

Self-Esteem: Humanness

“Today I learned that you
can’t do life wrong.”

Erin

GOAL

To expand self-esteem by developing a productive way
to accept and handle mistakes.

OBJECTIVES

Activity 1: Share Information (2 minutes)

- To reward prompt students with a constructive “extra.”

Activity 2: Permission to be Human (5 minutes)

- To understand that mistakes are part of growth.
- To enlarge understanding of self-esteem.

Activity 3: Handling Mistakes (5 minutes)

- To introduce a method of handling mistakes.

Activity 4: Role-Plays (33 minutes)

- To practice handling mistakes.

PREPARATION

1. Set out Student Activity Books.
2. Select information to share in Activity 1.
3. Make the Handling Mistakes wall chart (p. 73) for Activity 3.

ACTIVITY 1

Share Information

2 MINUTES

STEP 1

Share the information selected as before.

Share



ACTIVITY 2

Permission to Be Human

5 MINUTES

STEP 1

Humanness
in
Self-Esteem



Tell class that the last area of the Self-Esteem continuum is called Humanness because it's the one that involves granting yourself permission to be human. Being human includes making mistakes.

Review the Humanness area.

Say: *"People feel bad when they make a mistake because they think their worth and value depend on doing it right."*

Ask: *"When someone makes a mistake, how do they usually feel about themselves?"* (R: bad, they are dumb, incompetent, not OK)

Say: *"Some people are very concerned about doing things perfectly, without making any mistakes. I have had students who were so concerned about turning in perfect work that if they made a mistake, they would tear up the paper and start over."*

Ask: *"Do you know anyone like that?"* Point to the Humanness wall chart.

"Where would such people be on this continuum?" (R: lower end)

"Where would their sense of their own worth have come from?" (R: from the thing being done perfectly, from their ability to do the task, something external)

Say: *"Mistakes don't mean you're dumb, or that you're a failure. They mean that you're a human being. Mistakes are part of the growth process. They are actually stepping stones in growth. From mistakes we can learn how to do it better next time."*

"Expecting yourself to do things perfectly is a real trap, because NOTHING THAT'S EVER BEEN DONE IN THIS WORLD HAS BEEN DONE PERFECTLY!"

“No matter how well something gets done, it is never perfect. That is because if it were to be done over again, it could be done more effectively. Since we’re always learning, there’s always a way to do it better next time.

“People who think stuff is ‘wrong’ because it’s not perfect are missing out on the best news of all. The really good news is that since it can’t be done perfectly, there’s no way to do it wrong.

“THERE IS NO WAY TO DO IT WRONG. THERE IS ALWAYS A WAY TO DO IT MORE EFFECTIVELY.” Point to the wall chart.

Ask: *“Because there’s no way to do it wrong, does that mean it doesn’t matter how well you do a task? Does that mean it’s OK to just slop it out any old way?”*
(R: no)

“Your sense of personal integrity doesn’t depend on doing things perfectly, but it DEMANDS that you give your best to every task you undertake. If you could do it better this time and you don’t, are you walking the talk? Are your actions consistent with what’s on the inside of you?”

(R: no)

Say: *“Understanding this chart (point to NO WAY TO DO IT WRONG wall chart) means you:*

- *do your best every time;*
- *learn from mistakes;*
- *do it better today than yesterday; and*
- *do it better tomorrow than today.”*

ACTIVITY 3

Handling Mistakes

5 MINUTES

STEP 1

Introduce Activity



Explain that knowing mistakes are a natural part of life is one thing, but knowing how to handle it when you experience one of these “natural parts of life” is another.

handling mistakes in a way that helps them develop self-esteem. It has proven very effective for people of all ages. After you’ve gone over it, they will each practice doing it.

Tell class you’re going to introduce a four-step process for

STEP 2

How to Handle Mistakes



Tell students to turn to page 22 in their Activity Books and follow along the chart as you explain the four steps.

Post the Handling Mistakes wall chart. Review the steps on the chart.

STEP 1

Say: *“The first step is to be honest with yourself and admit you made a mistake. Think about it and decide what YOU did to cause this mistake to happen. Every time you make a mistake, if you look carefully, you’ll find*

that you did something to cause it. If you don't identify what you did to cause it, you won't know what to do differently next time so you can do it more effectively.

"When you honestly admit you made a mistake, you AVOID ALL EXCUSES. Many people find it difficult to take responsibility and admit their mistakes. They react defensively by blaming others and finding excuses. It's never THEIR fault.

"People with internal self-esteem know it's OK to make mistakes. It's easier for them to admit it and to say what they did to cause it. When they think or talk about their mistakes, they start with 'I...' For example, 'I didn't allow enough time to finish all my homework and I didn't get it all done.'

"People with external self-esteem think their value depends on NOT making mistakes, so they want to protect themselves. That's why they blame others and make excuses. When they think or talk about their mistakes they start with the person or thing they are blaming. For example, 'The teacher gave too much homework, so I didn't get it all done.'"

STEP 2

Say: *"The next step is to create a solution by deciding what to do about the mistake. There are two parts to this. The first is to decide what specifically you will do to fix the situation caused by your mistake. What can you do to repair or make up for damage that resulted from your mistake? For example, if you didn't finish your homework, what are you going to do to make up for what wasn't done?"*

"The second part of deciding what to do is to figure out what you'll do next time you are in a similar situation so you won't make the same mistake again, so you can do it MORE EFFECTIVELY next time. For example, you might decide to review how much homework you have every day right after school so you can plan how long to allow that evening to get it done.

"There are always lots of possible things you could do to fix each mistake and lots of options on how to do it more effectively next time. Your personal integrity will guide you in choosing the way that's most effective rather than the one that's just the easiest or the quickest."

STEP 3

Say: *"The third step is to tell the others involved who were affected by your mistake. You begin by letting them know you recognize that they have experienced some inconvenience, difficulty, or problem because of your mistake. This is different from saying, 'I'm sorry.' Recognizing the inconvenience the other person experienced indicates understanding and that helps build the relationship. It is OK to also say you're sorry, but only if you really mean it. Remember the issue of personal integrity.*

"Then you say what you did to cause the mistake. Remember the statement begins with 'I.' This shows you are assuming responsibility for yourself and your actions.

"Next let them know what you plan to do to make up for or to fix the situation caused by your mistake.

“Then you tell them what you plan to do next time a similar situation occurs so you can avoid making the mistake again and thus do it MORE EFFECTIVELY.”

STEP 4

Say: *“The last step is to ‘walk the talk’ and do what you decided and said you would do.*

“When you DO IT, you are claiming your self-esteem by demonstrating your humanness in handling your mistakes well. You are also maintaining your personal integrity in making your actions consistent with your words.”

ACTIVITY 4

Role-Plays

33 MINUTES

STEP 1

Practice Handling Mistakes



Tell students they will practice these four steps in various situations they might encounter. Divide class into groups of four. Have students turn to pages 23 to 27 in their Activity Books and assign each group a different page to do.

Explain that each member of the group is to pick one of the mistakes listed on their page to do. Taking turns around the group, each student will decide with the help of the others in their group how to handle the mistake following the four steps on the Handling Mistakes chart. As they decide exactly what they would

tell the other person involved, they are to fill in those blanks on the page under the mistake they have chosen. Orally go over the example on Handling Mistakes Sheet One on page 23 of the Activity Books.

Tell students that each of them will be coming up to the front of the class to go through what they would say to the other person. If they finish their responses early, they can practice what they’ll say with each other before coming up to do it with you. When they come up to do it with you, they can bring their book and read their responses.

STEP 2

Do Role-Plays



With you serving as the injured person, have each student handle their mistake situation before the whole class.

Note: This is their first role-play. Many will be nervous. Give them

whatever support is necessary so they complete the task successfully. By the end of the course they’ll love role-plays so much you won’t be able to get them to stop. Growth in self-confidence is a joy to watch.

STEP 3

Discussion



Ask students how they felt handling the mistake. Accept all responses.

Tell class that learning to handle mistakes is an important step in becoming more powerful. Explain that because they're still in the early stages of the course, some of what they are learning may not seem to make a lot of sense now, but it will as they go on.

Tell them they will learn a lot more about:

- how to deal with other people's reactions; and
- how to get rid of the frustration that they experience when things don't go right.

Tell them those things will make life easier.

STEP 4

Close



Close with students individually as before.

HANDLING MISTAKES

1. ADMIT IT TO YOURSELF

- What you did to cause it (I...)
 - NO EXCUSES

2. DECIDE WHAT TO DO

- To fix this situation
- To do it more effectively next time

3. TELL OTHERS INVOLVED

- You recognize inconvenience caused
- Say what you did to cause it (I...)
- Say how you'll fix this situation
 - Say how you'll do it more effectively next time

4. DO IT

HANDLING MISTAKES

Sheet 1

Example: You and your brother are wrestling in the living room. You bump into the table and knock over a small lamp which breaks.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? Mom
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. I realize you won't be able to use the lamp to read now.
- C. What did you do to cause it? I was wrestling, hit the table, and broke the lamp.
- D. How will you fix it? I will pay \$2 per week till I pay for a new lamp.
- E. What will you do next time? Next time I'll wrestle with Jim outside.

1. You borrow your friend's skate board. One of the wheels is damaged while you are using it.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

2. You were supposed to pick your sister up at home at 4:30 and take her to a doctor's appointment. You arrive at 4:45 to pick her up.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

3. You and a friend are at the gate just ready to get your tickets for the big basketball game when you realize you don't have your student body card with you. No one is admitted without their card.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

4. You forgot to go to your dentist appointment at 2:30. It is now 4:30.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

HANDLING MISTAKES

Sheet 2

1. You had arranged to go with a friend to the mall on Saturday afternoon. It's Saturday evening and you realize you forgot.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

2. You forgot to drop off at the post office the package your mom gave you Monday. It is a birthday present for your older sister who lives in Montana. It is now Tuesday afternoon.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

3. You were supposed to be at the Smith's at 5:00 to babysit. You arrive at 5:10.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

4. You are angry and slam the door of your locker closed. It jams and you can't get it open.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

HANDLING MISTAKES

Sheet 3

1. You show up 20 minutes late for your job as a bagger at the local Safeway market.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

2. You arrive at Marty's house on Friday at 6:30 to pick him up for the show. The two of you had arranged to go Saturday, not Friday.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

3. You forgot that the English paper was due today. You arrive in class on time without the paper.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

4. You are using your sister's hair dryer. You drop it, it cracks and won't work anymore.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

HANDLING MISTAKES

Sheet 4

1. You work at a florist shop delivering flowers. It's 4:30 Wednesday afternoon and you've just finished your deliveries. When you check the slips, you realize that you got two of the flower arrangements mixed up and delivered them to the wrong addresses. One arrangement was quite a bit nicer than the other.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

2. You were to meet your friends at the mall at 7:30 but you arrived at 7:50.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

3. You forgot to pick up medicine for your little brother on your way home from school. Now it's 4:45 and your friends are coming over at 5:00.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

4. When the teacher calls on you to read a paragraph in History, you don't know where you are supposed to begin reading, because you have not been paying attention.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

HANDLING MISTAKES

Sheet 5

1. The headphones of the Walkman you borrowed from your friend were lost while you had them.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

2. You forgot to pick up your brother at the doctor's office at 3:00. It is now later that evening at home.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

3. Your sister wanted to wear her new blouse this afternoon, but it wasn't in the closet. You had borrowed it without asking. It's now later that evening.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____

4. You were supposed to be in class at 8:05. You arrive at 8:15.

- A. Who was inconvenienced? _____
- B. Recognize the inconvenience. _____
- C. What did you do to cause it? _____
- D. How will you fix it? _____
- E. What will you do next time? _____