### Key Concept:
When we put the tools from the visual metaphors into action, and when we develop an awareness of the positive and negative ways that others can influence us (especially when it comes to family members and close friends) we will be prepared to avoid negative behaviors, unhealthy and dangerous environments where we and others often get hurt, and the consequences that negative family members and peers and harmful environments create in our life.

Positive affirmation: “I WILL identify and hold onto positive family members and friends.”

### Vocabulary
- Peer pressure
- True friends
- False friends
- The Pot
- Change
- Attacked
- Misery Loves Company
- Tools
- Focus on staying out

### Climbing Out of the Pot

#### Identifying Strong Family Members and Friends
1. What “pot” am I in?
2. What have I told myself and others about the “pot” that has kept us in?
3. What are my reasons for putting forth the time and effort needed for me to be able to climb out?
4. What “tools” are available to me to help me climb out?
5. Who wants to see me stay IN the “pot”?
   - What are their reasons for wanting me to stay in?
6. Who wants to see me get OUT of the “pot”?
   - What are their reasons for wanting me to get out?
7. What have been my reasons for staying in the “pot”?
   - How have these choices made me feel?
8. What will my future be like if I don’t get out?
9. Why is it difficult for the crabs to climb out of the pot?
10. When I get out, what will I need to stay focused on and do in order to STAY out?
11. Who do I know who stayed in the “pot” too long and never made it out?
   - If they were here right now, what would they probably say to me about their “pot”?

#### Personalize the Lesson:
- Do I have an example of a time when a positive family member or friend influenced me for good? What were the characteristics of this person?
- Do I have an example of a time when a negative family member or friend influenced me for bad? What were the characteristics of this person?
- What tools or resources are available in my community that can help people “climb out”? I may want to incorporate these into my lesson plan.
- How do I avoid negative peer influence in my own life?

### Secondary Concepts:
- If I am in trouble at home, at work, or with friends, I am in the pot.
- To climb out of the pot, I must follow certain steps and not let others pull me down.
- The WhyTry visual metaphors give me the tools I need to stay out of the pot and find opportunity, freedom, and personal strength.
- I can identify negative and strong family and friends.
Welcome
We believe at WhyTry it’s critical to have positive, upbeat music playing in the classroom as students enter. We have built in a mix of WhyTry’s original music 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 names of students from the previous class. Click on the icon metaphor representing the previous class and have the student review the core concepts of the metaphor as it relates to their own experience.

If we’re teaching Climbing Out of the Pot in an open-group setting, click on the picture icon at the bottom of the slide to take you to the previous metaphor for a student to review.

Share and Report
Every student will now take 1-3 minutes, depending on the class size, to stand in front of the class and share and report one key component of the previous class that resonated with them.

Where We’re Headed
Positive affirmation: “I WILL identify and hold onto positive family members and friends.” Touch briefly on the positive affirmation, stating that this is where we are heading in this unit and that by the end of the unit, all of us will have the proper perspectives and tools to proclaim this statement in our life.

WhyTry Staircase
If we’re working in a closed group setting, this is the sixth 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.
Climbing Out of the Pot
Lesson Plan: Introducing Climbing Out of the Pot

Show the picture of crabs in a pot with no words. This metaphor of crabs in a pot reflects an actual, natural characteristic of blue crabs. This metaphor is an homage to the founder of the WhyTry Program, Christian Moore, who grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and observed this natural phenomenon firsthand.

Show the picture of blue crabs in a basket. When blue crabs are in a basket, as shown here, we can see their tendency to cling and grab onto each other. This natural instinct is triggered by the movement and motion around the crabs. If a blue crab is able to reach the rim of a basket like this one and begins to pull itself out, the nearby crabs will reach out and grab onto the one making the move to get out.

Show the video, “Blue Crabs in a Pot.” Here is a real-life example of what this looks like. Process with the class by asking:

Questions
• Why wasn’t the crab able to get out of the pot?
• What did you observe happening when the crab tried to get out but wasn’t able to?
• Did anyone notice the background sounds in this video? Where do you think this was filmed? (It sounds like this video was captured in a restaurant.)
• Where do you think these crabs are headed if they don’t get out of this pot?

Discussion
Sometimes people around us will try to keep us from changing. They will want us to continue to do the same things that we have been doing. Like crabs in a pot, they will keep pulling us down if we try to get out. This can make it extremely hard to change, especially when those influencing us are members of our own family or our close friends that we’ve known for a long time.

To climb out of the “pot” we are in, we will need to be strong, have a plan, and get some help. The people that help us climb out must be strong and positive individuals.

TOOLKIT SLIDE
Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the concept that it can be very frustrating when our individual right to make decisions and choices for ourselves is taken away. Our recommended activity is “Says Who?”
Discussion Point 1

Question
• Why is it difficult for the crabs to climb out of the pot?

Discussion
As already explained, certain crabs have a natural tendency to pull other crabs that try to get out back into the pot. Ask the students to relate this visual analogy to their own lives. We could ask, “Is there anyone in your life who is trying to pull you down or get you into trouble?” Or, “Have you ever noticed that when you are with certain people you get into trouble?”

Point 2

Question
• What “pot” am I in?

Discussion
Ask the students what the pot in this metaphor might represent in their life. Answers given may include, “jail/prison,” “my gang,” “violence,” “other inmates who like to ‘stir things up,’” “not caring,” “probation,” “drug addiction,” “comfort zones,” “my problems and challenges,” etc. It’s important as a facilitator to not take sides against feedback that a student may offer. If a response is given that we don’t understand, a good follow-up statement could be, “Give me an example of that,” “Tell me a little bit more about what you meant when said…” or simply, “Thank you for sharing,” and move on.

A reality of life is that to overcome challenges, we cannot let others hold us down and keep us in the pot. On the other hand, positive family and friends can help us climb out of the pot and deal with challenges. This is the main focus of climbing out.

The first step in solving any problem is having a clear picture of the problem in our minds. As we have seen in other WhyTry metaphors, the first step in jumping over hurdles is to clearly identify what the hurdle is. The first step in controlling our defense mechanisms is having a very clear picture of the situation that we find ourselves in. In this metaphor, the first step in getting out of the pot is to have a clear picture of what the pot is. We may not have any control over what pot we find ourselves in, but we definitely have control over whether or not we stay in those pots.

TOOLKIT SLIDE

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that reinforces the concept that things can happen suddenly, unexpectedly, and beyond our control. Our recommended video is “Waterbed Surprise.” This video offers a humorous look at customers in a furniture store who suddenly find themselves in an unexpected situation that they have to get out of.
What have I told myself and others about the “pot” that has kept us in?

Discussion

Our lives are impacted either positively or negatively by where, how, and with whom we spend our time. For example, if we hang out with peers who smoke or use drugs, we are much more likely to do the same. If we hang out with peers who don’t work, we are more likely not to keep a job. On the other hand, if we hang out with friends that put effort into their home life, work, and friendships, we are more likely to do the same. Stress again that our environments can influence us, but they cannot control us or make decisions for us.

Peer pressure is so dangerous because it’s difficult to detect. We don’t notice peer pressure because it usually comes from people by whom we want to be accepted. Peer pressure is like the water in the pot: the exact temperature may be hard to detect until the water is boiling or steaming, at which point it is too late. When we are in the water (among our peers) from the beginning, we may not notice the changes in temperature (pressure) until we are almost cooked!

This metaphor clearly is not just about how others influence us, but how we are able to influence others as well. We also have the ability to pull our family members and friends down and keep them in our pot. For example, have we ever encouraged someone to stay longer at a party or to have “just one more for the road” after they have expressed that they need to head home because they have something important in the morning?

We can test the water of our pot with these questions: How do I feel about myself when I am talking with my friends? How do I feel about myself after I am with them? Do I feel like I have more or less personal strength? How do people who really care about me feel about my friends and the messages we are giving each other?

Remind students that they will know that peer pressure is positive when they do things with their friends that don’t hurt themselves or others and that don’t take away their opportunities, freedom, and personal strength!

We will shortly identify our own reasons for staying in our pot, but here we are focusing on the messages that we give ourselves and others that keep us all in the same pot.

WEAK THINK/STRONG THINK

Students will be introduced to “VOLUNTEER VICTIM” and “RESPONSE-ABILITY.” It is recommended that a volunteer from the class read the Volunteer Victim Weak Think concept and another volunteer read the Response-Ability Strong Think concept.

Discussion

Open brief discussion with the students about examples of when and where they have done either of these in their life.
Climbing Out of the Pot

Point 4
Questions
• Who wants to see me STAY IN the “pot”?
• What are their reasons for wanting me to stay in?

Discussion
No one likes being taken advantage of. No one ever likes being played the fool, but one of the realities of life is that there are people who have no problem using and taking advantage. There are people in this world that may even find pleasure in my pain.

If I struggled in school as a young person and dropped out, but have now decided to return to school and continue your education, there may very well be people in my life who will discourage me from this course of action. I need to stop and try to figure out or identify what their motivation might be for not wanting me to become a better person.

For those of us who have struggled with drug addiction, we are all too familiar with what it looks like when we try to express that we’re giving it up. We know that there will be those around us who will come back at us and say, “Man, you don’t really want to do that, do you?” What in the world would be their motivation for wanting me to continue to use drugs when I’ve decided that I’m ready to move forward?

These are things we have to identify and figure out for ourselves. We know that we cannot control what other people say and do. However, it can be very helpful to figure out what their motivations might be behind what they say and do.

Who wants to see me stay IN the “pot”?

• What are their reasons for wanting me to stay in?

4

Warning: If I try to get out, I will be attacked!

WARNING: If I try to get out, I will be attacked! Why does this happen?

Ask the students if any of them have experienced this in their life; have they tried to do something to better their position and been attacked because of it?

One explanation for why this happens is found in the old saying, “Misery loves company.” People may be thinking, “Where does it leave me if they move on and improve the position of their life and I have not made any changes in my life?” Oftentimes, when one person’s life begins to
shine brighter, their life can shed light on how dark the lives of others around them may be. If I am struggling with my own self-esteem and have a negative perspective of the world, and you have a very positive self-esteem and an optimistic outlook on the world, the natural tendency is for me to begin to disagree and even resent you as a person, because in comparison to you, I don’t amount to much.

Point 5

Questions

• Who wants to see me GET OUT of the pot?
• What are their reasons for wanting me to get out?

NOTE:

Some of our students may honestly respond to this question by saying, “I don’t know anyone who wants to see me get out of the pot.” Whenever we hear this, we must be able to honestly and sincerely reply, “Well, you can put my name at the beginning of that list. I want to see you get out, and here’s why…” Many times, having our names at the beginning of their list will prompt them to dig deeper and come up with others, including parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, past teachers, old friends, counselors, religious leaders, and so forth. If the student hasn’t already considered it, emphasize that the most important person they should be identifying is himself or herself. If they don’t have the desire to climb out, it’s harder for others to reach out to them and help.

Discussion

People who help others are often those who see in them a potential that they may not currently see in themselves. We have to trust and believe people who point out our strengths and potential. Many people who want to see us climb out, love and care about us and have invested time and effort in us. The best way to pay these people back is to try to climb out and refuse to let those who don’t believe in us pull us down.

It’s important that we demonstrate respect for people who believe in us and care about us. Let me repeat it once more: No one should be able to say in our presence as a facilitator, “I don’t know anyone who wants to see me climb out of the pot.” We must demonstrate respect and value our students because of who they are, not just because of their successes or failures! And if nothing else, they can respect themselves for making the difficult decision to not let others pull them down. Their personal strength will grow each time they attempt to get out of the pot, whether or not they ultimately succeed.
An important distinction that needs to be made under this point is the difference between a true friend and a false friend. Ask the class how they would define what a true friend is. Possible answers may be:

- Someone who really cares about me
- Someone who doesn’t want to see me in trouble or locked up
- Someone who has my best interest in mind
- Someone who respects me
- Someone who is loyal to me when I’m not hurting myself or others

Follow up by asking the class how they would define a false friend. Answers may include:

- Someone who lies to me
- Someone who cares more about themselves than they do about me
- Someone who has no problem throwing me under the bus
- Someone who violates my personal confidentiality
- Someone who doesn’t respect my boundaries
- Someone who makes it difficult for me to make positive decisions

Simply stated, false friends are those who fit under Point 4 (Who wants to see me STAY IN the pot?); and true friends are those who fit under this point (Who wants to see me GET OUT of the pot?)

**TOOLKIT SLIDE**

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that demonstrates an example of others helping someone else get out of the “pot.” Our recommended video is “Football Team Reaches Out.”

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**Point 6**

*Question*

- What have been my reasons for staying in the “pot”?
- How have these choices made me feel?

*Discussion*

There is nothing more basic to us as human beings than wanting to be accepted, to feel safe, and to be comfortable in our environment – even if our environment is potentially harmful and destructive. There is not one single thing that I have ever done in my life where I did not have a reason motivating me to do it. I may not always be aware of the reasons, but they are certainly there.

Here is where we must slow down, pause, and stop. We need to take a close look at our reasons for doing what we have done, and staying where we have stayed. For example, when it comes to
peer pressure, our peers and friends are very important. Who doesn't want friends? If our “pot” involves our friends and people we care about, it can be very difficult to climb out. Once we are accepted by a group of peers, walking away is extremely hard. Even a negative peer group can become comfortable, because its members accept us. The group may provide protection, money, and excitement. The idea of making new friends can be overwhelming and scary. This is doubly true when it relates to members of our own family. It’s not like we can just pick up and find a new family. Our family will always be our family. When our family members play a role in keeping us in the pot, the thought of abandoning them can be downright paralyzing.

There are reasons why:

- People use drugs.
- People fight.
- People overeat.
- People stay in bed.
- People join and stay in gangs.
- People don’t follow traffic laws and lose their driver’s licenses due to too many tickets.

Discuss with the class what some of the reasons might be of why people do these things; and what emotions and feelings these behaviors produce in the people.

Here is where we can whip out the classic “Dr. Phil” approach and ask, “How’s that been working out for you?” In the short term, we may feel good and it may be working, but the longer I stay in the “pot,” the fewer benefits and good feelings will come as a result of my behaviors.

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**Point 7**

**Question**

- What will my future be like if I don’t get out?

**Discussion**

When we look at the metaphor and see the upside-down crab with its eyes closed in the lower left corner of the pot, ask the class, “Why does this crab look this way? What happened? What’s going on?”

Answers may include:

- The crab is dead.
- He stayed in the pot too long.
- He got too close to the fire.
- The other crabs kept pulling him down.
- He got tired and just quit.
One of the biggest, yet easiest, mistakes a person can make is believing that what they do today will have little or no impact on their future. It’s impossible to stay in a pot day after day, week after week, year after year, and experience no impact.

In this metaphor, we have the advantage of being able to see inside of the crab pot. However, in reality most of our pots do not allow others to look inside of them. It has to be up to us to see what the long-term effects of staying in the pot will have on our future.

Point 8

Question

• What are my reasons for putting forth the time and effort needed for me to be able to climb out?

Discussion

For every reason for staying in the pot, there exists a better reason to climb out. These better reasons, however, are not always self-evident. A person will have to dig deep and look hard for his or her own motivation if they want to be able to climb out.

FACT: It will take time and effort to climb out of the pot! It’s a process. It will not happen overnight or in a single day. The scales must be tipped toward my own positive motivation and reasons to climb out. For every reason I have identified that has kept me in the pot, I will probably need to identify three or four reasons to climb out.

Brainstorm with the students and come up with creative ways for them to remember these identified reasons when they feel like giving up. For example, they could draw a picture that shows all of their reasons and hang it up in their room, write a poem or a song, or come up with a key word that they can say to themselves to remind them to keep trying.

At WhyTry, we believe that one of the greatest motivators that can facilitate personal change is the desire to have positive relationships with others. One positive relationship can change a life. Imagine that we wake up tomorrow and the reasons that have kept us in the pot suddenly have no control or influence on us. How would our relationships with others change? Ask the students to identify one person who has believed in them. How and why did this motivate them to try in life? What motivated them to get out of bed this morning, to go to work or school today, to show up for their probation appointment on time, etc?

Point 9

Question

• What “tools” are available to me to help me climb out?
Discussion

Ask the students, “How would you describe a ‘tool’? What are tools?” (The literal definition of a tool is a device, instrument, or strategy used to help carry out a specific function.)

Let’s say we want to build a nice, comfortable, roomy house for our family and ourselves. What tools would we need? (Saw, hammer, nails, measuring tape, carpenter’s square, drills, etc.) Being in possession of tools is one thing, but knowing the specific function of each of the tools is something else, and developing the personal experience and skills to effectively use the tools is another thing entirely.

If a person wanted to build not just a physical house for themselves and their family, but rather a life that offers greater opportunity, freedom, and personal strength, what tools would they need to accomplish this? Possible answers may include:

- The ability to transform challenges and struggles of daily living in a positive direction
- The ability to function within the parameters of the law
- A positive self-image with a clear understanding of personal strength, skills, and abilities
- Problem-solving skills
- Work ethic
- Self-discipline
- The ability to recognize and break free from negative influences
- A positive support system
- A clear understanding that the decisions a person makes today do impact their tomorrow
- A clear “blueprint” of what that life (opportunity, freedom, and personal strength) actually looks like for themselves and their family.

NOTE:

These ten points are the specific tools of the WhyTry curriculum.

After identifying what a tool is and what types of tools a person in general would need to be successful in life, the question that must be asked of the students is, “What tools do I have and know how to use to help me climb out?” Again, this is not just about the availability of tools, but rather being in possession of tools and knowing how to use them.

WEAK THINK/STRONG THINK

Students will be introduced to “PLAYING GOD” and “BEING HUMAN.” It is recommended that one volunteer from the class read the Playing God Weak Think concept and another volunteer read the Being Human Strong Think concept.

Discussion

Open brief discussion and invite the students to share examples of when and where they have done either of these in their life.
TOOLKIT SLIDE

Refer to the toolkit slide to select a video, song, or activity that demonstrates the importance of being surrounded by individuals who care and are interested in my personal health and safety. Our recommended video is “Battle at Kruger.”

Point 10

Question

• When I get out of the pot, what will I need to stay focused on and do in order to STAY out?

Discussion

Point 9 focused on the tools we need to climb out of the pot, but this metaphor does not and cannot end there. This metaphor is ultimately not just about climbing out; it’s about climbing out and STAYING OUT.

There are some very real elements and forces within the American criminal justice system that make it very difficult to climb out from the system. There are elements and forces within the system that are expecting and counting on individuals who climb out of the pot to wind up back in the pot, as this contributes to job security for correctional staff.

Ask the students this question: “How many of you have ever heard from a detention officer or corrections officer as you were leaving a detention facility, jail, or prison, ‘We’ll see you back here in a couple months!’?” Ask for a show of hands. Whether any individuals in the class have ever personally heard an officer say something like this or not, the fact of the matter is that this mentality does exist in the system. The next question to be asked is, “Why do you think this mentality exists?” (Because a very large percentage of people, when they get out of detention, jail, or prison, do return in a matter of months.)

Another question that could be asked is, “How many of us have been released from detention, jail, or prison and we thought, ‘I am never coming back,’ but then wound up getting re-arrested and returning to detention, jail, or prison?” If any of the students raise their hands, ask them if they would share with the class what happened, and then ask, “So what perspective or focus did you lose sight of that could have helped you stay out?”

NOTE:

If most of the students have already gone through the Jumping Hurdles metaphor, ask them, “What was the first of the six steps in the problem-solving model for Jumping Hurdles? The first step started with the word IDENTIFY… (Identify the pain that my tripping over hurdles in my life has caused myself and others.)” Reinforce the concept that one of the things that we can stay focused on to help us stay out is how unpleasant being in the justice system really is.

Some possible answers to the question posed in this point may include:

• How much it really sucks being on probation/in jail/in prison
• How much I hate having a curfew
• My family members that really care about me and hate to see me locked up
• My children
• How expensive court fees and probation costs are; and all I could do with the money I earn by not having to turn it over to other people
• Who my true friends are
• I don’t want to die inside the “pot”

Who do I know who stayed in the “pot” too long and never made it out?

Question
• If they were here right now, what would they probably say to me about their “pot”?

Discussion
This star question points directly to the upside-down crab with its eyes closed in the lower left-hand corner of the “pot.” Ask the class, “How many of us know someone who wound up looking like this crab in their own ‘pot’?” If any of the students raise their hand, ask if they would be willing to briefly share who that person was, and what happened to them. If none of the students raise their hand, be prepared to either share a personal story of someone you know or an account of someone in the news or from history. The basic concept posed here is, “If this crab had the ability to come back to life and speak to us about their experience in the pot and ultimately what happened to them, what might they say to us?”

Review Climbing Out of the Pot

Draw a name from the hat of class participants. The person chose will review the concepts of “Climbing Out of the Pot.”

Discussion
Note that the PowerPoint image is a basic representation of the “Climbing Out of the Pot” 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 “Climbing Out of the Pot” 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 “Climbing Out of the Pot” 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 “Volunteer Victim/Response-Ability,” and “Playing God/Being Human.” Emphasize that this also will need to be completed before the next class.

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 - Climbing Out of the Pot

Learning Activity: Says Who?

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Group Size: 6 or more

Time: 15 minutes

Introduction: Whom do I allow to influence my decisions? How much do other people determine the choices I make? The answers to these questions can determine whether or not we find ourselves stuck in the pot, allowing the influence of others to continually pull us back in. The purpose of this activity is to allow students to think about the different directions their lives can take when others make their decisions for them.

Materials:
- 1 die per group of 6
- 1 pen or pencil per student
- 1 piece of paper per student

Activity:
Tell the students to number their papers from one to six. They should title this list “My Answers,” then respond to the following questions on their piece of paper:

Question 1: What is your favorite food?
Question 2: What is your favorite television show?
Question 3: What is your favorite sport?
Question 4: What is your favorite color?
Question 5: If you could choose any animal for a pet, what would you choose?
Question 6: If you could choose any job to have when you are older, what would it be?

Now divide the class into groups of six and assign each group member a number from one to six. If one group has fewer players, assign someone multiple numbers. The person assigned number one will roll the die first. Then the person assigned the number shown on the die reads their answer to question one. For example, if player one rolled three, player three would read their response. This response becomes the official group answer to the first question, and all the players replace their original answer with this one. Player two then rolls the die to decide which player reads question two, and this continues until all six questions have been answered and recorded by the group.

Processing the Experience:
• Which question was easiest to answer? Which one was hardest?
• How do your personal answers differ from the group answers?
• How did it feel to have your answers replaced with someone else’s?
• How might this activity apply to peer pressure?
• How can the influence of others sometimes affect us negatively?
• Why do you think it’s important to make your own positive choices?
• How often in life do you let others pressure you into making certain decisions?
• How can making certain choices just to “fit in” force you to veer off the path that will lead to reaching your goals?
• Who ultimately pays the consequences for the choices you make?
TOOLKIT - Climbing Out of the Pot
Learning Activity: An Amazing Experience

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required
Activity Type: Movement/group
Group Size: 10-15 per maze
Time: 30-40 minutes

Introduction: As participants go through the maze, they will learn important concepts about choices and consequences. They will learn the importance of learning from their mistakes and the mistakes of others, and using positive support systems to help them through life’s experiences. This activity can also apply to “Climbing Out,” “Desire, Time, and Effort,” and “Plugging In.”

Materials:
• 1 roll of masking tape
• 1 grid map per team (See below)

Activity:
Make a 6 X 9 grid on the floor with the masking tape. A “maze master” stands at the head of each maze to monitor the movement of the team members on the maze. The maze master holds the grid map out of sight of the group. He/she also makes a “beep” sound when a mistake is made, and keeps track of all mistakes with a tally mark on the paper.

Have the team members line up in front of the maze. The team will see a grid of squares made of masking tape, and only the maze master will know which squares represent the path and which ones are impassable. (The impassable squares are those with an “X” over them on the map.)

The first person in line begins by stepping on any square of the maze. If they are lucky enough to step on the path, they may proceed to another square. They may move forward, backward, sideways, and diagonally, but can never skip or step over squares. As long as they stay on the path as shown on the grid map, nothing happens. But when they step off the invisible path and onto an invisible “X,” the maze master “beeps” and that person leaves the maze and proceeds carefully back through the maze, to the entry point, and on to the back of the line. (They must avoid “beeping squares” while they are retreating as well.) The next person in line then steps into the grid and also moves through it until they make a mistake and the maze master “beeps” at them. The other players must watch closely to learn the correct route and complete the object of the game, which is for everyone to finish the maze without stepping on an impassable, “beeping” square

Time this event starting with the first person. Any time the maze master beeps, add one minute to the total time. This includes if a team member steps on an impassable square while retreating back to the starting point.

Allow each player to take a turn before allowing second turns. Do not allow props (like a pen and paper) or speaking.
Only one person may be on the maze at a time until a player has made it completely through the maze and the pattern is discovered. At this point, there may now be multiple players on the maze at one time. However, if any of those players make a mistake, all the players behind them must retreat back to the start. As before, each beep encountered while retreating adds a minute to the team’s total time.

**Processing the Experience:**
- What was difficult about this activity?
- What were your feelings as you went through this activity? What frustrated you? What motivated you?
- What tools helped you to be successful in the activity?
- What could the “Maze” represent in your life? (the path of life)
- What might the “beeps” represent? (the mistakes we make on the path of life)
- What “beeps” do you have in life?
- What support systems did you have in the activity?
- What support systems do you have in life?
- Do you use all of the support systems that are available to you? Why or why not? (This question also ties in to “Plugging In.”)
- Were you concerned about the success of the other players as they entered the maze? Why or why not?
- How concerned are you with the success of others in the maze of life?
- Do we ever allow friends to keep making the same mistakes over and over again?
TOOLKIT - Climbing Out of the Pot

Song: Hot Spot

My life is like a work/ that is always in progress
Mama used to say/ watch the crowd you hang out with them kids around the block/ be on some nonsense
But I didn’t listen/ didn’t see the consequence
It started from leaving stores/ with fat pockets
I wasn’t copping/ so my friends started mocking
But when I started stealing yo/ I couldn’t stop it
I was straight violating/ my own conscience
We went from small licks to picking locks at houses
That is what we thought/ would have brought the hotness
The amount of stuff we stole/ was straight up shocking
But then one day popo/ came up knocking
Said something’s come up missing from a nearby apartment
Went to my mains and my name they started dropping
My heart started pounding/ like a just caged robin
I should have listened to mom/ and climbed out the pot quick

Verse 2

Just like some folks no joke will damage ya
Some will give ya hope fa sho and stand with ya
Show you tough love maybe even challenge ya
But call you beyond the life of being an amateur
They see beyond the lenses even caught by a camera
And bring the right equation like you be up in algebra
And water destiny that be planted in us
Activating a mind state waiting to erupt
When you understanding this man you will flip
And begin the authorship of your own manuscript
Sure there are folks who just be acting scandalous
So get with those who respect your perimeters
Without support I couldn’t even handle this
Without Uncle Ted and Jen and people to stand with me
When all I could see was the hood like damaging
They showed me the good life and know I live it passionate

Verse 3

To bring out the best you know what you say yes to
Hook up with a fresh crew that will always respect you
It might just be one dude there to come catch you
But he’ll always come through when it’s time for the rescue
A good friend will check and express without a spectacle
He’ll let you know that you can’t settle bro
But the jealous folks will try to provoke the lesser you
But let them know they can't hold to the best in you
Good company will lead you through all of the hating
And let you know no matter what you're never forsaken
As your purpose is awaking you'll soon be elevating
And demonstrating a way out in any situation
No debating you'll find that cats is blind to the plot
When opposition is itching it is a sign that you got
Your position and your vision so shine in this spot
And when they ready to listen help them climb out the pot