

Attitude

Attitude

Hawaiian

Hi Ua Pane

Jump to act

VS

Lele i hana

Fly off the handle

English

Respond

To reply thoughtfully, calmly, and appropriately in words or actions

VS

React

To act back in an emotional manner.

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Hawaiian

Ho`okaohi iho

To be in control
of oneself.

English

Self-control

Restraint over our desires.
Managing ourselves
and our impulses.

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Learning Objectives:

In this chapter students learn an equation that will help them change the outcomes they produce in their lives. $E + R = O$ means the EVENTS in our lives plus our REACTIONS to these events equal the OUTCOMES that we get. In math students learn that, "If you want to change something on one side of the equation, you have to change something on the other side of the equation." Here students learn that in order to change their OUTCOMES, they must change how they REACT to the events that happen in their lives.

Students are then taught to make a distinction between 'react' and 'respond'. This chapter builds on the previous chapter in that students are again inspired to think before they act. They are taught to think of the outcome they would like to have. Then they are encouraged to consider how they can respond to the event in order to produce the outcome they want.

In activities such as Sunny Day/Cloudy Day, students learn that if they stuff their emotions, a seemingly small event can trigger them causing an inappropriate explosion. In the activity entitled Emotional Overload, students discover how hard it is to function when we are emotionally overloaded. They discover and discuss strategies for communicating their hurt and anger before it turns into overload and gets out of control. All of these activities give the students a heightened sense of dignity through self-control.

In the activity called The Domino Effect, students are made conscious of the effect they have on others in a chain reaction of events. They also explore times in which they have been caught in someone else's chain of reactions. In Breaking the Chain, students encounter a method of breaking their reactions into their component parts: thoughts, emotions, and actions. Here they gain even greater control over themselves regardless of how challenging the situation or circumstance may be.

This chapter centers on the quality of our emotional responses and provides students with one more piece to the puzzle of their lives. It does so by helping students understand and release their emotions so that they can respond more appropriately to the events and situations that arise in their lives.

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Learner Outcomes:

As a result of this module, students will discover:

- It is better to respond instead of react
- That they can think before they react or explode in an inappropriate manner
- That they can look at the specific outcome they want, and to back it out to the response that will create that outcome
- It is better to share their feelings and emotions instead of stuffing them
- That stuffing emotions eventually leads to inappropriate outbursts
- That when they take responsibility for their emotions they have a powerful source for managing their lives
- That they have more power than they think to control the outcomes in their lives.

Key Concepts:

When you want to change something on one side of an equation, you have to change something on the other side. We are not pawns in the game of life. We can control the outcomes or results we produce by controlling how we respond to the situations and events in our lives. Stacked emotions cause inappropriate responses. We must learn appropriate ways of releasing our emotions so that we can respond instead of reacting in different situations. We are each the managers of our reactions. No one else can manage our reactions. It is the one area where we can have control. In classroom Planet Earth, one of the main lessons that each of us must learn is how to handle our emotions.

As students of life we must all learn to acknowledge our emotions. Then we must learn to deal with them appropriately by talking about our feelings. In this way we can release the charge on them. Then we can separate our thoughts from the emotions and the actions that follow. Finally we can start to change our reactions by changing our thinking.

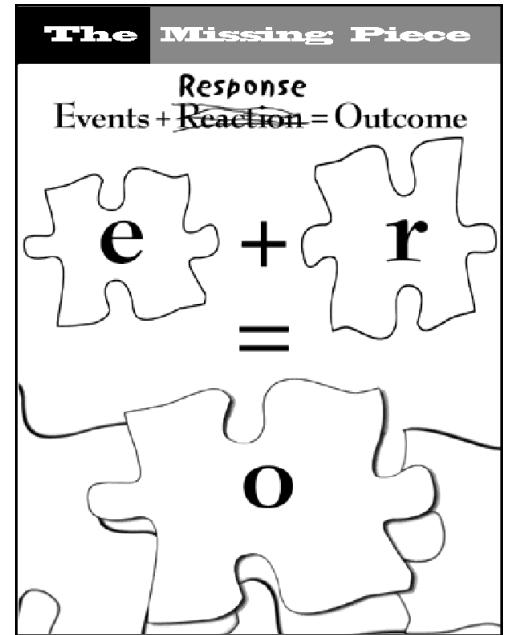
Find the Events + Response = Outcome page in the Appendix (see the image on the next page) and make copies as needed. Write on the board the following equation

$$\mathbf{E + R = O}$$

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Opening Discussion

Explain out loud to the class that, "In this equation, E = EVENTS, R = RESPONSE, and O = OUTCOME." Discuss what the words mean and ask, "How many of you would like to be able to change some of the outcomes or results in your lives?" Discuss. How many of you would like to be able to control your emotions instead of 'going off' when a person or event bothers you? Discuss.



(Put the 8 1/2 X 11" version of the Key Words "React VS Respond" on the bulletin board). One of our key words for the chapter is the distinction between react and respond. Does anyone know what the difference might be? Discuss. (React is to act back. If someone screams at you, you scream back. Respond, on the other hand, is the root word for responsible. Its connotation is to be responsible in your return. If you used tennis as the metaphor, react would be to slam dunk the ball, while respond would be to return the ball so as to continue the game.)

Do you think that handling our reactions to the events in our lives might be one of the missing pieces to the puzzle? Why or why not? How many of you have ever had a family member or friend 'go off' and you were the receiver? How many of you would like to understand why that is and how you can work with it better?

How many of you have ever wanted to control your speech or your actions, but you just didn't know how to do that? In this chapter, the piece to the puzzle that we will explore is how to change our thoughts, emotions, and behavior.

(Put the 8 1/2 X 11" version of the second Key Word "Self-control" on the bulletin board). What does self-control mean to you? Is self-control important in life? Why or why not?

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Unlikely Allies



Cynthia was angry. She would have cut school today, but she couldn't afford another run-in with the cops. So here she was, stuck in second period, exhausted from another night of her parents' fighting, and gazing out the window as she dreamed of surfing.

"This assignment is simple, Cynthia Barnes," Mr. Curtis looked at her intently as his voice cut through her reverie. "You'll each have a partner, and you'll have two days to prepare a 5-minute presentation on some aspect of school life."

Five minutes of pandemonium ensued as Mr. Curtis called out the partners and everyone regrouped. As the dust settled, Cynthia found herself sitting across from "Wayne the Wimp," the shyest boy in school.

Cynthia was irritated. "How did I get him?" she wondered. "How are we ever going to do this?" Wayne's voice slipped through her thoughts.

"Hello," Cynthia was sarcastic. "It's not my thing. Don't expect my help!"

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"Please, Cynthia," Wayne pleaded, "I'm afraid of being in front of the room." His honesty was disarming. For a moment Cynthia was touched. But she shook her head.

"Can't do it, Wayne," she said. "Don't even want to be here, so I can't help you." Wayne withered. Cynthia's words were searing.

"I need the grade, Cyn," he pleaded. "If I don't get the grade, I'll get a D for the semester and my parents will..." The school bell cut into his sentence and a moment later, Cynthia jumped up and was caught in a rush of students as they exited the classroom.

That night Cynthia was bothered. She tossed and turned restlessly in bed. She tried not to think of the project but she kept seeing Wayne's face and hearing his plea. "I'll get a D and my parents will..." Cynthia couldn't help but wonder what his parents would do. Maybe they hit him. Maybe that's why he was such a wimp. She suddenly felt sorry for him and wanted to help.

The next day in class, Cynthia pulled her chair up next to Wayne and sat down. "Okay, my friend," he said. "You pick the subject, and we'll pull it together."

"Cool!" Wayne's face broke into a grin. He didn't know what had happened, but he didn't care. "I've been thinking about the subject for a long time," he said. "I want to talk about making our school the first school in our district to be a "Tease-Free Zone." Cynthia was touched. She got the point. "Wayne the Wimp" wasn't really a wimp at all. He was willing to take a stand for a Tease-Free Zone if she would take a stand beside him. The next 45 minutes flew by as they prepared their speech with a poster to match.

The next day, their presentation was a smashing success. Cynthia said, "You can never judge a book by its cover," as Wayne stood proudly beside her, poster in hand. Even Joe Dobson, the biggest tease in the class, got the point. Mr. Curtis was so impressed that they earned an "A" on their presentation. Cynthia was really glad that she changed her attitude and chose to support Wayne after all.

Many months passed before a decision arose in the Student Council declaring their school a Tease-Free Zone.

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Nobody said that it started with Cynthia and Wayne's speech, but Cynthia and Wayne, friends at a distance now, secretly knew what had started the transformation. One person changing their attitude can make a huge difference.

By D. Trinidad Hunt

1. How do you think Wayne felt when Cynthia refused to help him at first? Think of a time when you really needed someone's help and they didn't help you? How did it feel? How are those feelings similar to the feelings Wayne was feeling? How are they different?

2. What feelings was Cynthia having that made her decide not to help Wayne at first? Recall a time when someone asked for your help and you didn't help him or her. What feelings were you having that made you decide not to help? How are those feelings similar to the feelings Cynthia was having? How are they different?

3. Think of a situation, either at school or at home, that you could change for the better if you changed your attitude? How would a change in attitude on your part change the situation? Be specific.

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Reaction City

Purpose: In this activity students begin to discover that they can change the results or outcomes they produce in their lives by changing how they respond in any given situation.

Materials: 2 storyboards per student
Pencils
Colored Pentels

Time: 25 - 35 minutes

Number: 20 - 30 students

Directions:

Review $E + R = O$. Make a distinction between reacting and responding. In reacting we act back, we have little choice, we are like the wooden pins that can't get out of the way of the bowling ball. If we respond, we are responsible, we have direction, we are more like the bowling ball itself, choosing to go in a particular direction. Discuss the difference between reacting and responding in a situation or event.

Ask the students to recall a time when they were in 'reaction city', a time when they 'blew their cool' and reacted in a way that created an unpleasant outcome. Ask them to do a cartoon of the situation and the outcome it created.

Then ask them to look at what outcome they would have liked to create. Ask them to do a second cartoon of how they would handle it now, knowing what they know about changing their outcome by changing how they respond ($E + R = O$).

Debrief:

Do a paired sharing and then a full room share to debrief this activity. Discuss different behaviors that might create the positive outcomes that we desire. Remind them that we have no control over how others behave, but that we do have control over our behavior.



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Breaking The Chain

Purpose: In this activity students start to separate their thoughts from their emotions and their actions. They begin to see that if you want to change your actions or behavior, you have to stop the emotion, and to stop the emotion you have to change the thought that started it.

Materials: 1 "Breaking the Chain" handout
Pencils or pens

Time: 35-45 minutes

Number: 30-35 students

Directions:

Review $E+R=O$. The question is, how do we change our REACTIONS in the $E+R=O$ equation. Today we are going to take a look at how reactions happen. Reactions may look as if they are instantaneous, but if you put a microscope to your reactions, you will find that they have three parts to them. One reaction consists of a thought + an emotion+ an action.

Imagine this:

You are walking home from school all by yourself. Normally your friend, Billy, is with you, but on this particular day, Billy didn't make it to school, so you are alone. As you turn the corner you see a gang of boys at the far end of the block. They look up at you menacingly. One of the gang members points at you and makes a comment, then they all turn and start moving in your direction. You drop your books, turn around and run.

Let's look at what happened here. We had an $E+R=O$. We had an EVENT. What was the event? (Person walking home from school alone, meets gang.)

We had a REACTION. What was the reaction? (Person drops books and runs.)

We had an OUTCOME. What do you think the outcome might be? (He/she probably saved himself by running.)

Now let's look at the R part of this, the REACTION part of this more closely.

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As you turn the corner you see a gang of boys at the far end of the block. They look up at you menacingly. (You **think**, "Oh no! Where is Billy when I need him? They look mean." The **emotion** of fear runs through your body.) One of the gang members points at you and makes a comment, then they all turn and start moving in your direction. (You **think**, "I've got to get out of here before I'm dead meat." Your heart races with **terror**.) You drop your books, turn around and **run**. (**Action**)

This all happens very quickly, like a chain reaction. You have a thought that creates an emotion that leads to an action or reaction. It looks like this:

THOUGHT → EMOTION → ACTION

It is actually very important that it happen so quickly. If you had to sit around and think about whether or not to run, you would probably be pulverized by the time you decided to move.

Now where this gets us in trouble is when the situation is not so life threatening. So let's look at some of the more common EVENTS in our lives. (Either elicit an event from the students or use the following example.) What about a pretty common situation at home like when your younger brother goes into your room and empties all your drawers on the floor. Or how about when your mother tells you you're grounded because she has told you to clean your room 10 times and you haven't done it.

Let's do the first situation: The EVENT is that you walk into your bedroom to do your homework, turn on the light, and see that all your clothes are all over the floor. Ask the students what each their REACTION might be in each area:

THOUGHT = (i.e. I'm sick of my brother. He did it again!)

EMOTION = (i.e. Anger and frustration)

ACTION = (i.e. Rush into brother's room and begin hitting him.)

Let's look at E+R=O again. If we want to change the OUT-COME we have to change our REACTION, don't we? So how do we do that? We do that by changing the thought.

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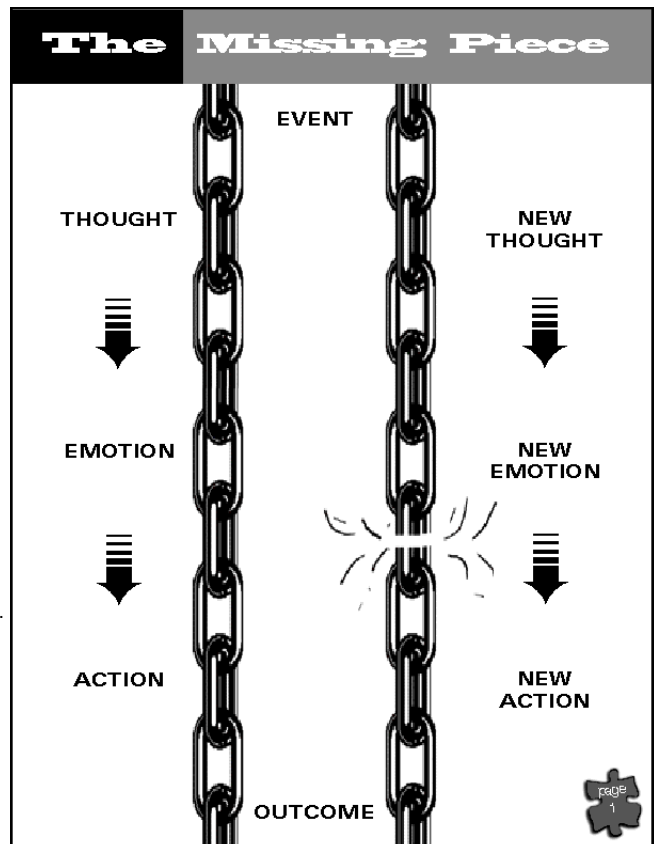
So first you have the very same thought (i.e. I'm sick of my brother. He did it again!), and the very same emotion (i.e. Anger and frustration). But this time you take a deep breath and think again. "I don't want to start a fight with my brother, so I'm going to talk to my dad about this." Now what kind of **OUTCOME** do you think you will produce with this rethinking process? Discuss.

Distribute the "Breaking the Chain" handout (Found in the Appendix). Ask the students to think of a time when they 'went off' or reacted and they created a negative **OUTCOME**. Ask them to write the **EVENT** and the **OUTCOME** they produced. Then ask them to write the thoughts, emotions, and actions they went through in the left hand column.

Then ask the students to diagram or draw how they could have changed the **OUTCOME** by changing their **thoughts, emotions** and **actions**. Do this in the right hand column.

Debrief:

Close with a full room share on the items that they did. What did we learn from this lesson?



Adapted from "The Academy" training by D.T. Hunt

Attitude

Changing Outcomes

Purpose: In this activity students review $E+R=O$ and learn to apply the formula to specific situations in their lives.

Materials: 1 "E+R=O Worksheet" per student
Pencil or pen

Time: 25-45 minutes depending on class size

Number: 20-25 students

Directions:

Review the formula $E+R=O$. In math, when we want to change something on one side of the equation, we have to change something on the other side of the equation. In other words, if we want to change our **OUTCOME**, we have to change something on the other side. Can we control all of the **EVENTS** in our lives? So can we change the **EVENTS**? (No) So what can we change? (Our **REACTION** to the event).

Hand out the "E+R=O Worksheet". Do the first one or two out loud with the students. Then have them complete the sheet on their own.

Debrief:

Close with a full room share. Have students read their answers out loud and discuss.

The Missing Piece

E+R=O Worksheet

Directions: Read each of the scenarios below. The first scenario is filled in showing a possible reaction and outcome. The scenario is then repeated to give you a chance to change your outcome. First fill in the outcome you want to happen in this event. Then fill in how you will have to act (respond or react) in order to produce the outcome that you want.

<p>Man asks you to clean out your room before Saturday or you'll be grounded for the weekend.</p> <p>Man asks you to clean out your room before Saturday or you'll be grounded for the weekend.</p>	<p>You avoid or forget to clean your room till Saturday.</p> <p>You react at the bully.</p>	<p>You're grounded!</p> <p>NEW OUTCOME</p>
<p>A bully gets in your face he rears and teases you saying "you're a wimp".</p> <p>A bully gets in your face he rears and teases you saying "you're a wimp".</p>	<p>You react at the bully.</p> <p>You walk into his room and grab it out of his hands.</p>	<p>NEW OUTCOME</p> <p>NEW OUTCOME</p>
<p>You walk in your room to find that your brother had taken your Game Boy.</p> <p>You walk in your room to find that your brother had taken your Game Boy.</p>	<p>You walk into his room and grab it out of his hands.</p> <p>He zeeens and bites your hand. Dad punishes you.</p>	<p>NEW OUTCOME</p> <p>NEW OUTCOME</p>

Attitude

Christopher Reeve

Christopher Reeve had everything going for him. He had a happy and normal childhood growing up in New York. At a young age he had launched a successful movie career. For many years he was probably best known for playing Superman in the popular 1978 movie and its sequels. He even branched out successfully into a writing and directing career. Chris Reeve seemed to be leading a charmed life.

Then in 1995 a single event changed that instantaneously, dramatically and permanently. Chris Reeve was thrown from a horse. He was paralyzed from the neck down. He had never had to deal with such adversity before. At first, he plunged into deep despair. It was a depression so devastating that he felt he would never escape.

But with the support of his wife and family, Chris slowly began to change his attitude. He started to adjust to life as a paraplegic. Although it has been extremely difficult, he now refuses to let his injuries stop him. Since the accident, Chris has continued to work in Hollywood as a director and producer, and even acts occasionally. The book he wrote about his experience, *Still Me*, was a bestseller in 1998.

Chris Reeve has also become an outspoken activist for spinal injury research. He works with charity organizations and has testified before Congress about the need to support spinal injury research. While he has made peace with the circumstances of his own life, he is committed to helping spare others the same fate.

Chris Reeve could have easily remained angry at life or depressed because of this life-changing accident. But instead he realized that attitude is a choice. He has chosen to rise above it and to use the experience to help others improve their lives. Because of this, he is no longer just a hero on the movie screen; his courage and perseverance have made him a true Superman in real life.

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Shania Twain

Canadian Born Eileen Twain is the country and pop music star known as Shania Twain. Second oldest of 5, she was raised by her mother and stepfather. The Twain's had their share of empty cupboards growing up; Shania recalls days when there was only sugar and bread to eat. Throughout the financially hard times, Shania's mother encouraged her singing and did whatever she could to help her gain exposure. At 8 years old, her mother was sneaking Shania into clubs so that she could perform. But to Shania it was more important to help support her family than explore her talent. She spent her summers in the forest with her stepfather learning to use a chainsaw and an axe, helping him cut trees to sell the wood. During the winter she sang anywhere that they would let her to keep her dream of being a singer alive.

At the age of 21, Shania thought her family obligations were behind her and was working on her music full time, but a devastating phone call in the middle of the night changed everything. Her parents had both been killed in a terrible car accident. Shania dropped everything to return home for the funeral. Even though it was discouraging she was determined to make the best of it. She gathered her 3 younger brothers and their belongings and moved into a house without electricity or running water and took a job singing at a resort. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise because a record producer saw her singing and offered her a chance to record an album.

Now her brothers were finally ready to be on their own so she changed her name to Shania, an Ojibway Indian word that means "I'm on my way," and moved to Nashville. The rest is history. Shania has had several hit albums, and is one of few artists to cross over successfully from country to pop. But Shania never forgot her past. She donated the profits from 2 of her hit songs to charities for under-privileged children and she regularly supports organizations for children in both Canada and the United States. Shania could have easily let the circumstances of her life defeat her but she refused to give up and become a victim of her situation. She chose to persevere. Today she continues to reap the rewards of her hard work, as do the charities and people that she supports. She is a living example of choosing a positive attitude toward life events, instead of reacting negatively to them.

Attitude

**Though no one
can go back
and make a
brand new start,
Anyone can start
from now and
make a brand
new ending.**

Anonymous



Attitude

If we are
strong, our
character
will speak
for itself.

John F. Kennedy

Attitude is Everything

Attitude

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a team, a family or a person. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our attitudes.