The Power of Positively Reframing Your Language:
For the Student-centered Instructor

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Learning Objectives

- By the end of the session, participants will be able to:
  - Define the fitness instructor’s impact on college-aged participants in regard to body image
  - Develop two personal goals relating to positive and transformational language to apply in future group fitness classes
  - Summarize data collected in group fitness setting from surveys distributed at James Madison University Recreation
Ice Breaker | Activity

- Name
- School
- Favorite class to teach
Introduction Examples

- Teacher-centered
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M(QL)-H6l1Y

- Student-centered
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQUwqst50Wl
Skinny, lose weight, burn calories
we need to be the leaders of the industry and stop perpetuating the negative language

Example
Fitness Instructor’s Impact on College Population

- Student development theory

**CHICKERING’S SEVEN VECTORS**

- Vector 1: Developing Competence
- Vector 2: Managing Emotions
- Vector 3: Moving Through Autonomy to Interdependence
- Vector 4: Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships
- Vector 5: Establishing Identity
- Vector 6: Developing Purpose
- Vector 7: Developing Integrity
Fitness Instructor’s Impact on College Population

- Why are we student-centered?
- Student learning lab
Fitness Instructor’s Impact on Body Image

- Language
  - Verbal
  - Non-verbal

- Approachability

- Music

- Names of exercises

- Clothing
JMU Research

- Why
- What
- When
  - Survey was sent out to people who had taken group fitness classes for the 1st three weeks of the semester
- Demographics
JMU Participant Survey

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female

Your body perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before you took today’s class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After you took today’s class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did the instructor influence your body image today?
- Yes
- No

If Yes, how did they influence your body image?
- Positively
- Negatively

Please finish the end of the following sentence: At the end of a group fitness class I usually feel...
Survey Results

- Before class, average was 5.67 on 1-10 scale (10 positive body image, 1 negative)
- After class, average increased to 7.4 out of 10
- Of the 223 responses, 145 participants responded that the instructor DID influence their body image
  - 99% of those who responded “yes” said that the instructor positively influenced their body image during class
Survey Results (cont.)

- Written question – Negative responses
  - “like I got a good workout or wasted my time, depending on the instructor.”
  - “still unsatisfied with the way I look.”
  - “somewhat pleased, but generally frustrated.”
  - “like I’ve been productive but could have done more.”
Survey Results (cont.)

- Written question – Positive responses
  - “like a step closer to **accomplishing my goal**”
  - “it depends on the class, I always feel **positive**. But for yoga it’s more ‘zen’ but after kickboxing I feel more **kick-ass and ready to take on the world**.”
  - “like the **queen of the world**/incredibly lucky to have JMU and to be taking these classes for free.”
  - “**healthier** and skinnier as well as **more knowledgeable** about what I can do on my own without group fitness.”
  - “I feel tired, but in the dance classes they encourage you to rock out **and look sexy no matter what your body looks like**.”
  - “I feel energized and good about the time I dedicated to **improving my body and my overall health**.”
Transformational Learning

- Transformational learning is defined as:
  - “learning that induces more far-reaching change in the learner than other kinds of learning, especially learning experiences which shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or paradigm shift, which affects the learner’s subsequent experiences”
    - Jack Mezirow

- What can instructors do/say to make a long-term, positive impact on their participants?
Activity

- Develop **two personal goals** relating to positive and transformational language to apply in future group fitness classes.
  - Think-pair-share
Physical activity is fun

Empower participants to be FEARLESS in their fitness endeavors in and out of the studio

Starts with the language the instructor uses from the moment they put on the microphone to the time they lock the door after class