

The Philosophy and TAF Circle

PURPOSE: To introduce the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle, which teaches that positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings about yourself, and positive feelings about yourself lead to more positive thoughts.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Tacks, audio player, internet access	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	“Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster, 36” fishline, “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings” music and lyrics on <i>Positive Action Resources</i> website
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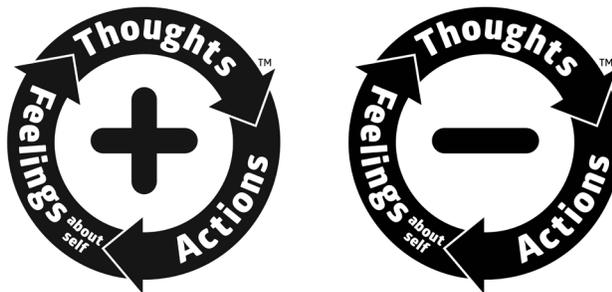
PROCEDURE

 **1) SAY:** We have been practicing improving our thoughts about ourselves in the last few lessons. This means being honest about our strengths and weaknesses. Still, every day we act in certain ways without knowing exactly why. Our lesson today will help us understand the way our thoughts influence our actions and our feelings about ourselves, and how positive thoughts can set off a “positive circle.”

2) TEACHER: *Display the “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster using the fish line and tacks so both sides will be visible. Indicate each step as you discuss it.*

 **3) SAY:** It starts with a positive thought, which leads to a positive action, which leads to a positive feeling about ourselves. That positive feeling leads us to another positive thought.

It works in the same way with negative thoughts. A negative thought leads to a negative action, which leads to a negative feeling about ourselves, which leads to another negative thought.



4) Every day we are faced with all kinds of situations that require us to make choices. When faced with a situation, we have a thought about it. This thought leads to an act, and that act leads to having a feeling about ourselves, which then leads to another thought. This process is called the **Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle**. As you can see on this poster, there is a positive circle and a negative circle. Let’s consider the following example of the different thoughts that will lead to a positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle or a negative Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle.

A teacher asks you to do some homework. You have a thought: “Homework makes me feel grown up.” That’s a positive thought, and it leads to a positive action: You take a positive action and do a good job on the assignment. This leads to a positive feeling about yourself: satisfaction and pride in your work. Then, it circles back to your next thought: “I want to do well on my next homework assignment.” Do you see how the circle works? (*Discuss*) Now, suppose you start with a negative thought, such as, “I hate homework.” Can someone describe the action and feeling that might follow?” (*Discuss*)

If the negative thought is, “I hate homework and I won’t do it,” then you don’t do your homework. The next day when you have to turn your homework in, you won’t have it. You won’t feel good about yourself. When you have another homework assignment, you might hate it even more, so you won’t do it either, and the circle will continue. You will feel worse and worse about yourself because you are in the negative circle.

- 5) Now you see how positive thoughts—or negative ones—are part of a circle. Good or bad thoughts influence our actions, which make us feel good or bad, and lead to further thoughts. This circle of thoughts, actions, and feelings about ourselves continues on and on. Can you see how important our first thoughts are in any situation?
- 6) Now let’s play a game that shows just how important our thoughts can be.

TEACHER: *Have eight students stand in a circle. Describe a situation from the list below or use your own and ask one student to say a positive thought about it. Have the next student describe a likely action and the one after that describe a likely feeling about one’s self that will likely result from that action. The fourth student should now see how that feeling can lead to another thought that continues the circle. For example: The next time a homework assignment is given, you remember your pride in the last one, and this leads to good work on your next homework assignment, and to further good feelings about yourself. Then do the situation from a negative point of view. Let the group continue the thoughts-actions-feelings circle on two more situations, one positive and one negative. Change and have another eight students do the same activity. The game can be played as many times as time will allow.*

These are some possible situations, or you may want to make up some of your own that are particularly relevant to your students.

- You have an important test tomorrow and an invitation to go skating.
- Your class has a new student who looks lonely.
- You and a good friend had a disagreement yesterday.
- You wake up to find the day is cloudy and gray.
- Your family has voted to spend summer vacation in a place that was your last choice.

- Some of your classmates are making fun of someone.
- Your father has asked you twice to carry out the trash.
- The dog chewed a schoolbook you left lying on the front steps.



7) SAY:

As a reminder for us all to stay in the positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle, I'm going to leave this poster hanging for the rest of the year. We're also going to learn a song called "Thoughts-Actions-Feelings." Are you ready?

TEACHER:

Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Resources website. Play the "Thoughts-Actions-Feelings" song once and have the students listen. Play it again and have them sing along. Play this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.

The process of the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle is one we want the students to memorize. It should become second nature for them to think through a situation using the Circle. Learning the song should help them remember the Circle better.