

Skill 26: Reacting Appropriately to Peer Pressure

INSTRUCTOR PAGES

Rationale: Pressure from peers is very strong and can be positive or negative, depending on how it affects one's personal stance and goals. Students need to realize how powerful this pressure can be and be equally strong in their decisions as to how to respond to it.

Worksheet 126: Feeling the Pressure

Students are to read a short story about two characters who experience pressure—one positive (to join in a sport) and the other negative (to be cruel to someone). Students should be prepared to answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

Answer Key:

1. positive pressure; 2. negative pressure; 3. Nancy may have learned that joining in can be fun; Robbie may have learned that it isn't worth hurting others to be accepted by another group.

Worksheet 127: Everybody's Doing It

Even if a peer group gives approval to an activity, it does not necessarily mean that the activity is okay for an individual in a different situation. Students are to decide how each example might be positive for one person and negative for someone else.

Answer Key (answers may vary):

1. Positive—time spent with a friend; negative—maybe time should be spent studying or getting ready for the day.
2. Positive—the “right” running shoes are important for a serious athlete; negative—the person may not be able to afford expensive shoes, or may not even need them.
3. Negative—could be harmful; neutral—may not matter.
4. Negative—could be harmful.
5. Positive—could be exciting and fun; negative—this person may be trying to get someone to do something he or she does not really want to do.
6. Negative—they could get caught and get in trouble.
7. Positive—the person may have a humorous idea for his or her license plate; negative—may not want to spend the extra money.
8. Negative—it sounds like the person has tried to lose weight before; this person may really be criticizing the other.
9. Negative—that's a lot of money to spend for a dress.
10. Negative—now the pressure is on to spend a lot of money on a limo and the prom.
11. Positive—perhaps Mr. Jones will think it's funny; negative—perhaps Mr. Jones will be upset.
12. Negative—this is vandalism.

Worksheet 128: Positive and Negative Peer Pressure

Students are to read each of the comments and decide if the peers are pressuring someone to do something positive or negative. Students should write a P (positive) or N (negative) to indicate the type of peer pressure.

Answer Key:

1. P; 2. P; 3. N; 4. P; 5. N; 6. P; 7. N; 8. P; 9. N; 10. P; 11. N; 12. N; 13. P; 14. N; 15. P; 16. N

Worksheet 129: When There's a Conflict

Students are to think about their position in a conflict situation by considering the following questions: Is it a question of right and wrong? Could this be harmful? How will it affect my long-range goals? Students should be prepared to discuss how the questions might help them come up with a solution to the conflict and a possible resolution.

Answer Key (answers may vary):

1. Take Japanese; it's part of her long-range goals.
2. This person may feel that it's wrong for him to use a fake ID to go to a movie that is not appropriate for him.
3. Smoking could be harmful.
4. Decision may affect long-range goals.
5. Reckless driving could be harmful.
6. This is a question of right and wrong.

Worksheet 130: Resisting Negative Pressure

This worksheet contains a list of ways to help deal with negative peer pressure. Students are to think of ways they could apply them to their own situations.

Answers will vary.

Worksheet 128

Positive and Negative Peer Pressure

Read each of the comments below. Decide which show pressure from peers to do something positive and place a P on the appropriate lines. Place an N next to the comments that show pressure from peers to do something negative.

- _____ 1. "Let's join 4-H. It'll be really fun."
- _____ 2. "We're all going to go to the spring dance. I know we have to invite girls, but if we all do it, it'll be OK."
- _____ 3. "Everyone smokes. Here—I've got a whole pack for you."
- _____ 4. "If you got your hair cut like Hannah's, your face would really show. I know where you can get it cut."



- _____ 5. "If you want to be accepted, you'd better swear once in a while, or people will think you're a nerd."
- _____ 6. "Volunteering at the hospital is a really neat experience. We can sign up after school to work there all summer."
- _____ 7. "Don't talk to Debbie. We're all mad at her because she acts like she's better than we are."
- _____ 8. "They're having a sale on sweatpants at the sporting good store. We're going to wear them with our favorite baseball team shirts on Friday."



- _____ 9. "If a cop tries to pull me over and give me a ticket, I'll tell him a thing or two. Don't let them boss you around."

- ___ 10. "Our group is meeting tonight to cook a Russian meal for an extra-credit project for social studies. Join us."
- ___ 11. "If anyone thinks they can beat me up, they are welcome to try it right now!"
- ___ 12. "Don't buy those cheap jeans—they look awful. If you don't have expensive jeans, you'll get talked about."
- ___ 13. "I don't think you should go out with Brent. He's got a really bad reputation, and I know he's been in trouble with the police. I would worry about you."
- ___ 14. "I know your parents don't want you to get a tattoo, but I know where you can get one really cheap. They'll never find out."
- ___ 15. "We're collecting money to send to an orphanage in Haiti. We're trying to get 100% participation for our class. Can you donate?"
- ___ 16. "You can finish your homework later—we're all going to the movies tonight. Come on."

