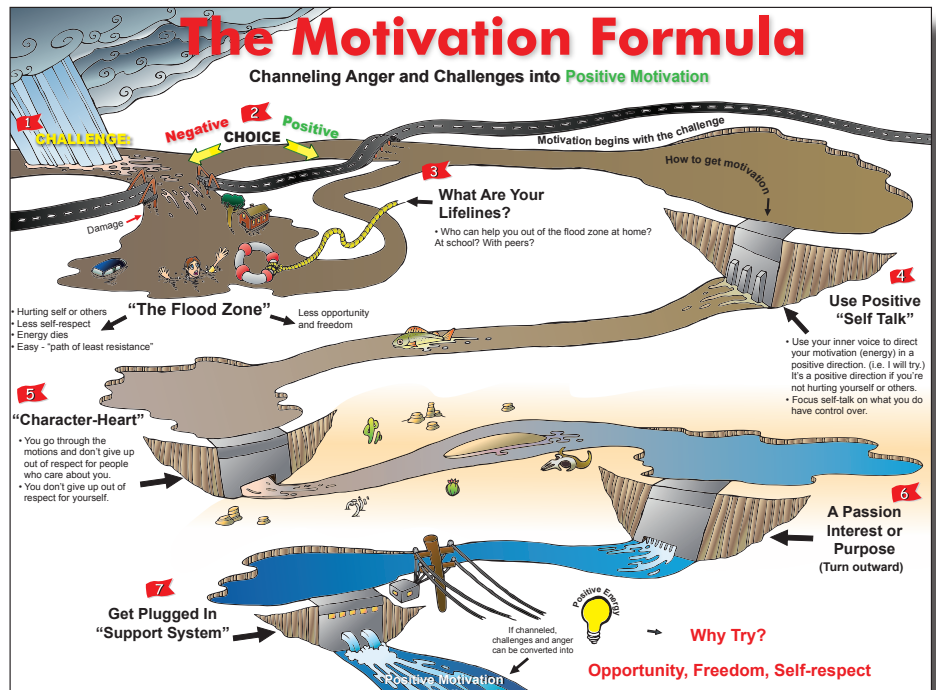


The Motivation Formula

Introduction

Key Concept:

You can take your challenges and channel them into positive motivation: first to better yourself, and then to turn outward and help others.



Vocabulary

- Motivation
- "Flip the switch"
- Positive energy
- Reframe
- Turning outward
- Self-talk
- Character and heart
- Passion
- Support systems

Secondary Concepts:

- We can channel the challenges we face at home, at school, and with peers in a positive direction.
- When we channel our energy in a negative direction, we end up in the flood zone.
- Positive self-talk, character and heart, a passion, purpose, or interest, and positive support systems can help us remain motivated.

Personalize your Lesson:

- In what ways is this formula the key to the rest of the program?
- What is your role as a teacher or counselor in motivating your students to do better in school?
- What is an example of "positive self-talk" that you use to motivate yourself when you have a challenge?
- What is a passion that you have (outside of your work) that you can share with your students?

Activity:

To introduce this lesson, complete the attention activity "Mind Over Matter."

The Motivation Formula

Lesson Plan: Introducing Motivation Formula

It is likely that some of your successes occurred because you channeled your challenges. Many youth are confused about how to deal with challenges. While there are no magic solutions to the challenges youth face today, this formula can help you show them what you already know and have likely been applying in your life for years.

Ask students about the various uses of water. Explain that water can provide life and energy -- like water that's channeled into a dam -- but that it can also be devastating. Show pictures or videos of the destructive effects of floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters related to water. Show the visual analogy. Explain that our life's challenges are

like this river. We can choose to channel these challenges in positive ways that give us opportunity, freedom, and self-respect, or in destructive ways that will plummet us into the flood zone. The dams this river flows through represent the positive ways we can increase our motivation.

The Motivation Formula

Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough



Discussion Point 1: Challenges

Question:

What are the challenges that you're dealing with? (Go back to the Reality Ride. What challenges did they list for home, school, and peers?) How are you dealing with those challenges?

Discussion:

In the face of difficult challenges in life, we often feel anger, fear, and frustration. With these challenges and emotions comes energy.

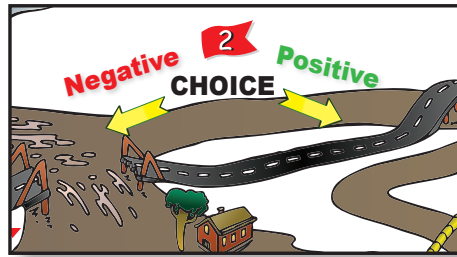
Point 2: Choice

Discussion:

When energy emerges from challenges and emotions, we have a choice. We can channel that energy in a positive direction or a negative direction. Like a river breaking from its course, using our energy in a negative way puts us in “the flood zone.”

Question:

How do you know when you're in the flood zone?



The flood zone can take away our opportunity and freedom. You know you're in the flood zone when you are hurting yourself or others, you have no self-respect, your energy has died, or you are taking the “path of least resistance.”

Discussion:

Often there are positive attributes hidden in our negative behaviors. When we can use our strengths to take us in a positive direction, we have “flipped the switch.” Have the students think of behaviors that get them in trouble, then discuss the strengths, talents, or positive attributes that might be hidden in those behaviors.

NOTE:

As a facilitator, it is your job to help students reframe the positive attributes exhibited in their negative behaviors. Help them “flip the switch” and see how they can channel their strengths and abilities in a positive direction to reach their goals and dreams.



Point 3: What are your lifelines?

Question:

What are your lifelines? Who can help you out of the flood zone at home? At school? Among your peers?

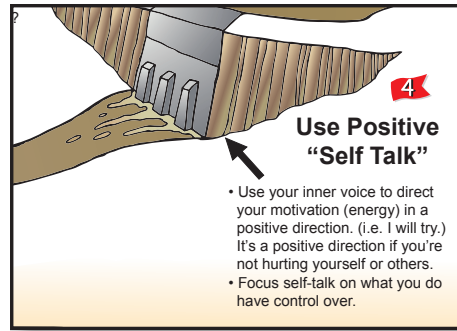
NOTE:

Make sure that students realize that you, the facilitator, are one of their lifelines. They will be reassured of this as you continually surrender the one-up relationship. (Refer to the “Surrendering the One-up Relationship” chapter for ideas.)

Point 4: Use Positive Self-Talk

No matter what your challenge is, what we tell ourselves about a problem often determines the impact that challenge will have on us. We can use our inner voice to direct our motivation (energy) in a positive direction.

We should focus our positive



self-talk only on things we can control. Talk about the difference between the things we

can control and the things we can't control. For example, students don't have control over their graduation requirements, but they do control the amount of effort they put into passing their classes. They don't have control over whether their parents get divorced, but they can control their reaction to this and other challenging situations.

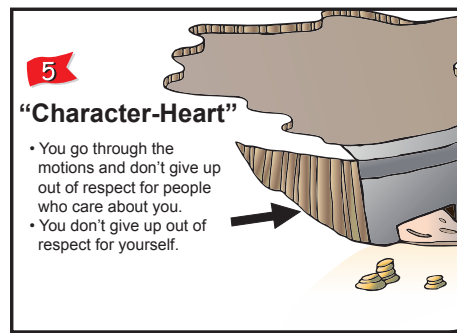
Point 5: Character and Heart

Question:

Who are some people in your life that you care about and respect?

Discussion:

Sometimes life gets tough and you can't answer the question "Why try?" It is in these times



that you can tap into character and heart. That means

you keep going through the motions, not giving up out of respect for yourself and for people who care about you and believe in you. Relationships can be the greatest motivators when dealing with difficult challenges.

Point 6: Passion, Interest, Purpose

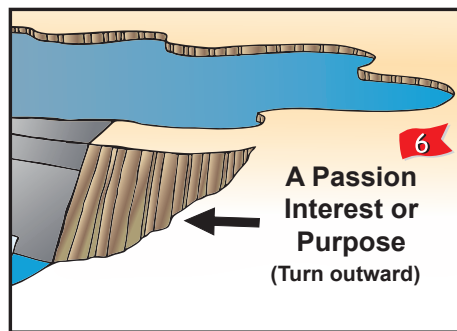
Question:

What is your passion?

If you don't think you have a passion, it may be that you just don't realize it or haven't discovered it yet.

Discussion:

Sometimes motivation will be low, like a river drying up as it runs through the desert. In these times, the greatest moti-



vation will come from focusing on your passion.

Your passion can help you in life and in your future career. People who get to use their passion in their career do a

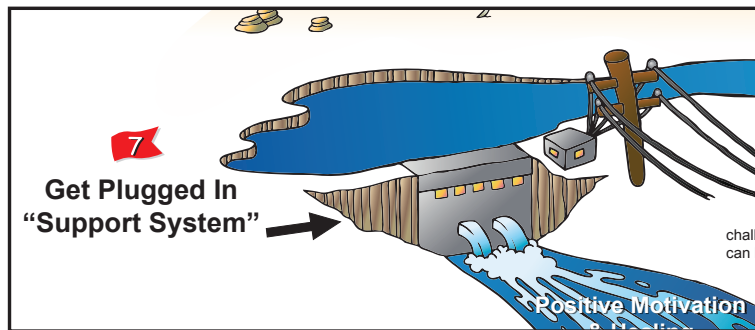
better job because they love what they are doing. People who have passions outside of their career can put in a hard day's work so they can focus on their passion after work or on the weekends.

When you have identified your passion, interest, or purpose, it is important that you turn outward and share it with others. This will help other people develop that passion and help you connect with people who share the same passion (Step 7).

Point 7: Get Plugged In

Discussion:

To stay motivated and overcome challenges, we need help from others. Developing a strong support system is key. This principle is so important, in fact, that there is an entire visual analogy dedicated to it later in the manual.



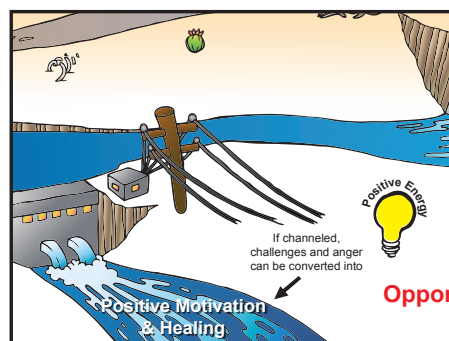
Conclusion

Question:

Look at the entire picture. How does the river change from the beginning to the end?

Discussion:

At the beginning of the motivation formula, we are generally seeing our challenges with



anger. As we use our energy to move in a positive direc-

tion, however, our perspective changes. We “flip the switch” and begin to see our challenges with gratitude. When we can face our challenges in this manner, we can literally have an advantage over someone who hasn’t had to deal with those challenges.

A Personal Example:

How WhyTry Founder Christian Moore applied the Motivation Formula

I came up with these principles by observing people I respected and by reading biographies of great men and women. I started to notice that they all had challenges, but that they turned any anger that came from the challenge into motivation. Many had people in their lives that believed in them when they didn’t believe in themselves (surrendering the one-up relationship.) These people also focused their

“self-talk” on what they could control. They went through the motions and didn’t give up, often out of respect for someone who cared about them (character and heart). Those who channeled their challenges seemed always to have a passion or purpose, and often used it to help others; this seems to be very healing for them. Lastly, the great men and women I studied and observed were “plugged in” to many resources and supports, but it took time to develop great support systems.

In my own life, one of my challenges was getting a Master’s

degree despite my learning disabilities. When I was in grade school, I channeled this challenge at times into the flood zone by acting out. On the other hand, when I went to college, I took the energy from the challenge and fear of not being able to support my family or myself and used it as motivation. The motivation did not come immediately. I had to find the seeds of motivation illustrated in this analogy of water and dams. A milestone in helping me out of the flood zone occurred the first time a professor surrendered the one-up relationship. Although I was failing most of the tests,

the professor didn't focus on my failures, but on my potential, and put effort into pulling me up. Even though I felt like a failure, being treated positively gave me motivation to try harder.

Next, my self-talk while in college resembled the following: "I will study 50 to 100 hours to pass this test. I will prove people wrong. I can make a living. Education will give me more opportunity, freedom, and self-respect." Although this self-talk helped me, in overwhelming times, positive self-talk was not enough. I decided to leave my cognitive self-talk and go from my brain to my heart. I started to notice

that one of my greatest motivators was relationships. I would study 50 hours to pass a test because of my love for my wife and others who believed in me. I defined this earlier as character and heart.

Once I had the positive self-talk and character and heart, my passion, purpose, and interest became my motivation. My passion is social work and giving others these seeds of motivation. This passion gives me the energy to keep trying when I have challenges in my personal and work life. I soon started to notice that this passion for social work quickly got me plugged into great people who became my support sys-

tem. This support system continually motivates me to apply my passion, to use positive self-talk (which they often modeled for me), and to not give up—both out of respect for them and for myself, which is the dam of character and heart. Although my support system also knows my failures, they focus on my potential successes. They understand what surrendering the one-up relationship means. Finally, this formula helps me take my anger and challenges and convert the pain into positive motivation, healing, opportunity, freedom, and self-respect, which are the answers to the question, "Why Try?"

Finding Your Own Example

To see if this motivation formula has worked in your own life, please answer the following six questions to yourself, or write them down. First, think back to your junior or senior years of high school or your college years. Feel free to adapt the questions to your life circumstances—the overall theme of the questions should be clear.

Challenge

What is one challenge you had getting into college or while going to school? (For example, test anxiety, money problems, illness, frustration, depression, etc.)

Your Lifelines

Write down the name of some-

one you personally knew who inspired you. Think of someone who knew your weaknesses and some of your problems but still believed in you. Maybe they treated you the same whether you had successes or failures.

Choose To Use Positive Self-Talk

To the best of your memory, write down the self-talk you used to make it through school. What were you telling yourself while in school that motivated you? (For example, "If I get this degree, I will be rich," or "This degree will give me respect and opportunities," or "I must keep studying.")

Character and Heart

When school became difficult or when you were having a challenge, what motivated

you to keep going through the motions and not give up? (For example, respect for yourself, out of respect for others that care about you and others you care about, pressure, fear of consequences, etc.)

A Passion, Interest, or Purpose

Write down one passion, interest, or purpose that you identified for your life.

Get Plugged In (To a Support System)

Write down three support systems or connections that you have. (For example, family, friends, colleagues, a club, religious or community organization, work, etc.) Has your passion or interest helped connect you to any of these support systems?