

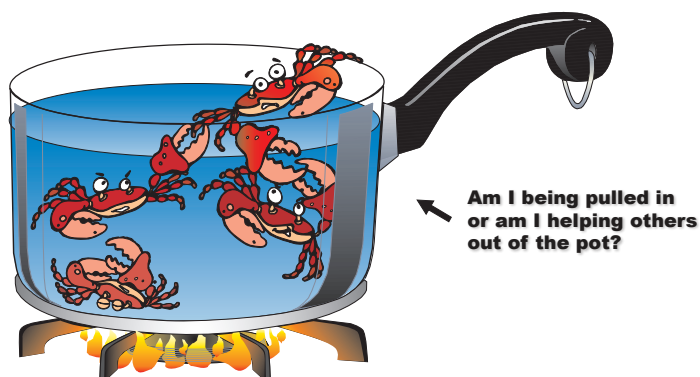
Climbing Out

Introduction

Key Concept:

When you put the tools from the visual metaphor into action, and when you develop an awareness of the positive and negative ways that others can influence you, you will be prepared to avoid negative behaviors and their consequences.

Climbing Out



Vocabulary

- Peer pressure
- True friends
- False friends
- The Pot
- Characteristics
- Change
- Influence
- Attacked
- Control

Secondary Concepts:

- If you are in trouble at home, at school, or with friends, you are in the pot.
- To climb out of the pot, you must follow certain steps and not let others pull you down.
- The visual analogies give you the tools you need to stay out of the pot and find opportunity, freedom, and self-respect.

Personalize your Lesson:

- Do you have an example of a time when a positive friend influenced you for good? What were the characteristics of this friend?
- What is an example of a pot that students might be in at home? At school? With friends?
- What tools or resources are available in your community that help youth "climb out"? You may want to incorporate these into your lesson plan.
- How do you avoid negative peer influence in your own life?

Activity:

To introduce this lesson, complete the attention activity "Make Me Laugh." (See the "Learning Activities" section under "Climbing Out.")

Climbing Out

Lesson Plan: Introducing Climbing Out

Sometimes people around you will try to keep you from changing. They will want you to continue to do the same things that you have been doing. Like crabs in a pot, they will keep pulling you down if you try to get out. That can

make it especially hard to change.

To climb out of the “pot” you are in, you will need to be strong, have a plan, and get some help. The people that help you climb out are you real

friends.

Explain, “When crabs are cooked live in a pot, they will try to escape by climbing out. They rarely succeed because the crabs at the bottom often pull those at the top back in.”

Climbing Out

Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough

1. Peer Pressure

Question:

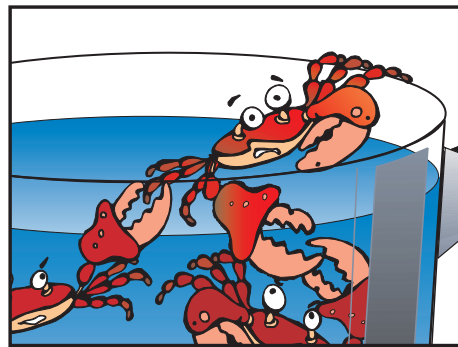
Does anyone know what peer pressure is?

Discussion:

Explain the concept of peer pressure:

Peer pressure is when youth become more and more concerned about belonging to a group and fitting in with friends. Friends can be part of our support system when they are helping us to be our “real” self.

Our desire to “fit in” to a group can create pressure on us to do the things that allow us or make us part of that group. This is part of peer pressure. Because we want to belong to



a group of friends, we often let our friends influence our choices. Depending on the kind of friends we have, the influence can be good or negative.

You may want to share a story of your own or someone that you know that illustrates how friends can be a negative or positive influence.

Youth use labels to define groups of friends. This can make your group more appeal-

ing and others less appealing, depending on how the label is used.

- Problems that are influenced by friends can be the most difficult problems to overcome (for example: drug use, gangs, school attendance).
- If your friends are getting into trouble, they are going to want you to do the same things they are doing.

Write:

Show the poster. Explain that the crabs represent students and their friends. On the poster next to the crabs write, “You and your friends.” Explain that the water represents peer pressure and write “Peer pressure” next to the water on the poster.

2. Water and Fire

Discussion:

Point out the fire on the poster and explain how peer pressure is gradual. Cold water heated slowly doesn't feel as hot as it would if it started out hot. The exact temperature of the water in the pot is hard to detect until the water is boiling. When we are in the water from the beginning, we may not notice the changes in temperature



until we are burned.

If your friends tried to force you to do bad things right off, you would probably refuse. It is done slowly with gentle pressure. It's easier to rationalize negative behavior in groups.

"Millions of people do it, so it's OK."

Peer pressure is dangerous because we don't notice it and it usually comes from people by whom we want to be accepted.

Activity:

To illustrate how peer pressure works, complete the activity "Sucked In."

3. The Pot

Write:

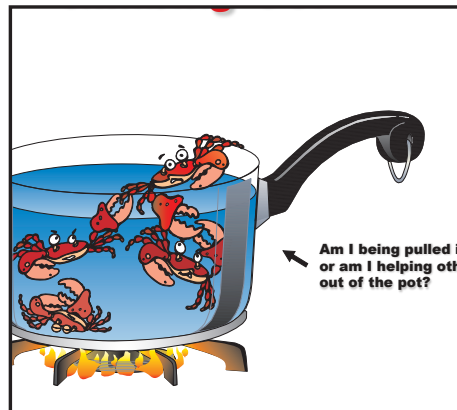
Explain to the students that the pot represents the kinds of trouble you can get into. Have students give examples and write them on the poster next to the pot.

Some examples may include:

- Smoking or using drugs
- Skipping school or not doing your schoolwork (failing school)
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Gangs
- Disrespecting parents or teachers
- Breaking rules at home or school

Discussion:

Emphasize to students the following point: "If you are in trouble at home, at school, or with friends, you are in the



pot."

Ask the students to relate this visual analogy to their own lives. You could ask, "Is there anyone in your life who is trying to pull you down or get you into trouble?" Or, "Have you ever noticed that when you are with certain people you get into trouble?"

Explain that the pot represents challenges or problems. A reality of life is that to overcome challenges, we cannot let others hold us down and keep us in the pot. On the other hand,

emphasize that positive peers can help them climb out of the pot and deal with challenges. Stress that if they are going to stay on the track to opportunity, freedom, and self-respect, they must overcome peer pressure. This is the focus of climbing out.

Challenge

Ask the students to test the water of peer pressure with these questions: How do I feel about myself when I am with my friends? How do I feel about myself after I am with them? Do I have more or less self-respect? How do people who really care about me feel about my friends?

Remind students that they will know that peer pressure is positive when they do things with their friends that don't hurt themselves or others and that don't take away their opportunities, freedom, and self-respect!

4. Climbing Out

Question:

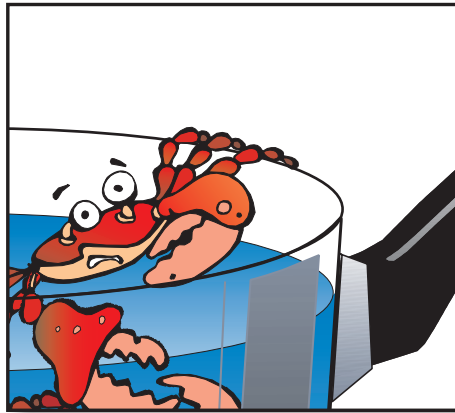
HOW CAN YOU GET OUT
AND STAY OUT OF THE POT?

Discussion:

Ask students this question and list responses on the poster. Make sure the responses include "picking good friends." This is the most important thing students can do to stay out of the pot.

Story:

Share the story in the box



below to help illustrate the importance of picking good friends.

Discussion

A reality of life is that where,

how, and with whom we spend our time impacts us positively or negatively. For example, if we hang out with peers who smoke or use drugs, we are much more likely to do the same. If we hang out with peers who don't try in school, we are more likely not to try either. On the other hand, if we hang out with friends that put effort into their home life, school life, and friendships, we are more likely to do the same.

STORY: THE INDIAN BOY AND THE SNAKE

An Indian boy was on top of a mountain when he came across a dangerous poisonous snake. Fortunately for him, it was a very cold day and the snake, being cold blooded, was too cold and weak to move. The snake said to the boy, "Will you please carry me down the mountain? I am too cold to move, and if I stay here much longer I will freeze to death."

The boy responded by saying, "You're not my friend. I know what kind of snake you are and I'm not going near you!" The snake then asked him again, "Please, won't you just carry me down and let me go at the bottom of the mountain where it is warmer?" The boy said, "How do I know that you won't bite me?" The snake said, "I promise that I won't hurt you. Besides, I am too cold to move. Please, won't you just carry me?" The boy thought for a moment, then decided that he would help the snake. So he walked over to the snake and gently picked him up, being careful to stay away from his venomous fangs.

As the boy walked down the mountain, he became more comfortable holding the snake. The temperature began to get warmer and the snake slowly found the strength returning to his cold, chilled body. When the boy reached the bottom, he turned to the snake and said, "Here you are, a nice warm spot." As he carefully set the snake down, the snake suddenly turned and bit him on the hand. The boy gave out a yell of pain as he fell backwards away from the snake. He turned and said, "Why did you bite me?!?" The snake coldly replied, "Oh, don't be so surprised . *You knew what I was when you picked me up.*"

5. Conclusion

Write:

Finish listing ways to get out and stay out of the pot on the poster. Include the following:

- Remember, your passion, purpose, and interests can help you find friends who like the same things you do and will support the real you.
- Get plugged in to a positive support system.
- Keep focused on your passion, purpose, or interest. Let it motivate you.
- Identify friends who will support you (support system). When the pressure is on, use positive peer pressure to crush negative peer pressure.
- Have an emergency peer pressure escape plan: Have someone you trust on call to come get you.
- Labels: Don't be afraid to let the real you show.
- Positive self-talk
- Character of heart
- Reality ride: If your friends are crashing, they are going to try to get you to crash too. You know what is going to keep you on the right track. Don't let peer pressure influence you to crash.

Climbing Out

- Positive defense mechanisms: Giving in to negative peer pressure is a negative defense mechanism. It's the EASY way that provides little protection in the long run. (Remember the paper shield.)

Discussion:

REMEMBER, IT IS A LOT EASIER TO PULL SOMEONE DOWN THAN TO PUSH THEM UP OR PULL THEM OUT.

If I had a box of blocks on the shelf, could you pull them down from the shelf? Could you pick up the same box and lift it up and put it on the shelf? Which is more difficult? Doing what is easy is not usually doing what is best.

Discuss with students that they too have the ability to pull their peers down or to be a true friend and help others climb out of the pot. Ask the students to share an example of a time when they helped a friend. Point out that real friends stop us from crashing and help us get out of the loop (Reality Ride). Emphasize that one of the greatest experiences

in life is helping others climb out of the pot.

Challenge

Challenge the students to pay more attention to how they influence others. Encourage and motivate them to take the risk and start climbing out, preferably with someone else. This makes overcoming the challenge easier and more fun. For example, they can identify someone with a similar challenge and work out a deal that when they feel weak and want to give up, they call each other. (Discuss other ways they can support each other. Be creative.)

Activity:

Have the students complete the following activity in their WhyTry journals or on a separate piece of paper:

Ask the students to identify anyone who has overcome peer pressure (a relative, sports hero, celebrity, etc.). Discuss that most people who are successful in life don't let negative people pull them down. Have them draw a picture of this person and/or write about them and what they did to get out and stay out of the pot, and what they were able to achieve because of this.

6. Review Lesson

Vocabulary

For the review lesson, have students define the vocabulary words listed in the introductory page of this chapter in their WhyTry Journals. This will

help increase understanding of the analogy and give you an opportunity to assess comprehension and retention from the overview lesson.

Visual analogy

In their WhyTry Journals,

students have a copy of the visual analogy. Have students use this to do a review/walk-through of the analogy. Have them make notes, answer questions, or use a personal example to explain the concept.

7. Reflection Question

Until the next WhyTry class, ask students to consider the Climbing Out reflection question:

Am I being pulled in or am I helping others out of the pot?

