them the other remaining item so the eraser is the only item left. Again, ask, "Did we pre-arrange anything before class?" Then open your hand and reveal the eraser to the class.

Repeat this activity with other items and new volunteers until someone in the class catches on to the trick.

Processing the Experience:

- How was I able to make the prediction?
- What is manipulation?
- Is manipulation good or bad? Why?
- Have you ever been in a situation with friends where you were "manipulated" to do something that you probably would not have done if you were by yourself? What was it?
- How did you feel after you figured out what was going on?
- Do true friends manipulate? Why?