

WhyTry

What is it?

The mission of WhyTry is to help people achieve opportunity, freedom, and self-respect using education and interventions that motivate and create positive change. WhyTry offers an answer to the question “Why Try in life?”

This simple idea has reduced truancy, improved academics, and changed the climate of schools throughout the US. A recent analysis showed that it tripled the graduation rate of at-risk students in one district.

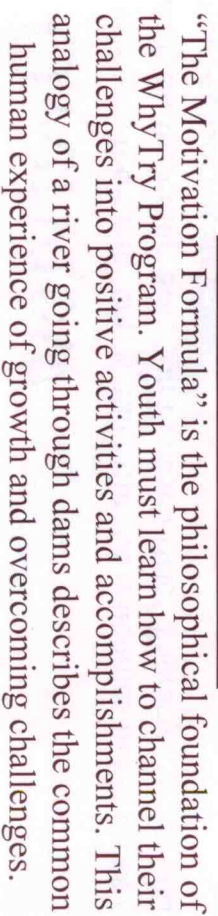
WhyTry is used in both youth and adult corrections throughout the United States. It helps provide life skills and transition support. The WhyTry Program has been used as a tool that probation staff can use to reinforce the social and emotional skills that allow offenders to succeed outside of an institution.

Curriculum Overview

The WhyTry Program is a strength-based approach to helping youth overcome their challenges and improve outcomes in the areas of truancy, behavior, and academics. It is based on sound, empirical principles, including Solution Focused Brief Therapy, Social and Emotional Intelligence, and multi-sensory learning.

The idea is straight-forward: Teach social and emotional principles to youth in a way they can understand and remember. This is accomplished using a series of ten pictures (visual analogies). Each visual teaches a discrete principle, such as resisting peer-pressure, obeying laws and rules, and that decisions have consequences. The visual components are then reinforced by music and physical activities. The major learning styles—visual, auditory, and body-kinesthetic—are all addressed.

Channeling Anger and Challenges into Positive Motivation



into Positive Motivation:

“The Reality Ride” teaches that decisions have consequences in a way that relates to the specific circumstances of each individual’s life. It helps youth understand and change their decision-making process to “get on the right track.”

1 Things That Get Me In Trouble ...

Easy - Fast

2 What will my "Reality" be when I ride here?

At Home:
At School:
With Peers:
In Future:

3 What Problems Do I Keep Having Over And Over?

No Options

4 My Challenges...

Home:
School:
Peers:

5 "Reality" Consequences of Crash

Will These Things Give Me Lasting
Opportunity?
Freedom?
Self Respect?

6 "Reality" Consequences of Crash

Will These Things Give Me Lasting
Opportunity?
Freedom?
Self Respect?

GOAL:

Opportunity
Freedom
Self Respect

More Options

Crash!

Tearing Off Your Label

Four Steps to Tear Off Your Label:

1. Stop Living Up To Your Label. Prove Your Label Wrong!

- Believe in the real you . . . not the label
- How has living up to my label affected the past, today, future?
- When this label is off how will it effect me, family, friends, school?

2. Remember: It's EASY to Prove that Your Label is True

- Just keep doing the same things over and over.
- To tear off the label you must do something different, and use **Self Respect, Desire, Time, and Effort.**
- When I prove the label wrong why will I have more opportunity and freedom?

3. Your Label Is From The Past, Today "YOU" Decide To Keep It Or Start. . .

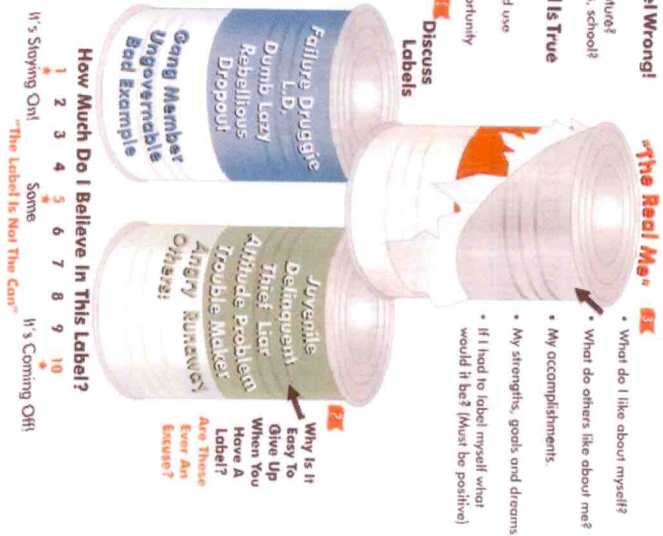
"TEARING IT OFF!"

Imagine . . .
You wake up tomorrow and your label is gone,
what would be different?

- Let **"The Real Me"** Stand Out So Much
That **The Past Label Must Be Torn Off!**
 - What observable behaviors do I need to use more to show I am bigger and better than a label?

Every night ask yourself:

- What did I do today to tear off the label?
- How can I do more of this tomorrow?



- What do I like about myself?
- What do others like about me?
- My accomplishments.
- My strengths, goods and dreams.
- If I had to label myself what would it be? (Must be positive)

Why Is It
Easy To
Give Up
When You
Have A
Label?
Are There
Ever An
Excuse?

#3 - Tearing off Labels:

Negative labels can come from many sources, including peers, teachers, parents, and society. To change, youth must learn to tear off their negative labels and find their real worth. "Tearing Off Your Label" teaches a simple, memorable process for overcoming negative labels.

Defense Mechanisms

What is a Defense Mechanism?

Situation How do you respond (act) when:

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| - Disrespected | - Mad At Parent | - Blamed |
| - Yelled At | - Embarrassed | - You're Hit |
| - Put Down | - You Lose | - You Caught |
| - Laughed At | - Make A Mistake | - Confronted |
| | - Feel Pressure | - Hurt |
| | | - Frustrated |
| | | - Angry |

Four Steps to Control Your D.M.

1. Notice . . .

When you are in a pressure situation these are the signs:
You feel Angry, Frustrated, Nervous.

What outward behaviors can I use to help control the pressure?

2. Feeling "Identity it" . . . "Calm It" . . . "Express It Controlled!"

What are the situations I need to practice this?

3. Don't Let other people choose (or control) how you will respond.

The signs are: someone is yelling at you, you are physically attacked, or you're put down.

What could happen when I stay in control?

4. Select a positive solution

What would motivate me to do the "tougher" (harder) thing?

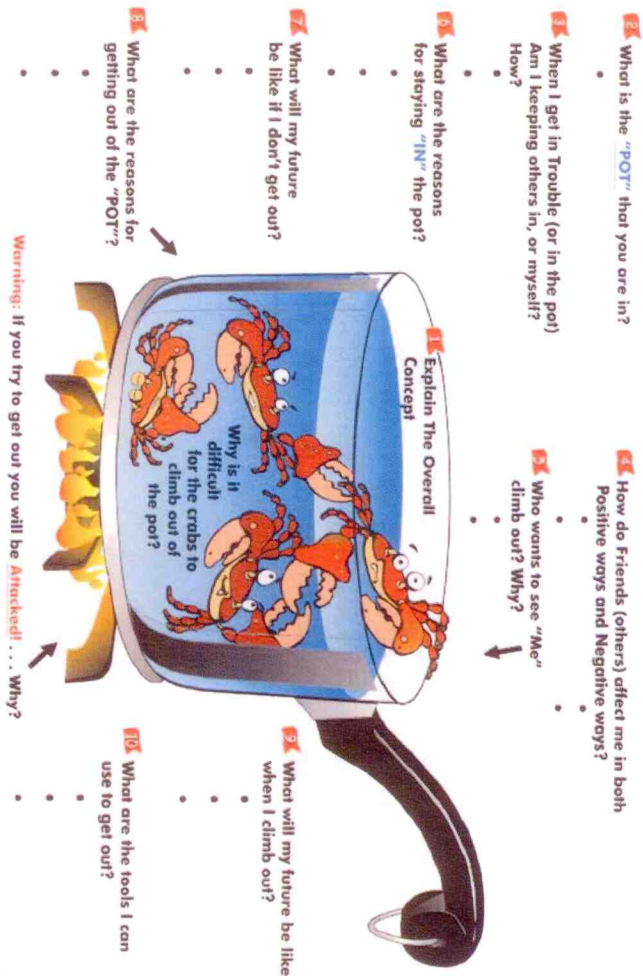


Defense

How do you know when you've selected a positive Defense Mechanism? . . .
When you are helping (not hurting) yourself and others.

#4 - Defense Mechanisms:
"Defense Mechanisms" teaches youth to recognize and control their own Defense Mechanisms, and to recognize the Defense Mechanisms other people use. Everyone has Defense Mechanisms, the problem is that sometimes people use Defense Mechanisms that are destructive, and instead of protecting them, they just get them into more trouble.

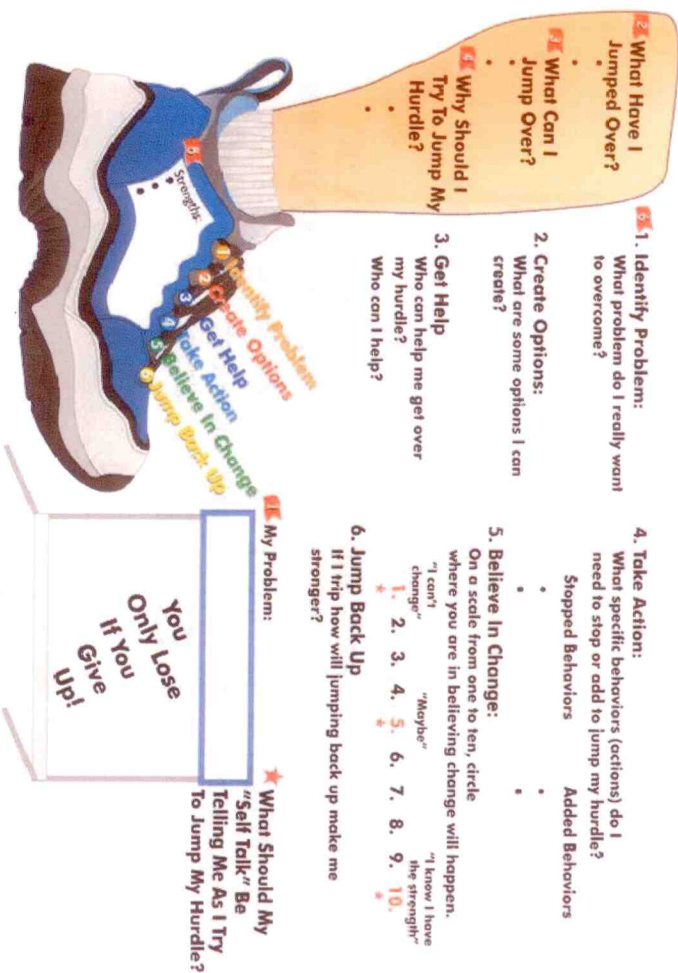
Climbing Out



“Climbing Out” teaches youth that sometimes people around them will try to keep them from changing. This simple message on peer pressure is both powerful and memorable. It provides some tools for helping youth differentiate between the people that pull them down, and those that help them out.

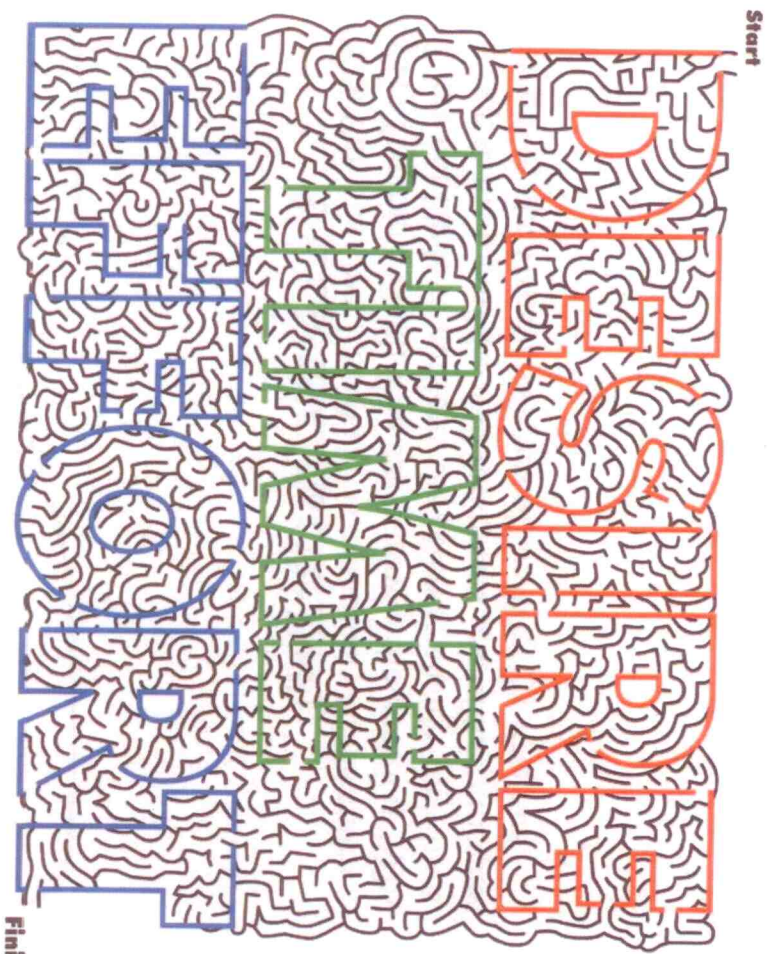
#5 - Climbing Out:

Jumping Your Hurdles



#6 - Jumping Hurdles:

“Jumping Your Hurdles” provides a problem solving model for people who might be accustomed to giving up when confronted by challenges. There are two critical components to this problem solving model: Getting Help; and Jumping Back Up. To “Jump Back Up” is to have resilience in the face of failure and setbacks.



#7 - Desire, Time, Effort:
“Desire, Time, & Effort” teaches youth that hard work is the key to achieving anything they want. Contemporary culture teaches youth that they must be naturally gifted to succeed. Three simple things can change anyone’s destiny: Desire, Time & Effort.

Lift The Weight

What Makes Me Strong?

8K Discuss picture . . .
Why do I need resistance to become stronger?

8K What is expected of me?
From Parents: (rules)
From Society: (laws)
For Myself: (Self Discipline)

8K Why does this need to be your strongest muscle?

8K What have I given up on?

8K What are three new options you could do with your time that will make you stronger?

Challenge A lot of Resistance
“Hard”

Choice

Character

8K What are three things that I put most of my Time and Effort into?

8K What does giving up make me weak?

8K What are three things give you Opportunity, Freedom, and Self-Respect?

8K Why does this need to be your strongest muscle?

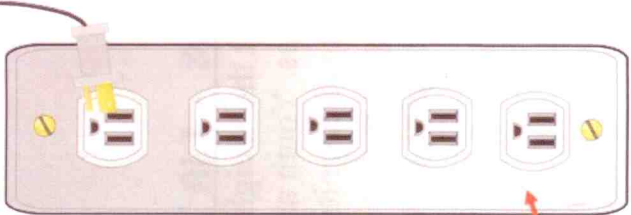
8K What have I given up on?

8K What are three new options you could do with your time that will make you stronger?

#8 - Lift The Weight: (what makes me strong?)

“Lift the Weight” teaches youth why they should obey laws and rules. Youth are often highly resistant to this idea. This image makes a cognitive link between the way the resistance of lifting weights makes someone stronger, and the way the resistance of keeping laws and rules gives someone more freedom and opportunity in society.

Get Plugged In



- 1. Parent/Care Giver**
 - How much time am I spending with a parent or care giver? (If you're not spending at least 30 minutes a day then create and demand more time)
 - What is one "conflict," "argument," or "power struggle" that I can give up today that won't hurt me but will help lower my parents' anxiety about me?
- 2. Positive Friend**
 - Remember - You know you have a "real" friend, when you are hanging out and they are doing things that help (not hurt) themselves or you.
 - What could I do to help a friend overcome peer pressure and deal with challenges at home and at school?
- 3. Teacher/Counselor/School Official**
 - Make sure that someone at school knows the real you and what you can become with their help. Ask how they will help you reach your dreams and potential?
 - Let them know what you are willing to do and work together with them - (Identify three things you're willing to do)
- 4. Positive Mentor**
 - Who can I identify that has accomplished goals and dreams similar to those that I want to accomplish?
 - What are three things (qualities) about them that I respect and admire, that I would like to develop also?
 - Take a risk - If possible ask them how they can help you achieve the same thing.
- 5. Something that inspires or motivates you to do good**
 - What motivates me to not hurt myself or others?
 - What do I do with my time that's "fun," gives me self respect and doesn't get me into trouble? (How can I do more of this?)



#9 - Getting Plugged In:

"Get Plugged In" illustrates the power that comes from connecting with other people. The analogy not only suggests the kinds of connections to make, but also offers ideas for how to make and maintain those connections.

You Can See Over The Wall

