

Open-Ended Role Play

Grade Level: High School

Skill: Self-Management

Concepts: Anger Management

Anger Management Strategies

1. **The Warning Light**

When you feel yourself start to get angry and have the feeling that you are losing control and wanting to lash back at someone, imagine a warning light going off inside your brain. This is a cue to slow down and think. You may have to leave the situation for a while to gain control. The worst thing to do is to respond with insults and threats in an aggressive manner.

2. **Counting to Ten**

Practice counting to 10 silently to yourself while the other person is venting. It is hard to get mad and count at the same time.

3. **Self-Statements**

Keep telling yourself to stay calm and in control. Think of some other words you could use to keep control and use those whenever you get into a situation that could get you angry.

4. **Reframing**

Think about the situation and reframe it in your mind. For example, if someone is yelling at you and creating conflict, tell yourself things like "They must have some other issues going on." "That is not how they really feel-they are having a bad day."

Teaching Tips for Open-Ended Role Play:

1. After teaching the strategies, have two students come to the front of the room and perform the 1st part of the role play. This explains the scenario and gets the situation started.
2. Then use the "freeze" technique when one of the characters is faced with responding to an anger situation.
3. Discuss with the whole class which strategy may be the best to use and model/practice what it would look like.
4. Next, have the class get into partners and practice using that strategy.
5. After a few minutes, process the results of using the strategy and then try a different strategy for the same situation.
6. Continue with using different strategies and/or different scenarios.



Open-Ended Role Play Script Example

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Scenario: *Alex and Sean are on the basketball team. They are in the playoffs and there are 2 seconds left on the clock. The team is down by 2 points and Alex is shooting free throws. He misses both of them and they lose the game. Sean unloads on Alex in the locker room.*

Sean: Man, Alex, how could you have missed those shots?

Alex: I don't know. I can't believe it. I am sorry, Sean.

Sean: Are you kidding me? You are just sorry? You lost that game for us.

Alex: What a minute. I know I missed those free throws, but I didn't lose the game.

Sean: It was the whole game. You were a ball hog and you just kept shooting three's when I was open. I can't believe it. I am glad this season is done so I don't have to play with you anymore.

Alex: FREEZE. *(Process with the group)*

Alex is already mad at himself. What did Sean say that started to escalate Alex's anger?

Which technique should Alex use to calm down his anger?

Alex uses one of the anger management techniques. Use the technique and think out loud while using it.

UNFREEZE

Sean: *(Sean continues to give Alex a rough time.)*

Alex: *(Alex uses the anger management skill.)*

Sean: I still can't believe you lost it for us. Are you listening to me?

Alex: Yeah, sorry you feel that way. I'll see you later.

Open-Ended Role Play Script Example

Feedback

1. I liked how you were convincing in your roles.
2. How was it being Sean?
3. How was it being Alex?

Processing

1. At what point in the role play did you start to become angry?
2. What did Sean say that really mad you angry?
3. When you started to get angry, what was the first impulse you wanted to do?
4. What are some other reactions people can have in this situation?
5. How did the strategy of counting to 10 help to calm you down?
6. Did this solve the conflict?
7. What is the main purpose of these techniques? Why are they important?
8. Have you ever been in a situation where one of these techniques might have helped you control your anger?

Once students have a good understanding of how to use one or more of the techniques, allow them to practice in partners using different techniques.

