

# Negative Ned Meets Positive Pat

*A Game of Positive  
Self-Talk*



# *Negative Ned Meets Positive Pat: A Game of Positive Self-Talk*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*Negative Ned Meets Positive Pat* is a unique, role play game which provides an entertaining and playful way for players to practice positive self-talk and examine their own past experiences with positive and negative self-talk. Players will benefit from the game by

- Identifying consequences of negative self-talk
- Recognizing benefits of positive self-talk
- Gaining insight regarding their past use of negative and positive self-talk
- Practicing positive self-talk in multiple situations
- Improving social skills through play interactions

## **GAME RATIONAL**

Research overwhelmingly supports the concept that negative self-talk and cognitive distortions are associated with multiple mental health problems and low self-esteem. Indeed, depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety disorders, and aggression have all been linked with irrational and negative thinking (e.g. Burnett, 1999; Leung, & Poon, 2001; Owens, & Chard, 2001). Pessimism and dysfunctional patterns of thinking can affect social, behavioral, emotional and academic functioning. Some of these negative self-statements include (but are not limited to) all or nothing thinking, over-generalizations, magnification, jumping to conclusions, disqualifying the positive, and catastrophizing.

There is empirical evidence that cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is quite effective in the treatment of a variety of problems (Butler, Chapman, Forman, & Beck, 2006). In fact, CBT is favored over other approaches such as psychodynamic treatments (Lambert, Bergin, & Garfield, 2004). *Negative Ned Meets Positive Pat* is based on these same cognitive principles and interventions.

*Negative Ned Meets Positive Pat* helps children realize the importance of positive self-talk and the consequences of negative self-talk. During game play, children develop and practice statements of positive self-talk while discussing how these statements affect their thoughts, feelings and behavior. The game teaches children to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk, in an effort to improve mental health and increase self-esteem, leading to improvements in social, behavioral, emotional and academic functioning.

## **PLAYERS**

2- 6 players, ages 5 - adult

## **PROVIDED GAME MATERIALS**

- Two(2) sets of game cards
- Two (2) NN/PP tubes

## NEEDED MATERIALS

- Color printer
- Paper, OR card stock OR perforated business card stock (i.e. Avery 8373 or 8869 or 8371)
- Scissors
- Tape
- OPTIONAL: glue stick

## BEFORE YOU PLAY

### If using regular paper:

1. Print out pp. 6-27 of this document
2. Matching the fronts and backs of the cards by color, glue the backs of the cards to the front of the cards. (i.e. glue pp. 6-10 to pp. 11-15; glue pp. 16-20 to pp. 21-25). (TIP: a glue stick works best so that the paper does not become too wet)
3. Cut along the dotted lines of all of the playing cards.
4. Roll the Negative Ned and Positive Pat tubes (pp. 26 and 27) into individual tube shapes so that the figures are on the *outside* of the tubes; tape the long edges together so that the tube figures “stands up”.
5. OPTIONAL: You can laminate the cards and tubes for a longer lasting game.

### If using card stock:

1. Print out the fronts of the Situation cards (pp. 6-10); reload the pages into your printer so that the backs can be printed. Make sure that the card stock is facing the right direction. Print pp. 11-15.
2. Print out the fronts of the NN/PP cards (pp. 21-25); reload the pages into your printer so that the backs can be printed. Make sure that the card stock is facing the right direction. Print pp. 16-20.
3. Print out the NN/PP tubes (pp. 26 and 27 of this document).
4. Cut along the dotted lines of all the playing cards.
5. Roll the Negative Ned and Positive Pat tubes (pp. 26 and 27) into individual tube shapes so that the figures are on the *outside* of the tubes; tape the long edges together so that the tube figures “stands up”.

### If using perforated business card stock (Avery 8373 or 8869 or 8371)

1. Prior to loading the business card stock, print out the Negative Ned and Positive Pat Tubes (pp. 26 and 27 of this document) on regular paper or card stock.
2. Load the business card stock in the printer. (Make sure that none of the sheets stick together.)
3. Print out the fronts of the Situation cards (pp. 6-10 of this document).
4. Reload the printed fronts of the Situation cards into your printer so that the backs can be printed. Make sure that it is facing the right direction. Print pp. 11-15 of this document.
5. Print out the fronts of the NN/PP cards (pp. 21-25 of this document).
6. Reload the printed fronts of the NN/PP cards into your printer so that the backs can be printed. Make sure that it is facing the right direction. Print pp. 16-20 of this document.
7. Roll the Negative Ned and Positive Pat tubes (pgs. 26 and 27) into individual tube shapes so that the figures are on the *outside* of the tubes; tape the long edges together so that the tube figures “stands up”.
8. Tear along the perforated lines of all the cards.

## **GAME SET-UP**

Separately shuffle Scenario cards and Negative Ned/Positive Pat cards (NN/PP cards) and place each stack face down in the center of the playing area. Place the Negative Ned tube and the Positive Pat tube with figures standing upright in the center of the playing area.

## **RULES**

Players have the opportunity to decide amongst themselves who goes first. If players are unable to decide the youngest player will start, with game play continuing counter clockwise.

The first player begins by turning over the top cards from both decks of cards (Scenario Deck and NN/PP Deck). The player reads out loud the scenario written on the Scenario Card.

If the NN/PP card says “Negative Ned” or “Positive Pat,” the player will then:

1. Give an example of the kind of self-talk that is represented (i.e. a negative self-statement for Negative Ned and positive self-statement for Positive Pat). For example: If a player turns over the Scenario Card, “You are on a roller coaster and the ride is about to take you on the first big drop,” and a “Negative Ned” Card, the player would use negative self-talk (i.e. “What if the rail breaks?”). If the player turns over the same Scenario Card with a “Positive Pat” Card, the player would use positive self-talk (i.e. “I’m going to be OK, many people have been on this ride before me.”).
2. Describe how the self-talk would make her/him (a) feel and (b) behave in the situation.
3. Place the NN/PP card into the opening at the top of the corresponding tube (i.e. If the player turned a Negative Ned card it will be placed in the Negative Ned tube; if the player turned a Positive Pat card it will be placed in the Positive Pat Tube). The player will end her/his turn by placing the used Scenario Card at the bottom of the Scenario Card deck.

If the NN/PP card says “Pick-a-Tube,” the player will then:

1. Select one of the NN/PP tubes (Negative Ned or Positive Pat) from which to collect all accumulated NN/PP cards. (Smart players will select the tube that contains the most NN/PP cards!) Depending on which tube was chosen, the player must report either a benefit of using positive self-talk (Positive Pat) or a consequence of using negative self-talk (Negative Ned).
2. Lift the NN/PP tube that was selected and remove all accumulated cards. The player will also keep the “Pick-a-Tube” NN/PP card.
3. Return the NN/PP tube to its original position and place the unused Scenario Card at the bottom of the Scenario Card deck, marking the end of the turn.

Game play continues until no NN/PP cards remain in the deck or for a predetermined length of time. At the conclusion of game play each player counts the number of NN/PP cards that s/he has collected.

## **OBJECT OF THE GAME**

The object of the game is to collect the most NN/PP cards during game play.

## REFERENCES

- Burnett, P.C., (1999). Self-talk in Upper Primary School Children: Its relationship with irrational beliefs, self-esteem and depression. *Journal of Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy*, 12, 181-188.
- Butler, A.C., Chapman, J.E., Forman, E.M., & Beck, A.T. (2006). The empirical status of cognitive-behavioral therapy: A review of meta-analyses". *Clinical Psychology Review*, 26(1), 17–31.
- Lambert, M. J., Bergin, A. E., Garfield, S. L. (2004). Introduction and Historical Overview in Lambert, M. J.. *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* (5th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 3–15.
- Leung, P.W.L. & Poon, M.W.L. (2001). Dysfunctional schemas and cognitive distortions in psychopathology: A test of the specificity hypothesis. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry & Allied Disciplines*, 42(6), 755-765.
- Marsh, H.W. (1990). *Self-Description Questionnaire Manual 1*. Sydney: University of Western Sydney Press.
- Owens, G.P. & Chard, K.M. (2001). Cognitive distortions among women reporting childhood sexual abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 16(2), 178-191.

You have just begun a math test and you don't know the answer to the first two problems.

You are trying to go to sleep but it is dark and you are afraid.

You walk by a group of girls at school and they laugh.

You have woke up from a nightmare about a giant spider and you are very scared.

You ask your mom if your friend can spend the night and she says "No, I already have plans for us."

Your teacher asks you to get up in front of the class and read a sentence aloud.

You wake up in the morning and your favorite shirt is dirty so you can't wear it to school.

You are walking through the lunchroom and you trip and fall down, in front of everyone.

You want to ask someone to be your friend but you are worried s/he will say no.

Your teacher tells you that the principal wants to see you in her office.

You got a bad grade on a test and you have to go home and show your parents.

You are sad because your best friend just moved to another town.

Your mom gave you \$3.00 for lunch and you can't find it.

You are going to your first day at a new school and you don't know any of the kids.

You get to school and realize that you have on two different shoes.

You are playing ball in the backyard and accidentally break a window.

You walk by some kids  
at lunch and they  
start whispering.

You are playing kickball  
and it is your turn to kick.  
You really don't want to  
embarrass yourself.

You ask a question in  
class and stutter.  
Some of the kids laugh.

You open your birthday  
present and it's not  
what you wanted.

A group of friends  
have been hanging out  
without you.

You just found out that  
the person you like  
likes someone else.

You really want a shirt  
that you saw at the store  
but your mom tells you  
that she can't afford it.

You are grounded for  
the weekend and you  
won't be able to go to  
your friend's  
birthday party.

You are at a friend's house and his dad asks you to climb up a ladder to get a ball out of a tree. You are afraid of heights but don't want them to know.

Your pet got out of the house and has been gone all day.

You are eating at a friend's house and her/his dad makes something that you have never tried before. It looks gross.

Someone at school tells you that your shirt is ugly.

You always meet your friend at a certain spot at lunch but today s/he didn't show up.

You are trying to work a math problem on the board, in front of the entire class. You are not sure that you will get it right.

You are looking forward to going to the zoo but on the day you are supposed to go, your mom tells you that she can't take you.

After a soccer game you are looking forward to your favorite snack but the concession stand ran out of it.

You thought you did well on an assignment but when your teacher returns it, you didn't do very well.

You get a new hair cut and it doesn't look like you wanted it to look.

You are getting ready to fly on an airplane for the first time. You keep thinking about crashing.

You are getting ready to spend the weekend with your dad and your new stepbrother is really mean.

You were playing outside in your new pants and got a grass stain on them. Your mom told you to change before you played.

You accidentally broke the radio that your parents got you as a gift.

You spilled red juice on your friend's white bed spread and she is going to show her mom.

You are going to the dentist to get a cavity filled. You hate the sound of the drill.

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**Pick-a-Tube**

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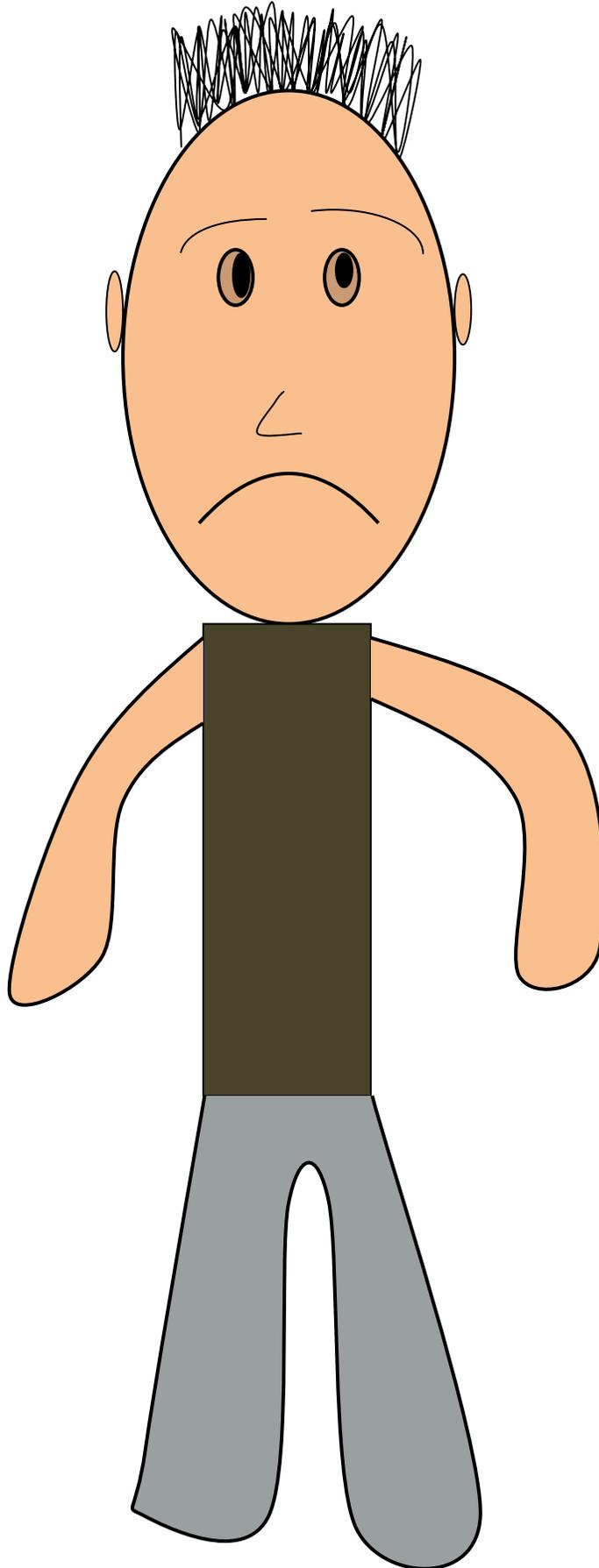
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# Negative Ned



# Positive Pat

