

Habit Help

Habit 6: Synergize

Understanding the Habit

In a nutshell this habit means:

- Synergize is achieved when two or more people work together to create a better solution than either would have thought of alone.
- It's not your way or my way, but a better way.

Think of 1 + 1 = 3 (or more)

How is that possible? Well, 1 person + another person = 2 ideas + many, many more that neither of them would have thought of alone. It's taking good ideas and making them better by working together. Synergize is a great tool for families.

Habit 6 will teach students to:

1. Express and present information and ideas clearly in oral, visual, and written forms.
2. Use their own unique talents and abilities to the fullest; value others' talents and abilities.
3. Cultivate the ability to inspire, motivate, and draw out the best in others.
4. Communicate and work as a team in a multicultural and interdependent world.
5. Show initiative and entrepreneurialism.

Habit 6: Synergize says: *I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different than me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others, we can create better solutions than what any one of us could alone. I look for third alternatives.*

Putting the Habit into Practice

Getting started

- Read the Habit 6 story from 7 Habits of Happy kids with your class. Have a discussion about how the 7 Oaks gang worked together to win the game. How alone they couldn't

even score one goal; but working with each individuals unique strength they were unstoppable!

- **Introduce the habit with an object: energy stick**

”Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”—Helen Keller

- Read other books from the school library that go along with this habit, or a few of these books:
- **Swimmy** by Leo Lionni

A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams

That’s Mine! by Elizabeth Winthrop

The Ant and the Elephant by Bill Peet

The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flourney

- **Three Little Pigs Story**

Instructions:

Have the student gather in a small group, preferably in a circle, and tell them that they will be telling the story of the 3 Little Pigs (if the students don’t know the story, you can choose a common story they all will know). One by one the students are to tell the story, but only by saying 1 word at a time. The goal is to complete the story by having the students work together.

Lesson:

By working together (synergizing) the story can be told to completion.

- **Letter Word Body Parts**

Materials: Paper and pencil

Instructions:

Tell the students to individually, think of any body parts that are spelled using only 3 letters and write them on their paper. Hint: there are 10. After a few minutes have them work with a partner to compare answers. If they are still having trouble after that, have them walk around the room and compare answers.

Answers: 1. Ear 2. Eye 3. Lip 4. Arm 5. Leg 6. Toe 7. Gum 8. Rib 9. Jaw 10. Hip

Lesson:

By working together (synergizing) they should be able to come up with all the answers. The sum of the parts is greater than the whole.

- Discuss:

1. How is synergy like a fruit salad?
2. How are two heads better than one?
3. Why is diversity (being different) important?

Rice crispy treats

3 Tablespoons margarine or butter

1 pkg (10 oz.) regular marshmallows

2 cups rice crispies cereal

- “I have never in my life learned anything from any man who agreed with me.” –Dudley Field Malone
How can having someone disagree with you help you learn? Explain your thoughts.
- Pair up with someone you don’t usually work/play with. Come up with at least five differences and five things you have in common.

Baby Steps:

1. Write down three things that you’re really good at. Then write down three things that someone else you know is good at, like your brother or sister or a friend.
2. Watch your favorite sports team play a game. Pay extra attention to how all the players work together as a team.
3. Talk about what makes a bad team member and what makes a good team member.
4. This summer, call two friends and put up a lemonade stand, just like Goob and Jumper did in the story “Goob and the Bug-Collecting Kit.” One person can create the poster, one can make the lemonade, and one can set up the table and bring the cups and ice. Have fun!

Synergy Action Plan

Define the Problem	Make sure you understand the problem or task.
Their Way	Try to understand everyone’s ideas. Listen carefully.
My Way	Seek to be understood. Share your ideas.
Brainstorm	Be creative. Everyone create new ideas.
High Way	Find best solution.

Habit 6 Update:

Putting the Habit into practice

Getting Started:

- **Introduce the habit with an object:**
Puzzle, or a blank puzzle- let the class draw a picture or write their name on a piece, then as a group put it together.
- Read books from the school library that go along with the habit, or a few of these books:
 - Ox-cart man** by Donald Hall
 - Clifford's Spring Clean-up** by Norman Bridwell
 - How the 2nd grade got \$8205.50 to visit the Statue of Liberty** by Nathan Zimelman
 - Ruby Holler** by Sharon Creech
 - The Chalk box kid** by Clyde Robert Bulla
 - Chicken Sunday** by Patricia Polacco
 - The View from Saturday** by E.L. Konigsburg
 - A Wrinkle in time** by Madeline L'Engle

Synergy is taking good ideas and making them better by working together. Discussions can focus on other examples of synergy in nature, history, literature, and personal experiences. For example, synergy happens in nature when a flock of geese heads south for the winter. They fly in a V formation because due to the updraft, the entire flock can fly farther than if each bird flew alone.

Synergizer: This tool is used when students or groups have different approaches to a situation. It helps students to find "third alternative" solutions that are better than either of the original solutions and which lead to synergy. Write one approach to the situation in one of the lower boxes (My Way). Write the other approach in the other lower box (Your Way). Then brainstorm together to come up with a better way (High Way) which is not a compromise but is but a new solution that is better than either of the original. Write this better solution in the top box.

A Synergizer can be used in any behavioral situation. With supervision, even young students can arrive at different ideas for solving problems.

Assign students the task of explaining and using the Synergizer at home.

Say, "I'd like you to think of something at home that has been a problem (bedtime, snacks, friends over, etc.). Write your solution to the problem in the "My Way" box. Tonight you are going to take home the Synergizer, explain it to a parent or guardian, and fill in their solution in the "Your Way" box. Then, together, think of an idea that is better than either of the solutions. Write it in the "High Way" box. Bring it back to school to share."

The following day, choose one of the follow-up activities:

1. Allow students to share their Synergizer with the class.

Use their experience at home with the Synergizer for a journal entry.

Student understanding will be determined by the use of the Synergizer

Use this tool whenever a problem or conflict arises. The Synergizer will help students to think of Third Alternatives.