Teaching Habits Of Mind – Using Habits of Mind Cards

Aim: To develop a broad understanding of each of the 16 Habits of Mind, and to develop students language skills in relation to the Habits of Mind.

Activities

All of the following activities use the Habits of Mind cards. (Copies at the end of this document)

Preparation

Photocopy and cut up the Habits of Mind cards. You will need one set per group of students. Students work in groups of 2-4. It can help to laminate the cards and put an identifying mark on the back of each set so the sets don’t get mixed up (alternatively photocopy each set onto a different color paper). For the Concentration game, it is useful to ensure that the paper is thick enough so students can’t easily see through it.

Prior Understandings

Students should be familiar with the idea of what a habit is, and had some introduction to the concept of Habits of Mind. Perhaps a detailed investigation of one or more of the Habits of Mind could be undertaken before these activities so students appreciate the depth inherent in each.

Activity One – Habit Matching

Conduct a brief discussion about each of the 16 Habits of Mind. Discuss the meaning of the words as well as the significance of the icons. Having poster on the walls of each of the habits can aid this.

Remove any posters from the walls.

Have students shuffle the cards and then attempt to match up the Habit of Mind with its; icon, identifying phrase, short definition and a quote. Depending on the age of the students, and the sophistication of the understanding required one or more of these card types could be removed.

As students attempt to match the cards for each Habit it elicits a surprising degree of discussion about what each of the Habits of Mind mean.

Allow students to check their answers from the posters or a set of cards that haven’t been cut up.

Repeat the activity as needed, perhaps with a different subset of categories used.

Conduct a follow up discussion about any parts that students had trouble with.

Activity Two – Concentration

This will be a familiar game. Simply choose two or more of the types of cards (name of habit, icon, phrase, quote etc), shuffle and place face down on the table.

Students take turns, turning over cards attempting to match all the pieces for one Habit of Mind.

When cards are turned over, all students are shown what the card is before it is placed back, face down, on the table. Students attempt to remember where each part of each habit is on the table.

Modifications

Both activities can be modified to suit different groups or needs. Some suggestions are:

Where 16 habits are too many for a group, simply reduce the number of habits or the number of types of cards.

Allow students to create their own phrases and definitions etc for each of the habits.

Similar cards can be made from the results of a “Looks Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like” activity for each of the Habits of Mind.
Reflection

I conducted this activity with groups of 12-14 year olds. I was amazed at the level of discussion and degree of engagement displayed by the students. In just over an hour (both activities) students had become familiar enough with the names, icons and definitions of the Habits of Mind that I was able to use the language freely in class and have it understood by most students.

In this way I am now able to discuss all of the Habits of Mind in all my classes. I can point out opportunities for the students to engage in specific Habits of Mind, as well as identify when I see particular Habits being displayed in the classroom. This in turn has allowed me to integrate the ongoing development of the students understanding and application of Habits of Mind in all of my classes.

James Anderson

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Reference:

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| Persisting | **Stick to it!** | Persistence is the twin sister of excellence. One is a matter of quality; the other, a matter of time. Marabel Morgan, *The Electric Woman* | Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused |
| Listening with Empathy and Understanding | **Understand Others!** | Listening is the beginning of understanding... Wisdom is the reward for a lifetime of listening. Let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance - Proverbs 1:5 | Devoting mental energy to another person’s thoughts and ideas; holding in abeyance one’s own thoughts in order to perceive another’s point of view and emotions |
| Thinking About your Thinking (Metacognition) | **Know your knowing!** | When the mind is thinking it is talking to itself - Plato | Being aware of one’s own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others. |
| Questioning and Problem posing | How do you know? | The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, required creative imagination and marks real advances.... | Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve. |
| Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision | Be clear! | I do not so easily think in words... after being hard at work having arrived at results that are perfectly clear... I have to translate my thoughts in a language that does not run evenly with them. \[ - \text{Francis Galton, Geneticist.} \] | Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding overgeneralizations, distortions and deletions |
| Creating, Imagining and Innovating | Try a different way! | "The future is not some place we are going to but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination." \[ - \text{John Schaar, Political Scientist, University of Santa Clara Author, Loyalty in America} \] | Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality |
### Taking Responsible Risks

**Venture out!**

There has been a calculated risk in every stage of American development—"the pioneers who were not afraid of the wilderness, businessmen who were not afraid of failure, dreamers who were not afraid of action."

Brooks Atkinson

**Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one’s competence.**

### Thinking Interdependently

**Work together!**

Take care of each other. Share your energies with the group. No one must feel alone, cut off, for that is when you do not make it.

Willie Unsoeld

Renowned Mountain Climber

**Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations.**

### Managing Impulsivity

**Take your Time!**

"...goal directed self-imposed delay of gratification is perhaps the essence of emotional self-regulation: the ability to deny impulse in the service of a goal, whether it be building a business, solving an algebraic equation, or pursuing the Stanley cup."

Daniel Goleman "Emotional Intelligence" (1995) p. 83

**Thinking before acting; remaining calm thoughtful and deliberative.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Flexibly</th>
<th><strong>Look at it Another Way!</strong></th>
<th>If you never change your mind, why have one?</th>
<th>Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Edward deBono</td>
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<tr>
<td>Striving for Accuracy and precision</td>
<td><strong>Check it again!</strong></td>
<td>A man who has committed a mistake and doesn’t correct it is committing another mistake.</td>
<td>A desire for exactness, fidelity and craftsmanship.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confucius</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applying past knowledge to new situations</td>
<td><strong>Use what you Learn!</strong></td>
<td>&quot;I've never made a mistake. I've only learned from experience.&quot;</td>
<td>Accessing prior knowledge: transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Thomas A. Edison</td>
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<td>Gather data through all senses</td>
<td>Use your natural pathways!</td>
<td>Observe perpetually. Henry James</td>
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<td>Responding with Wonderment and awe</td>
<td>Have fun figuring it out!</td>
<td>The most beautiful experience in the world is the experience of the mysterious. Albert Einstein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding Humor</td>
<td>Laugh a little!</td>
<td>Where do bees wait? At the buzz stop. Andrew, Age six</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at oneself.</td>
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Remaining open to Continuous learning

Learn from experiences!

Insanity is continuing to do the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Albert Einstein

Having humility and pride when admitting we don’t know; resisting complacency