

Defense Mechanisms

13. Name Writing Activity

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

Activity Type: Group

Grades: 2-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: In order to improve and make positive changes, we need to get out of our comfort zone. This attention-grabbing activity shows students that this is possible with time and practice.

Materials:

- Timer
- 1-2 pieces of paper per student
- 1 pen or pencil per student
- Background music (optional)

Activity:

Play the background music. Ask the group members to write their full name on the paper as many times as they can in 30 seconds. After the time is up, have the participants count the total number of times they were able to write their name. Repeat this activity two more times. Ask if they improved after the third time. Now, have the group members change hands and repeat the activity for 30 more seconds. Ask the first two processing questions. Ask, "Do you think you can write your name with your eyes closed?" Have them try. This will come easy for them with their dominant hand. Ask them to do the same thing with their non-dominant hand. Ask the remaining processing questions.

Processing the Experience:

- Why was it easier to do this activity with the hand that you normally write with?
- Why was it harder when you changed hands?
- Why is change hard? (Discuss muscle memory. We are used to doing what comes naturally.)
- What do we usually do in pressure situations when someone yells, hits, or blames us?
- Why is it hard to do something different?