Key Concept:
Maintaining control of our emotions and selecting positive defense mechanisms that don’t cause harm to others or ourselves is the best way to handle pressure situations.

Positive affirmation: “I WILL create a strong positive defense by focusing on what I control; my thoughts, feelings, and choices!”

Vocabulary

- Defense Mechanism
- Battle attitude
- Pressure situation
- Impulse response
- Thoughts & feelings
- Self-control
- Strong (hard) response
- Weak (easy) response

Personalize the Lesson:

- What personal stories am I comfortable sharing about a time I lost control of my defense mechanisms? How did I replace my negative thoughts and feelings in order to develop a new behavior and get a positive outcome?
- What personal stories am I comfortable sharing about a time I controlled my defense mechanisms in a pressure situation?
- What are my techniques for calming my emotions (i.e. take a time out or count to ten, etc.)?
- What are some typical pressure situations we might face daily at home, at work/school, and with friends?

Secondary Concepts:

- In pressure situations, our natural reaction is often negative.
- We can make a conscious choice to react positively. This gives us control over the conflict situations we encounter.
- We can identify techniques to calm and control our emotions.
- We can replace our negative thoughts and feelings with new positive thoughts and feelings.
Welcome
At WhyTry we believe that it is critical to have positive, upbeat music playing in the classroom as students enter.

For his reason we have built in a mix of WhyTry’s original music that you can find embedded on the slide.

Class Commitments
Our recommended approach is that all students, along with the instructor, recite in unison the four class commitments.

Review from last class
Draw a name from the hat containing the names of the students from the previous class. Click on the icon that represents the metaphor discussed during the previous class. Have the selected student review the core concepts of the metaphor as it relates to their own experience.

If we are currently teaching “Defense Mechanisms” in an open-group setting, click on the picture icon at the bottom of the slide to take you to the previous metaphor for the student to review.

Share and Report
Each student will take 1-3 minutes, depending on the class size, to stand in front of the class and present one key component of the metaphor taught during the previous class that resonated with him or her.

Where We’re Headed
Positive affirmation: “I WILL create a strong positive defense by focusing on what I control; my thoughts, feelings, and choices!”

Touch briefly on the positive affirmation by explaining that this statement is the framework of the unit. The goal is that by the end of the unit, all of us will have the proper perspectives and tools to proclaim and apply this statement in our life.

WhyTry Staircase
If we’re working in a closed group setting, this is the fifth step on the WhyTry staircase.

In an open group setting, this slide simply points out the entire curriculum, with the “Motivation Formula” handrail, and all of the steps that we ultimately will be taking in the program.
Defense Mechanisms
Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough

What is a defense mechanism?

Discussion
Discuss with the class the following questions:

• Look at the knight in this picture. What is he wearing?
• Why do you think he would be wearing this?
• What kind of weapons would be used against him to need this kind of protection? (These could include a sword, spear, lance, arrows, or mace.)
• Have you ever seen a suit of armor in real life? What does it look like? (Usually someone will say, “Heavy.”)
• How much do you think a suit of armor weighs? (Often it is around 100 pounds.)
• Why would this knight want to carry so much weight around? (The amount of protection would make it worth it.)
• Would it be weird to see someone walking down the street wearing armor like that today?
• Do soldiers today wear different types of armor to protect themselves? (Bulletproof vests, Kevlar, helmets, etc.)
• Based on this picture, what is this knight’s defense mechanism? (Armor and shield)
• What is the purpose of this person’s defense mechanism? (Protection)

A defense mechanism is what we use to protect our feelings in various life situations. It’s like a bulletproof vest for our emotions. For example, when WhyTry Founder Christian Moore was in school, he was a bad reader. If a teacher asked him to read out loud, he felt uncomfortable or embarrassed, and turned to the defense mechanism of acting out (punching a kid next to him). He would then be sent to the principal’s office instead of being embarrassed in front of the class.

A defense mechanism is also any behavior used to divert attention away from the pressure situation. People can learn to identify negative defense mechanisms that hurt themselves and others, and conversely select positive defense mechanisms that will help, not hurt, themselves or others.

If students know what a defense mechanism is, congratulate them and tell them that we are going to learn how to take control of our defense mechanisms.

Discussion
To help create interest in the subject, explain to students that many adults don’t know what defense mechanisms are or how to use them positively. Tell students that if they pay careful attention, they will learn how to access a tool that will give them a huge advantage in life. This tool will help them feel like they have more control in different areas of their life: at home, at work/school, with peers, and in the legal system.

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**Situation**

How do I respond (act) when I’m:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Injury</th>
<th>Physical Injuries</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lied to</td>
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<td>Pushed/Hit</td>
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<td>Caught in the act</td>
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<td>Told what to do</td>
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<td>Angry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Confused</td>
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**Point 2**

In life, we seldom have control over the situations that confront us. We can be minding our own business and doing the right thing when suddenly, WHAM! We have a situation.

**TOOLKIT SLIDE**

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces that unexpected situations can happen at any moment. Our recommended videos are “Jump and Scare” or “Oh Crap!”

**Question**

- How do I respond or act when I’m… (There are 16-pressure situation scenarios listed on the visual analogy under #2, “Situation.”)

**TOOLKIT SLIDE**

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the concept that a negative response to a pressure situation is often the easiest response. Our recommended video is “Print Screen Meltdown” and/or “Granny Road Rage.” Another recommended activity is “Red Balloon Green Balloon.”

**Point 3**

*Discussion*

Remember when we talked about how understanding this picture can give us a huge advantage in dealing with life’s challenges? This is the part we really need to understand. It is the one big difference between the people who get locked up and those who have successful careers and relationships. If we truly understand this concept, it will have a huge impact on our lives.

Everyone has pressure situations in their life. No one is immune to them. Even when we are not aware of them they create different thoughts and feelings. Most people respond to pressure situations with quick reactions. Psychologists call this an “impulse response.” Unfortunately most impulse responses in pressure situations are negative, resulting in harm to others or ourselves.

We all know how difficult it can be to control our thoughts and feelings, especially when others are trying to hurt us emotionally or physically.

We come back to this concept a little later and will explore how this works and different solutions we can use to regulate it.
Point 4

Discussion
In the metaphor “Lift the Weight,” we learned that we choose whether or not to do the hard thing (lift the weight), which produces greater strength, or the easy thing (lift the balloon), which produces greater weakness.

This same concept is carried over onto the shield of our defense mechanisms.

Questions
• Who controls the choice I make?
• How do I protect my feelings?

Discussion
We seldom have control over life’s situations and obstacles, and it’s difficult to control our thoughts and feelings in response to them. However, the fact of the matter is: We choose what or who controls how we respond. It is a choice, and it is ours alone to make! We cannot blame the situation or blame another person for what we choose to do. This is especially important when considering how we protect our feelings. I can’t think of anything that is more personal than how we feel about something. When it comes to our emotional well being and how we protect ourselves in this area, we will either demonstrate self-control and personal strength by doing what does not come naturally to us (“Hard”), or demonstrate a lack of self-control by doing what does come naturally to us (“Easy”).

TOOLKIT SLIDE

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the concept that we choose how we respond to the situations that confront us.

Our recommended video is “Ladies in a Parking Lot” from “Malcolm in the Middle.” After playing the video, process with the class the choices that these two ladies demonstrated. Did they do the easy thing or the hard thing? What do we think they were trying to protect?

Ask the class if they caught the very final line in this video: “I don’t know what happened!” After all the drama and everything she did in the parking lot, once she was back home sitting at her coffee table, is it possible that this lady (Malcolm’s mom) couldn’t remember what happened?

FACT: The more intense a situation, the more intensely a person’s “fight or flight” instinct kicks in. When a person chooses to stay engaged in an intense situation and chooses to fight, their thoughts and feelings focus and fixate on the attacker. It has been well documented that in life and death situations, and in moments of hyper emotional states, people can black out and do things that they later do not recall. The best way to avoid this is to not stay engaged in the fight and, whenever possible, remove yourself from the situation as quickly and as safely as possible.
We don’t have to respond to pressure situations and feelings by just doing what comes naturally. We actually get to make a choice in every situation. We can choose to do something different. We can choose to do something positive. Although it is difficult to control what happens to us, and how we feel inside, we can control how we respond outwardly. The choice is ours.

**WEAK THINK/STRONG THINK**

Students will be introduced to “ANGER” and “COMMUNICATE THE REAL ISSUE.” It is recommended that one volunteer from the class read the Anger Weak Think concept, and another volunteer read the Communicate the Real Issue Strong Think concept.

Discussion

Open up a brief discussion and invite the students to share with the class with examples of when and where they have done either of these things in their life.

**Question**

• “Hard” --> How does this produce more personal strength?

Discussion

Some answers may be: “It takes more effort,” “It is harder,” “I stay in control of my actions.”

Referring back to “Lift the Weight,” we understand that a person really can’t build muscle without resistance. Any process that is, by definition, “hard,” that requires us to “hang in there,” or where we don’t resort to the easy response, will always help us become stronger.

Choosing a strong and hard response often requires us to pause for a moment before we react. This may seem pointless, but in the end it will give us more personal strength and freedom. Other people can affect our feelings, and sometimes, they will do all they can to influence our choices. Often life is not fair. It is easy to blame others for our actions, especially when we do not have control over our defense mechanisms. For example, “He/she yelled at me so I had to yell back,” or “They hit me first,” or “They were disrespectful to me.” People who are trying to take control of their defense mechanisms will take responsibility for their actions.

The prison population provides us with a great example of this concept: Many people in prison will tell you that someone hurt them so they had to hurt them back. Although they may have thought retaliating would bring them respect and make them feel better, in reality, it didn’t. It took away their opportunities, freedom, and personal strength.

How do you think a person begins to feel when they choose to use more strong “hard” defense mechanisms? Selecting positive defense mechanisms may make life harder in the beginning, but it will be worth it as we begin to experience and develop more personal strength. (Challenge the students to find out for themselves if what we are teaching is true. Explain that they will probably notice that other people have less control over them; in turn they will feel more freedom as they select the strong “hard” defense mechanisms.) When we pay attention to other people’s defense mechanisms, we can learn from others’ mistakes and avoid negative consequences.
WEAK THINK/STRONG THINK
Students will be introduced to the “GORILLA” and “EVERYONE HAS VALUE.” It is recommended that one volunteer from the class read the Gorilla Weak Think concept, and another volunteer read the Everyone Has Value Strong Think concept.

Discussion
Open up a brief discussion and invite the students to share with the class examples of when and where they have done either of these in their life.

Point 5

Question
• How do I know when I have chosen a strong, positive defense mechanism?

Discussion
Some possible responses might be, “Because of the consequence;” or “Because of the way I feel.” These are both true. However, the easiest way to define a strong, positive defense mechanism is by whether or not it hurts me or another person.

In most pressure situations, people respond by doing the things that they are used to doing. Natural responses in a pressure situation are frequently negative. This is because weak defense mechanisms are usually the easiest to choose. Point out to students that although negative defense mechanisms may give some short-term relief from the situation, too often they end up making the situation worse.

For example, if someone hits me, the easiest thing to do is to hit back. If someone yells at me, the easiest thing to do is yell back.

Selecting a weak defense mechanism is easy: anyone can do it.
TOOLKIT SLIDE

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the concept that we all do the things that we do because we have practiced them, changing this is very difficult. Our recommended activity is “Write Your Name.” Additionally, if it is has not already been played, we recommend the music video “Defense” or “Defense 2.”

Point 6: NOTICE, IDENTIFY, CONTROL, CHOOSE

1. NOTICE the warning signs of the attack.

The first step in controlling our defense mechanisms is paying attention and noticing that we are, in fact, coming under attack. The following are common physical symptoms of an attack are:

- Anger
- Nervous
- Adrenaline
- Frustration
- Fear
- Pulse Racing

Experiencing these emotions and physical symptoms is an indicator that we should begin to pay attention to what is going on. We cannot deal with what we do not see; the sooner we recognize our situation, the better. If we are not careful, emotions can quickly intensify.

Just like a fire, emotions can quickly get out of control and cause serious damage if they are ignored. The simple spark of irritation can quickly turn into the flame of frustration. The flame of frustration can then easily ignite an anger explosion. This explosion can turn into an inferno of rage that too often burns others emotionally or physically. In order to prevent out-of-control fires of anger and rage, we need to identify the warning signs early on when we are first coming under attack.

Discuss with students other early warning signs that they may have experienced, such as irritation, annoyance, hands shaking, frustration, confusion, nervousness, mild anger, etc.

WEAK THINK/STRONG THINK

Students will be introduced to “RETAIATION” and “FORGIVENESS.” It is recommended that one volunteer from the class read the Retaliation Weak Think concept and another volunteer read the Forgiveness Strong Think concept.

Discussion

Open up a brief discussion and invite students to share examples of when and where they have done either of these in their life.
2. IDENTIFY the thoughts & feelings.
Once we have learned to notice the warning signs of the attack, the next step is to identify our thoughts and feelings concerning the situation.

- Once identified: A) Check it... B) Reframe it... C) Calm it.

These three steps, A, B, and C, have to be applied toward both our thoughts and our feelings. Our feelings, nine times out of ten, are in direct relationship to, and subsequently follow after, our thoughts. If we are able to change our thoughts, our emotions will also change.

For example, someone comes up to me and aggressively brushes my shoulder with the back of their hand as if they were knocking a chip off of it. My first instinct is to feel disrespected. I push them back and demand, “Dude, what’s your problem?” I then punch them in their shoulder. Because I immediately thought they were disrespecting me, I experienced an intense feeling of anger, which resulted in me punching them.

Now let’s rewind this and take another look at it. Someone comes up to me and aggressively brushes my shoulder with the back of their hand as if they were knocking a chip off of it. I do not jump to an immediate conclusion, and I ask them, “What was that about?” The other person replies, “I’m not kidding, there was a big spider on your shoulder.” I challenge them and say, “No way.” They persist and say, “I’m not kidding. Look!” and point to the floor. I see a big spider walking away. Because I took a moment and assessed the situation before I reacted, my thoughts about the other person and what they did changed drastically. Instead of feeling anger, I now feel grateful. So I checked my thoughts (A) by asking, “What was that about?” I was then able to reframe my understanding (B) of what had just happened once I saw the spider. I was then able to calmly (C) say, “Thank you,” rather than punching the other person.

-What are two areas in my life where I know I will be attacked?
-How can I practice identifying my thoughts and feelings before the attack hits full on?

Discussion
Much like preparing for any battle or war, a key to creating a strong positive defense is to be one step ahead in the situation. We all have our own personal “buttons,” or areas of vulnerability, that can trigger us very quickly. For example, I know if someone talks disrespectfully to me about my sister, that I will experience strong defense mechanisms. Knowing this, I need to practice checking my thoughts and feelings before a problem arises.

Ask the class what some of their personal buttons are. Briefly discuss these things.

Some of the class’s responses may include:
- If I get blamed for something that I didn’t do.
- If someone tries to provoke me by calling me a disrespectful name.
- If someone starts and spreads a rumor about me.
- If someone cuts in front of me in a line.
3. **CONTROL** my response: “I will not let anyone else control how I respond!”

How do I know when someone else is trying to control how I respond to a situation?

FACT: There are people around me who may want nothing more than to set me up, push my buttons, then step back and watch as I react or respond negatively. Some people seem to have a skill at winding other people up like a spring-loaded toy, setting things in motion, then stepping back and laughing as the toy bumps into and knocks over other things.

We may want to emphasize that what we are about to teach may be one of the biggest -- and easiest -- mistakes people make in life:

“One of the biggest mistakes people make is letting others’ weak and negative defense mechanisms control how they act.”

Think about this: If someone hits me and I hit him or her back, which one of us is in control? (They are.) Too often we act as a mirror, reflecting back to others their weak, negative defenses. If they yell, we yell. If they hit, we hit back. If they put us down, we put them down. The reality is, we are responding by doing what they do, and they are controlling us. If someone is trying to pick a fight with me, what do they want me to do? (Fight back.) If someone yells at me, what do they expect me to do? (Lose control or yell back.) These actions give our personal control away. The goal in these situations needs to be not to give up control to the other person.

Yes, it can be very difficult not to retaliate and get even; it takes a lot of time, practice, and effort. But learning how to remain in control is worth the effort. It will give us tremendous control over our lives. If we understand this step, we understand something that many people either don’t understand or don’t have the strength or desire to apply. Understanding and applying this step will give us a major advantage in life.

-How do I know when someone else is trying to control how I respond to a situation?

The following may be signs that someone else might be trying to control me: someone yells at me, someone physically touches or pushes me, I am laughed at, mocked, or put down.

Although I may get a short-term rush from hurting a person in return, I am not left with much long-term personal strength. Too often TV shows, movies, peers, and daily examples teach us that if we don’t get revenge or lash out, we are weak. In reality, those who choose to believe and act this way often regret their actions. In the end, they wind up hurting themselves or others.

**IMPORTANT:**

It may need to be pointed out that if anyone ever abuses us emotionally, physically, or sexually, we need to tell someone whom we trust, such as a counselor, teacher, police officer, social worker, doctor, etc.
4. **CHOOSE a strong positive defense mechanism.**

   • What will I probably gain when I choose a strong “hard” defense mechanism?

**Question**

- What will I gain when I choose the strong (“hard”) positive defense mechanism?

**Discussion**

There is a golden nugget of truth in the old saying, “Good things come to those who wait.” I would add, “Good things eventually come to those who stay in control and create strong positive defenses with their thoughts, feelings, and choices.” It is not easy, and seldom does it come quickly, but a positive life does have its rewards. If my goal was to find a kind, loving, and gentle woman to marry; and not just marry, but with whom I could actually have a happy and fulfilling marriage, what is the possibility of me reaching this goal if I don’t have control over my defense mechanisms? If my goal is to have a well-paying job that I really like, what is the probability of me keeping that job if I don’t have control over my defense mechanisms? This list could go on and on.

Discuss with the class what some of their goals and dreams are. Ask if achieving those goals and dreams would even be possible without them being in control of their defense mechanisms.

**TOOLKIT SLIDE**

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the importance of controlling our frustration and being a productive member of a team. Our recommended activity is “Mad Gab.”

**Review Defense Mechanisms**

Draw a name from a hat of class participants. The person chosen will review the concepts of “Defense Mechanisms.”

**Discussion**

Note that the PowerPoint image is a basic representation of the Defense Mechanisms visual analogy. Encourage the student to recall, to the best of their ability, the basic concepts of this metaphor.

Remind students that by the beginning of the next class, everyone should have reviewed for themselves the core concepts of “Defense Mechanisms” and be prepared to share what they learned as their name may be drawn out of the hat at the beginning of the class.

**Looking Ahead**

**Discussion**

Point out to the participants that in their “Game Plan” journal there is space provided for them to
document their thoughts, experiences, and perspectives related to the entire Defense Mechanisms metaphor. Emphasize that this will need to be completed before next week’s class.

Next, direct the participants to the narrative surrounding the “Weak/Strong Think” exercises pertaining to the “Anger/Communicate Real Issue,” “Gorilla/Value Others,” and “Retaliation/Forgiveness.” Emphasize that this also will need to be completed by next week.

Participants will also need to document responses to the weekly “Motivation Question” and “Action Step” outlined in their “Game Plan” journal.

**Last slide**
Show the cover slide once again, playing music to send students off until next week.
TOOLKIT - Defense Mechanisms

Learning Activity: Red Balloon Green Balloon

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required
Activity Type: Movement/group
Group Size: 1 or more
Time: 10-15 minutes

Introduction: Situations and how we react to situations, can build up inside of us until we eventually “pop”, explode, or act out in a way that hurts ourselves or other people. In the same situation, if we take our time and follow certain key concepts, the same situation can generate a response that actually produces character & heart and personal strength. This activity reinforces this premise and visually shows what that can look like.

Materials:
• 1 red balloon
• 1 green balloon
• 1 pin or needle to pop red balloon

Activity:
Red Balloon: Blow up a large red balloon part way. Tell the group that the balloon represents situations and challenges that we have. These challenges may make us mad, upset, angry, or frustrated. Ask the group to name things that make them angry, upset, mad, or frustrated. Have someone write them on the board. Each time something is listed on the board, blow the balloon up a little bigger. You, as the facilitator, are in control of how many items are listed on the board and how big the balloon gets. Blow the balloon up until it explodes. (Use the pin to pop the balloon if you cannot blow it up big enough. Hide the pin in your hand and try to make it look like all of the “challenges” made the balloon pop.)

Green Balloon: Blow up a large green balloon but do not let it pop. Ask the group to tell you responses that are more difficult to do but produce character & heart and personal strength as they do not hurt themselves or other people. As the group shares positive ways to deal with the situations and challenges, let a little air out each time an item is shared. Have a group member write each idea on the board. When the group runs out of ideas, let the balloon go.

Processing the Experience:
Red Balloon:
• In our own lives, what makes us lose control and “pop” like the balloon?
• What generally happens to opportunities, freedom, and our personal strength when we lose control?
• Why do you think some people react to certain situations in a negative way, and others respond in a positive way? What makes the difference?
• Do you think it’s OK to be angry? Why or why not? When do you think anger is not OK?
Green Balloon:

• How would your life be different if you were actually able to control how you responded to tough situations where you didn’t hurt yourself or others?

• What kind of opportunities and freedoms might you experience on this path that you would not otherwise have if you kept losing control and “popping”?
Learning Activity: Frustration Squares

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required
Activity Type: Movement/group
Group Size: 12 or more
Time: 15-20 minutes

Introduction: When we respond negatively to a stressful situation, it usually becomes worse. The goal of this activity is to show that our natural response is not always the best one; and that there are many positive coping mechanisms we can choose as alternatives to deal with the pressures of life.

Materials:
• 1 set of 6 squares per group of 6 people, with the pieces mixed up and divided equally into the envelopes (A pattern of the 6 squares is provided following these instructions.) (A group of 12 would require two sets, one for each group of
• 1 copy of instructions/rules per group (These are found following these instructions.)

Activity:
Organize the participants into groups of six. Hand out the envelopes to each member. It doesn’t matter if some group members do not have an envelope, or if there are more packets than group members. The contents of the envelopes will be divided up evenly later. Group members are not allowed to open the envelope until the rules are given. The goal of this task is to make six squares, all the same size. Give the following instructions to the group:

1. No talking, pointing, or any other kind of verbal or non-verbal communication to any member of your group.
   Participants may give pieces to other participants, but may not take pieces from other members.
2. Participants may not simply throw their pieces into the center for others to take; they have to give pieces to an individual directly.
3. It is permissible to give away all pieces even if a square is formed.
4. All squares will be exactly the same size.
5. There is only one right way to make the six squares.

Ask the group if they have any questions. Have the group members open their packets. If packets are left over, divide the contents between all members. If there are not enough packets for each person, take a piece from two or three participants to equal out the number of pieces in front of each individual. Each table should have an observer watch to make sure the rules are followed. Make sure to block the view from one group to another.

As an observer, you may want to look for some of the following behaviors:
1. Monitor the frustration level of the group as well as individual members.
2. What behaviors did members of the group show when they finished their own square? Did they divorce themselves from the group?

3. How many people were mentally engaged in putting the pieces of the puzzle together?

4. Was there a turning point where members “put it together?”

5. Did anyone try to violate the rules by talking, pointing, or taking pieces from another group member?

6. What defense mechanisms did each member exhibit during the activity?

**Processing the Experience:**

- What was most frustrating during this activity?
- How tempted were you to violate the rules by talking, pointing, or taking pieces?
- Who was watching what other team members might need and was willing to share the puzzle pieces they had?
- If this had been an actual frustration test, what grade would you give yourself on how well you handled the frustration?
Frustration Squares

8-1/2”
Rules: Frustration Squares

1. No talking, pointing, or any other kind of verbal or non-verbal communication to any member of your group.
2. Participants may give pieces to other participants, but may not take pieces from other members.
3. Participants may not simply throw their pieces into the center for others to take; they have to give pieces to an individual directly.
4. It is permissible to give away all pieces even if a square is formed.
5. All squares will be exactly the same size.
6. There is only one right way to make the six squares.
Learning Activity: Write Your Name

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required
Activity Type: Group
Group Size: 1 or more
Time: 5-10 minutes

Introduction: When we are used to responding to situations the same way over and over again, to suddenly do something different can feel very awkward and uncomfortable. In order to improve and make positive changes, we need to get out of our comfort zone. This attention-grabbing activity shows participants that this is possible with time and practice.

Materials:
• Timer
• 1-2 pieces of paper per student
• 1 pen or pencil per student
• Background music (optional)

Activity:
Play the background music. Ask the group members to write their full name on the paper as many times as they can in 30 seconds. After the time is up, have the participants count the total number of times they were able to write their name. Repeat this activity two more times. Ask if they improved after the third time. Now, have the group members change hands and repeat the activity for 30 more seconds. Ask the first two processing questions. Ask, “Do you think you can write your name with your eyes closed?” Have them try. This will come easy for them with their dominant hand. Ask them to do the same thing with their non-dominant hand.

Processing the Experience:
• Why was it easier to do this activity with the hand that you normally write with?
• Why was it harder when you changed hands?
• Why is change hard? (Discuss muscle memory. We are used to doing what comes naturally.)
I guess you like to tease, yell, and antagonize
That is fine as long as you can realize
That sticks and stones and words and deeds
Break more than bones
Your intentions aside, I will protect all that is mine

I've got a way to deal with words that are not so kind
I'll just walk away and leave unsaid things in my mind
The pressure is rough
But with some time I'll show you what I'm made of

The fire inside is out, no longer will I hide
Behind the deeds that will take me on another ride

I've got a way to deal with words that are not so kind
I'll just walk away and leave unsaid things in my mind
The pressure is rough
But with some time I'll show you what I'm made of

I've let you run my world but now it's time for more
I will row my own boat to a safer shore
I can help myself

I've got a way to deal with words that are not so kind
I'll just walk away and leave unsaid things in my mind
The pressure is rough
But with some time I'll show you what I'm made of
Why do I let other people push my buttons?
I get in trouble and they get nothing
And I know that they're trying to provoke me
Always in trouble, is why my mom wants to choke me

She have to take off work to come to school
I make her feel like a fool trying to be cool
I really want to change, but I don't know how
I'm feeling like no one can help me now

'Cause it is hard for me to take when I make a mistake
And my real life is bad so I got to be fake
So if you bring it, I'm gonna give it back
Going out like a punk, can't live with that

Even though the result is never positive
Where I am from on the real is how you gotta live
I can't change the hand I was dealt
Cause a lot of more young'ins seem to feel what I felt

(Chorus)
Can't let you, Got to let go
Take control so I can grow
Can't let you, got to let go
Take control and let my life flow

We put up walls to protect ourselves
But the walls usually help us to neglect ourselves
Reject ourselves cause we been hurt by somebody or something
One thing is never gonna change The dumb thing
We give up control but think we still got it
Try to cover up the hurt but they still spot it
And that is when we overcompensate
Turn our hurt into anger and our anger into hate

Cause it is easy to tear down but hard to build
Cause it takes more patience and takes more skill
But it is what we need to do let the truth be told
TOOLKIT - Defense Mechanisms

Learning Activity: Mad Gab

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required
Activity Type: Movement/group
Group Size: 4 or more
Time: 10-15 minutes, with possible out-of-class homework time

Introduction: When we are faced with challenges in life, we are more likely to be successful when we are plugged in to a wide support network. This activity encourages students to utilize their own network to solve problems and overcome challenges.

Materials:
• Mad Gab Worksheet (The answer sheet and student sheet are below.)
• 1 pen or pencil per student.

Activity:
Print enough worksheets for each person and distribute them. The object of the game is to have each group figure out the solution to as many of the commonly used phrases from the worksheet as they can. You may want to do some sample phrases together before beginning.

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Give the groups 10 to 15 minutes to work on their sheets.

Encourage the participants to work very quietly so as not to let the other teams overhear their answers.

Processing the Experience:
• What was frustrating and challenging with this activity?
• Did you put down any answers that you overheard other teams come up with?
• How would the activity have been different if you had to work on this by yourself in silence?
• Was working as a team easier or harder for you?
Mad Gab - Answer Sheet

Dick's Each Hicks: Dixie Chicks
Mere Eye Can Eye Dull: American Idol
Seek You're It Heap Lank Kit: Security Blanket
Ace Cam Mar Test: A Scam Artist
Lore Ants Offer Abe Year: Lawrence Of Arabia
You Knee Verse Sails Duty Owes: Universal Studios
Shy Niece Sheik Anne’s Hal Ad: Chinese Chicken Salad
Aid Us Tier Owed: A Dusty Road
Pen jitters: Pinch Hitters
Hive cot whom hop thief lower: I’ve got to mop the floor
Hit snowed ice: It’s no dice
Use Header Moth Fuel: You Said A Mouthful
Mash Who Sun Tide: My Shoe’s Untied
Chain Jeff Pays: Change Of Pace
Toe Runt Hope Luge Hays: Toronto Blue Jays
Tour Tea Etch Hips: Tortilla Chips
Thud Era Belt Ooze: The Terrible Twos
Fooled Forth Halt: Food For Thought
Tote Ali Calypso Thee Art: Total Eclipse Of The Heart
Tack Seed Rye Fur: Taxi Driver
Tube Row Tacked Ant Surf: To Protect And Serve
Sit Chores Height Sigh: Set Your Sights High
Date Roy Pea Stuns: Detroit Pistons
Hemp Yule Lance High Wren: Ambulance Siren
Dream Mennen Eight Hub: Three Men In A Tub
She Can Catch A Tory: Chicken Cacciatore
Why Tell Infants Ale: White Elephant Sale
Soon Knees Hide Hup: Sunny Side Up
Rye Sorrow Knee: Rice-A-Roni
Nay Jerk Halls: Nature Calls
Amos Ooze: A Masseuse
Gay Gummy Width Ace Boon: Gag Me With A Spoon
Plea Sleeve Amass Itch: Please Leave A Message
Jaw Jan Law Rob Whoosh: George And Laura Bush
Ache Hunt Trim Aisle: A Country Mile
Chest Hey Kitty See: Just Take It Easy
Hocks Verdict Shun Airy: Oxford Dictionary
Ma’am Fizz Tenor Sea: Memphis, Tennessee
Egg Aim Much Egg Curse: A Game Of Checkers
May Lord Herb Ride: Mail-Order Bride
Why Pup Dispelled Chews: Wipe Up The Spilled Juice
We Knit Train Sip Oars: When It Rains, It Pours
Mad Gab - Student Sheet

Dick's Each Hicks
Mere Eye Can Eye Dull
Seek You're It Heap Lank Kit
Ace Cam Mar Test
Lore Ants Offer Abe Year
You Knee Verse Sails Duty Owes
Shy Niece Sheik Anne's Hal Ad
Aid Us Tier Owed
Pen jitters
Hive cot whom hop thief lower
Hit snowed ice
Use Header Moth Fuel
Mash Who Sun Tide
Chain Jeff Pays
Toe Runt Hope Luge Hays
Tour Tea Etch Hips
Thud Era Belt Ooze
Fooled Forth Halt
Tote Ali Calypso Thee Art
Tack Seed Rye Fur
Tube Row Tacked Ant Surf
Sit Chores Height Sigh
Date Roy Pea Stuns
Hemp Yule Lance High Wren
Dream Mennen Eight Hub
She Can Catch A Tory
Why Tell Infants Ale
Soon Knees Hide Hup
Rye Sorrow Knee
Nay Jerk Halls
Amos Ooze
Gay Gummy Width Ace Boon
Plea Sleeve Amass Itch
Jaw Jan Law Rob Whoosh
Ache Hunt Trim Aisle
Chest Hey Kitty See
Hocks Verdict Shun Airy
Ma'am Fizz Tenor Sea
Egg Aim Much Egg Curse
May Lord Herb Ride
Why Pup Dispelled Chews
We Knit Train Sip Oars