

Lift the Weight

4. Four Aces

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: This activity teaches that when we consciously follow the rules/laws of life, we will be successful.

Materials:

- 1 deck of cards

Activity:

Beforehand, prepare a deck of cards by placing all the ace cards on top of the deck.

When you stand before the group, shuffle the deck two or three times, insuring that the top four ace cards do not get shuffled in. They should remain on top when the shuffling is complete.

Invite one volunteer to be your assistant. Ask the assistant to cut the deck in half (watch where the top deck is placed with the four ace cards).

Ask the assistant to cut each pile in half again, creating four piles. Again, watch where the deck with the four ace cards is placed.

Point to the stack of cards with the four ace cards and ask the assistant to take the top card (without looking at it) and place it on another pile. You will now have two piles with aces on top.

Here is where the deception begins. Your goal is to have all four piles with one ace on top. However, you don't want to move them all at once or you will give away the secret. The key is to make it appear as though you are randomly moving cards from one pile to another. Now that you have two piles with aces on top and two without, move a top card from one of the two piles without aces to the other to confuse the group.

Next, take one more card from the pile with the remaining three aces and move it to a pile with no aces. Remember to keep track of your aces.

Now, move the ace that was placed on a pile by your volunteer on the first turn and place it on the remaining pile that doesn't have an ace. There should be two aces remaining in your "ace" pile. Have your volunteer take the top card from this pile and lay it on the only pile that does not contain an ace.

Ask your assistant to turn over the top card on each pile to reveal the four aces.

End the activity by asking the audience to clap their hands for your assistant, who just expertly performed an advanced magic trick.

Processing the Experience:

- What was the secret to this magic trick? (I followed certain steps to make it successful.)
- The steps of this trick are like rules. If you do not follow the rules, will this trick be successful? Why or why not?
- What rules in society do you need to follow to be successful?

- What rules in school do you need to follow to be successful?
- What rules at home do you need to follow to be successful?
- Does following the rules give you more freedom? Why?
- Does following the rules give you more opportunity in life? Why?
- How do you feel about yourself when you are on the right path?