

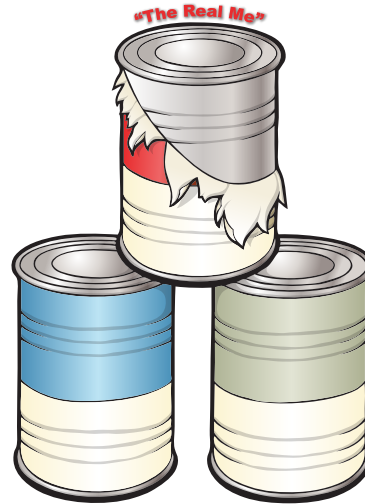
Tearing Off Your Label

Introduction

Key Concept:

Negative labels can hurt your future, but positive labels can help you achieve your goals and attain better opportunities. Ultimately, the label you wear depends on you: you can change your negative labels by changing your actions and showing others your strengths and positive traits.

Tearing Off Your Label



How can I show others "The Real Me"?

Vocabulary

- Label
- Individuality
- True
- False
- Real me
- Strengths
- Accomplishments
- Judgmental
- Differences

Secondary Concepts:

- It is human nature for people to assign labels to each other.
- Sometimes these labels are incorrect or unfair.
- If you keep doing the same thing you've always done, you'll always get the same result.
- It is important to focus on what you're doing right, not what you're doing wrong.

Personalize your Lesson:

- How have labels impacted you in your life?
- What are some of the most difficult labels your students have to deal with?
- What will happen to them if they never lose those labels?
- Why do people use labels as an excuse?

Activity:

To introduce this lesson, complete the attention activity "The Can." (See the "Learning Activities" section under "Tearing Off Your Label.")

Tearing Off Your Label

Lesson Plan: Introducing Labels

Human beings can't help labeling things. No matter who you are, or what you do, you will get labeled. Sometimes these labels are negative and they can hold you back.

If you are stuck with a negative label, you need to tear the old label off and get a new one. You can choose your new label with your behavior. If you just imagine the

label on the ideal you, and then act as if that label belongs to you, it will stick.

Tearing Off Your Label

Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough

1. Poster

Question

Have you ever been given a negative label because of your actions?

Discussion

Show picture or poster of "Tearing off your Labels."

Discuss with students some examples of negative labels. List some of the labels on the picture or poster.

Questions

- Do you feel that because of your actions, you have ever been given any of these labels?
- Are there any other labels you feel you have been given that are not on the can?
- How did these labels make you feel?

Share the story in the box below or another applicable one.



Discussion

Explain that labels are just words. They do not begin to represent or explain who a person really is. Labels only have power if we let ourselves believe them. Tell them that you are going to teach them how to tear off any label they may feel they have been given that is unfair or wrong. Stress that if they believe the negative label, it is easy to give up. They may be tempted to use these labels as an excuse to quit trying. Labels given by someone they respect or care about are usually the most painful labels.

Stress that people who really care about them don't want them to live up to the negative label.

Tell students when they are given a negative label they have two simple choices. The first choice is to live up to the label. You can be what people say you are. This is easy, anyone can do it. The second choice is to tear off the label. This takes strength and effort, but it is worth it because as you tear off the label you develop self-respect.

Encourage them to use their label as motivation to show people that they are much bigger and better than a label. Challenge them not to believe any negative labels and not to live up to them. This is one of the first steps to stop a crash and to stay on the track to opportunity, freedom, and self-respect. (Refer back to the Reality Ride.)

STORY: AN APRIL FOOL'S LABEL

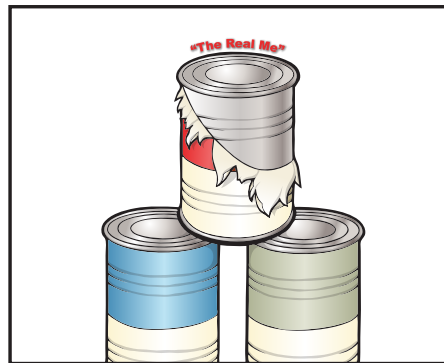
This is an experience one of our developers had in high school that illustrates the power of persuasion, and what happens when we allow ourselves to believe the labels others put on us:

One year when I was in high school, some friends of mine decided to play an April Fool's Day joke on my friend's boyfriend. It was a pretty simple joke, but we got a lot of people in on it, including some teachers. Anytime we saw him during that day, we would just say, 'Are you feeling OK? You don't look like you're feeling well.' Early in the morning when we asked him, his response was, 'Sure, I feel great.' But as the morning wore on and more and more people kept asking him, pretty soon he started to believe it. He started to say things like, 'You know, I don't feel so great,' or, 'I think I'm starting to get a headache.' By the late afternoon he told my friend, 'I am really, really sick. I think I have a bad flu.' Soon after that he called his mom, checked out of school and went home sick. My friend got home, called him, and told him it had been an April Fool's joke, but by then he refused to admit he wasn't really sick. Maybe by then he was. He had made himself become sick by believing the label (he was sick) that everyone else had put on him."

2. The Real Me

Writing Assignment

Give students a paper with the words "The Real Me" at the top, or you may want them to use page 7 in their Why-Try Journals. As you go over the questions on the poster or overhead next to "the Real Me," have students answer them on their paper. Have some students share their answers. (Save these to help students later to create the labels they want to have.)



Questions

Read and discuss as a class the following questions, then have students answer the questions individually on their paper:

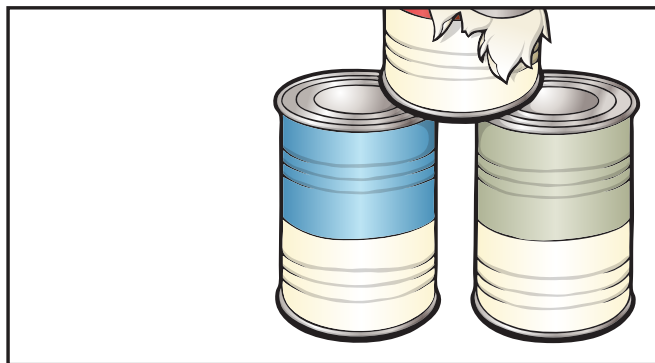
- What do I like about myself?
- What do others like about me?
- What have I accomplished?
- What are my strengths, goals, and dreams?
- If I had to give myself a label, what would it be? (Must be positive.)

NOTE:

Stress that putting their energy and effort into their strengths and goals (The Real Me) will help them tear off negative labels. Challenge them to remind themselves daily of the things they put on the Real Me paper.

3. The Steps to Tearing Off Your Label

Have four students come up one at a time and tear off part of the label from the can used during the Attention Activity. Tear off one section then discuss that step before tearing off the next section.



Step 1: STOP living up to your label! Prove your label wrong.

“Believe in the real you... Not in the label.” Ask the students what they think that means. Stress that they can replace the negative label with things they identified on the “real me” can. They can start to do this by asking themselves the following question before they make a decision: “Will this action cause me to live up to my label or will it help me to tear it off?”

Step 2: Remember: It is easy to prove that your label is true; just keep doing the same things.

If they keep doing the things that initially made the label

stick, the glue holding the label in place becomes stronger. Doing the opposite of what they did to get the label is one of the first and simplest things they can do to tear it off. Encourage them to take a risk, leave their comfort zone and do something different. For example: you didn’t do your homework so you got bad grades and you got the negative label that you are stupid. If you keep not doing your homework your label will stick even stronger. If you however decide to tear off that label and start putting the time and effort into doing all your homework eventually your grades will get better and the label will start to be torn off.

Step 3: Your label is from the past. Today you either need to

keep it or start tearing it off.

Point out that we can do only a few things about the past: Make amends for past mistakes, learn from them, and try not to repeat them. The past is over and done. But every day is a new day. Every day they have the chance to create the future they want by tearing off negative labels.

Step 4: Let the “real me” stand out so much that the past negative labels must be torn off.

Tell the students to ask themselves every day the following questions: What did I do today to tear off my negative label? What more can I do tomorrow?

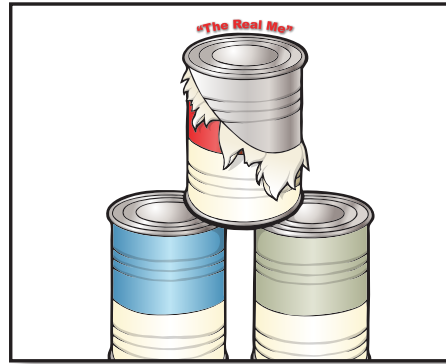
NOTE:

Once the label is torn off, ask the students, “What is in this can? Explain that this can is empty and there is no label. We can decide what we want to be in it. We can decide what the label will say. When you tear off your negative label, you get to decide what you want your new label to be. You choose by your actions what kind of person others will see you to be. What kind of label will give you the most self-respect? (Answer: “the real me”)

4. Conclusion

Discussion

Tearing off the label is not difficult once they clearly know what is not getting them into trouble and they repeat this over and over! (Refer back to the loop on the Reality Ride, and stress that repeating what is not getting them into trouble will throw them out of the loop and onto the track to opportu-



nity, freedom, and self-respect!) Once they have clearly identified what is not getting them

into trouble, they have the secret to tearing off the negative label. At the end of each day, they need to ask themselves how they can do more of this tomorrow. Have students write down these questions or give them the handout with these questions: What did I do today to tear off the label? How can I do more of this tomorrow? Have them put this in a place where they see it daily.

5. Review Lesson

Vocabulary

For the review lesson, have students define the vocabulary words listed in the introductory page of this manual 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,

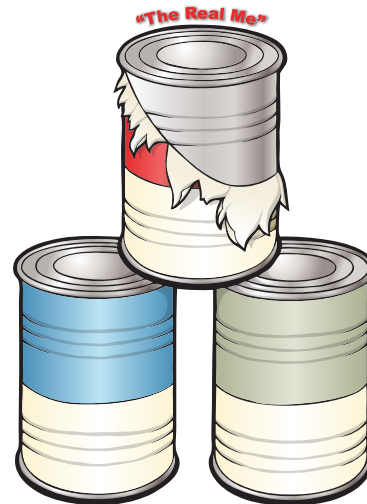
students have a copy of the visual analogy. Have students use this to do a review/walk-through of the analogy. Have them make notes, answer questions, or use a personal example to explain the concept.

6. Reflection Question

Until the next WhyTry class, ask students to consider the Tearing Off Your Label reflection question:

How can I show others “The Real Me”?

Tearing Off Your Label



How can I show others “The Real Me”?