

Motivation Formula

6. How Are You?

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

Activity Type: Group

Grades: 2-12

Group Size: 1 or more

Time: 10 minutes

Introduction: When someone asks, “How are you?” our answer is generally an immediate, “I am fine.” We respond this way out of habit, without giving consideration to how we are really feeling. Similarly, our self-talk is something we don’t often consciously think about. We allow it to impact us without considering what we are telling ourselves. This activity is designed to help students stop and think about their self-talk, then to reframe their negative self-perceptions into something positive.

Materials:

- 1 sheet of paper with examples of self-talk for each student (These can be found at www.whytry.org/activities.)
- Markers and paper for self-talk signs

Activity:

On a sheet of paper, list several examples of self-talk. Include both positive and negative examples. A sample worksheet is given on the website, but feel free to create your own, listing examples that apply directly to your class.

Distribute the self-talk papers and ask the students to circle all the phrases that describe them. Have them count the number of positive items and the number of negative items circled. Have them choose one of the negative responses they circled (if they had any) and have them think of a way to rephrase it so that it becomes a positive motivation for them to do better. For example, if they circled, “I am dumb,” they could rephrase it as, “I always try my best,” or “I will study harder,” etc.

Then have them choose one of the items they circled that is positive. Have them make a sign or poster that they can hang up in their room that contains that phrase. Encourage them to look at it and use it as a reminder of the kind of self-talk they should be focusing on.

Processing the Experience:

- What were some of the negative responses you circled? Positive?
- Was it hard to reframe your negative responses? Why?
- Which did you have more of: positive or negative responses?
- Do you feel that these responses accurately reflect who you are?
- What phrases do you feel would more accurately describe you?
- How hard is it to think of positive things to tell yourself?
- How can focusing on your positive traits help you in life?