

# Motivation Formula

## 11. Rope Handcuffs

**Spatial Requirements:** Classroom with moderate space required

**Activity Type:** Movement/group

**Grades:** 3-12

**Group Size:** 2 or more (even number)

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Introduction:** By using character and heart as well as support systems, we can overcome their challenges in life and help others overcome their challenges. This activity will illustrate this principle as students try to help each other “break free.” When group members learn the solution, they will share their knowledge with others, illustrating the importance of turning outward and sharing our skills and knowledge with those around us.

**Materials:**

- 1 3-foot length of rope per student

**Activity:**

Demonstrate the following with two people in front of the group:

Pair two people up and have a person tie the rope around the wrists of his/her partner so that each wrist is connected to the rope. There should be a length of rope between the wrists. (See pictures.)

Now tie the rope around one wrist of the second person. Before tying the rope on the second wrist, take the loose end of the rope and put it between the wrists of his/her partner and around the partner’s rope, and tie it to the wrist of the second person. Each person will then be linked together by the rope. (See pictures.)

Once everyone is connected to a partner by the rope, give the following instructions: “Your challenge is to disconnect from your partner without untying the rope or slipping the rope off your wrist.” Let them work on the challenge for four or five minutes. When the frustration level is high and they want to give up, challenge them to “think outside the box” and come up with another way to face the challenge. One hint might be: “The answer has more to do with what you do with the rope than it has to do with you climbing through the rope.” A second hint might be: “Under the rope and around the wrist.” A third hint might be, “A key goes through a...” If the teams still cannot figure it out, you as the facilitator might go up to one of the pairs and show them how. Once they know the solution, have them teach the other pairs one at a time. Continue the process until each pair that learns the solution goes individually to the next pair and shows them how. Continue until everyone learns the solution.

**Solution:**

One of the partners will take the loop of rope between his/her wrists and slip it under the rope of the wrist of his/her partner, being careful not to twist it in the process. (This is important!) With the loop of rope that is under his/her partner’s hand, move it over the hand of the partner to the opposite side of his/her partner’s hand. You are now disconnected. (See pictures.)

**Processing the Experience:**

- Why was this a hard challenge?
- How did you solve this challenge?
- Did some of you give up? Why?
- When one team figured it out, how did they help the other teams?
- How can turning outward and serving others be win-win for both parties?
- Do we ever give up on challenges we have in life? Why?
- What support systems do you have in your life?

- What does overcoming a challenge do for you?
- What challenges have you overcome in your life?
- How did you overcome your challenges?

