

Wrap This!

(Helping students learn how to “Wrap” their head/thoughts/feelings around difficult outcomes)

Purpose: To help students develop temporal templates (containers/constructs) to place difficult- “hard to fit” life events in to.

Materials: Rock, Stick, and Toilet Plunger *Create a fun effect by replacing the plunger handle with a long broom handle=)

Student Materials: Pencil & Paper. Coloring Pencils/Highlighters if available. If not available, encourage students to take paper home and finish using color pencils/highlighter.

Time: 25-30 Minutes.

Key Words/Concepts: “It is what it is” Wrap, Labels, Re-labeling/Changing Labels, Perspective, Skill Development, Box, Bag, Wrap, & Label w/ Hope. Trip-up/Stumble.

Introduce/reintroduce: Make sure everyone in the classroom knows who you are. Get a show of hands from any students who don’t know who you are and introduce yourself to them. Then, get a show of hands from everyone who does know who you are and call on some of those students to recall some of the counseling activities they’ve enjoyed in the past.

Part 1:

Direct: Students to fold their papers vertically down the center of their papers (Hot-Dog Bun Style) and then to label the two sections/columns A and B. Students should also number their paper in column A, 1 through 6- skipping 3-4 lines between numbers.

On line 1 in column A, write the word Rock (reveal/hold up.) In column B, write/describe how you would “Wrap it” as if you were going to give it to someone. Keep in mind anything is possible and all things are available to you.

On line 2 in column A, write the word Stick (reveal/hold up.) In column B, write/describe how you would “Wrap it” as if you were going to give it to someone. Keep in mind anything is possible and all things are available to you.

On line 3 in column A, write the word Plunger (This is the time to display your six foot plunger=). In column B, write/describe how you would “Wrap it” as if you were going to give it to someone. Keep in mind anything is possible and all things are available to you.

Call: On volunteers to share their responses for all three items.

Part 2:

Ask: Students to raise their hands if they've ever heard the expression, **"It is what it is."**

State: For those of you who may not know what the expression means, it's mainly a reference to something definitely not great, but more basically like something you just have to deal with.

Introduce: A counseling modification to that expression:

"It is what it is, but it's also how you wrap your head around it."

State: Let's continue by getting back to our papers, but instead of writing down the names of things, I'm going to give you the names of often "unwanted/undesired" events. And instead of wrapping those events in boxes and papers, now you'll have to use your heart/head/beliefs.

For example, in column A on line 4, write down the words, "Moving to a new town/school." In column B, write down your best thoughts/beliefs on how moving to a new town/school could turn out to be ok- or even a good thing. Remember, you are unlimited in your thoughts/beliefs and any outcome is possible.

In column A on line 5, write "Being Held Back a Grade." In column B, write down your best thoughts/beliefs on how being held back a grade could be ok- or even a good thing. Remember, you are unlimited in your thoughts/beliefs and any outcome is possible.

In column A on line 6, write down, "Family Pet Runs Away." In column B, write down your best thoughts/beliefs on how the family pet's absence could be ok- or even a good thing. Remember, you are unlimited in your thoughts/beliefs and any outcome is possible.

State: Even though "It is what it is" is a pretty true statement, I like "It is what it is, but it's also how we wrap our heads/hearts/hope around it" much better.

And even though some things that happen are really hard to wrap our heads around/come to terms with, it's really important that we try=)

*Grown-ups have a tendency of tripping up and stumbling over things they didn't know how to wrap their heads around and put away when they were younger. Poorly labeled and unboxed past events often become future problems=(

Call: On volunteers for responses (including their own experiences if appropriate. Feel free to provide volunteers the 6 foot plunger to hold as they stand alongside their desks and tell how they wrapped their heads around their difficult events.

Reassure: Students that really difficult things like losing a family member, someone getting really sick, going to jail, or losing housing/income can be wrapped up too. And even if you only have one single thread of hope, that it can be used to wrap those really difficult “it is what it is items” up with.

Part 3

State: For those of you who are trying to or still trying to wrap your heads around some of the difficult things in your life, here are some suggestions:

1. On a piece of paper, sketch boxes of various sizes. Label those boxes with titles such as: Accidents, BMC Box (Beyond My Control), Shock Box, Crazy Box, Tragic Box, and SH Box (Stuff Happens Box). Write down Words that best represent the type of things you’re struggling with (really sad, mad, worried or scared about) in any of those boxes. Examples: G’ma-Cancer, Two-Houses (divorce), Jail-Parent.
2. Use a colored pencil or highlighter as “Wrapping Paper”- which really represents your Hope, Trust, Belief, and Faith in a positive outcome.
3. Draw a colorful Bow on top the box to represent your Optimism.

*FYI: In the long run, it does not work well to place those “It is what it is”/unwanted events in boxes labeled Unfair/Unforgivable and then to wrap those boxes in Fear, Anger, Resentment, or Hate. And even though it’s not usually good to box and wrap negative/unwanted events that way, many people do. Counselors can help you relabel and rewrap those events so as to help you avoid having problems with them- and similar events, in the future.

Concluding Remarks:

“Remember, it is what it is, but it’s also how we wrap our heads/hearts/hope around it.”