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Helping Students Motivate Themselves

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Motivate #13A

The lesson I chose to adapt for my Personal Development class was the “Blaming Others” lesson plan beginning on page thirty-four of the Helping Students Motivate Themselves text. I thought it was would be a great, eye-opening, “aha” kind of lesson, but it didn’t have quite the impact I hoped it would.

Students enjoyed taking the test and the survey. (They love to talk about how they feel about things!) I think, though, that in the questionnaire taken from page 39, students were not as honest with themselves as they needed to be for the lesson to be effective. It is obvious from the answers listed what the “right” answer is, and students are not honest enough (or self-aware enough) to acknowledge that their response is sometimes a bad one. I think it would have been more effective if the questions were more open-ended rather than multiple choice, although it would have made it more difficult to assess. Instead of an easy number grading system, we could have used it as a jumping-off point for a discussion. We could have talked about what their initial response would have been and if that would have been the right thing to do. Then we could have led into what the right response would have been and what the long-term benefits of personal responsibility are, even if it is difficult in their short-term.

Student response seemed to be that the lesson was common sense and that personal responsibility is important. I don’t think, though, that they apply it in their day-to-day interactions with people, and I think they rationalize their own bad responses to situations. This is, of course, something that everyone, including adults, can improve, and we will continue to talk about and reinforce these concepts throughout the remainder of the course.