



Surviving Challenges by Adjusting Your Attitude

Opening Exercise – The Attitude Game

Directions – If done in person then cut out the 20 attitudes below to make 20 “Attitude Cards”. (*There are 20 total: 10 Negative and 10 Positive – mix them up*) Group members should take turns picking one of the attitude cards randomly then just read it silently without sharing it with the rest of the group. (Or if done via telehealth instead of picking a card, the counselor can pick an attitude from one of the cards and send it as a direct message through the “chat” feature on telehealth to the group member who is up for their turn) The person should then make a few statements that represent this attitude, to the best of their ability -. Dictionaries are allowed: If anyone is struggling with one of these attitude types, it can be very helpful to look up the definition

The rest of the group be shown the master list of all 20 of these attitudes and try to guess which one from the list that the group member had selected based on their statement. Once someone successfully guesses the answer, the group should pause to discuss the following two questions based on the selected attitude:

1. **Is this a negative or a positive attitude type? - Why?**
2. **How can this attitude help (make it better) or hurt (make it worse) an already difficult situation?**

Example – First player picks “*Inflexible*” attitude card and says the following “inflexible” sounding statement – “*I don’t care about the rest of you people, its my way or the highway and there is no compromise for me!!!*”

Attitude Cards:

<i>Isolative</i>	<i>Cocky/Arrogant</i>	<i>Hopeful</i>	<i>Cooperative</i>
<i>Condescending</i>	<i>Cynical/Contemptuous</i>	<i>Adaptive/Reasonable</i>	<i>Respectful</i>
<i>Resentful</i>	<i>Contentious/Argumentative</i>	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Understanding/Empathetic</i>
<i>Inflexible/Closed Minded</i>	<i>Critical</i>	<i>Open Minded</i>	<i>Caring/Compassionate</i>
<i>Self-Defeating/Pessimistic</i>	<i>Hostile</i>	<i>Humble</i>	<i>Lighthearted/Easygoing</i>



Follow Up Discussion – *Adjusting Your Attitude to Survive and Thrive*

Read: In many space-oriented science-fiction movies and shows, one thing the spacecraft pilot always seems to do when trouble is coming is to make sure to “adjust the shields”. Whether it is a laser battle or asteroid field coming up on the horizon, it is so important for the protective shield around the spaceship to be prepared so as to prevent a disaster.

The same is true for humans. Similar to this spaceship illustration, when know we are heading into a potentially challenging emotional situation, we can prepare ahead if time by “adjusting our shields” so to speak. In this case, one key aspect of our protective emotional shield is our **attitude**. Our attitude can truly help protect us against “attacks” of negativity from others by deflecting negativity before it causes serious damage.

Discussion: Put this into practice as a group by choosing a potentially challenging future situation – If there happens to be an upcoming future situation that the whole group may be facing then the counselor may choose to pick one scenario for everyone to discuss. (Such as preparing for a holiday or other potentially challenging scenario)

For example, holidays can be emotionally challenging in many ways including dealing with difficult family or coping with isolation and loneliness – *This discussion can be used for preparing for the upcoming holiday if applicable – If not, group members should come up with their own challenging scenarios*

For the scenario selected, each group member should discuss the following

1. What is one attitude you definitely want to avoid for this upcoming situation, and why? (What harm could this negative attitude cause?)
2. What is one positive attitude that you want to focus on for this upcoming challenging situation? What is your specific plan for displaying this attitude when you needed it?

Example – Potentially challenging situation chosen for this exercise is ‘Holiday family gathering’ –

Group member says (examples)

1. *“At the upcoming holiday gathering I am going to be with my extended family and there are going to be some opinions discussed that I do not agree with – One negative attitude I want to avoid is being **argumentative** because it is a waste of time to get into stupid fights with people at these kinds of gatherings”*
2. *At the upcoming holiday gathering, the positive attitude that I am going to focus on is being **easygoing**. I am just going to go with the flow and watch football, play with the kids, and avoid getting into it with anyone there so I don’t end up getting upset like I did last year which ended up in relapse”*

**Attitude is
a little thing
that makes
a big
difference**