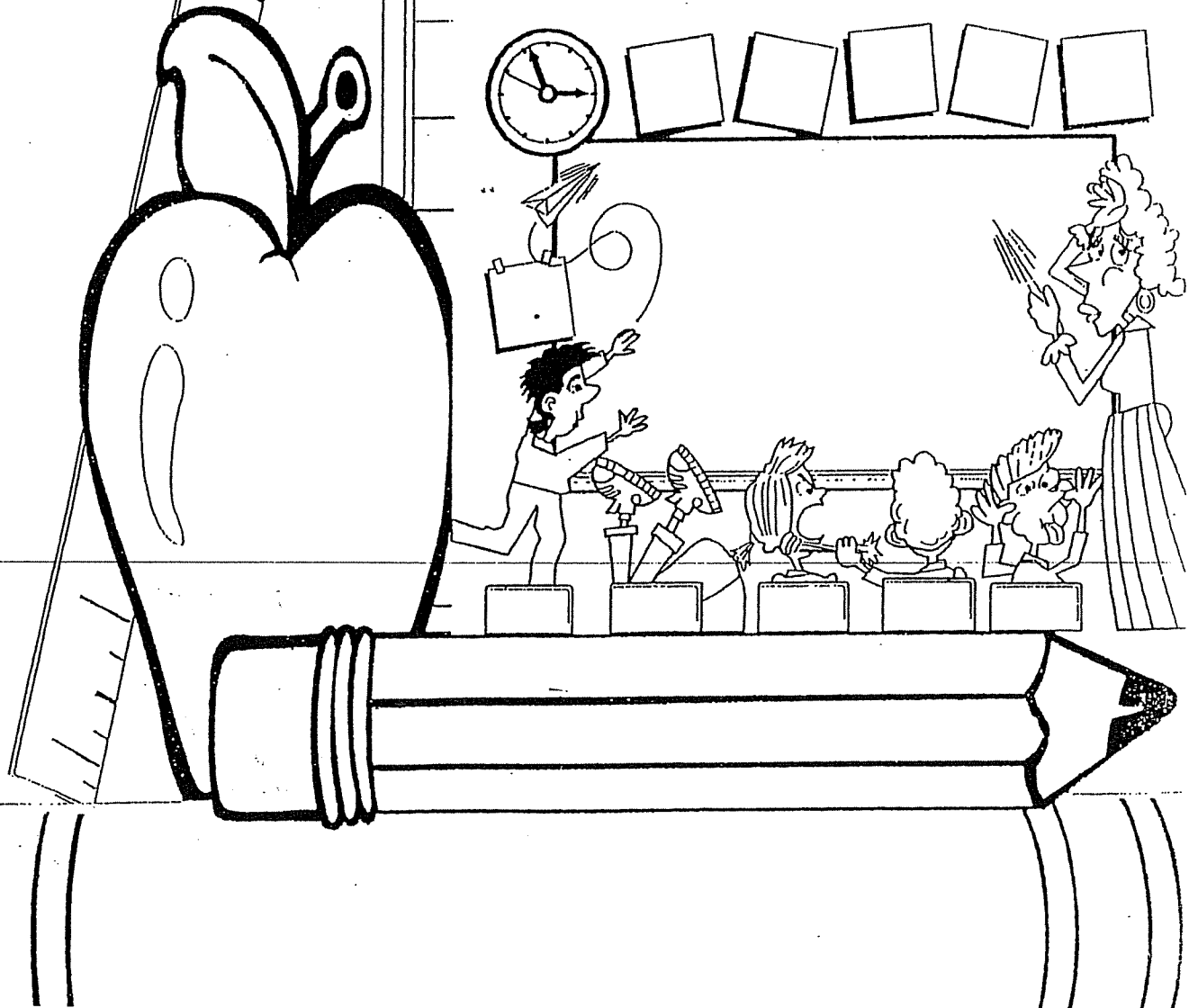


The Fourth "R" Responsibility



Did You Know?

- Students who believe they are capable of accomplishing a task are generally more persistent and likely to redouble their efforts in the face of initial failure.
- Students who believe they are not likely to succeed give up more easily or avoid the task altogether.
- Students begin to suspect they lack ability when teachers offer excessive praise, unsolicited help, and sympathy.
- Children who have developed learned helplessness can be taught to persist by encouraging them to see failure as the result of lack of effort rather than lack of ability.
- Peer models are more effective than teachers in influencing self-efficacy (belief that they are capable) beliefs of low-achieving students.
- Those persons who believe they are in personal controls of their lives are less susceptible to the social pressures of others, such as approval and disapproval.
- Students with repeated patterns of failure learn coping techniques, such as feigning illness the day of exams or non-participation in class discussions, to avoid risking additional failures.
- Students' self-efficacy judgments determine which tasks they will attempt or avoid and how persistent they will be when encountering obstacles to success.
- Students learn to use excuses and other clever explanations to avoid the anger and disapproval of teachers and peers.
- Student goal setting affects students' level of motivation and self-regulation.
- Organization should be the first self-management strategy and should be taught the first day of school.
- Teaching students self-management skills has significant benefits, including decreasing attention difficulties and increasing time-on-task.

Compelling Why No. 1

Educators are tired of seeing unself-responsible behavior in students. They see far too many bored expressions and lack of initiative or follow-through. They are tired of students acting, talking, and thinking like victims. It is time to help students learn to take responsibility for their own behaviors.

Employers want employees who are capable of self-management and independent thinking. They desire employees who see problems and initiate a search for solutions. Obedience, once thought of as a great virtue, is no longer held in high esteem. Self-responsibility has replaced obedience on employers' lists of desires.

Entitlement as we once knew it in this country is over! Welfare reform, decreased government support and regulation, and changes in affirmative action all point to a changing consciousness in our society. Government programs and policies that once encouraged millions of citizens to view themselves as helpless are ending. Dependence on the state will no longer be possible. An increased respect for and ability to activate self-responsible behaviors will be necessary for people to survive in the 21st century.

Self-employment and the rise of cottage industries demand self-reliance, self-management, and self-responsibility. No one tells a self-employed adult what to work on, when to begin work, or how long to continue. It takes self-responsible behaviors to become a successful entrepreneur in today's world.

Successful adults learn to take responsibility for their own lives — physically, emotionally, and intellectually. They see themselves as "the cause" and hold themselves accountable. This is important in almost every sphere of life: marriage, career development, parenting, citizenship, and schooling.

Children do not enter this world as independent, self-responsible beings. Without nurturing, supportive adults who know how to teach self-responsibility, children can grow into adulthood while remaining stuck using adolescent behaviors.

This course is designed to help students progress from dependence to independence. It will help them shift from external support to self-support. It will assist them in their growth from lack of responsibility to self-responsibility. It will help them develop their STAR Power.

Directions: List the top three Compelling Whys:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Compelling Why No. 2

Teachers, too, need help improving their quotient of self-responsibility. School faculties are often pecking orders of powerlessness with feelings of impotence being passed down to students. Educators who feel unempowered are less likely to empower others. Teachers who believe they have little control are not likely to share the control they do experience. In essence, educators cannot give away that which they do not believe they have.

Educators are caught in a blame game using "shoulds." High school teachers believe middle school teachers *should have* taught kids X and *should have* taught kids Y. Middle school teachers believe elementary teachers *should have*. Elementary teachers believe that parents *should have*. Also, the government *should*, the union *should*, the administration *should*, and the students *should*. We have got to stop making "should statements" about each other and start taking more individual responsibility for improving our unique situations.

"Teacher empowerment" is a catchy and popular phrase. Yet, for all its popularity, no one is systematically teaching teachers how to experience a greater sense of personal power in their lives. Again, this course will help you learn self-responsible thinking, speaking, and behaving you, in turn, can pass those skills on to your students.

Directions: List the top three Compelling Whys:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PP

Personal Power Definition

Having the _____, the _____, and the _____
to influence the circumstances of one's own life.

A Sense of Personal Power Is All About . . .

- Having the competence to do what I must.
- Believing that I can do what I set out to do.
- Feeling that I can handle, one way or another, what is put before me.
- Knowing that I can get what I need in order to do what I must.
- Feeling that I am in charge of my own life.
- Feeling comfortable when I have a responsibility to fulfill.
- Knowing that others cannot make me do anything I really do not want to do.
- Feeling that I can make decisions and solve most of my problems.
- Knowing that in spite of pressure or stress, I am not going to easily lose control of myself.
- Being able to use the skills I have in situations that require those skills.
- Believing that I can influence my environment.

Directions: List the six most important phrases in 3 words or less.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Behaviors That Indicate a Problem With Personal Power

1. Often stubborn and excessively bossy.
2. Frequently act helpless.
3. Control through aggression or withdrawal.
4. Avoid being in charge of others.
5. React poorly to frustration.
6. Avoid taking responsibility and blame others.
7. Do not exercise initiative.
8. Avoid tasks that are challenging.
9. Lack emotional self-control.
10. Use unself-responsible language.
11. Use "Give up" excuses.
12. Withhold resources that others need.
13. Undermine decisions that others make.
14. Unilaterally alter rules.
15. Take credit for the accomplishments of others.
16. Are excessively critical of others' accomplishments.
17. Have trouble making decisions.
18. Don't follow through.
19. Create distractions.

Responsibility Strategies

1. Choose, Decide, Pick
2. Freedom Phrases
3. Turn the Page
4. Shake It Off
5. Positive Self-Talk
6. Self-Responsible Language
7. I Can't Antidote

1. Choose, Decide, Pick



Implement Power Strategy No. 3: Perception of Choice by using the Teacher Talk cue words *choose*, *decide*, and *pick*.

Helping children perceive the choices they make is important. You let them know *you* know they are choosing when you use Teacher Talk that contains the words *choose*, *decide*, and *pick*.

Examples:

“You two boys have shown me by your behavior that you *have chosen* not to sit by each other for awhile.”

“I noticed that you *chose* to feel angry during gym today.”

“How did you *decide* to respond when the assembly went overtime?”

“I’m being distracted by the noise behind the science table. Please *pick* a different *behavior*.”

“If you *choose* to do it on the wrong side again, you’ll *be deciding* to do it over.”

“How many of you *chose* to be prepared for the spelling test today?”

“If you *decide* to turn it in on Monday, you’ll receive the grade you earned. If you *decide* to turn it in after Monday, you’ll receive one grade lower than the grade you earned.”

“I am wondering what grade you *will choose* to earn this semester.”

“Sarah, I noticed when Bonnie teased you that you *chose* to ignore her.”

_____ is the key.

Note: For additional information on Teacher Talk Strategy No. 1, read pages 26 through 28 in your *Teacher Talk* text.

Choose, Decide, Pick Activity

Directions:

Design ten (10) statements or questions that you could present to your students to show them you perceive a choice they are making. Use one or more of the words *choose*, *decide*, and *pick* in each statement or question. Make sure your statements or questions do not offer a choice. You are commenting on a choice students made or could be making. Record your answers in the space below, on a separate sheet of paper, or on your mobile device.

Correct: I see you *chose* to staple rather than paste or glue.

Incorrect: You can *choose* to staple, paste, or glue.
 (This is offering a choice and is an example of
Power Strategy No. 1: Providing Choices.)

The Choose, Decide, and Pick Teacher Talk strategy is used to make students aware of their choices.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

2. Freedom Phrases



Many times throughout the day students ask questions that place the teacher in the role of decision maker. They ask things such as:

“May I sharpen my pencil now?”

“Will this book qualify for extra credit?”

“Is it okay if I ask Beth to help me?”

With a simple yes or no, the teacher can answer these common questions quickly and efficiently, or the teacher can use them as opportunities to empower students. If you use a **Freedom Phrase** such as “you decide,” you can effectively place **decision-making responsibilities** on students. “You decide” frees the teacher from an **authoritarian role** by encouraging shared control of the classroom and by getting students in touch with their personal power.

Use the **Freedom Phrase** “you decide” only when your answer to a student’s question would be yes. If it is not okay for the student to ask Beth for help, or if it is not a time when you want students sharpening pencils, simply say no. Since you feel strongly about the issue, this is not a time to let students decide. On the other hand, if your inclination is to say yes, then this is an appropriate time to use language that leaves the decision to the child. “You decide” creates an opportunity for students to practice making decisions. It gives them the freedom to make choices. It provides an opportunity for them to experience their own power and to exercise independence.

Adding a Condition to Freedom Phrases

Add a condition to your Freedom Phrase “you decide” to help students develop their decision-making ability.

Examples:

Q. “May I sharpen my pencils now?”

A. “If you can do it without disturbing the reading group. You decide.”

Q. “Will this book qualify for extra credit?”

A. “If it tells about someone you respect and admire. You decide.”

Q. “May I go to the library now?”

A. “My concern is that you be back here at 11:15. You choose.”

When you qualify “you decide,” you give students criteria. They must think. They have something concrete on which to base their decisions. You help them simultaneously develop both their choice-making ability and their thinking skills.

Other Freedom Phrases that work well:

“It is up to you.”

“It is your choice.”

“You choose.”

“You can pick.”

“You get to decide.”

“You make that decision.”

“I am comfortable with whatever you decide.”

Regardless of the phrase you choose, the message to students is one of respect. You are telling them, “I trust your judgment. You are capable of making many of your own decisions. You know what is best for you and for our class.”

Additional reading on Power Strategy No. 4: Freedom Phrases is found on pages 29 through 30 in *Teacher Talk*.

(Note: Be careful not to add the word yes to your Freedom Phrase. If your Teacher Talk statement is something like “Yes, you decide,” you have already decided for the student.)

Freedom Phrase Activity

Directions:

Write a **Freedom Phrase** and a condition to go with each of the following student questions in the space below, on a separate sheet of paper, or on your mobile device. The condition may be positioned before or after the **Freedom Phrase** in your response.

1. May I have a pass to go to the computer lab?

2. May I interview my uncle?

3. May I have two extra days on this project?

4. Is it too late to change my mind about which country I use for my report?

5. May I bring my iguana to class on Tuesday?

6. Will Friday be too late to turn in my outline?

3. Turn the Page

4. Shake It Off

5. Positive Self-Talk

Circle T for true and F for False

1. I can control what others say about me. T or F
2. I can control what I say to myself about what others say about me. T or F
3. What others say about me tells me more about them than it does about me. T or F
4. Others can hurt my feelings by calling me names. T or F
5. Others are responsible for my reactions to their name-calling. T or F
6. My self-talk is more important than their out-loud-talk. T or F

“You’re a Car”

Matt, age 6, came in the house crying hysterically. Tears flowed down his cheeks and he couldn’t catch his breath. I put him on my lap and held him close. His breathing slowed as I rubbed his back, but the stream of tears continued.

“What’s wrong?” I asked as I continued to rub him.

“Randy,” he blurted out between sobs.

“Randy hit you?”

“No.”

“Randy knocked you down?”

“No.”

“What?”

“Randy,” sob, sob, “called me stupid!”

Randy is Matt’s twelve-year-old brother, and he chooses behaviors like calling Matt stupid on occasion.

“Randy called you stupid?” I repeated.

“Yes.”

I turned Matt around and looked him straight in the eye.

“You’re a car!” I told him.

“What?”

“You’re a car!”

“Dad, what are you doing?”

“I am calling you a car. Car, Car, Car, Car, Car!”

By this time Matt had stopped crying. I had his full attention.

“Matt, there’s something interesting going on here,” I told him.

“I am calling you a car and you’re not crying.”

“Ya.”

“Would you mind explaining that to me?”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, I am calling you a car and you’re not crying. How come?”

“Dad,” he offered, “I am not a car!”

Then I had him. “Well, you know what, Matt—you’re not stupid either.”

“Oh,” I heard him say, and I could begin to hear the wheels turning in his head.

Matt was having his first encounter with an adult concept that could positively affect the rest of his life. It is this: *More important than what people say to you, is what you say to yourself about what they say to you.*

When I said, "You are a car," Matt said to himself, "No, I am not" or "What is my dad doing?" or "He sure doesn't know me." When Randy calls him stupid, he can say to himself, "No, I am not," "What's the matter with Randy?" or "He sure doesn't know me."

You can't control the whole world and get people to talk to you just the way you want to be talked to. But you can *always* control how you talk to yourself about how others talk to you. Making *your* talk more important than *their* talk is a sign of maturity and self-responsibility whether you're six years old or 60.

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Examples of Healthy Self-Talk in Responding to Name-Calling

"That is about them."

"Guess he or she does not know me very well."

"They are sure in a bad mood today."

"I know I'm not stupid, so I wonder what's up with her."

"He is just trying to get to me."

"Not true."

"I wonder what's really behind all this noise."

"Not even close."

"No matter what you say, I am still a worthwhile person."

"Something has her upset and it must be deeper than the words she's using on me now."

6. Self-Responsible Language

Self-Responsible Language Definition

Words and phrases that reveal an acceptance of responsibility for one's actions and feelings, show ownership for results, make choice conscious, or speak to unlimited potential

Examples:

"I am creating a lot of stress for myself over this."

"My efforts helped produce that."

"I am choosing to let it go for now."

Unself-Responsible Language Definition

Words and phrases that deny responsibility for one's actions and feelings, limit, confine, or create artificial boundaries, or put responsibility on someone or something else

Note: There is no such word as *unself-responsible*. We made it up for use in this course to describe the opposite of *self-responsible* when referring to the use of language.

Examples:

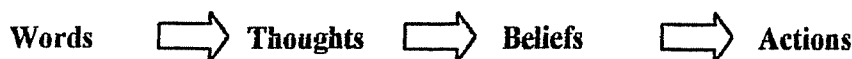
"I can't do it."

"She made me mad."

"It was not my fault."

The Effects of Language

There is a connection between the words you use, the beliefs you hold, and the actions you take. In this Power Strategy, you will explore those connections and learn to purposefully select language that leaves you feeling and acting more self-responsible.



Language Activity

Directions:

When prompted, record your answers in the space below, on a separate sheet of paper, or on your mobile device.

I can't

I can't

I can't

I can't

I can't

Journal



Argue for your limitations, and sure enough, they are yours.

— *From Illusions: Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah, by Richard Bach*

7. "I Can't" Antidote



1. _____ as _____.

2. _____.

3. _____ like.

4. _____ it 'til you _____.

5. If you _____, what would _____?

**If you try and do not succeed, you fail.
If you pretend and do not make it, it is not failure.**

Chick Moorman

Unself-Responsible Language Quiz

Directions: Read through the following sentences. Circle the number of each sentence you feel contains an example of unself-responsible language. Underline the word or phrase you believe indicates that it is unself-responsible. Hint: Refer to the definitions on page 117. If you are using the digital version of the participant manual, locate this sheet in the small file of pages you may have printed.

1. She ticks me off.
2. I'm too nervous to ask her for a date.
3. Time just got away from me.
4. He changed my mind.
5. I have to call my mother this weekend.
6. I am frustrated and angry.
7. We do not like that kind of behavior.
8. I need a vacation.
9. I want you to wait until I am finished.
10. I was fortunate to get the job.
11. I got carried away.
12. The choice I made produced an outcome I did not like.
13. I did not have time to write that up.
14. My nerves are getting to me.
15. I lost my temper.
16. I am feeling frustrated.
17. I would prefer it if you'd get this in by Monday.
18. That is just the way I am.
19. I am a morning person.
20. I get really excited when the mood overtakes me.

8. Teacher Talk

"Next time..."

"Next time, I want you to wait until I'm finished."

"Next time, tell her what you want."

"Next time, put your name in the upper right-hand corner of your paper."

"Next time" is a sentence starter that plants pictures in students' heads of what you expect. It focuses their attention on what you want to have happen. It enables them to visualize the positive outcome rather than the negative behavior you wish to eliminate.

"Next time" is an alternative to "don't." Imagine that we just told you, "Don't think of a blue elephant." What happened? Of course, you thought of a blue elephant. The same phenomenon occurs with students. "Don't run in the hall" puts a picture of running in the halls in students' heads. "Don't poke and push" helps them visualize poking and pushing. Whenever you say "don't" you may actually strengthen the exact behavior you want to eliminate.

The phrase "next time" not only plants a positive picture, it concentrates on teaching. Whatever follows "next time," instructs. It gives students useful information for later.

"Next time, walk around Jimmy's blocks on your way out to recess."

"Next time, let me know if your committee wants more time to prepare the report."

"Next time, measure your margins to see if they fall within the 3/4 inch guidelines."

Are you interested in developing a style of communication that gives students clear instructions as to your expectations? Do you want them to create positive pictures of desired behaviors? Then, next time begin your sentence with "next time."