

Cultivating Our Power to Choose

This is a small group activity. Please read out loud and respond together as a group to the items below:

1. Go over the three reminders that support us in living a life grounded in freedom and choice. Take turns summarizing each concept and see whether everyone in the group shares the same understanding.
 - a. “I have a wealth of personal resources.”
 - b. “I always have choice in what I do or say.”
 - c. “I can accept reality or I can resist it.”
2. Give a real example (taken from your own lives) to illustrate each concept.
3. Pick one of the six scenarios (Group Handout #13.3 “Playing the Card We’ve Been Dealt”). As a group, assume the role of the primary character in the scenario and apply the 3 reminders in the following sequence:
 - a. Recognize resources:
Brainstorm, naming all the resources — personal qualities and material resources — that you possess as individuals in this group. Ask one member to record the list.
 - b. Accept: How might you fully accept this moment’s reality?
 - State the reality in the form of an NVC observation.
 - Devise one or several strategies that would support you in fully accepting what is already true. You might, for example, take turns expressing what you are feeling in relationship to this reality. Or you might create a ritual that helps you move through disbelief, denial, resistance, resentment, etc.
 - Name the unmet needs in this situation. Pick one need that seems most prominent and take time to connect with it fully. Hold this need silently: be aware of how (and how much) you value it or yearn for its fulfillment.
 - c. Choose freely:
 - Review the list of resources you brainstormed and highlight the items most likely to serve you in responding to this particular “card which life has dealt”.
 - While being grounded in a clear awareness of your current need(s), name ways you might choose to respond to the situation at hand.
 - Ask whether these choices take into account the needs of all those who are touched by the situation (and what need of yours might be served by considering this question).
4. When you have completed the process, decide what you have learned that would be valuable to share with participants in the large group during debrief.