

Be Your Own Coach

Grade Level:

3-6

Objective:

Students will set a fitness goal and learn strategies for motivating themselves.

Materials:

- Whiteboard
- Markers
- Poster board or construction paper
- Markers, crayons, pens, pencils and/or other writing utensils
- Optional: arts and crafts supplies like glitter, glue, stickers, magazines for cutting out pictures, etc.

Class Time:

30-45 minutes

SEL Competencies:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Responsible Decision Making

Procedure:

1. Discuss with the class why exercise and eating well is important: it builds strong muscles, keeps our heart healthy, improves our moods, helps us sleep better and has numerous other benefits! But it can be hard to motivate yourself to exercise daily.
2. Ask students to call out different kinds of physical exercise and write them on the board. If students are struggling, you can provide additional examples, which include:
 - going for a 10-20 minute walk
 - going for a hike
 - jogging or running
 - biking
 - playing sports like basketball, tennis, soccer, baseball, etc.
 - swimming
 - yoga
3. Tell students that everyone's #1 coach is themselves: we all have the ability to motivate or discourage us from exercise (or whatever our other goals are). Discuss the concept of "self-talk," which is the talking that you do to yourself in your head. Self-talk can be encouraging or critical. In exercise or other parts of life, it's important to nourish positive self-talk to motivate yourself and achieve your goals. Here are some examples:

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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Procedure (cont.):

NEGATIVE SELF-TALK	POSITIVE SELF-TALK
"There's no point in trying. I'm terrible."	"It's okay that I didn't get it today. I'll try again tomorrow."
"Why is this so hard? I can't do it anymore!"	"It's not easy to be good at something when I'm just starting. I'll take this one day at a time."
"I knew this would be impossible."	"Anything is possible!"
"I quit."	"I'll take a break and try again."

4. Inform students that they'll be making their own motivational poster. Have students write at the top of their poster or piece of paper: [NAME]'S FITNESS PLAN.
5. Next, have students write down two or three positive statements that they'll tell themselves when exercising – in other words, the encouragement that their "inner coach" will give them.
6. The biggest section in the middle of the poster should be a simple T-chart that says GOAL / WHEN. Under GOAL, students will write the exercise goal they have in mind, whether that's going for a hike, playing basketball, doing yoga, etc. Under WHEN, students will write how often they will do this activity (i.e., every day, every week, three times a week, etc.).
7. Have students decorate their poster however they'd like. Images of athletes or physical activity from magazines can always be good encouragement. Have them hang up their poster at home in a prominent place so it will motivate them to stick to their fitness goals.
8. Discuss the following critical thinking questions:
 - Why is exercise important for us?
 - How we can make physical activity a part of our routine?