

SELF-ESTEEM: WARM FUZZIES OR COLD PRICKLIES

PSC NOTE: This lesson may be expanded by using “A Warm Fuzzy Tale,” a fairy tale about spreading kindness and love (warm fuzzies) and how unkindness and hate (cold pricklies) can harm us. (Claude Steiner, 1983 Jalmar Press) (<http://www.claudesteiner.com/fuzzy.htm>).

It should also be noted that this lesson does NOT suggest that students’ challenges should be sugar-coated or ignored; in fact, honest/instructive feedback and self-assessment about academic performance strengthens self-esteem—valuing of self as a worthy human being.

Purpose: In this lesson, students learn to replace the negative/discouraging messages of others with positive/encouraging self-talk. Students’ self-esteem (value of self as a worthy human being) is influenced by students’ ability to hear the negative/discouraging statements without believing them. A core self-esteem issue for many people is not feeling worthy—of such things as success, happiness, friendships and love. Helping young folks understand and learn to dispel the discouraging messages from others leads to greater self-confidence and a self-concept that says “I CAN” ... throughout their lives!

Time: 45-60 minutes (may be divided into two [2] parts) **Group Size:** Whole Class **Grade Level:** 4-6

Materials: [Self-Esteem Role-Play](#) & [Self-Esteem: Warm Fuzzies Or Cold Pricklies: I Learned I...](#) Student Thinking Papers, a jar filled with cotton balls + several cotton balls for each student (make cotton balls come alive by using a marker to “dot” on eyes) ; a jar filled with small pieces of rough sand paper + small pieces of rough sandpaper for each student (idea: substitute Gum Tree Balls—or other rough objects from nature—for sand paper [gather Gum Tree Balls in fall of the year]), paper punch holes (confetti), several large pieces of course sand paper; 5 or 6 pieces of “chalk” (for writing on board).

Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program (MCGP) Strand/Big Idea/Concept:

Strand: Personal and Social Development (PS)

Big Idea: PS 1 Understanding Self As An Individual And As A Member Of Diverse Local And Global Communities





Concept: PS.1.A. Self Concept

American School Counselor Association (ASCA): Domain/Standard:

Personal/Social Development Domain

Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Link to Sample MCGP Units/Lessons (Note: this listing does not include all possible related Units/Lessons—they are merely examples of how the activity fits with the MCGP Guidance eLearning Units/Lessons)

4 th Grade	PS.1.A	Unit: How Do I Fit In?	 
5 th Grade	PS.1.A	Unit: I Understand Me	 

Show Me Standards: Performance Goals (check one or more that apply)

X	Goal 1: gather, analyze and apply information and ideas (<i>about self</i>)
X	Goal 2: communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom
	Goal 3: recognize and solve problems
	Goal 4: make decisions and act as responsible members of society

This lesson supports the development of skills in the following academic content areas.

Academic Content Area(s)	Specific Skill(s)
X Communication Arts	6. participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas
Mathematics	
Social Studies	
Science	
X Health/Physical Education	2. principles/practices of...mental health (self-esteem/valuing self)
Fine Arts	

Enduring Life Skill(s)

	Perseverance		Integrity		Problem Solving
X	Courage	X	Compassion		Tolerance
X	Respect		Goal Setting		

Assessment: acceptable evidence of what learners will know/be able to do as a result of this lesson:

Self-Esteem: Warm Fuzzies Or Cold Pricklies?: I Learned I... Student Thinking Paper. Items 1-6 assess **content**; items 7-12 assess **personalization** of content. Students complete the thinking paper following conventions of standard written English. Responses will indicate: Items 1-6: definition of self-esteem; knowledge of discouraging and encouraging messages from others, ways to dispel discouraging messages, reasons people send discouraging messages. Items 7-12: responses indicate personalization of information in regard to strengthening inner self-esteem voice and not allowing discouraging messages into their inner self esteem voice (self-talk).

Lesson Preparation/Motivation

Essential Questions: What can we do when people “send” us negative messages? What causes people to want to hurt other people with words?
Engagement (Hook): See Lesson Procedures

Procedures

Professional School Counselor Procedures:	Student Involvement:
<p><i>Throughout this lesson, systematically observe students as they complete thinking papers and work with partners. Make note of students who have difficulty talking or writing about “warm fuzzies” or who insist (by action or words) that they prefer sandpaper.</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, be sensitive to cultural differences in regard to complementing individuals (e.g. hidden culture of school and/or classroom, family and/or ethnic values). Cultural differences may influence students’ receptiveness to ideas presented, e.g., it may</i></p>	<p>Students: During this lesson, courageously volunteer and be sure to speak loudly and clearly enough for everyone to hear your great ideas. Use complete sentences and conventions of standard English in speaking and writing.</p>

<i>Professional School Counselor Procedures:</i>	<i>Student Involvement:</i>
<p><i>be a part of the pre-adolescent hidden culture to put on a façade of non-caring/alooftness.</i></p> <p><i>Hook:</i> Without saying a word, distribute cotton ball and small piece of sand paper (or other rough object) to each student. Place jars of cotton balls and sand paper where students can see them (see materials).</p> <p>1. After <i>Hook:</i> transition to lesson with: SHOW-ME...WITH ACTIONS: Would you rather have—more cotton balls or more sand paper (or other rough object)? Hold up your preference. Distribute additional cotton balls or sand paper to students.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Invite volunteers to explain their choices. Listen for misconceptions in thinking about concept represented by cotton balls and sand paper.</p> <p>2. Use students’ responses to make the transition to the lesson’s topic: Self-Esteem. Write SELF-ESTEEM and SELF-CONCEPT on the board.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Ask for definitions of each phrase, write responses under each phrase. Explain that people often use the words interchangeably; however, they mean different things.</p> <p>3. Emphasize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem is the value we place on ourselves--the sense of feeling worthy as a human being—no matter what our strengths/limitations might be. • Self-concept is how we think of ourselves in terms of the things we can/cannot do. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I may think that I am really bad at math—my math self-concept is low; however, ○ I know I am really good at writing stories—my story-writing self-concept is high. • Important to remember about self esteem and self concept: both are related to how we think and feel about ourselves! • AND it is ok to like yourself and to be proud of the things you work hard to do every day—being proud is NOT the same as bragging! <p>4. Draw a large circle on the board and stress that part of our self-esteem is formed from influences outside of us. On the outside of the circle write the words: parents, other relatives, friends, teachers, and siblings (add others as appropriate for students).</p> <p>Ask students to draw a large circle on a blank piece of paper and write the names of parent, friends...as you</p>	<p><i>Hook:</i> When you receive cotton ball and piece of sandpaper, hypothesize, in your mind, what they represent.</p> <p>1. Following <i>Hook,</i> Participate in SHOW-ME... by holding up your preference: more cotton balls or more sand paper.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Volunteers explain their preferences.</p> <p>2. Consider difference between “self-concept” and “self-esteem”.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Volunteer YOUR idea/definition of “self-esteem” and/or “self-concept”.</p> <p>3. Actively listen to explanation of difference between “self-esteem” and “self-concept”. Ask clarifying questions or contribute relevant comments.</p> <p>4. Observe and think about what the circle on the board represents.</p> <p>Draw a large circle on a blank piece of paper; write the names of parents, other relatives, friends, teachers</p>

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<p>mention them. Provide examples as necessary.</p> <p>5. Explain: Another, and more important, part of our self-esteem—the value we place on ourselves--comes from inside us.</p> <p>Tell students to write (or draw) their perceptions of their strengths and talents and self-talk words they use inside their circles.</p> <p>Public Sharing: SHOW-ME...ALL-AT-ONCE...AND ORDERLY, write one of your strengths or talents on the board (give a piece of chalk to 5 or 6 people—other students line-up behind those with chalk; likity-split, each person writes one of his or her strengths in the circle, gives chalk to next person and returns to seat.</p> <p>Emphasize variety of talents and strengths represented on board and comment about how each one strengthens the others to help make a productive classroom. Invite comments from students.</p> <p>6. Emphasize that encouraging words AND discouraging words influence our self-esteem—how we value ourselves as human beings. Public Sharing: Invite examples from students.</p> <p>7. Ask students to recall whether they wanted more cotton balls or sand paper (Step 1). Ask students to relate the cotton balls and the sand paper to the encouraging and discouraging words they hear from others—which would represent encouraging words?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cotton balls represent the positive influence of encouraging words on our self-esteem—“warm fuzzies”. • The sandpaper represents the negative influence of discouraging words on our self-esteem—“cold pricklies”. <p>(Give students who preferred sand paper in Step 1 an opportunity to exchange sand paper for cotton balls, if they want to do so.)</p> <p>Public Sharing: Invite 3-5 students to tell their peers what it is like for them when they receive “warm fuzzies” from another person.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Invite 3-5 additional students to tell their peers what is like for them when they receive “cold pricklies” from another person.</p> <p>8. Explain: Cold Pricklies (discouraging words and negative statements) can negatively influence our self-</p>	<p>and siblings around the outside of the circle.</p> <p>5. Think about, how self-esteem can come from inside you.</p> <p>On inside of your circle write (or draw) your perceptions of your strengths and talents and the self-talk words you use to tell yourself about yourself.</p> <p>Public Sharing: Participate in SHOW-ME...ALL-AT-ONCE: Likity-split, write one strength or talent or helpful self-talk word in the circle on the board.</p> <p>Contribute to conversation about how everyone’s strengths helps to strengthen everyone’s strengths.</p> <p>6. Public Sharing: Contribute examples of encouraging words and discouraging words and how they each influence the value we place on ourselves.</p> <p>7. Recall choice: cotton balls or sand paper? How do cotton balls and sand paper represent the words we hear from others and/or tell ourselves? Contribute to class discussion.</p> <p>Now...re-think choice of cotton balls or sand paper. Ask to exchange sand paper for cotton balls if desired.</p> <p>Public Sharing: If haven’t volunteered during the lesson, volunteer to tell classmates what it is like to get a warm fuzzy.</p> <p>Public Sharing: If haven’t volunteered during the lesson, volunteer to tell classmates what it is like to get a cold prickly.</p> <p>8. Actively listen—think about how cold pricklies affect you and the value you place on yourself.</p>

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<p>esteem. Negative statements take several forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words such as names or comments on physical appearance. • Actions—ignoring someone or excluding a person from an activity or laughing when someone makes a mistake. <p>9. Ask students to think about the reasons people give “cold pricklies” to others, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • They think putting others down is the way to be liked • They do not like themselves • They enjoy your reaction • They feel competitive • They want to impress others • They are passing on the hurt of discouraging words they have received from others <p><i>(PSC Note: Be aware of any students who act as if saying discouraging words is funny or cool. Follow-up with classroom teacher regarding need for intervention with these students)</i></p> <p>10. Ask for volunteer students to role-play the situation. (4 actors are required for this role-play: Lakisha, Lakisha’s inner voice, Joel, Joel’s inner voice. Inner voices stand behind Lakisha and Joel; inner voices whisper [loudly] their parts.)</p> <p>11. Distribute the <i>Self-Esteem Role-Play</i> student thinking paper to students. Give role-play actors a few minutes to look over script.</p> <p>While actors review script, tell the observers (other students) what to watch and listen for during the enactment of the role-play: e.g., how does each player feel during conversation, what motivates Lakisha and Joel to say and do what they do (both voices)?</p> <p>12. Enact role-play</p> <p>13. Debrief role-play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask actors to tell about their thoughts and feelings during role-play. What would do if they had a chance to re-do the play in any way? • Ask all students to consider Joel’s role—why did Joel feel the need to criticize Lakisha? • Ask all students to consider Lakisha’s role—what did Lakisha do to ensure that Joel’s discouraging words did not affect her self-esteem. Would that be easy or hard for you? 	<p>9. Actively listen and privately consider the reasons people give cold pricklies. Have you ever given a cold prickly? What was your reason for doing so?</p> <p>10. Consider volunteering for role-play, especially if have not volunteered for public sharing during this lesson.</p> <p>11. If not one of actors, prepare to observe role-play.</p> <p>12. Observe role-play enactment; make written or mental notes of observations.</p> <p>13. Actors tell what it was like to be in their roles.</p> <p>All students contribute to prompts concerning the characters’ motives/thoughts.</p>

Professional School Counselor Procedures:	Student Involvement:
<p>(PSC Note: If you decide to divide the lesson into two (2) parts, this is a good place to stop the first part. Begin second part with review and preview.)</p> <p>14. Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although we have no control over the discouraging words/messages people give us... • We can control whether we let them become part of our self-esteem inner-voice. • Most discouraging words are not true. <p>15. Suggest students handle discouraging words by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring them. • Refusing to accept them into their self-esteem. • Replacing a discouraging thought about self with an encouraging thought about self. • Developing a mantra (e.g., “No matter what you say or do to me, I’m still a worthwhile person!”)* <p>Discuss each suggestion. Explain that one must keep perspective to maintain a strong self-esteem.</p> <p>*source recognition: mantra taught by Dr. Sydney B. Simon during his self-esteem workshops in the mid-70’s</p> <p>16. Empty the cotton ball jar; refill with paper punch holes; explain that some people shrink encouraging words they receive from others down to the size of paper punch holes. For example, someone tell you that you are a good artist; you say (to yourself or out-loud), “No, I’m not! My brother is an artist—not me! Invite several volunteers to give examples of shrinking encouraging words. What are some reasons individuals might think they have to shrink encouraging words to the size of paper punch holes?</p> <p>17. Empty the sand paper jar; re-fill with the large pieces of sand paper; and explain how some people blow discouraging words they receive from other people out of proportion. For example, someone says to you “You can’t draw as well as your brother!” You say to yourself (or out-loud), “You are sooo right and that just proves he’s better at everything! I can’t do anything right! I’m dumb!” Invite several volunteers to give examples of blowing discouraging words out of proportion. What are some reasons individuals might think they have to blow discouraging words way out of proportion?</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Distribute Self-Esteem: Warm Fuzzies Or Cold Pricklies? I Learned I... Student Thinking Paper. Items 1-6 are content-related; items 7-12 are Personalization of Content-related.</p>	<p>14. Contribute to discussion as appropriate. Actively listen to suggestions and discussion.</p> <p>15. Think about the best way(s) for YOU to handle discouraging words.</p> <p>16. Contribute to conversation by responding to school counselor’s prompts about reasons individuals may feel need to shrink warm fuzzies to paper punch-hole-size.</p> <p>17. Contribute to conversation by responding to school counselor’s prompts about reasons individuals may feel need to blow cold pricklies way out of proportion.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Look over the thinking paper.</p>

<i>Professional School Counselor Procedures:</i>	<i>Student Involvement:</i>
<p>ASSESSMENT: Content: Go over items 1-6; provide opportunity for students to ask clarifying questions. Students complete 1-6 on their own. Invite several students to tell classmates how they responded to selected items (1 student=1 item). Discuss results</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Personalization of Content: Go over items 7-12; provide opportunity for students to ask clarifying questions. Students complete 7-12 on own.</p> <p>Invite several students to tell classmates how they responded to selected items (1 student=1 item). Discuss responses.</p> <p><i>PSC Note: As students are completing thinking paper, observe students' approach to the task and be aware of students who are not able to take discussions of "warm fuzzies" and "cold pricklies" seriously. Make mental notes; follow-through with classroom teacher.</i></p> <p>CLOSURE: Remind students about the positive self-talk Lakisha used to keep the Cold Prickly (discouraging) words from Joel in perspective. (She replaced them with self-talk she knew was true [Warm Fuzzies]).</p> <p>Tell students to keep working on strengthening the perspective of their inner self-esteem voices by filling their inner self-esteem "jars" with encouraging thoughts and self talk they know is true. Doing so will make it easier to put discouraging words from others into perspective.</p> <p>SHOW-ME...WITH OPEN PALMS...WHO WOULD LIKE MORE WARM FUZZIES?</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT: Content: Follow school counselor's direction and complete items 1-6 on the thinking paper: use conventions of standard written English and respond to each prompt with thought and honesty. If you don't know the answer or don't know what to say, ask for help from an assistant (i.e., your school counselor).</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Personalization of Content: Follow your school counselor's instructions for items 7-12. Follow guidelines for items 1-6.</p> <p>Volunteer to contribute to discussion of responses—honestly.</p> <p>CLOSURE: Think about the strength and ability Lakisha used in response to Joel's Cold Prickly words.</p> <p>Think about how warm fuzzies will be accepted and Cold Pricklies received will be dispelled—from now on!</p> <p>OPEN PALMS AND WELCOME MORE WARM FUZZIES INTO YOUR LIFE!!</p>

Classroom Teacher Follow-Up Activities

Provide classroom teacher with a summary of this lesson and encourage him or her to use the concepts of "Warm Fuzzies" and "Cold Pricklies" to help students monitor their self-talk (and how they talk to/with their peers).

Summarize systematic observations: identify students who had difficulty completing thinking papers and who had difficulty talking or writing about "warm fuzzies" or who insist (by action or words) that they prefer sandpaper. Identify students who act as if saying discouraging words is funny or cool.

Consult with classroom teacher: Discuss your systematic observations. Does he or she validate your observations as being classroom behaviors as well? Talk specifically about students who appear to have a need to de-value themselves or lack a belief in their own worth as human beings and those who have difficulty "owning" the idea of personal power over one's self-talk.

Collaborate with classroom teacher to identify the extent of specific students' apparent lack of self-esteem—will or skill; false or true; for show or for real. Plan appropriate interventions (e.g., Responsive Services in the form of small counseling group sessions, individual counseling, consultation with parents/guardians or additional Classroom Guidance lessons regarding self-esteem).

SELF-ESTEEM ROLE-PLAY

4 actors are required for this role-play: Lakisha, Lakisha's inner voice, Joel, Joel's inner voice. Inner voices stand behind Lakisha and Joel and whisper (loudly) what the inner voice says.

Lakisha: Hi, Joel. Guess we're in the same class again this year.

Lakisha's Inner Voice Says: *Joel's got so much going for him. He won the science fair last year. Everyone likes Joel.*

Joel: Yeah, I guess we are.

Joel's Inner Voice Says: *We're also in class with that bully, Theodore. He gave me such a hard time last year. I've just got to show him I'm tough this year and I won't take his pushing me around.*

Lakisha: Hey, since we know each other, why don't you pick a seat by me?

Lakisha's Inner Voice Says: *Whew! That was kind of risky to ask. But, I know I'd feel more comfortable sitting by someone I already know.*

Joel: Well, I'd like...

Joel's Inner Voice Says: *Oh, no! Here comes that bully. I'd better act tough or he'll pick on me at recess.*

Joel: Never mind... I'd never sit by an ugly old girl like you. Now bug off and leave me alone!!

Joel's Inner Voice Says: *I hate being mean to Lakisha. She's pretty cool, but I just don't want to be pushed around by Theodore. I hope he saw how tough I was. I'll tell Lakisha that I am sorry later.*

Lakisha: (Walks away)

Lakisha's Inner Voice Says: *What's his problem? I'll just find someone else to sit by. I know I am not ugly. I'll find someone who treats me the way I deserve to be treated. That girl over there looks friendly. I'll go introduce myself.*

SELF-ESTEEM: WARM FUZZIES OR COLD PRICKLIES: I LEARNED...

Items 1-6 are content-related; 7-12 are personalization of content-related. Follow school counselor's directions.

1. My definition of Self-Esteem: _____

2. I learned that the difference between "warm fuzzies" and "cold pricklies" is _____

3. I learned that when someone "gives" me a discouraging message, I can _____

4. Some of the reasons people hurt other people with words are _____

5. YES NO This lesson helped me understand that I can either accept or reject **discouraging** words.

6. YES NO This lesson helped me understand that I can either accept or reject **encouraging** words.

7. *From now on, when someone gives me an **encouraging** word I* _____

8. *From now on, when someone gives me a **discouraging** word I* _____

9. *As a result of this lesson, I learned I* _____

10. *I want to be able to turn "cold pricklies" into "warm fuzziness". To do that 24/7/365, I need to*

11. *The most difficult for me will be* _____

12. *I will help myself by* _____