

TWELVE COOPERATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

FOR PSYCHOLOGY

WRITTEN BY

ROBERT B. LEACH

**MENTOR TEACHER, DUARTE HIGH SCHOOL, 1992-1995
VETERAN TEACHER, 1977-PRESENT
PRESIDENT, RELEVANCE, INC.**

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**RELEVANCE, INC.
1149 #2 CALLE DE LA LUNA
AZUSA, CALIFORNIA 90702
Leachenutt@aol.com**

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**ROSE LEACH
ALEJANDRA HERNANDEZ
LIZBETH CASTANEDA
MATT MOODY
MISI WARD**

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Myriad changes have taken place in the study of Psychology since I began teaching this subject at Duarte High School over thirty years ago. At that time the field of Psychology was limited to the study of the behavior of organisms. Now, due to the incredible advancements in technology and neuroscience, we can isolate the areas of the brain that are responsible for our various emotions and behaviors. Through surgery or medications such as prozac, lithium, and paxil, we can correct emotional problems and improve the quality of life for so many.

Through the years we have also seen the credibility and respect for the field of Psychology rise markedly. Today successful companies employ psychologists and also pay top dollars to inspirational speakers who can motivate employees to perform to the best of their abilities. Every professional athletic team and many college teams have a psychologist that help players to stay relaxed and positive in order to perform to their optimum level. While at one time many people saw meditation as a very strange practice, more and more people are utilizing this relaxing method to reduce the stress of modern living.

This tremendous progress translates into making the teaching of Psychology at the high school level even more fun and relevant! More and more high schools are offering introductory Psychology classes as well as

advanced placement classes. This is certainly great news for those of us who love teaching Psychology. “Making Psychology Fun and Relevant, IV” provides for you great cooperative learning activities that will provide wonderful discussions for your students. The topics are all relevant to the standards but also to the interests of your students. They are open-ended questions that inspire the students to think at a high level. Your students will particularly appreciate the questions not only because they will enjoy the topics but also because there are no correct answers. You will enjoy these activities because of the deep level of critical thinking that takes place and the animation, joy, and frequent laughter of your students.

In the mainstreamed classes that many of us teach, we must be concerned about stimulating our brightest students while not leaving our slower learners far behind. The activities from “Making Psychology Fun and Relevant, IV will be challenging enough for advanced level students but also stimulating for your slower learners, ELD, and SDAIE students. You will find that when you heterogeneously group your youngsters, your brighter students will be very helpful to the slower learners. Also the groups will make it much easier for you to check for understanding as you perform your ongoing assessments.

I would recommend that, after you introduce the assignment, you give the students about twenty to twenty-five minutes to discuss the questions within their groups. While they are engaged in their discussions, you will be circulating to observe, enhance, and clarify when necessary. When I catch a group in a particularly high level discussion on one of the questions, I acknowledge them with a “bonus star” that amounts to five extra credit points. Believe it or not, even students at high school age appreciate bonus stars!

After all the groups have completed their discussions on the questions, I like to have one person from each group come up to present their answers. It is preferable to wait until the next day, however, to have the group’s representative share their answers. My students have difficulty getting re-focused after the group activity and their attention tends to be much better the next day.

All of the activities are easily reproduced for your students but feel free to “tweak” them to suit your own purposes and style. I have had tremendous success and fun with these activities with my students and am sure that you will too. Please contact me if you need any help or would like to share with me how effectively “Making Psychology Fun and Relevant, IV” worked for you and your students. Have a fabulous school year!

Table Of Contents

Friendship	1
What Motivates You, Competition Or Cooperation?	3
The Pressure To Succeed: Is The Bar Too High?	5
The Drive To Be Successful	7
Anger Management	11
Reinforcement: Does it Shape Or Control Others	13
Compliments As Reinforcement	15
Being A Teen: The Best Stage Of Our Lives:	17
Sleep And Performance	19
Dogs: Man's Best Friend?	21
Stress And Alcohol	23
Good Mental Health	26

The National Standards For High School Psychology Curricula

Topic	Standards
Friendship	VC-3.7
The Pressure To Succeed: Is The Bar Too High	IIC-1.1
The Drive To Be Successful	IIC-1.1
Anger Management	IID-1.1
Reinforcement: Does It Shape Or Control Others?	IVA-3.3
Compliments	IVA-3.1
Being A Teen: The Best Stage Of Our Lives?	IIIB-2.2
Sleep And Performance	IVD-2.3
Dogs: Man's Best Friend?	IID-4, IID-4.2
Stress And Alcohol	IVD-5.2, IID-4
Good Mental Health	VA-1.1, VA-1.2

Introduction:

Social relationships predict life satisfaction across time and place. From childhood through old age, those with friends experience greater psychological well-being than those without friends. A large cross-cultural study found just one common indicator of happiness across all countries analyzed, social relationships.

Time spent with friends seems to be particularly satisfying. In one study, adults and teens were paged every two hours and asked what they were doing, who, if anyone, was with them, and how they felt. About 65 percent of the time the volunteers were in the presence of others. The most interesting result was that participants of all ages reported higher levels of enjoyment and excitement when they were with friends than when they were alone or with casual acquaintances, coworkers, or family. How does friendship foster our happiness? What specific needs do friends meet? We will investigate this in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Most of us feel more comfortable in the presence of friends. List as many benefits that friends give to us that makes us feel so much better around them.
2. Married adults' report being happier with friends than when they were alone with their spouses. Their happiest times, however, are when they and their spouses were together with friends. Why do you suppose this happens?
3. It is not unusual for dating couples or married couples to have a friend that their significant other/spouse does not like. If you were in that situation, would you be more likely to avoid seeing that friend or see the friend without your significant other/spouse? Why?

4. Several studies have shown that having a large number of social contacts enables a person to live almost three years longer. Why do you suppose this is the case?

5. The cost of living and the challenges of marriage have resulted in many people marrying later in life. Today there are actually more households of unmarried people than married. If you were in your mid-twenties to mid-thirties and unmarried would you prefer living with a friend(s) or living alone? Why?

6. Many of you have spent not only high school but also your middle school and elementary years with some of the same people. You have had a chance to form some lasting friendships. Do you foresee maintaining life-long friendships with a few of these people? Why? Do you foresee yourself coming back for reunions? Why?

7. If you wanted to go to the beach and none of your friends were available, would you go by yourself? Why?

Psychology
*What Motivates You, Competition
Or Cooperation?*

Name _____
Date _____
Period _____

Introduction:

Our economic system in the United States is totally based on the idea that competition brings out the best in individuals and companies. Through competition with other companies, the consumer will get the best quality products at the lowest prices with great service. When one company comes up with a new innovation, the others will have to keep up. Certainly those companies that cannot compete will go out of business.

The American way is all about “keeping up with the Joneses.” If our neighbor or friend buys the latest gadget, car, or television, we have to get one as good if not better. A popular bumper sticker at one time seems to describe the American way best, “he who dies with the most toys wins.” Americans seem to make everything a contest and our prestige, social status, and respect are always on the line.

Is it natural for us to want to compete and be better than every one else? Does competition bring out our best or does it cause us to resort to less desirable qualities like lying, cheating, and greed in order to win? Do some people prefer cooperation rather than competition to motivate them? We will investigate these topics in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Americans love watching the best teams and individuals compete in sports and other endeavors. In recent years, it has been discovered that many star athletes have used steroids in order to perform better. Some of them have surpassed the records from earlier generations. Do you think competition brings out the best in us or causes us to resort to any measures in order to win? Explain.

2. Pair sharing and cooperative learning groups have become more popular in schools today. The “old school” approach was that individuals would do their own work and sharing with other students was considered cheating. Do you enjoy and perform best when cooperating or competing against other students? Explain.

3. A recent article in the Los Angeles Times chronicled the charitable donations of wealthy Americans. Although some like Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, and Warren Buffett were particularly generous, many were less philanthropic. This was because they enjoyed the power and fame that their huge wealth provided. So much good could be done if they were generous but they preferred the status of being at or near the top in income. Do you think you would feel the same way? Explain.

4. An adolescent girl was shopping with her mother in an exclusive department store in New York City. Her mother had just purchased for her a very expensive Gucci bag. The young girl’s response was “now my friends will really be jealous of me.” Do you think most of us are competing with our friends in terms of being successful and acquiring possessions? Explain.

5. If a friend of yours had just received a prestigious award would you more likely be happy for them or jealous? Explain.

6. Do you feel that competitiveness or cooperativeness is the more beneficial personality trait to possess in our society? Explain.

Psychology
*The Pressure to Succeed: Is the Bar
Too High*

Name _____
Date _____
Period _____

Introduction:

One of our society's most cherished cornerstone beliefs is the Protestant Work Ethic. It simply states that, "any one can achieve anything if they are willing to work hard for it." The movie, "Forrest Gump," showed this beautifully as we saw a young man with physical handicaps and a low I.Q. go on to be a college graduate, war hero, football star, multi-millionaire, philanthropist, loyal friend, and eventually married the girl of his dreams. Does this belief serve as an optimistic incentive to take on challenges or put too much pressure on us to achieve? We will investigate this in the topics below.

Directions:

Answer the questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Little league baseball has long been criticized because of parents who put undue pressure on youngsters at an early age. Today the best girls and boys compete on year around club teams playing "travel ball" to excel in their sport. Often they give up other sports to focus in on one. Is this competition fun or too much pressure? Explain.
2. At one time high school students could go to top universities with around a 3.0 grade point average. Today the average G.P.A. of entering freshmen at elite universities is around a 3.9 to 4.0. It is not uncommon for students with grade point averages over 4.0 to be rejected. Does the emphasis on "Advanced Placement" classes and high performance challenge students to be their best or make it too difficult to attend the best universities? Explain.
3. Charles Darwin, the famous biologist, believed that the theory of natural selection meant that only the strongest would survive. High schools today

have tougher graduation requirements, trying to make sure you have the skills to survive an increasingly competitive world. As a result, students take more math, science, and English classes than earlier generations. Do you agree that these are the classes that will most benefit your survival and ability to get a successful career? Explain.

4. A nursery rhyme that most every one is taught at an early age is about the “Little Engine That Could.” It was able to make it up the steep hill because it repeatedly told itself, “I think I can.” Do you believe that, with a positive attitude, any one can achieve their dreams if they are willing to work hard for it? Explain.

5. The outsourcing of jobs and the downsizing of companies have made finding well paying careers increasingly challenging and competitive to attain. As you approach adulthood do you look forward to the challenge of the competition or see it as scary and possibly overwhelming? Explain.

6. Our capitalistic economic system is all about competition. We believe that competition brings out the best in companies and their employees. From your experiences have you found that competition brings out the best or worst in us? Explain.

7. Millions of people enjoy sports like bowling and billiards even when they are not very good. Could you enjoy playing a sport in which you don’t have much talent? Explain.

Introduction:

The legendary UCLA basketball coach, John Wooden believed that, “Success is the peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.” Our society has a completely different view of success. In order to achieve it, we have to climb the social ladder, attain wealth, and gain fame, preferably as a movie star, professional athlete, singer/rapper, or some other form of celebrity. Working in your dream profession, a career for which you have passion, and having the drive and excitement to do your best each day is about as good as it gets. Do you have the right outlook and perspective in order to reach your dream career and attain success? We will examine this topic in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the statements below within a group by circling the number that most closely reveals your attitude. The numbers reflect the strength to which you are in agreement or disagreement with the statement. Give an explanation as to why you felt the way you did about each topic.

Making Your Dream Your Goal

1. I have a dream career and am actively taking the steps to achieve it.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

I Have Mentors In My Life Who Share Their Wisdom And I Take Advantage Of It.

2. I take the time to listen to adults I respect and utilize their knowledge.

Explanation:

Belief In The Protestant Work Ethic

3. I believe that I can achieve anything if I am willing to work hard for it.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Don't Put All Your Eggs In One Basket

4. I am confident I can reach my dream but I also have an exciting back up plan.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Networking: I take the time to have and maintain friendships.

5. I have good friends and I take the time to stay in touch and get together.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Persistence:

6. I see obstacles to my dreams as challenges and don't let setbacks stop me.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Self-Discipline: Using Common Sense And good Judgment

7. I have the self-discipline to avoid behaviors and habits that hurt me.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Passion/Skill

8. I am enthusiastic about getting better each day in the field that I love.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Delaying Gratification

9. I can postpone immediate pleasures for larger more worthwhile ones in the future.

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Explanation:

Interpretations:

Add your ratings from questions one through eight to see where you fit in on the scale.

- 18 -27 = You are making excellent progress towards your dream career.
- 9 - 17 = You are making moderate attempts towards reaching your dream career.
- 1 - 8 = You are making progress to reach your dreams, adjustments are necessary.
- 0 - -9 = You are unaware of the steps necessary to reach your dream career.
- 10 - -17 = You are not getting as much joy because you aren't in pursuit of a dream.
- 18 - -27 = You are moving aimlessly and are in serious need of setting some goals.

My Total: _____ My Category: _____

Conclusions:

1. Did you agree with the category in which you were placed? Why?

2. It has been said that most of the pleasure we get in life is anticipatory. We derive most of our pleasure and excitement from looking forward to doing and achieving things in our future. People who are pursuing a dream have that anticipation. They are going to enjoy life much more than those who are not taking steps to reach a dream. Do you agree? Why?

3. While it is important to have a dream career, many experts on ambition and success believe it is just as necessary to have a second option just in case you do not reach your dream. Do you think the experts are right? Explain.

Introduction:

Frustration and disappointment are emotions that all of us will feel from time to time. Generally speaking, we all have a frustration level or boiling point in which we could occasionally “lose it.” Psychologists believe that Type B personalities, the more laid back, easygoing demeanor, handles disappointments much better than a Type A person. How well do you handle such negative emotions? Why do some people take life’s struggles well and others have difficulty? We will examine these issues in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. We have all heard the expression that “a person knows how to push my buttons.” There are those that say or do things that get us particularly upset. Also there are life’s occurrences that we find very frustrating. Rank the following in order of which ones your group would find the most frustrating:
___ spreading a false rumor about you ___ some one who “knows it all”
___ some one who constantly interrupts ___ some one who is always late
___ some one who puts you down/trash talks ___ waiting in long lines
___ sitting in a traffic jam ___ being cut off in traffic
___ some one insults you ___ other _____
___ other _____
2. There are certain situations in our society where we see arguments, fights, and even brawls more acceptable. Managers, coaches, and players get some leeway in athletic events when yelling at umpires and officials. Why are we more accepting of displays of anger during athletic contests?

3. When a group of high school athletes were asked if they preferred an encouraging coach or one who motivated them by yelling, screaming, and on some occasions, swearing, they preferred the one who got angry. They felt the one who was more volatile cared for them. Do you agree with them? Why?

4. Developing healthy outlets to deal with frustration and anger are essential. Losing your cool with a boss, girlfriend, wife, friend, or co-worker can result in some very negative consequences. List five healthy ways of dealing with frustration that can help you to remain calm in difficult situations.

5. While fistfights occasionally take place on high school campuses, we have seen more of these between girls in recent years. Why do you suppose we are seeing more outward displays of anger with females?

6. I have more respect for others and myself when remaining calm in frustrating situations. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

7. Discuss a time when you lost your temper. Do you think you would handle it differently if it happened today? Why?

Introduction:

Most of us have grown up believing that we are all unique individuals because of our personality. No two people have the same personality. B.F. Skinner, the famous psychologist, believes that we are not as unique as we might think. He believed that our behavior was much more dictated by strong rewards than by our personality. How possibly could Adolph Hitler get so many young Germans to hate Jews and commit such horrible acts of violence? By offering great rewards to the “Hitler Youth” he was able to manipulate these youngsters into performing some reprehensible behaviors. It was so overpowering that even the current Catholic Pope, Benedict, was a member of the Hitler Youth! Are we just as vulnerable to manipulation by the use of rewards? We will investigate this in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. It is believed that the people who control access to the rewards we desire have power over us. Who are the people in your life that control access to the rewards you want?
2. It was suggested in question one that people who control access to the rewards you want have tremendous power over you. Do you think that is true? Explain.
3. It was stated in the introduction that Hitler was adept at using rewards to manipulate young people into supporting some horrible treatment of others that they knew was wrong. Do you think you would have been able to resist the

temptation of significant rewards and refrained from joining his youth group? Explain.

4. Do you think your goals and dreams are more guided by reinforcement of others or by your personality? Explain.

5. Oprah Winfrey, Donald Trump, Bill Gates, and George W. Bush are a few very powerful people because of their wealth and/or position. Most people have tremendous admiration for them. If you were in their position, do you think you would get more joy out of your wealth or your ability to exert influence and use your power? Explain.

6. Parents have the ability to shape our values, our interests, our hobbies, and even our goals and dreams. Do you think you will be trying to create a “mini-me” or will you allow your children to follow their own path? Explain. How much freedom have your parents given you in following your dreams? Explain.

Introduction:

B.F. Skinner, the noted psychologist, established that reinforcement is a very powerful tool in shaping behavior. People are more likely to do behaviors that are rewarded. Those that are punished tend to be extinguished. What are the rewards that are effective in getting people to do appropriate behaviors? Do the people that offer these rewards control our behavior and possess power over us? We will examine these and related issues in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class.

1. Compliments, particularly from respected authorities, can be very effective in shaping behavior. List ten words or phrases that can be used to praise another.
2. Research has shown that a sincere compliment from some one that you highly respect is one of the most powerful rewards that you can receive. Do you think that is true? Explain.
3. Typically, people avoid those with which they do not get along. Occasionally, there are those who believe they can win a person over by “killing them with kindness.” If you had to work with some one with which you didn’t get along, which approach would you be more likely to take? Why?

4. I have heard females who have broken up with a boyfriend claim the reason for it was “he was too nice.” Is it possible for people to be too nice? Explain.

5. If some one complimented you, would you be more likely to think he/she was being genuine or there was an ulterior motive? Explain.

6. A poster, which displays practices we should engage in to be happier, suggests that we should compliment three people a day. If you followed this recommendation would this be more likely to make you or the recipient of your praise happier? Explain.

7. Assuming praise is such an effective tool and makes people feel better, why isn't it used more frequently? Explain.

Introduction:

According to psychologist, Harry Stack Sullivan, the tasks of adolescence are monumental. We need to be able have a close friendship with another of the same gender before we can do so with an individual of the opposite sex. The sexual desires that are awakening need to be integrated with intimacy so that we eventually have a healthy and loving relationship with a significant other. We need to develop anxiety control, confidence in our ability to have relationships, and the knowledge that we will be able to take care of ourselves in a competitive and stressful society.

Adolescence is a time when we may have to deal with being awkward physically, unsure emotionally, and confused with hormones that are unstable and sometimes raging. On the other hand, this stage of youth can involve some of our greatest successes, romance, and clean spontaneous fun. Is adolescence a time filled with youthful exuberance, exciting challenges, and remarkable triumph? Or is it a period of discomfort due to our changing bodies, the pressure to succeed, and confusion whether to succumb to the influence of our peers or stand out as an individual? We will investigate this topic in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. The noted psychologist, Harry Stack Sullivan, believes we need to have a close friendship with another of our own gender before we can have this with a boyfriend or girlfriend. What do you suppose we learn from a close friendship that makes us better able to have a relationship?

2. List three advantages and three disadvantages to being a teenager today.

3. Youngsters in their teens tend to want to be older and when people show signs of aging, they want to be younger. What age would you consider to be ideal? Why?

4. Previous generations lacked cell phones, computers, iPods, cable television, and countless other modern conveniences. However, concert tickets, admissions to movies and sporting events were much more affordable as was a college education. Do you suppose it is more fun to be a teenager today or was it better twenty-five years ago? Why?

5. There are an estimated 5,000 high school students that commit suicide each year. List five reasons for depression and/or difficulty in coping for teens.

6. We often hear that most people come from dysfunctional families. Emotional abuse, alcoholism, drug abuse, gambling, divorce, and countless other problems within the home can contribute to a teen's unhealthy development. Some rise above the problems and excel while others are too distracted to perform well. What could be done to help more students develop resilience, the ability to withstand setbacks and problems and still be able to focus on the task at hand?

7. I will be coming back to my high school reunions because my high school years have been filled with great friendships and fun. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Introduction:

People vary in their need for rest and sleep. While the American lifestyle seems to demand more and more time, some cultures around the world still make room for a nap in the middle of the day. Most studies show that the optimum amount of sleep to perform efficiently is between seven and eight hours. Teenagers, during their development years, can require as much as nine to ten hours to feel fully refreshed. While some people enjoy one of nature's great gifts, others struggle with insomnia that leaves them tired and frustrated. What choices do you make that facilitate the quality of your sleep? We will examine this topic in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Some studies show that teenagers are sleep deprived. Many experts have recommended that school begin no earlier than 9:00a.m. Do you think a later start would help the performance of the students? Why?
2. Studies have shown that our bodies have an internal clock. We sleep best if we get to bed consistently around the same time, preferably before midnight. This is the case even when we get the same number of hours of sleep. Essentially, sleeping from 10:00 in the evening until 6:00 in the morning is more beneficial than sleeping from 1:00a.m. until 9:00a.m. Do you think this is true? Explain.
3. Flipping the mattress periodically, frequently changing your sheets, and making your bed daily can have a positive impact on your sleep. List three other factors that help you to fall asleep.

4. Drinks that include caffeine are often used to help people wake up but are detrimental to allowing people to fall asleep. Experts suggest avoiding these drinks and chocolate after 6 o'clock at night. Have you found a relationship between consuming these products and having difficulty sleeping? Explain.

5. Most of us have very busy lives and have trouble finding enough time to get everything done. Some people take the time to get a nap or occasionally fall asleep while watching television. Do these restful periods improve our performance or make it more difficult to fall asleep at night? Explain.

6. Many experts suggest that the "multi-tasking" that is so prevalent in today's society makes it very difficult for us to unwind, relax, and fall asleep. Do you think you would sleep better if, like earlier generations, we more frequently performed one task at a time? Explain.

7. A trend in home building today is to build houses that include two master bedrooms. A significant number of married couples prefer to have separate bedrooms. They report getting more quality sleep without the presence of another in the room. List three reasons why couples might feel this way. Do you project that you would be interested in purchasing a home like this? Why?

Introduction:

It has long been believed that dog is man's best friend. Studies have shown that dogs are not only faithful companions but also effective in reducing stress in our hectic lives. Animal rights activists are vigilant in their attempts at protecting dogs and many other types of furry creatures today. Domestic pets hold a high place on our society. We will examine their role in providing a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. List three advantages and disadvantages to owning a dog.
2. Studies have shown that dogs reduce stress levels and actually add years to our lives. Do you think this is true? Why?
3. An old adage is that "dog is man's best friend." Do you think dogs are more loyal, friendly, and soothing to our senses than cats? Explain.
4. The death of a dog or cat for many owners is an incredibly traumatic experience. Many people shake their heads that a person can take an animal's death so emotionally. Are pet owners over-reacting or are we supposed to get this attached to our pets? Explain.

5. Some dogs like Pit Bulls, Dobermans, and German Shepherds are bred to be aggressive. Why do you suppose a pet owner might want a dog of this nature? Would you enjoy a dog like this? Why?

6. Horses enjoy a lofty position in our society right along dogs. Despite this status, companies have sold horsemeat to restaurant owners in France where it is a prized dinner selection. American companies that sell this meat enjoy huge profits. Do you see anything wrong with this? Explain.

7. I can't see myself living life to the fullest without owning a dog. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Introduction:

Statistics show that alcohol is the most widely abused drug. While our country made alcoholic consumption illegal for a brief period, it became obvious that this habit was too engrained in the American culture to eliminate. Surprisingly, alcohol consumed in moderation has shown to be healthy both physically and in reducing stress. It has been found that for many people two drinks a day can actually prolong a person's life and effectively cut down on our stress levels. Unfortunately, too many people cannot stop at two and this when it becomes dangerous. Is alcohol consumption an effective manner to "unwind" and control stress or a threat to the healthy functioning of individuals and families? We will explore this topic in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. A recent survey of twelfth graders in a Southern California high school revealed that well over fifty percent of them planned to get drunk on an upcoming weekend. Are you surprised by these findings? Explain.
2. Tailgate parties at college football games for both collegians and alums of universities have included the imbibing of much alcohol. A book entitled "Beer and Circus" claims that a major factor for most high school seniors in selecting a college has as much to do with the quality of the parties as it does their academic standing. Do you think this is true? Explain.
3. At one time numerous states in America allowed consumption of alcoholic beverages at the age of eighteen. Today all states require that a person be

twenty-one before consuming alcohol. They found that people under twenty-one were not mature enough to drink responsibly. Were they right? Explain.

4. Studies claim that drinking in moderation, consuming two drinks a day, is good for one's health. Drinking more than two will shorten your life span. Would you consider someone that had two drinks a day a moderate or heavy drinker? Explain.

5. New flavors of alcoholic beverages are continuously being developed to try to attract more customers to buy adult beverages. Some experts claim that this is done in order to appeal to the under age youth. Do you think this is true? Explain.

6. Studies have shown that each alcoholic beverage consumed will kill thousands of brain cells and they don't replenish themselves. Certainly if one abused alcohol over a long period of time, an alcoholic psychosis or dementia could result. Do you think the consumption of alcohol during your adulthood would facilitate or be harmful to your mental health? Explain.

7. The culture of drinking has become more and more popular in recent years. People now plan entire vacations to various locations known for wine tasting. At the same time we have seen many families devastated by the presence of an alcoholic in the family. From your own observations, do you think more families are benefiting or being harmed by the consumption of alcohol? Explain.

8. Today many people are taking Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil, and various other medications that alleviate depression and anxiety. People with depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder have self-medicated by utilizing alcohol or illegal drugs to dull their pain. Do you think that the increase in the use of legal medications will eventually reduce the popularity of “drinking” in our society? Explain.

Introduction:

The human body and brain are remarkable in the capabilities they have for physical and intellectual accomplishment. All of us, however, have limitations. Some of us may have attention deficit problems, some have phobias, and still others have tendencies to be obsessive. Are these the quirks and idiosyncrasies that make us interesting and unique or abnormal behaviors that require therapy? When it comes to our emotional and mental health, it's believed that all of us can benefit from therapy. We are going to investigate the feelings you have about mental health in the questions below.

Directions:

Answer the following questions within a group and be prepared to discuss them with the rest of the class.

1. Fear of limited spaces or claustrophobia is quite common. List five other common phobias.
2. Major league baseball player, Nomar Garciaparra, has quite an extensive "ritual" he follows prior to each pitch. Basketball players have routines they follow before attempting their free throws. Do you see these as timing devices, superstitions, obsessions, or something else? Explain.
3. Phobias arise from earlier experiences that create panic. What are factors or experiences involved in relationships that cause many people, particularly males, to have commitment phobia?

4. It is believed that children are mentally healthy to the degree that their parents do not try to vicariously live through them. That is to say that children are healthier when they pursue their own dreams rather than fulfill the dreams their parents have for them. Do you think the mental health of parents has an impact on their children? Explain.

5. Noted psychologist, Abraham Maslow studied mentally healthy people and described the qualities of those who are most healthy. List five qualities or personality characteristics of those that have the best mental health.

6. People can be obsessive about neatness, cleanliness, health, exercise, and certainly just about anything. Do you think you would be more comfortable with a roommate who was somewhat messy or obsessively organized? Why?

7. Do you think you would experience better mental health if you learned to accept your shortcomings or worked hard to overcome them? Explain.