**PositiveAttitudes 1**

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms – **to choose one’s attitude in any given circumstance.”-** Victor Frankel

*(Here we highlight 2 instances of physically challenged persons , defying the odds and becoming an inspiration to many )*

Has anyone ever heard of Helen Keller?

Helen Keller was born with the ability to see and hear. At 19 months old, she contracted an unknown illness . The illness left Helen Keller blind , deaf and mute at 21 months old. Although she lived in a world of silence and darkness, she became a voice of hope and light for persons blind and deaf.

Helen Keller had passed through many obstacles and she learned to live with her disabilities. She learned how to tell which person was walking by from the vibrations their footsteps would make. The sex and age of the person could be identified by how strong and continuous the steps were.

She was the first deaf blind person to graduate from college. She was taught how to speak and learnt to communicate with sign language and read using the Braille method.

At home we have inspiration from our local achievers. Anyone knows Shantoll Ince ?

Shantoll, was born with a deformity where her right leg is much shorter than her left leg. She started swimming at the age of 4yrs. At 8 yrs of age , she shocked the local swimming fraternity by winning the 200 mt individual medley and 100mt. Freestyle at the National longcourse meet at the 8 and under age group.

Shantoll has gone on to represent our country at the paralympics.

We have many world class athletes we can use as inspiration.

How many of you have played a sport competitively?

How do you handle defeat?

Do you review the performance and acknowledge where improvement can be made? Or do sulk off in a corner blaming, the wind, the shoes? The referee or other?

Today having an attitude usually means a bad attitude, (as in “He’s got attitude” Or “Don’t’ give me any attitude!”) This term we are going to focus on development of positive attitudes.

Your attitude is your point of view, your outlook on life, your state of mind. It determines the choices you make and how you feel about the people, things and events around you.

If your mind / attitude is “Math is boring”, then that is how it will seem to you and you probably won't do your best in that subject.

Similarly, washing down the dog poop may seem like torture and stink. Why not think of it as a cleansing of your home, and take pride in keeping the place clean.(Less flies, less scent.)

When you have positive attitudes, you can choose how to react to each situation you encounter.

You cannot choose everything that happens to you, but you can choose what you think, feel or do.

This gives you enormous personal power- control yourself from the inside out, to direct your own future.

Encourage discussion on instances where a positive outlook can be taken that would lead to greater sense on peace within and then a better or improved performance.

*Examples.*

\* Having to wake every day at 4.00 am to train for a sport before school. If we get out of bed grumbling, the training session would most probably be poor and not much gained, compared to an enthusiastic effort.

\* Or taking that extra lesson to keep up the grades. If you go to the lesson with a closed mind, then for sure, very little will be taken in. Wasted time, $ and effort.(parent’s)

\* Washing up the wares before playing the playstation.

\* Playing with a younger brother/sister so mom could get through some work

To close, ask the boys to think over the next 2 weeks of 5 positive attitudes. These must be written down and will be discussed in our second session.

Here are some quotes on positive thinking:

**"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."** Winston Churchill

"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination." Jimmy Dean

"People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude.” John C Maxwell.

**END.**

**BMW 1**

**Positive Attitudes 2.**

Last session, we discussed positive attitudes in general and how we can choose to react.

We ended asking you all to think of 5 positive attitudes. How many gave this any thought??

Ok, let’s see what can be contributed.

(Choose a secretary and have that student write down each given attitude on the blackboard or note pad for those in the Hall.)

Here are 11 ways to be more positive. These must be used to lead, or support contributions from the boys.

\* Choose to be optimistic. A pessimist is often someone who sees a glass half empty, while an optimist sees it half full. The pessimist focuses on the negative,

missing water, while the optimist sees the positive, that there is water to be .. enjoyed.

\* Choose to accept things as they are and work to the best of your ability. Do you gripe and bang your head when things don’t go your way? Behaviors like that make you a helpless victim. Think about this and remember:

“The past is history, the future is a mystery and this moment is a gift. That is why it is called The Present” ……..Deepak Chopra MD.

\* Choose to be cheerful. Have you ever been around cheerful people? Being around cheerful people energizes you. They are like human battery chargers. You can be one too. Just start by refusing to think gloomy thoughts. Bite your tongue when you are about to say something negative. When you send out positive words, thoughts and feelings, then people and things are attracted to you.

\* Choose to be resilient. Have you ever watched a tree swaying in the wind? (On TV or real life?) Trees that are rigid will never win a battle with the wind, they are often felled by the force. Trees that sway or bend with the wind often survive. You can choose to sway and bend with life’s challenges, then bounce back supported by strong, deep roots. When you are resilient, you can survive almost anything- being hurt, frustrated, or let down by a good friend and much more. Just

Remember the image of the tree swaying in the storm, but still rooted to the end.

\* Choose to have a sense of humor. When you do something silly (everyone does), don’t miss the opportunity to laugh at yourself. If you laugh a lot you will be healthier. Do you know that laughter releases good chemicals in your body that stimulate you and can help you grow? This is scientific fact.

\* Choose to be more alert. If you are more alert to potential problems, then you can be better prepared fro them, or even dodge some. E.g. A friend invites you to come lime at his house and then you’ll go Movietowne. Just tell your parents you are coming to him. The friend’s parents are away, so you would be on your own. You know this spells trouble with your parents if found out. Just say “no thanks”, you are busy. Being alert can also be for positive things, such as you hear of a team tryout or a new activity in school and you note the sign up date and time and plan to go.

\* Choose to be a good sport. This attitude can win friends and respect. Being a good sport does not only mean losing graciously by smiling, shaking hands with the winner and not blaming others for your performance. A good sport also wins graciously. Not pounding your chest, being loud like Tarzan and gloating when you are victorious. In other words ……………………….

\* You can choose to be humble. People, who toot their own horns, seldom attract a true audience and seldom gain respect.

\* Choose to be grateful. Think about it: You all have a lot to be grateful for. Gratitude puts a smile on your face. It makes you feel good about your life.

\* Choose to have faith. This means believing in God or another Higher Being/Higher Power. Others put their faith in their country, in other people or things. When we believe in the Higher Being, we can draw inner strength to face harsh realities and remain rooted with strong faith in the good.

\* Choose to have Hope. Without hope, life has no meaning or point. We expect nothing, plan nothing, and don’t set goals for ourselves (why bother?) What do you hope for? What is your ambition? What are your dreams? What is your purpose? Without hope, there is nothing to work for. There will be nothing to gain.

Developing positive attitudes doesn’t mean that you should ignore problems. If someone steals your bike, you won’t say, “so what?” Instead you will report it to the authorities, you will do everything to get it back. But if you can’t get it back, you’ll accept the fact that it’s gone. You will not let it drag you down and become mistrustful. It will make you more alert and aware.

Flip a coin. What do you get? Either heads or tails, Problems must be considered as challenges or situations. There is always a flip side. If you fail a test, you can flip the coin and study harder or find a tutor.

If you approach each situation for what it is, a positive direction can be taken to either correct the situation or prevent it re-occurrence. The approach must be calm and with little emotional drama. High emotions always affects how a situation’s direction.

Let the boys suggest the optimistic view to each comment.

Positive ways of thinking.

Pessimistic Optimistic

I will try………………………………..I will do it

That is just the way I am………………I can do better than that.

There is nothing I can do………………Let us look at all the options.

I have a problem ………………………I have a situation

I have to ……………………………….I choose to

I can’t ………………………………….There’s got to be a way

You ruined my day ……………………I am not going to let your bad mood ruin my day.

Positive Attitude Tip: There are many people who need to listen to how they currently communicate. Not only what words they say, but also how they listen. Focusing on the positive not on the negative. When you consciously focus on speaking and listening in a positive manner then you will find it does make a difference.

Two tips... 1. when speaking try and focus only on the good, find the good in the situation and focus on that

2. when listening, truly listen....do not try and think about what you are going to respond, just listen.

As Epictetus once said, "We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak."