

Metaphor Processing Guide

Key Concept:

Emotional Regulation

Objectives

- I understand that in pressure situations if I lose control or let others control me, I will often lose opportunities, and privileges, or face negative consequences.
- I understand I control how I react in pressure situations and when I remain in control I will be able to have greater opportunities in life.
- I can follow the steps to control my defense mechanisms: recognize situations, recognize feelings, pause, and choose.

Vocabulary

- Defense mechanisms
- Positive DM
- Negative DM
- Opportunities
- Freedom
- Control

Explanation:

The 5th and 6th grade defense mechanisms visual metaphor is a video game controller. We build off of previous metaphors which introduce defense mechanisms and dig deeper into what happens when we choose negative defense mechanisms. The video game controller is used to control a character in a game. You can choose where it goes and what actions it takes. You can even get it to emote or show emotion, pause, or do a wide variety of things. When we choose negative defense mechanisms, we are giving a controller over ourselves to someone else or to a situation. We are letting go of maintaining control and it can instead be used to control us. Others can push our buttons, manipulate us and get us to do things and feel things because we are losing control. We maintain our self respect and build self confidence by choosing positive defense mechanisms because we are keeping control.



Grades 5-6 Metaphor Walkthrough

Introduction:

Show the visual metaphor of the controller. Begin a discussion about the controller by asking some of the following processing questions:

- What can you do with a video game controller like this one?
 - What kind of video games are the most frustrating (or difficult) to play?
 - What are some situations in life that are frustrating?
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Flag One:

Ask: What do these buttons on a video game controller typically do (group of 4 buttons on right)?

WHYTRY

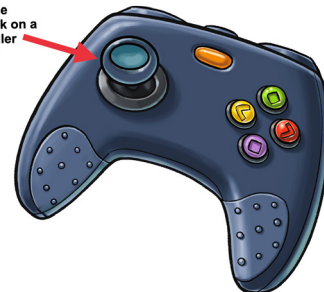


Flag Two:

Ask: What does the direction stick on a video game controller typically do? After asking the questions, continue using questions and processing to generate thinking about the visual metaphor:

WHYTRY

What does the direction stick on a game controller typically do?



- When you're playing a video game who gets to control what buttons are being pushed during the game?
- What can happen if you push the wrong button during a game or at the wrong time in a game?
- What would happen if someone else started pushing the buttons on your controller while you were playing a game or if we become frustrated and start pushing the wrong buttons? (During this processing question make sure to point out that one thing that can happen here is that in the game we will start to lose, and we may not be able to finish the level that we're on)
- What can happen in life if we allow other people to frustrate us and push our buttons and cause us to lose control? (Make sure to point out that in life when this happens we will often

Flag Two (continued):

lose opportunities or privileges)

- What are some examples of how we might let someone else “push our buttons” or make us react a certain way?
 - In life who gets to choose how we react when we’re frustrated or in a pressure situation?
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Flag Three:

WHYTRY

Ask the following questions:

- What does the pause button do if you push it during a game?
- What can you do while the game is paused during a video game?
- What are some things we can do if we feel ourselves starting to get frustrated to pause and try to reduce our frustration?



Explain that we can imagine that in life we have a video game controller that controls how we respond when we are in a pressure situation or are beginning to get frustrated. When we remain in control and don't let other people choose how we are going to respond we're much better off in life and can avoid losing privileges and opportunities. Oftentimes when we lose control we end up letting other people get a hold of our “video game controller” and start to push buttons and make us react in certain ways. When we remain in control we can choose positive defense mechanisms (things that won't hurt ourselves or others) when other people push our buttons or make us react we can end up choosing negative defense mechanisms that can get us in trouble or hurt ourselves or others.

Explain now that you would like to teach them a pattern that they can follow to help them choose positive defense mechanisms and make sure that they're not letting other people or situations take their controller.

Explain that while sometimes we choose negative defense mechanisms because that is how we are used to doing it, it is possible to learn to react in a different way. There are four steps we take. Go through each step that is on the visual metaphor and explain it to the students.

What are some ways that we can learn to stay in control of our defense mechanisms:

1. Feelings: Know what you are feeling and don't let your emotions control your choices.
2. Situations: Think of situations that make you feel emotions like anger, frustration, and fear.
3. Positive Choices: Think of positive defense mechanisms you could choose in those situations.
4. Practice: Put those into practice because those situations will come and you can be prepared for them.

Flag Four:

Teach the 3 step pattern that is under Flag #4:

Step #1: Situation

The first step is that we need to be able to recognize when we are in a pressure situation or situation that may begin to get frustrating.

Ask the question: What are some of the signs that we may be in a pressure situation or a situation that may become frustrating? (If they struggle giving answers you can volunteer some that may include things like “recognizing that the same situation has been frustrating in the past to us”, “if there are people involved that are intentionally trying to make us mad”, and “if things that we can’t control are happening”, etc.)

Ask the students to list some pressure situations that they can think of. Write the situations that they list on the board in a list.

Step #2: Feeling

When we are in a pressure situation it will typically cause certain feelings in us.

Ask the question: What are some of the feelings we might experience in pressure situations? (If appropriate perhaps explore what some of those feelings actually feel like)

Explain that we have the beginning of a pattern now. A situation happens, and then we feel a feeling as a result of the situation. Go through the list of situations that the students listed during the previous step and ask what feeling or emotion accompanies each situation. Record their responses on the board next to the situation.

Step #3: Pause and Choose

Explain that this is the part of the pattern where we get to decide if we are going to remain in control or if we are going to let someone or something else take our controller.

Refer back to the pause button on the controller. Teach them that when we recognize a pressure situation by the emotions that we are feeling one of the best strategies we can use is to pause and then choose to do something to help us remain in control.

Ask the question: What are some things that we can do when we begin to feel frustrated to help us remain calm? (If they struggle coming up with answers you can volunteer some examples such as the following “take a deep breath”, “ignore and walk away”, “talk to a grownup that you trust”, etc.)

