

CARING ACTIVITIES

Peer Pressure

What is peer pressure? Mentees feel pressured to do something they really don't feel comfortable doing. There are specific techniques people use to get someone to do something they want them to do. There are also some specific assertive responses students can use to handle this pressure.

1. **A common pressure technique is to repeat the demand over and over.**

Example: "Oh, come on! Let's go! Come on!"

Best response, "No, I don't want to go!"

"Oh, come on!"

Response, "I said NO, I'm not going!"

Repeat again and again as they repeat. The person is trying, by repetition, to wear you down. The trick is to hold firm and outlast them.

2. **Another pressure technique is using the question, "Why not?" and then arguing with your reasons by saying, "Yes, but..."**

Example: "I don't want to smoke a cigarette. I will get in trouble."

"Yes, but we won't get caught. Besides, it is cool to smoke."

"Sorry, but my decision is not to smoke. If you think it is cool, then go ahead."

Most kids don't want to get into trouble by themselves. They want someone to try things with them. **Stand firm** with your decision.

3. **Often a person will use name-calling such as "chicken", to get you to do something to prove that you are not a chicken.** The best answer to this type of pressure is to admit that you are a chicken. Most fears are just common sense.

Example: "OK, I admit, I'm scared. You can go ahead if you feel so brave."

4. **Pressure is often put on students by use of ridicule through put downs.**

Example: "You're a bore!" or "You're no fun."

Good response: "We have a different idea of what fun is."

5. **Pressure is sometimes in the form of threatening statements. Threats may be either of a physical or social nature.**

Example: "I'm going to beat you up if you don't."

"You won't be my friend anymore if you continue to hang around with her."

Many times these threats are a bluff, but it is important to always tell an adult if someone threatens to hit you. Your rights are being violated whenever you are threatened or hit. Your "so called" friends must understand that you do not tolerate physical abuse. When a friend tries to control you, you might reply with something like, "I like you a lot, but I also like my other friend and I will continue to hang around with her. If you can't accept that, then I will miss our friendship."

Peer Pressure Role Plays

Have your mentee role-play the following scenarios. After each scene, ask:

1. What pressure technique was being applied here?
2. Did the student make excuses to get out of the situation?
3. Instead, what assertive responses were used to state the real feelings?
4. What will probably happen now?
5. Has a similar situation ever happened to you?
6. How did you handle it then?
7. How will you handle it in the future?

Situation #1

Jessica: Hey, Tiffany, let's see if we can take some pencils from this store. I've done it before. It's fun!

Tiffany: Shoplifting? Are you kidding? No way!

Jessica: Come on!

Tiffany: Forget it.

Jessica: It's no big deal. So why not?

Tiffany: If it is no big deal, why are you making such a big deal out of it?

Sally: Come on.

Jessica: I'm going home. This isn't my idea of fun.

Situation #2

Jennifer: LaToya, your parents won't be home for a couple of hours. Let's drink some of their booze!

LaToya: I'm not allowed to drink. My parents would kill me.

Jennifer: Yes, but they don't have to know.

LaToya: They always find out.

Jennifer: Yes, but we'll water it down. They won't know the difference.

LaToya: I don't like to trick my parents. I'd feel guilty. They trust me and that's the way it's going to stay. If you want to drink so badly, you'll have to find a drink somewhere else.

Jennifer: Well, okay, if you're going to be such a prude...okay.

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Situation #3

- Billy: Hey man, you should have heard what T.J. said about you. He said he wants to fight you but you're too chicken. He said you even cluck when you talk.
- Durell: Yeah. Well, I don't want to fight. That's all.
- Billy: Cause you're a chicken.
- Durell: Listen. If not wanting to fight someone over something stupid is chicken, then, yeah, I'm chicken.
- Billy: I'm going to tell him you're too chicken to fight him.
- Durell: You can tell him whatever you want. I don't see you volunteering to fight him.

Situation #4

- Jasmine: Do you like Becky?
- Shamika: Yes, I like her. I like her a lot.
- Jasmine: Well, I think she's a creep and if you keep hanging around her, I'm going to beat you up. (Jasmine pushes Shamika.)
- Shamika: Leave me alone!
- Jasmine: I'm warning you. I mean it!
- Ms. Jones walks in.
- Shamika: Ms. Jones, I don't like to tell on my friends, but Jasmine is threatening to beat me up if I hang around with Becky. I don't know how to handle it because I like both of them.
- Ms. Jones: It sounds to me as if Jasmine is not treating you as a friend. No friend threatens to beat up a friend. I think we need to discuss this with Jasmine. (To Jasmine) Maybe you're afraid that Shamika won't be your friend anymore if she spends time with Becky.
- Jasmine: Sort of.
- Ms. Jones: And you may feel that the only way that you can keep that from happening is to threaten her.
- Jasmine: I guess so.
- Ms. Jones: Remember, Jasmine, that threatening and fighting are always poor substitutes for talking about your real feelings. You can't control another person by threats but you can grow in understanding by sharing your real feelings, even when those feelings are uncomfortable. And Shamika, you were right to come to me. When you are physically threatened, you must tell an adult. No one has the right to hit another person.

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Situation #5

Crystal: Let me borrow your math homework.

Heather: Borrow my homework?

Crystal: I hate to ask you but my mom's making me go with her this afternoon and I won't have time to finish. You know I can't afford another "F" in math. I'll do you a favor sometime.

Heather: No, Crystal. I'll be truthful with you. It makes me angry when you expect me to just hand over my homework. That assignment took me a long time.

Crystal: Well, thanks a lot! Some friend you are.

Heather: A real friend wouldn't ask for my homework.

Crystal: Well, don't worry. I won't ask you for any more favors.

Heather: I just don't loan out my homework. That's all.

What Would You Do?

Here are a few interesting situations that you can discuss with your mentee to get him/her to think about doing the right thing in situations that call for quick decisions. Read each scenario to your mentee and ask for an answer. Then ask about the values that are expressed by way of his/her answers.

1. You are going over to your friend's apartment building, and as you walk into the courtyard, you see your friend and another person climbing out of the basement window with an electric drill. The janitor comes running around from the back and stops all three of you. He asks whether you saw the others climb out of the window. What would you say?
2. You and a friend go to a party, at which most of the kids are two years older than you. When you get there, some of the other kids start teasing your friend, but they don't know you're with him. What do you do?
3. You are taking a test and you notice that a cute boy (girl), whom you have been trying to get to notice you, is sitting next to you. You notice that he (she) is copying your test answers and that the teacher is walking up and down the aisle. What do you do?
4. You are baby-sitting and you have been told not to let anyone in the house. Two very good friends come by and want to come in. You know nothing bad could possibly happen. What do you do?
5. You are eating dinner at a friend's house, and his mother serves you this horrible-looking, smelly stuff. Everyone is sitting around the table enjoying it. What do you do?

Friends

One of the factors that wear down self-concept is the inability of some youngsters to make and keep friends. The following activities are designed to help the mentee expand his/her repertoire of skills in building and enhancing relationships with his/her peers:

- 1.) Discuss the methods of making friends. Take some time to brainstorm some new ways. Role-play the best ones.
- 2.) Ask your mentee to draw a picture of a friend. Underneath the picture ask him/her to write a paragraph beginning with "A friend is..." Some mentees may say they have no friends. If this happens, ask him/her to draw a picture of friends they would like to have.
- 3.) Lead a discussion around the following questions:
 - Do you have a best friend?
 - Do you like to do the same things?
 - Did you ever want to do something that he/she didn't want to do?
 - What happened?
 - Were you still friends?
- 4.) Ask your mentee to write a paragraph answering the following question: "What is there about you that makes your friend like you?"

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Friends

Try out the following questions for discussion. They are guaranteed to stimulate discussions.

- How do you make friends?
- What is a friend?
- Do you have a friend?
- What makes a good friend?
- How do you find a friend?
- Is it better to have a lot of friends or just a few friends?
- When you first came to school, how did you make a friend?
- Have you ever moved into a new neighborhood and had no friends at all?
- How did you find a friend there?
- What do you do when someone new moves into your neighborhood? Do you wait for him to come over to your house? Do you go over to his house and try to make friends with him?

E/M/H

From *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom, a Handbook for Teachers and Parents* by Jack Canfield & Harold C. Wells (Allyn and Bacon, A division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1976) p. 221

Friendship Scale

There is a need for each of us to know more about what we are like. This is to help you describe yourself. Answer these according to your feelings. It is important for you to give your own honest answer.

	Nearly Always	About ½ the Time	Not Very Often
1 Trustworthy			
2 Friendly			
3 Reliable			
4 Loveable			
5 Good listener			
6 Cooperative			
7 Not a tattletale			
8 Civilized			
9 Polite			
10 Helpful			
11 Nice			
12 Thoughtful			
13 Generous/sharing			
14 Cheerful/humorous			

To get along with people better, I need to be more

E/M

Fun Things To Do with Your New Mentee

- Get acquainted. Share pictures of family, friends, pets, et. And encourage your student to do the same.
- Share stories about your own childhood (funniest, happiest, saddest, etc.).
- Play simple games of “Hang Man”, Tic Tac Toe”, etc.
- Play board games or do puzzles.
- Read to each other.
- Draw pictures together.
- Do a simple craft activity.
- Make a collage from old magazines.
- Play Frisbee, shoot hoops, throw a football, kick a soccer ball, etc.
- Play with play dough or modeling clay.

Recognizing Anger as a Second Feeling

There is usually some feeling that comes before the feeling of anger. The exercises on this page will help you understand those feelings and give you practice in making good responses.

- 1.) Mary is going skating; she invited two of her friends, but did not invite Susan. Susan acts angry.

What is Susan's first feeling? _____

Your response to Susan is . . . _____

- 2.) Billy teases Tom about how short he is. Tom acts angry.

What might Tom's first feeling be? _____

Your response to Tom is . . . _____

- 3.) Two of your friends are talking and laughing. You think they are talking about you. You feel angry.

What did you feel first? _____

Your response to your friends is . . . _____

- 4.) Mom got angry with me when _____

Mom's first feeling may have been _____

Your response to your mom is _____

- 5.) My teacher was angry with me when _____

Her first feeling was probably _____

Your response to your teacher _____

- 6.) My best friend was angry with me when _____

Her first feeling was probably _____

Your response to your friend _____

M/H

Sending “I” Messages

Read the following situations. Write “I” messages for the problems.

- 1.) Your best friend, Karen, has told your secret.

What is happening? _____

How do you feel? I feel _____

Why do you feel this way? because _____

- 2.) The student in the desk in front of you talks too much.

What is happening? _____

How do you feel? I feel _____

Why do you feel this way? because _____

Make up your own situation. Tell someone your “I” message. It is important to practice.

More About “I” Messages

Tell how you would feel in the following situations. Choose a word that expresses this feeling, write it on the line and tell why you feel that way.

1.) When you tell me that I am “special”, I feel _____
because _____.

2.) When you ask me for my homework so that you can copy the answers, I feel _____
_____ because _____.

3.) When you get all A’s on your report card and I don’t, I feel _____
because _____.

4.) When you tell me you won’t be my friend, I feel _____
because _____.

Write your own “I” messages. Think about some situations you’ve been in when you could have told the other person how you felt about what he/she had done that you didn’t like.

5.) When you _____, I feel _____
because _____.

6.) When you _____, I feel _____
because _____.

Learning Self-Control

To talk to your mentee about the importance of self-control, locate three articles in the newspaper about real people who have exercised self-control. Ask what self-control means to your mentee and ask him/her to write down what would have happened to these three people if they had not exercised self-control.

1

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Conflict Management

Many times when we are angry, we see the other person as an enemy. We feel like we are in a contest to determine who is stronger or better. We think there must be a winner and a loser – of course we want to be the winner. When we are fighting mad, it is difficult to fight fairly. Angry emotions block our good judgments.

It is important for us to remember that we both have the problem – not “me against you” – but both of us involved together in a common problem that needs to be worked out. We can learn to fight fair if we use the following rules:

Rules for fighting fair:

- Identify the problem.
- Focus on the problem.
- Attack the problem, not the person.
- Listen with an *open mind*.
- Treat the other person’s feelings with respect.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- The goal of fighting fair is to make everyone a winner!

M/H

Conflict Management

Think about the conflicts stated below. How might they be handled unfairly? Then, solve the conflict fairly, using the rules on the previous page.

1. Someone calls you a bad name.

Unfairly:

Fairly:

2. You want to go swimming with a friend but your mom wants you to do chores.

Unfairly:

Fairly:

What conflict were you involved in recently? Was it handled fairly? If not, how could you have handled it fairly?

Handling Anger

Read the following statements. Decide if the ways to handle anger are appropriate or inappropriate. Put + on the line if it is appropriate. Put - on the line if it is inappropriate.

- _____ 1. Run fast for two minutes or more.
- _____ 2. Hit the person who made you angry.
- _____ 3. Pound on the wall.
- _____ 4. Hit on my pillow or a punching bag.
- _____ 5. Scream at the person so he or she will know I am angry.
- _____ 6. Go outdoors and work in the yard or garden.
- _____ 7. Ride my bicycle.
- _____ 8. Kick the dog.
- _____ 9. Break something.
- _____ 10. Write down my angry feelings.
- _____ 11. Draw a picture that expresses my anger.
- _____ 12. Clean the house, my room, or the garage.
- _____ 13. Talk about the problem to someone who will listen.
- _____ 14. Try to forget about the problem.

Choose two appropriate ways to handle anger. #_____ and #_____.

Choose two inappropriate ways to handle anger. #_____ and #_____.

Responses to Conflict

*A*voidance

*P*ut-Down

*S*olution

*U*nderstanding

Tell which of the responses are being used in each of the statements below. Use the first letter of the words above that apply.

Example:

- A “Can you tell me about it after dinner?”
1. “When I was your age I would have just solved it this way.”
2. “That’s a stupid problem.”
3. “I can tell you’re worried about your spelling test tomorrow.”
4. “Not now, I’m busy.”
5. “All you have to do is....”
6. “Listen, if I were you I would...”
7. “You feel like no one listens to your ideas.”
8. “Why don’t you tell your father?”
9. “It sounds like you are really having a problem.”
10. “Can’t we talk about this tomorrow?”

Problem-Solving Worksheet

Step 1: Define the problem

What is the problem you want to work on?

Ask yourself: Why is this a problem?

Rewrite your problem statement.

Step 2: Define success in solving the problem

Describe what would happen if you were successful.

Step 3: Generate alternatives

What are some ways you could solve your problem and achieve the success you've just described? Come up with a list of choices—don't edit yourself, just think of as many as you can (you'll pick the best ones in a minute).

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Which of these approaches do you like the best? Pick the 3 – 5 you like most and circle them.

Problem-Solving Worksheet (cont.)

Step 4: Evaluate alternatives

It's time to pick "Plan A" and a backup "Plan B" (in case Plan A falls through) for solving your problem. Here are some things to consider in picking from your list of choices.

- How much time will this take?
- How much money?
- Are there any downsides?
- Is there any positive "multiplier effect"—that is, will this option yield other benefits beyond solving this problem?
- What would I rather do?

Once you've considered these questions, write the letter "A" next to your top choice, the letter "B" next to your next-best choice.

Step 5: Agree to action

If you want to follow through on this approach to solving your problem, it's important to decide what you need to do and when. Do that below with your mentor.

My plan "A" is to _____

To accomplish this, I will:

Task	Who	By When