

RECOGNIZING OUR STRENGTHS

GOALS:

- To recognize our individual strengths.
- To learn to feel comfortable presenting these strengths to others.

RATIONALE:

In our society it is generally not considered acceptable to talk openly about our strengths. However, our level of self esteem depends, in part, on others recognizing our abilities and positive qualities.

This lesson is designed to encourage participants to discover strengths in themselves and others, and to present these strengths with pride.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Flipchart, markers; for each participant coloured paper, pens, magazines, glue, scissors.

METHOD:

Warm up: Superlatives:

Prepare a flipchart with a long list of superlatives. Give participants a piece of coloured paper on which to write their name, plus one superlative. Cross off superlatives from the list as they are chosen, so that one is assigned to each participant. Ask participants in turn to announce their name plus one superlative.

Exercise 1: Brag Tag

Divide participants into triads. Instruct each person to make a Brag Tag by writing on the back of the name tag

"one thing I am good at is . . .".

Ask each person in turn to stand up in front of their small group and announce their strength.

This activity is processed in the large group using questions such as:

- How easy was it to pick an adjective that seemed right for you?
- How did you feel about telling the group your name with that adjective?

Theory: To be drawn from participants.

Discuss with group and flipchart responses to questions:

- What is bragging?
- Looking back to your childhood, what messages did you receive about bragging and being proud of your strengths?
- What is positive about bragging?

Exercise 2: Group Brag

Ask each participant to imagine themselves in front of a mirror saying

"I am good at . . .",

followed by writing down as many strengths as possible. Remind participants that strengths can be found in 'being' as well as 'doing'.

Focus discussion on the process of enumerating and presenting one's strengths using questions such as:

- How did it feel to brag about yourself to the rest of the small group?
- What sort of feelings did you have?
Can you name 3 different feelings or more?
- Did anyone find this difficult? Anyone else?
Can you say what was difficult about it or made it hard to do?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How did the rest of the group feel about someone bragging to them?

Exercise 3: Collage

Hand out magazines, paper, scissors and glue and ask participants to choose pictures, words or symbols which illustrate their positive qualities as individuals. Give each participant the opportunity to share their collage with the group, or in other words, to brag.

Note: It is important to allow ample time to make the collages.

EVALUATION:

REFERENCE:

Canfield, Jack. ***100 Ways to Enhance Self-Confidence In The Classroom.*** New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1976.

YWCA. "Building Self-Esteem." In ***Discovering Life Skills, Volume 2.*** YWCA of Greater Toronto, 2nd edition, 1999.

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