



ACTIVITY: 'MY ADJECTIVE'

TIME: 10–15 minutes
SIZE: Large groups or whole of class
SPACE: Room to form large circle/s
RESOURCES: Tennis ball

The aim is to create a situation where students must think instinctively about themselves in positive ways.

The result should be discussion about the tools that can help students speak helpfully to themselves in day-to-day situations.

1. Have students form a large circle.
2. Everyone is to come up with adjectives for themselves that begin with the same first letter of their first name. The important thing is that the adjectives be both positive and true.
3. Whenever the tennis ball is thrown to them, the student must introduce him/herself with their adjective and name, e.g. 'Hi, I'm Jolly John'. John must then throw the ball to another person who must reiterate the thrower's name and introduce him/herself e.g. 'Hi Jolly John, I'm Reliable Renee'. Renee then throws the ball to Charlie who says, 'Hi Reliable Renee, I'm Cheerful Charlie', etc.
4. Commence the activity by throwing the tennis ball to someone.
5. NB: if the adjective is known to be untrue or is unduly negative (e.g. Ugly Ursula) then you and the group can shout, 'No!' and demand the student try again until they come up with a positive adjective. Multiple words (e.g. Fun-to-be-with Fred) are admissible at your discretion.
6. Keep the activity going until everyone has had at least one, and preferably two, attempts at coming up with positive adjectives that describe themselves.



DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Who had the best/most appropriate/funniest adjective?
- Was it easy or hard to come up with the adjectives on the spot? Why/why not? Did you feel comfortable coming up with your adjective? If not, why not?
- Why in our society is it often awkward to speak well of ourselves? Is that healthy or unhealthy?
- Why is it sometimes easier to find good qualities in other people than it is in ourselves?
- What strategies (thinking skills) did people use during the exercise? How could you use those in everyday life?

Consider repeating the activity, but instead of students coming up with adjectives for themselves, the person who catches the ball must come up with a positive adjective for the person who threw it to them. Discuss what students thought and felt when they were well described by their peers, and how they might turn those helpful comments into helpful self-talk.