

THE ACT GAME

ACT: ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION TRAINING

A Social Skills Training Program for Children Grades 3 - 6

MODULE 3: POSITIVE RESPONSES TO ONESELF AND OTHERS

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase giving positive responses to oneself.
2. Increase giving positive responses to others.
3. Reduce negative comparisons of others.
4. Increase recognition of emotions expressed in facial expressions.
5. Increase congruence between verbal and nonverbal characteristics.
6. Increase recognition of pleasant events.

RATIONALE

For generalization of social skills, self-reinforcement must occur. Self-reinforcement can sustain newly acquired behaviors when the world extinguishes or punishes the response, and can help the child initiate new social skills in new or unpracticed situations. A higher rate of self-reinforcement is also a first step in raising the child's self esteem, eliminating "crazy" thoughts or catastrophic thinking and increasing the probability of the child being attractive to others.

It is important to have a self-evaluative scale that is built upon an internally based criterion. Using externally based criterion results in non-productive competition. The child is set up for failure because there is always someone more successful, and the child automatically self-reinforces. Comparisons with other people lead to demoralization. On the other hand, giving compliments to other people reinforces a positive self-assessment.

Facial expressions are the most critical aspect of delivering positive responses to others. Congruence between verbal and nonverbal characteristics is important. Both recognizing the emotions conveyed by facial expressions and communicating emotions clearly through facial expressions are necessary skills for giving and receiving compliments.

In addition to detecting the positive characteristics in other people, it helps children to cope if they can identify the positive aspects of situations or list positive events. Recognition of positive events impacts self-esteem.

Session 1, Module 3: Saying Good Things About Myself

TEACH

Step 1: Introduce the Super Coach and the Trainer. Prepare students for the quick plays. Play it up like you are movie stars and act very posh.

Example: I am the Super Coach and this is the Trainer. We are so smart, and gorgeous, and cool, and beautiful. We are glad to be with you again. Don't we look just spectacular? Like movie stars? We are going to do two little plays for you. By the end of the day's session, we want you to be saying all kinds of good things about yourselves. These plays will start us off.

Step 2: Explain what the plays are about and what to look for in each one. The first play is called "Talking to Myself: The Coach." It is about a child who constantly thinks negative thoughts about himself/herself. In the second play about missing dinner, a child thinks positive thoughts and also compliments the father for the way he handles the problem of the late dinner.

Example: This first quick play is about asking a coach to play on a team. The young person will tell you what he/she is thinking. Listen carefully to what the person is telling himself/herself. He/she will turn toward you - the audience - and let you know what is going through his/her head. Your job is to tell the class what the boy/girl is thinking. So, what is your task?

Step 3: Act out the play. Make sure it is clear when doing an aside that you are telling the audience what is going through your head. Only the player makes asides.

TALKING TO MYSELF: THE COACH

PLAYER: Hey, Coach!

COACH: What do you want?

PLAYER: Are there any openings on your team? (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) That was a dumb thing to say. Why didn't I just ask the Coach if I could play on his team?

COACH: Have you played before?

PLAYER: A little. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I made it sound like I couldn't play ball. I was on a team for 2 years. I say the wrong thing all the time.

COACH: What position did you play?

PLAYER: Center field. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I should have asked him what position was open and then have said that I could play that. Another mistake.

COACH: Were you any good?

PLAYER: So-so. I mean pretty good. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I made it sound weak - like I didn't know if I was any good.

COACH: Come over to the field, and we will let you try out.

PLAYER: I'll be there. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) The Coach must not like me or the coach would have asked me to join the team without a try out. I can't do anything right.

COACH: Be there at three o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Could you play right field?

PLAYER: You bet. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) Well, talking to the Coach sure didn't go very well. I guess I'll never make the team.

THE END

Step 4: After the play, help the class recall what the player said to himself/herself and to characterize the player's self-thoughts. You are looking for negative self-thoughts. You want the class to get the message that how you talk to yourself about yourself makes a difference.

Example: Your job was to listen to what the player was thinking.
What did the player think?
What did the player say about himself/herself?
Were the thoughts positive - like compliments - or negative - like criticism?
Name one good thing the player said about himself/herself.
Name one bad thing.
What difference does it make if you think good or bad things about yourself?

Step 5: Indicate what the play about dinner deals with, and assign two tasks for the class. The play is about breaking a family rule and how the young person deals with his/her father. The young person tells you what he/she is thinking as the scene moves along. One half of the class is assigned to watch how he/she talks to himself/herself, and the other half is to observe what he/she says to the father. You are looking for the child's positive self-thoughts and his/her complimenting the father.

Example: The next play is about a child who broke a family rule. I want this half of the class to watch for how he/she talks to himself/herself as the scene goes on. The other half

of the class is to listen to what the child says to the father. Watch for what you like that the child does and what you would do differently.

Step 6: Act out the play. Make sure it is clear when talking to the audience that you are sharing what you think.

TALKING TO MYSELF: THE DINNER

- CHILD: My dad is mad at me because I came home late for dinner. The dishes and pots and pans were all stacked in the sink. The kitchen was dark. My dad wants to talk to me.
- FATHER: Get in here, pronto.
- CHILD: (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I'm kind of scared. I'll take a few deep breaths before going in. (TAKES THREE DEEP BREATHS.)
- FATHER: Are you coming?
- CHILD: I'm on my way. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I can do a good job talking to my dad. I'll just tell him the truth and tell him I am sorry.
- FATHER: What took you so long?
- CHILD: I was getting ready.
- FATHER: You should get punished. That's what you should get.
- CHILD: What for? (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I'm doing all right. I'm not nervous and I am looking him right in the eye.
- FATHER: For missing dinner. You know we have a rule here that everyone sits down at the same time for a family dinner. Being here every night for the family dinner is very important to your mother and me. Who do you think you are that you can break the rules?
- CHILD: I am very sorry. I didn't mean to break the dinner rule. We were playing down the block, and just lost track of the time. When I realized how late I was, I ran all the way home. (ASIDE TO CLASS) I am keeping my cool and telling him straight without lots of excuses.
- FATHER: It is your responsibility to watch the time.
- CHILD: Yes, Dad, I know that. I made a mistake. I didn't hear mother call me for dinner.

FATHER: Don't blame it on her. You have a watch. Look at it.

CHILD: I looked at it and saw how late I was. It won't happen again. I am very sorry. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I feel good about the way this is going. But I shouldn't have brought mother into it.

FATHER: Don't think I'm going to let you go that easily. For the next week you will clean up the kitchen and do the pots and pans and the dishes too.

CHILD: Some people in this family use a lot of pots and pans.

FATHER: That makes no difference. You will scrub them anyway. Next time you will think twice about being late.

CHILD: OK, Dad. I'll do what you say. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) This turned out better than I thought it would. I handled it pretty well.

FATHER: We can't make excuses for ourselves. No one is responsible but us.

CHILD: Thanks, Dad, for being pretty fair about this whole thing. I'm glad you didn't jump all over me. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) When someone does something good, I like to let him/her know that I appreciate it.

FATHER: Next time, don't be a knuckle-head.

CHILD: I won't. (SOFTLY) You know where I get it from. Ha, ha ha. I was just joking, Dad. (ASIDE TO THE CLASS) I did really good in this situation.

THE END

Example: Half of the class paid attention to what the child said to himself/herself, and the other half watched what the child said to the father.

What did you hear and see?

Give me an example of a positive statement the child said to himself/herself.

Did the child give the father a compliment? What did he/she say?

Did it make a difference thinking positive thoughts?

Why is it good to let other people know that you like something about them? (They feel good about themselves, and they continue to do what you appreciated.)

Step 7: Help the class recognize a self-reward and giving of a compliment. The plays and discussion provided a background for actually giving positive messages. Ask for examples of a positive self-statement. Ask for examples of compliments. Ask why giving yourself positive statements is better than giving yourself negative ones. Ask why compliments are good to give.

PRACTICE

Step 8: Have the class compliment each other and themselves. Encourage practicing giving compliments to yourself and others. Help out a student who cannot think of anything about themselves or others. For example, “What about your eyes?” “You are always helping out around the classroom.”

Example: Let’s sit in a circle. Now I want you one at a time to first tell us one thing you like about yourself. Say something nice about yourself. Then give a compliment to the person sitting next to you on your right. For example a student might say, “I like my sense of humor, and I like that you don’t criticize other people.” Go ahead and get started.

Step 9: Divide the class into small groups (6 to 10), and appoint actors and directors in each small group. Give the teams a situation to work on with the task being to identify as many self-complimentary statements a person could make to oneself. This step is designed to give the students some practice in making up self-compliments. They work as a total team. There should be an equal number of actors and directors in each small group. The actors will practice the skill being learned - in this case giving oneself compliments. The directors will start the practice, using a role-play, and they will signal when to stop the practice. The directors will elicit self-evaluation from the actors and give them feedback. The groups will change roles, so that everyone has a chance to practice. Use tokens throughout.

Example: First, I will divide the class into small teams of from 6 to 10 people. Then within each team, there will be an equal number of actors and directors. I will tell you which role you play. After a while, you will switch, and the actors will become directors. The directors will become actors.

Here is a situation for you to work on. Your task is to think of as many self-compliments that person could make. Tell me again. What is the team’s goal? That’s it! To think of many self-compliments. The situation is as follows: You had a spelling test in class. You studied very hard for this test. You and your friend helped each other go over the words. You did very well on the test.

After the students work in teams, have the teams share some of the compliments they thought of with other teams. (Have the whole class share briefly, then proceed to the ACT Game.)

THE GAME

Step 10: Give the teams the situation for playing the game, assign parts to the actors, and give tasks to the directors. Basically, this step sets up for the game. Actors and directors should be clear on what they do and on what the situation is all about. The purpose of the

game is to increase skills through both practicing giving self-compliments and through giving feedback. The Super Coach needs to assign actor parts and director tasks. The Super Coach provides the situation to work on. Practice and feedback are key elements in skill development. You want students to know what a self-compliment is, be able to say one, be able to make them as a situation is progressing, and know how to evaluate one's own performance. It is desirable for everyone on the team to have a chance to be the actor playing the inner self. Use tokens.

Example: Now we are going to play the game. Here is the situation: A new kid just moved into your neighborhood. You want to get to know him/her. You are trying to find out what this new kid likes to do. After the role-play, think about what positive things you could say to yourself about how you did. Compliment yourself by saying I liked how I... (Example: "I went up and said hello with a nice smile.")

One of the directors will tell the actors when to start and finish. Each director will have one behavior to observe. Those behaviors are posture (straight, slumped over, leaning toward the speaker), gestures (large, small, threatening, withdrawing), voice level (soft, loud), voice tone (pleasant, whining), and eye contact (direct, away).

When the role-play is over, the directors will give feedback to the actors. Feedback starts with asking the actors playing the inner self what one thing was liked and what one thing would be done differently. Role-plays will last 2-5 minutes with 3 minutes for feedback. We will try to give as many actors as possible a chance, and after a while, the actors and directors will switch roles.

Step 11: Have the students in each team switch roles when the actors have all had a turn.

If time is short, switch before everyone has had a chance. Practice is essential. If some actors do not have a chance to try their hand at the skills, make note and assign them roles in the next session.

Example: Now it is time for everyone to switch roles. Actors will become directors, and directors will become actors. Everyone needs to have a chance to practice giving oneself compliments in the different situations.

New Situations

- Your mother is sick, and you have been helping out a lot. She appreciates it. You say to yourself...
- Some kids wanted you to try a cigarette and you refused. Your inner self said...
- You are working in a group project and not all the group members are doing their part on it. You end up carrying the load. You say to yourself...
- You have a spelling test tomorrow and cannot find the list of words. You call and get

the words from a friend over the phone. What do you say to yourself?

- A new girl just entered your class and everybody is ignoring her. You go up and say hello. You say to yourself...
- Your best friend wants you to let him/her see your answers on a test in math. Your friend believes that without the answers he/she will fail the test. You say no and your friend is upset with you. You say to yourself...
- Your good friend isn't talking to you and you don't know why. You start feel badly but then you say to yourself...

REVIEW AND CLOSING

Step 12: End with group affirmations. Reinforce approximations. For example, if a child could only think of one self-compliment, praise that response and ask the student to do homework of one compliment for school, one for home, and one for friends. Be careful not to leave out a child. Also continue reinforcing with tokens.

Example: Now it is time to end the session. Everyone did a great job in learning how to compliment himself/herself. If you could not think of many self-compliments, try listing one for each place you are during the week - one for friends, one for school, one for home, one for sports, and so on. Or you could think of five good words that describe you.

Let's end the session by going around the room. Complete this sentence: "One thing I do well in is..." and then say one thing nice about the person sitting on your right. We will see you again at the next session.

END OF SESSION 1, MODULE 3

FOOL: Long live the King. Long live the King! Long live the King!

KING: Into the closet with him.

FOOL: I've learned my lesson from a wonderful King. Whatever I say will be a nice thing.

KING: Compliments are the right thing to do. People will love them and love you too. I am the King and I know how to rule, but I don't need a stupid fool.

FOOL: A fool is a fool is a fool is a fool. Don't be a fool and badmouth others. Someone will hear you and send out their brothers.

KING: You never know who is asleep or awake.

FOOL: So don't fool around and big chances take.

KING AND FOOL TOGETHER: Give a compliment every day and it will keep bad thoughts away.

THE END

Step 3: Use the play to discuss the motivation for giving compliments. Explore the students' reactions to the characters in the play and what went on between them. Why is it a good idea to give compliments? Have ideas about the value of compliments: (1) makes people feel good about themselves; (2) makes people feel good about you; (3) makes people believe that you are interested in them; (4) keeps you connected to other people; (5) requires paying close attention to other people.

Example: What message did you get from the play?
Which part would you want to play, the King or the Fool?
What you just saw in the play was how not to do it. The Fool did nothing but put the King down and call him names.
Did the Fool do that because he was the little guy and it made him feel big to call the King names? Did it give him power? Maybe not because we laughed at the Fool. Why was he funny?
What are some good reasons for giving compliments to other people? What do you get out of complimenting others?

PRACTICE

Step 4: Have students work on how to give compliments to others by completing

incomplete sentences related to other people. Many people have little experience giving compliments. Using “friendly stems” may be a way to provide inspiration, structure, and a model for giving compliments. The point is to create spontaneous responses and not to analyze why a student responded as he/she did. Each student will be asked to complete a sentence that has been read to him/her.

Example: We want you to practice thinking up compliments. Sometimes people need a little help in getting started. Therefore, we will give you the first part of a sentence and you will complete the sentence. For example, if the sentence began with, “One thing I like about my older brother is...” I might end the sentence with, “He always takes the time to explain things to me.” Each person will receive a sentence that needs completing. Tell me what your task is-- to complete the sentence with something positive. We will read the sentence to you. Here we go with the first sentence.

1. One thing I like about my friends is...
2. I like how my teacher ...
3. Helping others is...
4. My best friend can be counted on to...
5. I can help other people most by...
6. I like how my parents ...
7. When someone is nice to me, I...
8. A person I learn a lot from is...
9. One thing I could teach someone else is...
10. I like being with people when...
11. I like being with people who...
12. The kind of people I like to talk with are...
13. The thing that makes for a good friend is...
14. Other people make me feel...
15. I like my family because...
16. I value most ...
17. Older people are...
18. Younger people are ...

Step 5: Divide the class into small groups (6 to 10), and in each small group appoint actors and directors. Give the teams a situation to work on with the task being to identify as many complimentary statements a person could give others. There should be an equal number of actors and directors in each small group. This lesson will give the students some practice in coming up with compliments. They work as a total team. After a bit of practice, the teams give feedback. Use tokens. The groups will change roles, so that everyone has a chance to practice. Use tokens throughout.

Example: Get into your teams. Here is a situation for you to work on. Your task is to think of as many compliments that a person could make. Tell me again. What is the team’s goal? That’s it! To think of many compliments for others.

The situation is as follows: The teacher brought in cookies for the class. She asked you to pass them out because everyone had made so much improvement. What kinds of improvement could any child have made: in behavior, attitude, work, etc.? Think of all kinds of compliments.

THE GAME

Step 6: Give the teams the situation for playing the game, assign parts to the actors, and give tasks to the directors. Basically, this step sets up for the game. Actors and directors should be clear on what they do and on what the situation is all about. The purpose of the game is to increase skills through both practicing giving compliments and giving feedback. The Super Coach needs to assign actor parts and director tasks. The Super Coach provides the situation to work on. Switch roles and give new situations as time permits.

Example: Now we are going to play the game. Here is the situation: You care a lot about the environment. You and your friends see a child in your neighborhood who doesn't have many friends, pick up some trash from the gutter and put it into a garbage bag. In fact, he/she is cleaning up the street. You want to help him/her out. Practice giving a compliment about him/her to your friends and then go over to the child and give him/her a compliment.

Roles: you, a couple of friends, the lonely kid cleaning up the street.

One of the directors will tell the actors when to start and finish. Each director will have one behavior to observe. Those behaviors are posture (straight, slumped over, leaning toward the speaker), gestures (large, small, threatening, withdrawing), voice level (soft, loud), voice tone (pleasant, whining), and eye contact (direct, away).

When the role-play is over, the directors will ask the actors what they liked and what they would do differently. Then the directors will tell what one thing they liked and one thing the actors could do differently. Role-plays will last 2-5 minutes with 3 minutes for feedback.

We will try to give as many actors as possible a chance, and after a while, the actors and directors will switch roles.

Step 7: Switch actors and directors and give new situations. Let new actors try to solve other problems. After a while switch roles so that the actors become directors, and the directors become actors. Stay actively involved as Super Coach, shaping the roles of actors, directors, and giving feedback.

New Situations for Switching Roles

After reading the situation, decide which character should compliment which other

character. Then role-play.

- The teacher read to the class your friend's essay on the history of the railroads. It was an example of good work. (Parts: primary actor, friend, teacher, other students.)
- At a party, you notice that a girl you like is really dressed nicely. (Parts: primary actor, girl, other party-goers.)
- Your mother often serves leftovers night after night. Tonight she cooked something totally different and it was really good. (Parts: primary actor, mother, father, brother, sister, older aunt.)

REVIEW AND CLOSING

Step 8: End with group affirmations. Reinforce approximations. For example, if a child could only think of one compliment, praise that response and ask the student to do homework of complimenting two people next week. Be careful not to leave out a child. Also continue reinforcing with tokens. Have the group compliment each other.

Example: Now it is time to end the session. Everyone did a great job in learning how to compliment other people. This week, compliment someone each day. Think about your compliment before you say it. Is it specific? Is it positive? Also, compliment yourself.

Let's end the session by going around the room. Say one thing nice about the person sitting on your right. We will see you again at the next session.

END OF SESSION 2, MODULE 3

Session 3, Module 3: What a Face Tells Me

TEACH (Materials required: photographs or magazine pictures of people with a variety of facial expressions.)

Step 1: Introduce the Super Coach and the Trainer, and indicate that the session is about faces. The Super Coach and Trainer should come to class dressed as a King and his Daughter. Highlight some facial feature such as the nose, eyes, lips, or cheeks. Explain to the class that the session is going to be about what a face tells us. Call attention to each other's faces by pinching each other's cheeks and making silly comments about faces.

Example: Hello! Don't we have beautiful faces, happy faces? You can tell a lot about what a person is feeling by watching the expressions on his/her face. I am the Super Coach and this is the Trainer. Later I will play the part of the King and the Trainer will play the King's daughter. Isn't the Trainer's face cute? (Pinch the Trainer's cheeks.) Doesn't the King look annoyed? (Tweak the King's nose.) If someone said he really liked you, but his face looked like he was smelling something stinky, would you believe him? Happy faces, sad faces, scared faces, angry faces, peaceful faces, loving faces, guilty faces, disgusted faces. That's what today's lesson is all about.

Step 2: Have the students describe a compliment they gave to themselves during the past week and one they gave to someone else. It is important to build on the previous sessions regarding complimenting oneself and others. Each lesson from now on will begin with compliments. As noted before, a child is greatly handicapped if he/she is unable to praise his/her own behavior and do it routinely. Teachers should try to find opportunities to reinforce self-compliments and compliments to others whenever they can. "What did you say to yourself when the teacher said you got an 'A' on your paper?" "Billy just helped you out. What compliment could you give him?"

Example: Before we do the play, we want to work on giving compliments. We are going to provide everyone with a chance to tell us about a compliment that you gave to yourself last week and one compliment you gave to someone else last week. Take a minute to think about them. OK, let's go around the room and hear your examples.

Step 3: Do the play. Set the play up by describing it and indicating that the audience must listen carefully because they will be asked to help out. The Super Coach plays two roles - the King and Mr. Reel. Mr. Reel can be a hand puppet or a face painted on the hand. The trainer plays the part of the King's daughter. You will need some pictures of faces with different expressions. Or ask a student to model the faces when asked for them in the play. You will also need a mirror.

Example: In this play, the Super Coach plays the parts of the King and Mr. Reel. The trainer plays the part of the King's daughter. The play is about what faces show and how faces and words maybe completely different. Pay close attention to the King's daughter's

problem because we will need your suggestions. Now we begin.

THE FACE ON THE WALL

KING: I have a terrible problem. My daughter is beautiful, and smart, and talented, and kind. But she communicates all the wrong emotions. No one can understand what she means. No one wants to be around her. She is terribly lonely and unhappy. You will see. I'll ask her to come here. Come here, daughter.

DAUGHTER: Yes, father. What is it?

KING: Recently, I gave you a fantastic ruby ring. How do you feel about receiving that gift?

DAUGHTER: (WITH AN ANGRY VOICE AND AN ANGRY FACE) Oh, thank you so much, father. I really love it.

KING: So, is she happy or is she angry? I don't know what to make of it. Daughter, I have been told that the most handsome and clever man in the kingdom wants to marry you. How do you feel about that?

DAUGHTER: (CRYING HER EYES OUT) Happy, father. Very happy.

KING: Your mother - the Queen - is very sick and lies in bed all day. What do you feel about that?

DAUGHTER: Very sad. (LAUGHS HILARIOUSLY AND SKIPS AROUND THE ROOM.) I hope the Queen is well soon.

KING: You have had your dog, Pluto, for 18 years. He is old and can barely move around. Don't you feel sorry for him?

DAUGHTER: Oh, yes, father. I love that adorable old dog. (SHOWING NO CARING.) Pluto is a smelly old creature that lies around in all the wrong places and needs a kick or two.

KING: She is getting worse. I just don't know what to do. (TURNS TO THE AUDIENCE AND ASKS THEM) Have you any bright ideas? (ENCOURAGE IDEAS FROM THE AUDIENCE. RESPOND. GIVE RESPONSES SUCH AS "THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, "I'VE TRIED THAT," OR "MAYBE WE CAN TRY THAT SUGGESTION.") If only someone could cure her. I have asked anyone in the kingdom to try. No one has succeeded. But there is one last fellow who wants to give it a shot. His name is Mr. Reel.

DAUGHTER: Father, I am tired of all these people messing with me. I am not sick. I think there is a broken connection between my emotions and my brain. Maybe what I need is to have someone write a new program for that brain called a computer. What does Mr. Reel have to offer?

(MR. REEL IS PLAYED BY THE KING WITH EITHER A HAND PUPPET OR A FACE PAINTED ON HIS HAND.)

KING: He said he could give you a funny face. But let's not talk about him because here he comes. Hello, Mr. Reel. This is my daughter.

DAUGHTER: I am pleased to see you, Mr. Reel. But what you can do for me? Can you write me a new program for my computer brain?

MR. REEL: I am not a genius or a magician or a computer expert. But let's get down to business. I will show you a photograph of a face showing an emotion. You tell me what the person in the photograph must be feeling. What emotion do you see? (TAKES OUT A PHOTOGRAPH OF AN ANGRY FACE. Or: you could have a volunteer student come up and model the kinds of faces required.) What is it?

KING: That's easy.

DAUGHTER: Don't help me, father. I don't remember ever seeing such a face. My guess is that the person is lopsided.

MR. REEL: No. What is the emotion? Being lopsided is not an emotion.

DAUGHTER: Maybe it is happiness.

MR. REEL: Take a look at this one. (SHOWS HER A PICTURE OF A SAD FACE.) Is it a picture of sadness, excitement, or hunger?

DAUGHTER: I never saw that face before either. I guess the person must be excited.

MR. REEL: We will try one more. (SHOWS HER A HAPPY FACE.)

DAUGHTER: Oh, that's gross! What a horrible looking face.

MR. REEL: Who is this? (SHOWS HER A PICTURE OF HER FACE – can use a mirror.)

DAUGHTER: I don't recognize her. Not bad looking. Seems vaguely familiar. Who is she?

MR. REEL: A surprise.

DAUGHTER: I like surprises.

MR. REEL: It is obvious that she has a learning disorder. Her learning is in the wrong order. I will teach her to match the feeling to the photograph. At the same time, King, I need your help.

KING: Whatever you want, I will be more than happy to give you. Just tell me.

MR. REEL: Every room must have a mirror in it. This young lady acts like she has never seen a face with emotion, and she doesn't even recognize her own face. (SHOWS THE DAUGHTER HER OWN FACE. IN THE MIRROR.) Whenever you see this face, I want you to say "beautiful." Now say it.

DAUGHTER: Beautiful. Mr. Reel, do you think I am beautiful?

MR. REEL: Very.

KING: She was so beautiful that I never let her see a mirror or herself in a mirror. I didn't want her to become conceited.

MR. REEL: There is one more photograph I want you to see and identify the emotion. (GIVES HER A PHOTOGRAPH OF A PERSON IN LOVE.)

DAUGHTER: It is love, Mr. Reel. I can recognize the face and the feeling.

MR. REEL: (GIVES HER A LITTLE KISS AND TAKES HER HAND.) See! We are making progress already.

THE END

Step 4: Ask the class questions about the play. Many youngsters do not know how to understand what message a face is conveying. Facial expressions are the most critical aspect of delivering positive responses to others. The play is an introduction to exposing children to faces. One outcome is that students pay more attention to other people's faces.

Example: Now that you have seen the play, I want to ask you a few questions.

1. What would you have done if you were the King, the Daughter, or Mr. Reel?
2. Do you know anyone whose face says one thing and who says they feel something different?

1. Do you know someone whose face you can't read? The Daughter couldn't read faces.
2. Do you think that faces tell us what a person is feeling?

To read faces you need to pay attention. You need to be a good observer. The next time you watch television, pick out a character to study. Watch the facial expressions. Try to figure out what the face is saying.

PRACTICE

Step 5: Divide the class into small groups (6 to 10), and in each small group appoint actors and directors. Give the teams a task to work on. Students are to identify emotions expressed in photographs of people's faces. This step is designed to give the students some practice in recognizing emotions. They work as a total team. After a bit of practice, the teams will play the game with actors and directors showing how to perform a skill and receiving feedback. Use tokens. The actors will practice the skill being learned - in this case, recognizing facial expressions. The directors will start the practice, using a role-play, and they will signal when to stop the practice. The directors will elicit self-evaluation from the actors and give them feedback. The groups will change roles, so that everyone has a chance to practice. Use tokens throughout. **You will need photographs or magazine pictures of various facial expressions.**

Example: First, I will divide the class into small teams of from 6 to 10 people. On this task, you will work together as a team. We will assign actors and directors for the game.

You are to take a photograph one at a time and see if the team can read the emotion expressed on the person's face. Also discuss what facial features made the face communicate a certain emotion. Tell me again. What is the team's goal? That's it! To identify facial expressions correctly.

Step 6: Introduce the play on social comparisons. This play points out the dangers of social comparisons. Building one's self-worth on being better than others is dangerous. There is always someone better and someone who can defeat you in competition.

Example: We are going to see a brief play. It is about what happens when you build your self worth on comparisons to others. There are two characters. One is called "Other" and the second person is called "Me." (Indicate who will play each role.) The play is called "There Is Always Someone."

THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE

OTHER: What do you really like about yourself?

ME: I am smart, tall, good looking, creative, and kind.

OTHER: Are you as smart as Einstein?

ME: No.

OTHER: I guess there is always someone smarter.

ME: Yes, I guess so.

OTHER: Are you as tall as professional basketball players?

ME: No.

OTHER: I guess there is always someone taller.

ME: Yes, I guess so.

OTHER: Are you as good looking as a movie star?

ME: No, I guess there is always someone better looking.

OTHER: Are you as creative as Picasso or Shakespeare?

ME: No, I guess there is always someone more creative.

OTHER: Are you as kind as Mother Teresa?

ME: No, I guess there is always someone kinder.

OTHER: When you see someone with one leg begging on the street corner, what do you say to yourself?

ME: Well, I am better off than he is.

OTHER: What happens if someone beats you at a game?

ME: I can't wait to smash them next time.

OTHER: It sounds like you compare yourself to other people all the time.

ME: Yes, but there is always someone better.

OTHER: You can't win.

ME: That's right. It is very frustrating.

OTHER: Well, I like you just as you are.

ME: Thanks, Mom.

THE END

Step 7: Ask for responses to the play and explain the play's message. It is very important that children learn that they are of value just as they are. They don't need to prove themselves by making comparisons to others. Exposing children's beliefs about self-worth and social comparisons can lead to a sounder base for self-esteem.

Example: What point did you get out of this play? Were you surprised by the ending? Are you less good of a person if someone is smarter than you or a better athlete than you? What do you think makes a person good or worthwhile?

THE GAME

Step 8: Give the teams the situation for playing the game, assign parts to the actors, and give tasks to the directors. Basically, this step sets up for the game. Actors and directors should be clear on what they do and on what the situation is all about. The purpose of the game is to increase skills through both practicing giving compliments and giving feedback. The Super Coach needs to assign actor parts and director tasks. The Super Coach provides the situation to work on.

Example: Now we are going to play the game. Here is the situation. Henry and Gonzo keep calling you "Shorty" even though they know you don't like it. Many of your classmates are taller than you. You know you will grow, but you don't like them calling you Shorty. What can you do? As a team, think of at least 4 alternatives or choices of what to do. Pick one to role-play and see what happens. Remember to use positive inner-talk. Compliment yourself.

One of the directors will tell the actors when to start and finish. Each director will have one behavior to observe. Those behaviors are posture (straight, slumped over, leaning toward the speaker), gestures (large, small, threatening, withdrawing), voice level (soft, loud), voice tone (pleasant, whining), and eye contact (direct, away).

When the role-play is over, the directors will give feedback to the actor. Feedback starts with asking you what one thing you liked and what one thing you would do differently. Role-plays will last 2-5 minutes with 3 minutes for feedback. We will try to give as many actors as possible a chance, and after a while, the actors and directors will switch roles.

Step 9: Do the role-play and give feedback to the actor. Substitute new situations as needed. Practice and feedback are key elements in skill development. You want students to identify feelings on people's faces and decrease developing self esteem based on social comparisons. Use tokens.

Example: The directors should start the actors going in the role-play. After 2-5 minutes, the director stops the scene and gives feedback to the actor. First, the each director asks the actors what they liked in their performance and what they would do differently next time. Then the directors comment on the goal, and what they observed in the area they focused on, and finally give general comments on the role-play. Go ahead and begin the role-plays, providing feedback after each one.

New Situations (Place situations in a bowl or bag. Randomly select one from the bowl for teams to role-play or choose a problem appropriate for your students.)

- Your mother tells you do one thing and your grandmother tells you to do something else. When would it be a good time to talk with your mom or your grandmother? Or, should you just do what you want? What is your goal? (Possible parts to play: you, mother, grandmother, brother and sister.)
- Your parents are angry with you and you don't know why. (Possible parts: you, mother, father, sibling.)
- The teacher won't let you sit next to your friend because you used to talk too much and not get your work done. You think you are ready for a chance to try again. (Parts: you, friend, teacher, other kids in class.)

Step 10: Have the students in each team switch roles when the actors have all had a turn. If time is short, switch before everyone has had a chance. Practice is essential. If some actors do not have a chance to try their hand at the skills, make note and assign them roles in the next session. The new parts grow out of the situation described.

REVIEW AND CLOSING

Step 11: End with group affirmations. Reinforce approximations. For example, if a child could only get one face/feeling right, praise that response and ask the student to review faces with a friend during the week. Be careful not to leave out a child. Also continue reinforcing with tokens. Have the group compliment each other.

Example: Now it is time to end the session. Everyone did a great job in learning how to read faces. You also practiced solving problems in role-plays that involved recognizing what is good about you. Right now, think of something you are good at. Pat yourself on the back. Five pats: ready, one, two, three, four, five.

Great, during our next session, we will spend some more time learning about faces. This week, watch people's faces. See if you see some expressions that surprise you.

END OF SESSION 3, MODULE 3

Session 4, Module 3: Compliments and Faces

TEACH

Step 1: Introduce the Super Coach, the Trainer, and the day's focus. If possible, the Super Coach and Trainer should come dressed in funny old clothes, like tramps would, with something to highlight their faces because the session will work on understanding faces again. At the beginning, they should horse around, complimenting their old, worn, baggy clothes. Remember to give tokens throughout. Whenever there is an opportunity to model an emotional face, the leaders should do so. (If old clothes are not available, adapt the opening. Compliment something about each other.)

Example: I am the Super Coach with raggedy old clothes, and next to me is the Trainer with terrible clothes. Actually, the Trainer looks quite good. I love the cut of his/her baggy trousers. He/she is telling me that I have been displaying the latest style. We are going to work some more on reading the emotions in faces and we want to practice giving compliments.

Step 2: Have the students give themselves a compliment and give one to another person. Both kinds of compliments are critical for developing social competence and will be practiced frequently. Use tokens. Catch a student doing something good.

Example: Let's go around the room. First, tell us what makes you happy. Second, give a compliment to the person sitting on your right. Find something nice to say about your self and the person next to you.

Step 3: Introduce the play, the characters, and the content. This play is designed to have fun and to create some interest in the topic of giving compliments. The intent in this session is to give time to practice giving compliments. The play also models giving compliments.
Exaggerate facial expressions in the play.

Example: This play is called "What a Nice Dinner." I will play Ed and the Trainer will play Fred. The play is about the dinner Ed made and the ingredients he used. Afterwards we will ask you: What are some of the compliments that Fred gave to Ed?

WHAT A NICE DINNER

FRED: Ed, that certainly was a nice dinner you fixed. The table looked elegant, and the guests seemed to love it. You served it in style.

ED: Thank you, Fred. That's good to hear.

FRED: Ed, can I ask you a question?

ED: Fred, you can ask me three questions.

FRED: One will do for a starter.

ED: What is it you want to know?

FRED: In the sauce, which was excellent, there were these chewy black things about the size of a small prune. They were kind of fleshy. If you don't mind my asking, what were they?

ED: Fred, they were snails.

FRED: Snails!

ED: Yes, from France. Called escargot.

FRED: I ate snails?

ED: Yes, indeedly, you ate snails. You even had seconds.

FRED: On top of the green beans was this crispy stuff like fried onions, but much smaller. I know it wasn't fried onion rings. What was it?

ED: You were right on the fried part. They were fried ants from South America

FRED: Fried ants?

ED: That's right.

FRED: I ate fried ants?

ED: You certainly did.

FRED: A couple more questions.

ED: You already used up your one question.

FRED: I'm dying to know, and if I find out I'll be dying for sure.

ED: If the dinner had been alive, it might have killed you, but not when it was dead.

FRED: The meat tasted like chicken, but it seemed to come in this nice, round shape. I was just wondering what it was. It was nicely cooked, tender, pleasantly spiced. What was it?

ED: Rattlesnake. It makes a wonderful change. From Texas.

FRED: It is a wonder that I am not deathly sick.

ED: Would I do that to you?

FRED: Let me just get it out. The dessert was superb. There was a little tartness to it, almost as if there was a slightly sour taste, but so good. Something like cheesecake.

ED: Cottage cheese from Holland.

FRED: You know I hate cottage cheese.

ED: I didn't think you would notice. How was I to know you were going to come here and play food detective?

FRED: Ed, I have one more comment. I hated your dinner!

ED: Thank you, Fred.

THE END

Step 4: Point out some areas that a person could compliment. Such areas might include what a person did, what a person said, how a person looks, how a person feels, what a person creates, and what a person thinks. Use the play to illustrate an area. Ask who the students would want to be: Fred or Ed. Fred gave compliments on the dinner even though he found out he didn't like the idea of eating certain foods.

Example: Fred gave compliments on how the dinner tasted even though he did not like the thought of eating snails, fried ants, rattlesnake, cottage cheese. Who would you want to be - Fred or Ed? What are some of the compliments that Fred gave? Some times it is hard to think of areas where you can give compliments. Look for a chance to give compliments regarding what a person says, does, thinks, feels, believes, creates, wears, and looks.

PRACTICE

Step 5: Have the students make up compliments to your descriptions. This step is designed to help students create compliments for specific areas.

Example: A compliment is best if it is specific. Which tells you more about what I want to compliment? "The picture is nice" or "The picture has beautiful colors. I feel

happy looking at it.”

Now I want to practice giving compliments. I will tell you something and you come up with a specific compliment that fits. Here we go:

1. The teacher asked a hard question and Rebecca answered it.
2. A friend is wearing a nice new outfit today.
3. I smell breakfast cooking when I wake up.
4. My sister gives her allowance to the food drive at Thanksgiving.
5. Miguel worked really hard on our group project.
6. The other day I was in the right mood, and wrote three poems.
7. I look in the mirror and see that my teeth are a little crooked, but I look pretty good overall.

Step 6: Divide the class into small groups (6 to 10). Give the teams two tasks to work on. First, pantomime different feelings. Students will work together in their teams for this task. To encourage accurate assessment of feelings shown on other’s faces, give out cards with a feeling written on it. Each student receives a card and does not reveal the emotion. Then have each student pantomime the emotion on the card. See if other students can guess what the feeling is. The cards to be given out are: anger, happiness, sadness, fear, love, relief, annoyance, terror, surprise, and pain.

Example: Get into your teams. You will each receive a card. The card will have an emotion written on it. Do not show others your card. We will go around the teams and each student will act out the emotion. Other students will try to guess the emotion. Here are your cards. Take a minute to think how your face and body will look to show the feeling on your card.

Step 7: Give the teams a second task to work on. Students practice giving compliments in pairs. This step is designed to give the students more practice in giving compliments face to face. Have the team split up into pairs. In pairs, students take turns in giving compliments to each other. They can pretend to be different characters and give compliments. They practice being specific. After a bit of practice, the teams will play the game, with actors and directors showing how to perform a skill and receive feedback. Use tokens.

Example: Here is a task for you to work on. First, get into pairs. Now each person take a turn in giving a compliment to your partner. I want you to feel comfortable giving a compliment face to face. You can give compliments over the phone, by letter, or e-mail, on tape, and through someone else. But here we want the most direct approach. Tell me again. What is the team’s goal? That’s it! To improve your skills in giving compliments to others in a face-to-face setting. First, give a compliment to the real person. Then you can pretend to be storybook characters and give compliments to the character. Remember, the compliment should be specific.

THE GAME

Step 8: Assign actors and give tasks to the directors. Basically, this step sets up for the game. Actors and directors should be clear on what they do and on what the situation is all about. The purpose of the game is to increase skills through practicing being assertive, giving compliments, and giving and receiving feedback. The Super Coach needs to assign actor parts and director tasks. The Super Coach provides the situation to work on.

Example: Now we are going to play the game. Here is the situation: You and your friends are wandering through the stores in a mall. You are drinking Coke and eating popcorn. In one store, the manager walks toward you angrily. He very firmly says, “Get out, get out. No food! Can’t you read!” His face is red. He looks pretty angry. For the actors, the parts are first you, your friends, the store manager, and another customer.

Think about how you feel when someone is angry with you. What is your first reaction? What is your Feeling Thermometer? Calm yourself down. Take a breath. What could you say to the store manager to let him know you are sorry? Or should you just run out? What are the alternatives of things you could do? Discuss in your group before you decide on a goal.

Choose a goal to act out. Make sure you develop a big list of alternative actions you could take. Then try the role-play using a couple of different alternatives.

One of the directors will tell the actors when to start and finish.

Each director will have one behavior to observe. Those behaviors are posture (straight, slumped over, leaning toward the speaker), gestures (large, small, threatening, withdrawing), voice level (soft, loud), voice tone (pleasant, whining), and eye contact (direct, away).

When the role-play is over, the directors will give feedback to the actors. Feedback starts with asking you what one thing you liked and what one thing you would do differently. First, the directors ask the actors what they liked about their performance and what they would do differently next time.

Then the directors comment on the goal, and what they observed in the area they focused on, and finally give general comments on the role-play. Role-plays will last 2-5 minutes with 3 minutes for feedback. We will try to give as many actors as possible a chance, and after a while, the actors and directors will switch roles. Begin.

Step 9: Have the students in each team switch roles when the actors have all had a turn. If time is short, switch before everyone has had a chance. Practice is essential. If some actors do not have a chance to try their hand at the skills, make note and assign them roles in the next session. The new parts grow out of the situation described.

Example: Now it is time for everyone to switch roles. Actors will become directors, and directors will become actors. Everyone needs to have a chance to practice giving others compliments.

New Situations

- You drop and break one of your mother's favorite glasses. She looks upset. (Possible parts: you, mother, father, sister, brother.)
- A substitute teacher calls you by the wrong name. (Possible parts: you, teacher, classmates.)
- A woman drops her purse in a store. Money goes all over. You go to help. She acts like you are stealing from her. (Possible parts: you, woman, cashier, clerk, customers.)

REVIEW AND CLOSING

Step 10: End with group affirmations. Reinforce approximations. For example, if a student was not sufficiently assertive, one could still praise those behaviors that had some assertive qualities in them, such as straight posture while ignoring the soft mumbling voice. Be careful not to leave out a child. Catch a student doing something right. Also continue reinforcing with tokens. Have the group compliment each other.

Example: Now it is time to end the session. Everyone did a great job in learning how to compliment other people. Be aware of how your face shows feelings. Count up the number of times per week that you give others a compliment.

Has anyone used what they have learned in the class in the last week? Tell us about what happened.

Let's all compliment another group member.

In the next session, we will talk about friendship.

END OF SESSION 4, MODULE 3