

Zingers, Ding Dongs & Ho Ho`s (Figuring out love & when to walk away from it)

Purpose: 1) Help students identify how some emotions masquerade as love. 2) Understanding/deciding when and or how it might be necessary to walk away from love. 3) Increase student awareness of the role counselors may have in helping people clarify their emotional relationships.

Materials: One box each of Hostess (chocolate) Cupcakes, Zingers, Ding Dongs & Ho Ho`s or use attached photos of products. Music cd, (tape, YouTube, etc.) of George Thorogood & the Destroyers song: “Who do you Love” and playing device (portable stereo/computer, etc.)
Student Materials: Paper & pen.

Time: 25-30 Minutes.

Key words: Love, Like, Crush, Infatuation and Preservatives.

Introduce/reintroduce: Yourself to the students and any new students. Let students know you’re here today to share information about reasons sometimes people go see counselors and other mental health professionals.

Review: Last classroom activity “Illusions.” Remind students the activity was about being aware of what to look for in choosing friends. “Once you know what to look for (kindness, greed, loyalty, selfishness etc.) you’re choices become clearer.” Tell kids that sometimes people will go to counseling to figure out why they make poor choices in choosing friends.

Part 1

Begin: With having students take out a page of paper and something to write with.

Ask: Students to choose a number between 1-100 and to write that number on the top of their paper.

State: “All I can tell you is that if you choose a low number you’ll probably be unhappy and if you choose too high of a number you’re possibly being unrealistic.”

Show & Tell: Students to fold their paper “hot dog bun style” (long ways) down (not across) the middle. (It might help to demonstrate on the whiteboard or have your own paper to demonstrate with.)

Say: “Number the left side of your paper 1 through 2 and skip a line between them.”

State: “For number one I want you to write out a description of a cupcake using five words or less.”

Say: For number two as soon as the music begins, I want you to make a list of names of people that *you know*, love and care about very much (no pets, movie stars or models.)

Start: The music (ample volume!)

Clarify: If you include (for example) your mom on the list, you don't have to write her first name...just "mom" will do."

Announce: (With a sense of urgency while the music is playing) "The more names the better before the music stops!"

Pause: Music after a minute or so.

Say: "Number the right side of your paper 3 through 4 and skip a line between them."

State: "For number three I want you to write out a description of *being in* a cupcake using five words or less."

Say: For number four as soon as the music begins, I want you to make a list of initials (not names) of people that you're *in love* with right now, used to like a whole bunch, used to have a crush on or were really, really excited about (no movie stars or models)!

Re-start: The music (ample volume!)

Clarify: Boyfriends, girlfriends etc. are examples of what I'm talking about.

Stop: Music after another minute or more.

Part 2

Call: On students for their descriptions of cupcake and *being in* a cupcake.

Congratulate: Students for being able to describe the similarities as well as differences.

Acknowledge: The differences that probably exist on their two lists of names as well.

(For example):

Ask: Student's to raise their hand if on the left list (question #2) they've included any of the following names (ask for responses one at a time): Mom...?, Dad...?, Brother...?, Sister...?, Aunt...?, Uncle...?, Grandma...?, or Grandpa...?.

(And for those with extended families, Stepdad...? Stepmom...?)

Notice: When kids aren't raising their hands.

Acknowledge: That's it's appropriate for those people to be on that list. The more the better!!!!

Say: "You all seem to be really clear with this love stuff, but let me ask anyway just in case..."

Ask: Did anyone list the initials of their brother, sister, grandma or grandpa on the right side list? Like, is anyone *in love with* their brother, sister, grandma or grandpa?"

Say: If you are in love with a family member, well, that might be a reason you go see a counselor someday too!

Clarify: Although, it's not uncommon sometimes to be attracted to a step brother or sister under certain circumstances. Still, you might want to talk with a counselor about that!

Announce: "Even though you know all about love and *love is the real deal*, let me introduce you to some pretenders that often masquerade as love but they're really not."

State: "I'll need some volunteers." (Volunteers will stand next to each other in front of the classroom for all to see.)

Call Up: Someone and tell that person he/she gets to be the "real deal." That is, he/she is the class Cupcake. (Provide student with empty product box or picture of Hostess Chocolate Cupcakes to display.)

Call Up: Another student and tell that person he/she gets to be the class Zinger. (Provide student with empty product box or picture of Hostess Chocolate Zingers.)

Call Up: Another student and tell that person he/she gets to be the class Ding Dong. (Provide student with empty product box or picture of Hostess Chocolate Ding Dongs.)

Call Up: Another student and tell that person he/she gets to be the class Ho Ho. (Provide student with empty product box or picture of Hostess Chocolate Ho Ho's.) (Yes, boys can be Ho-Ho's too.)

State: "You'll notice that even though Zingers, Ding Dongs and Ho-Ho's look like the real deal (cupcakes) they're not. Just like sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between liking someone (point to Zinger,) being excited (crush) about someone (point to Ding Dong,) being infatuated with someone (point to Ho-Ho) and actually being in love with someone (point to the real deal Cupcake.)

Thank: Volunteers and have them return to their seats. (If you've bought boxes of Hostess products to use in this presentation, this is a good time to use them and reward your volunteers.)

Part 3

Announce: “If you ever find you’re having a tough time figuring out if you’re in love with someone or if it’s something else, check out the preservatives.”

Explain: Preservatives are ingredients that make things last longer, stay fresher and be better.

Tell: Students to turn their paper over and number it 1-5 (Demonstrate on whiteboard.)

Say: I’m going to give you five preservative words (to write down) that seem to be important in any relationship, especially the relationships that are really important to you. These aren’t the only preservatives you can choose and you can choose more or less but for right now, let’s start with these.” (Patience, Kindness and Thoughtfulness are also good preservatives to use.)

State: For number one write the word: TRUST
For number two write the word: LOYAL
For number three write the word: HONEST
For number four write the word: RESPECT.
For number five write the word: SAFE.

Now Ask: Students to retrieve the number they had chosen and written on the top of their paper and to place that number next to the preservative words they had just written (see above) along with the percentage sign (%.)

(For Example) TRUST 55%
 LOYAL 55%
 HONESTY 55%
 RESPECT 55%
 SAFE 55%

Explain: The number you chose represents the amount of the preservative *you’re willing to settle for* in your relationship with the person you’re in love with. For example, you can TRUST the person you’re in love with 55% of the time. That person is LOYAL to you 55% of the time, HONEST with you 55% of the time, RESPECTS you 55% of the time and makes you feel SAFE 55% of the time. Still, you’re in love with that person.

Call: On students to report their chosen number and insert their number in your example.

Ask: Students to raise their hand if they’re unhappy with the number they’ve chosen.

Ask: Students to raise their hand if they ever felt disappointed in someone (Zinger, Ding Dong or Ho-Ho) they were in love with or cared about who didn’t live up to their expectation number or preservative listing.

Remind: Students that even though they don't always "choose" the person they fall in love with, they do get to choose: 1. If they want to pursue a relationship with that person and 2. The preservatives and the amount of each preservative they want in their relationships. A person may also have to choose to walk away from someone he/she is in love with because that person does not treat you as well as you expect/deserve/require.

Maybe: Tell a story of the physically abused partner who refuses to leave or press charges against his/her partner because "I love him/her."

Part 4

Inform: Students that sometimes people are most likely to confuse Zingers, Ding Dongs and Ho-Ho`s for Cupcakes when they're feeling: Lonely, Insecure and Desperate. And the people they're most likely to mistake for cupcakes are going to be "Heroes." Heroes are people who live to: Fix, Help and Rescue other people. That's what they do.

State (as an example:)"Just because you're feeling trapped and someone comes along and rescues you doesn't mean your in love with that person or that person loves you."

Remind: Students that lots of people seek out counseling for things like:

1. The person you're in love with does not love you (anymore.)
2. The person you love and care about does not treat you very well.
3. The person you fell in love with has changed a whole bunch.
4. Your expectation number is higher than "your" person's abilities.
5. Figuring out if Zingers, Ding Dongs and Ho-Ho`s are better than nothing =)







