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# *Member Resource*

<b>Title:</b>	Words I Wish I Had Heard
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<b>Type of Activity or Resource:</b>	Group activity
<b>Objective:</b>	to develop an awareness of the powerful influence of words
<b>Recommended Age Group:</b>	Middle school to Adult
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	A chair for each participant
<b>Time:</b>	40 mins

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## Strategy 15

# Words I Wish I Had Heard

### Objective(s):

To develop an awareness of the powerful influence of words.

### Age:

Middle school to adult

### Procedure:

1. Divide the participants into two groups.
2. Have half of the participants place their chairs in a circle. Ask them to sit in their chairs; close their eyes; and pretend they are students in a classroom. Encourage them to re-create an actual classroom situation they can remember.
3. Ask the remaining half of the group to focus on a situation in which a teacher put them down and recall the words of that teacher. Now go around the room and whisper in the ear of those seated, one at a time, the negative comments.
4. Have the participants change roles and do the identical activity.
5. Ask the participants to now focus on words they wish they had heard as a student.
6. Repeat the activity and change roles.
7. Suggested questions for processing:
  - A. How did you feel when you heard the negative comments?
  - B. How did you feel when you heard the positive comments?
  - C. Reflect on the number of years it has been since you heard those comments. Why did the memories stay with you so long?
8. Closure:

Research has confirmed that teachers send out 650 to 1,100 cues every day as to how they feel about their students. Teachers are human and of course will sometimes use a put down, but it is the level at which one "typically" functions that is important. Dr. William Purkey stresses that we need 12 blue cards (positive experience, comments, and so forth) for every orange card (negative put downs). As professional educators, we all want to strive to operate at the level of being intentionally inviting to ourselves and others.

\*This activity may be adapted to apply to messages we wish we had heard from parents, employers, or significant others.