

The logo consists of the words "Challenge Day" in a bold, red, hand-drawn font. "Challenge" is in red with a white outline, and "Day" is in black with a white outline. The text is centered over a background of two hands, one above and one below, with fingers spread, rendered in a light gray, semi-transparent style.

Challenge Day

Challenging You to Be the Change

Pre or Post Activities & Lesson Guide

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

Dear Challenge Day Supporter,

Thank you for all you do to support Challenge Day in our vision that **every** child lives in a world where they feel safe, loved and celebrated. As a Challenge Day coordinator, teacher, advisor, **Be the Change** Team member and/or mentor you now have the unique opportunity to empower young leaders to **Be the Change** they wish to see in their school and community.

Undoubtedly, you and your **Be the Change** School Team, and perhaps even your local Circle of Change, already have great ideas for expanding the impact of Challenge Day. We value your thinking! Please share your ideas, successes and resources with our office. Some of our best tools for follow-up have come from brilliant teachers, parents and coordinators like you! Tell us so we can pass it along to others who are **Being the Change** in their communities and we'll keep you updated on their successes.

This handbook is designed to support your efforts to keep the momentum from your Challenge Day program(s) going. We've found the best way to start follow-up is to enroll students into the planning – even before your program day. Once you have an agreement on where you want to focus, Challenge Day has several resources to support you in achieving your goals.

In this handbook you'll find sample outlines for planning and facilitating pre or post activities that have already proven to help sustain student connections and awareness of Challenge Day teachings. The best ways to support young people in keeping their vision to **Be the Change** is to provide them with fun, meaningful, heartfelt connections and opportunities to serve and be appreciated on a consistent basis. The more buzz you can create the bigger the impact and benefit will be on campus.

Thank you for your commitment to **Be the Change**. We're excited about working with you to create the school and community of your dreams!

The Challenge Day Staff



Gathering Options

Step 1 – Secure a Gathering Place

- Gathering Place – classroom or other easily accessible room on campus - Be sure there is enough space to do activities.

Step 2 – Time and Frequency

- Decide on the best time and frequency of meetings.
- Be sure to set yourself up for success – Some schools choose to do a single follow-up session while others meet – every other week or once a month. Be sure your group has a say in deciding a time that works best and how often they would like to meet.
- **Note:** Most schools find that lunch meetings are better than before or after school since it doesn't interfere with after school sports, transportation and/or other activities.

Step 3 – Arrange for Food

- Gatherings that include food have proven to be most consistently effective – Pizza, subs, snacks etc.
- Assigning student leaders to obtain donations of food from local businesses is recommended.
- Doing mini fundraising activities can also be a great source of group funds for food, posters and other expenses.

Step 4 – Prepare Yourself and Your Team

- Since most youth are hoping to recreate the sense of connection and safety, they experienced during Challenge Day, it is important that leadership of the group is prepared with an open-hearted and playful attitude.
- Be sure to have a plan and to set an intention for how you and your team will work together in facilitation. Since you're reading this, we assume you already know that young people respond best to facilitators are prepared, fun and compassionate. If you find yourself feeling uptight, tense or simply no fun to be around most likely you have become too attached to the agenda or having things go as planned. Remember young people don't often do things by the script. In fact, many of the best group experiences come from the organic partnership between the youth and the facilitator. Remember to breathe and trust the process.
- Remember your primary goal is to provide a safe, fun and meaningful connection for all attendees.
- Wear Be the Change tee-shirts.



Step 5 – Prepare the Gathering

- Because students often have busy lives and a lot on their minds during the school day, we recommend you provide students with as many reminders as possible. Posters on campus, daily announcements and personal encouragement can go a long way towards ensuring good attendance. Student leaders can also make personal invitations to their friends.
- When preparing the room, try to appeal to as many senses as possible.

Recommended Supplies

- **CD player or i-Pod with Positive Music** – We recommend playing Challenge Day type positive music that the youth enjoy as students gather to meet (up beat & fun).
- **Banners & Posters** – Be the Change Banner - Challenge Day Norms Banner- The Iceberg Image from Challenge Day - Positive message posters & announcements.
- **Food, Drink & Serving Supplies** – Food should be easily accessible and not so messy that it distracts people from listening.
- **Chairs** – If possible arrange the group in a circle with space for activities in the center of the room.
- **Timer** – For timed activities. A timer that beeps is best.
- **Kleenex**
- **Flip Chart & Markers** – Any other supplies need for activities.
- **Student Sign-in Sheet**

Step 6 – Plan/Choose Activities

- When planning your gathering be sure to use our 3 phase group process model in creating your plans - Inclusion, Influence & Affection

(For more detailed information see our Group Process Model Overview)

- **Inclusion** – Activities that allow all group members to have a voice and feel part of the group.
 - **Influence** – Activities, discussions, presentations, service project or event planning which help to shape and influence students' attitudes and leadership potentials.
 - **Affection** – Always allow ample time to share appreciations, complements, hugs and celebrations at the end of every gathering.
- As much as possible, try to settle on a consistent format so students can feel safe knowing what to expect & look forward to the next meeting.
 - We have found that having students do their first inclusion “check-in activity” while eating allows the group to start on time and still allows for the occasional latecomer.

Agenda Planning Options and Activities



The following are some suggested Inclusion, Influence and Affection activities that can be adapted depending on your goals, size of group, room space and the amount of time you have allotted.

Inclusion Activities / Questions

- **Individual Introductions** - Each person says their name (loud & proud) ... Everyone says "hi" and repeats the persons name (like a AA meeting) this helps students learn names as well as helping to make the gathering fun and welcoming for everyone.

Sample Inclusion Statements

Have each student say their names and...

- One thing they've changed, done differently or are especially proud of since Challenge Day or if you haven't had a day, what do they want to change or do differently.
- Something the group would love about them.
- One word that describes how they are feeling.
- Something that might surprise the group to know about them
- Something they are grateful for (and why - if time allows).
- Someone who is a hero or role model to them (and why - if time allows).
- A positive act of change that they are especially proud of (and why - if time allows).
- Biggest dream for their life (and what inspires them about it).
- Their most embarrassing moment and why it was so embarrassing.
- Best childhood memory and why it was so special to them.
- The nicest thing they've seen anyone doing for another person and what about it made it so special to them.
- Biggest challenge they have faced in their lives and what they have learned from the experience.
- The most beautiful place they've ever been and what made it so special to them.
- The person they feel safest to share their heart with and what about that person makes them so safe.
- The family member they feel closest to and what makes them so special.
- Any question that has people share below the waterline



Longer Timed Inclusions

Note: Some groups choose to do the entire gathering with shares like these below as a way to offer group members a chance to experience deeper connections and mutual peer support.

- Depending on time and group size, timed shares can be done in large group, small groups or pairs
- For timed shares it is often helpful to refer to the image of the iceberg we use in Challenge Day where we really only see the “tip” of who a person truly is! Encourage students to “drop the waterline” during their shares. Remind them all their feelings are welcome
- If using pairs, choose a person A & B and time each person’s share.
- To create opportunities for safe contact, students can find different partners and hook back-to-back, link arms or elbow-to-elbow. Make it fun to meet new people!

Sample Sharing Options

- **If you really knew me you would know...** Repeated - (Timed activity)
- **Something I might be afraid for you to know about me is ...** Repeated - (Timed activity)
- **Personal life stories** – (Timed)
- **Group or paired interview** – Group members or partners have a set time to interview one person at a time as a means of getting to know them below the waterline
- **Partner interviews and introductions** – In pairs group members interview one another and take turns introducing their “new friend” (fill in the name) to the group and recap some of the amazing things the group would like about the person
- **Question Game** – Have students write questions on slips of paper and then have group members take turns pulling questions and answering them for the group



Influence Lessons & Activities

Note: These activities can be done in small groups or pairs. If the large group as a whole is small enough to allow for time and workability of the processes or the activities, it will work.

Prior to starting these activities ... Be sure safety and confidentiality agreements are made. Invite students to drop the waterline and give the gift of listening.

Brainstorming

In small or large, group use butcher paper & markers to brainstorm any or all of the following...

- **Ideas to keep Challenge Day alive on campus**
- **Ideas for acts of change**
- **Daily challenges for the morning announcements**
- **Possible group service projects... a mural, mentor younger students, plant a forgiveness garden, a peace pole ...**
- **See our Challenge Day / BTC Projects Guide for additional ideas**

Listening Skills

- Brainstorm how we know someone is really listening.
- Have group members do timed shares. For example: Telling their life stories as the rest of the group gives the gift of listening.
- Have group members share how it felt to be really heard.

Balloon Share

- Divide the group into pairs choose a person A & B.
- Choose which will go first.
- Review the concept of the emotional balloon (from Challenge Day) the place where we store the feelings we don't share or let go of.
- Ask both partners to close their eyes and check in with themselves – notice how they are feeling? What feelings are they carrying around that they have not taken the time of felt safe enough to share.
- Remind each partner of the safety and confidentiality norms and be sure to mention that all their feelings are welcome as long as they express them in safe ways.
- Each person gets a set amount of time to empty their emotional balloons and to express any feelings, thoughts, concerns or celebrations they wish to share as their partner gives the gift of listening.



Rumor Elimination Model

- Brainstorm the costs and consequences of rumors.
- Review the Rumor Elimination Model with the group (See handout).
- Have students practice the techniques
- Answer questions as needed

Amends and Apologies

- Have group members make a list of the people in their lives that they believe deserve or would like an apology from them
- Break into pairs and have each partner share their list along with any action steps they are willing to take to make things right
- Be ready to question resistance – explore the cost of holding on to self-righteousness

“I” Messages

- Start out demonstrating a “YOU” Message with “the finger” pointing out... “You never clean your room”, “You always talk bad about people”
- Ask the group if they have ever heard a “You” Message
- Ask them honestly, if they have ever used a “YOU” message
- Practice “You” - If time allows, have the group practice saying a “You” Message with their partner.
- Review the teaching points on the “I” Message (See handout).
- Practice “I” - Have students practice changing their “you” statement into an “I” statement
- Ask partners to share if they notice any difference in the “I” vs. “you”.
- Share the differences out loud in the large group (as time allows)
- If possible have some of the students who feel especially good about what they practiced, share their “I” statements with the group

Validations

- Brainstorm clever ways to love, validate and appreciate people
- Have students share with a partner some of people in their lives that they would like to love and/or appreciate and why
- Then choose some ideas from the list and have students share with their partner, which ideas they will use and by when.



Appreciation Letters or Cards

- Distribute cards, paper, pens and/or other writing materials
- Have students visualize a list of all the people they appreciate in their lives and what about those people make them so special
- If time allows – students can share their lists with the group or with a partner
- Next, brainstorm all the qualities of a meaningful appreciation (genuine, heartfelt, specific, generous, given freely without attachment to how it is received)
- Ask students to identify at least one person from their list to write a letter of appreciation to. It can be a family member, a teacher, a friend or even someone from the community who has been especially nice to them.
- If time allows students may choose to share their letters with their partners or with large group.

Forgiveness

- Brainstorm the personal costs of holding on to hurt and resentment
- Have students take turns reading out loud reviewing the steps to forgiveness handout (from the Worldwide Forgiveness Alliance)
- In pairs have students choose a person in their life that they would like to forgive.
- Have them share with their partner what they would like to forgive the person for and why
- After both partners have shared, invite students to write a forgiveness letter to the person
- Even if they choose not to or can't for some reason send the letter, writing it and sharing it with another person can be very healing

Gratitude

- Ask students to check inside and notice how they are feeling
- Have each student say one word that describes how they are feeling
- Pass out paper and pens
- Have students make a brainstorm list of at least 25 things they are grateful for
- Ask students to notice if they feel any different after doing their brainstorm
- For those who feel different, ask them to share what they think the difference is
- Point out that whatever we focus on in life grows
- **Remember** Gratitude and depression cannot live in the same moment
- Encourage students to start a gratitude journal and to write at least 25 things a day they are grateful for over the next 30 days
- This can be a great group discussion for future gatherings



Teen Files Video Discussion

- Show a portion of the 90-minute - **Teen Files - Surviving High School Documentary.**
- See our video guide, suggested lessons or simply facilitate discussion on the topic of choice, either as a large group or in any other configuration.

Possible Discussion Topics include:

- Body Image (Eating Disorders / Steroid Abuse)
- Media
- Gender Roles
- Fitting In
- Being new to a school
- Depression
- Suicide
- Team Work
- Getting Real
- Family Relationships
- Challenge Day

6 Prepared Lessons - (See “Challenge Day “Teen Files: Surviving High School” Curriculum” Guide)

- “Fitting In”
- Gender Roles & Body Image
- Teamwork
- Teamwork 2
- Getting Real
- The Challenge

Challenge Day’s Video Presentation Guide and “Stand If..” activities can also be used by students in bringing these discussions to their peers.

Bully Solution Discussion

- Show the 23-minute “*Bully Solution*” Documentary (On the Challenge Day DVD).
- Facilitate discussion on the topic of bullying and things the group can do to intervene or **Be the Change.**



Sample Affection Activities

Open Appreciations

- Model appreciation - Start the activity by thanking and appreciating the group as a whole for how they are working together. Then, identify as many of individual members as possible to appreciate for specific attitudes and behaviors they displayed during the gathering (this can help to set the tone).
- Open the floor to anyone else who wants to share appreciations.
- Continue as time allows.

Partner Appreciations

- In pairs – choose a person A & B
- Depending on time, each person gets 30 seconds to 1 minute to say everything nice they can think of about their partner.

Mingle and Appreciate

- Have students stand and mingle.
- As they walk up to each other – have them complete the sentence...
“Something I like or appreciate about you is...”
- Remind them to make sure everyone is included, to appreciate not only their close friends, but the new people they are meeting too.

Appreciation Tag

- One person at a time shares an honest heartfelt appreciation with another person in the group.
- Then the person who is appreciated appreciates someone else.
- Continue until everyone has been appreciated.

In The Middle / Inner Outer Circle

- Depending on group size 1, 2 or more group members can sit in the middle of the circle while others from the group share appreciations either aloud or in their ears.
- Students on the outside should be advised to keep all their attention on the people in the middle and to avoid making jokes even with their good friends.

Appreciation Shower

- Divide the time by the number of group members (Leave at least 45 seconds each).
- One person at a time sits in the middle of the group.
- The rest of the group, speaking at once, showers the person with appreciations.

On My Back

- Have students hang poster paper on their backs with masking tape.
- Give everyone a marker and time to write appreciations on each person's back.
- Encourage them to write big and long sentences to fill up each person's paper.
- If they get full on one side, flip them over and write on the back.
- Note: Be sure to use water color markers and be sure all posters are as full as possible.

Noteworthy Friends

- Divide the allotted time by the number of participants in the gathering.
- Choose one person at a time and have all students write the one person a note of appreciation and sign it.
- Continue the process until all group members have had a turn

Appreciation Tunnel

In group gatherings of 25 or more

- Students line up in two lines facing each other.
- One student at a time passes through the tunnel with their eyes closed or blindfolded while the rest of the group whispers appreciations as they pass.
- Have a facilitator at the beginning of the tunnel to blindfold each person as their turn comes up and send them off through the tunnel.
- Have a facilitator at the end of the tunnel to remove the blindfold and add the person to the end of the line.
- ****Remember**** Make sure the facilitators get a turn too!

Secret Angel

- Do a round of appreciation tag.
- Pass out slips of paper with all students' names on them.
- Instruct the group that their job is to secretly love up and appreciate the person who's name they have drawn for the next day, week or even until the next gathering (Let the group members decide how long they want the activity to last).



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Standing Ovation

- Each group member gets their own standing ovation.
- Let's hear it for _____ (Fill in the name).

Parting Appreciations

- If time is short, simply invite students to share at least ____ (fill in number of hugs) and share at least ____ (fill in number of true compliments) before they leave.

Hugs

- **We recommend you always start & end your gatherings in hugs.**

Group Process Model

The Group Process Model used by Challenge Day was originally adapted from the “*Tribes*” Program, which was written by our friend and mentor, Jeanne Gibbs.



Challenge Day uses this model in the development and implementation of all our programs. This model is ideal for classrooms, workshop planning, meetings and conferences.

Our **Group Process Model** incorporates the following three stages ...

1. Inclusion Stage

Overall Objectives

- Build community
- Establish a feeling of safety among group members
- Create inclusion, connection and acceptance between members of the group
- Establish a sense of group identity

Activities

- Give participants an opportunity to present themselves to the group and to be acknowledged by the group
- Give everyone a voice
- Provide opportunities to interact and connect
- Provide opportunities for leadership
- Celebrate and support each person
- Empower participants

Tips For Building Inclusion

- Have group sit in circles whenever possible
- Use name tags, name games and or other forms of easy recognition
- Give everyone a voice
- Incorporate various learning styles – visual, auditory, kinesthetic etc.
- Hang visual representations like projects, posters etc. to increase group ownership
- Intentionally create opportunities for connection
- Incorporate paired sharing with questions
- Utilize activities that allow new leaders to emerge
- Provide opportunities for personal sharing (below the water line)
- Alternate leadership opportunities among group members
- Allow regular time for celebrations



2. Influence Stage

Objectives

- Interactive education
- Dissemination of information
- Empowerment of group members
- Build global awareness
- Skill Building
- Conflict resolution

Activities

- Influence activities are specific and adapted to the class, theme or group activity.
- Educational activities and/or presentations
- Group processes
- Goal setting, visioning and problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Community building
- Decision making
- Diversity training

Tips for Influence Stage

- Prepare for and expect conflict and disagreements – If group members feel included and part of the group, they will more freely express their opinions.
- Utilize diverse modalities when presenting or educating the group.
- Enroll diverse leadership in accomplishing your tasks.
- Be ready to let go of your agenda.
- Set clear guidelines for all discussions and get agreement from the group
- Welcome diverse opinions and points of view
- Co-create agendas and outlines whenever possible
- Make clear agreements around time, tasks and group accountability
- Be consistent and fair
- Model the behavior you wish to see in the group



3. Affection Stage

Objectives

- Acknowledge, appreciate, celebrate and encourage - Individuals and group

Activities

- Heartfelt connections and closures that inspire group members to return
- Leave participants feeling loved and supported
- Encourage individual leadership and expression
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Create a sense of fun and connection
- Leave group members feeling appreciated and excited for more
- Focus on the positive

Tips for Affection Stage

- Model the behavior you wish to see
- Be generous with your appreciations and encourage group members to do the same
- Remember to spend plenty of time on the inclusion stage of the group process – the more included group members feel the more generous they will be with their appreciations
- Allow plenty of time for appreciation
- If possible – Always end every group, class or meeting with some form of appreciation activity
- Be prepared – Have several activities and options available (time sensitive activities)
- Allow the group to appreciate you too. It gives them a chance to practice, tells you where they are and it feels good!

***“Interdependence ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency.
Man is a social being.
Without interrelation with society he cannot realize his oneness”***

- Mahatma Gandhi



“I” vs. “You” Messages

By saying “I” instead of “You” when talking (especially about feelings), the speaker takes full ownership for their words and for communicating from their hearts. Using “I” messages can be both empowering and vulnerable. The power of “I” messages allows the listener to know where you really stand and, in most cases, allows the listener to more easily separate their views from yours. Many people continue to use “You” messages out of habit or because they fear being vulnerable even after they’ve learned to use “I” messages. Although they can be scary, “I” messages allow for much more effective communication.

Another challenge for many of us in using “I” messages is that they require us to name how we feel. Many of us do not have a good “feeling” vocabulary. “I” messages require that we be able to name how we feel. With practice, it will get easier to identify your feelings. Sometimes you may find that sounds are more expressive than words. “I feel AHHHHHHHHH,” may be a good way to get started with the feeling words. Let’s look more clearly at the difference between “You” Messages and “I” Messages...

“You” Messages

- Tell the listener about them instead of about you.
- The listener often feels blamed, attacked, put down, angry or defensive (most people don’t like to be told how they feel or what they believe).
- The listener often shuts off, pulls away (physically or emotionally) attacks back, or simply ignores the speaker.

Some examples of “You” Messages

- You made me feel _____ when you _____.
- You never _____, you are so _____.
- You always _____, you are so _____.

“I” Messages

- The speaker talks about their own feelings, thoughts or beliefs
- The speaker tells about what they themselves feel, want or need

- The speaker is never wrong! (No one can say you don’t feel that way, although many people will try!)

Some examples of “I” Messages

- I feel _____ when _____ is said or done.
- I want _____
- I need _____
- When _____ happens, I feel _____



Challenge Day Rumor Elimination Model

The Challenge Day Rumor Elimination Model is designed to provide an effective way to intervene with when rumors and gossip are happening in your presence.

Step 1: Attempt To Interrupt

- Do your best to interrupt any signs of rumors, gossip, resentment or negative judgments about other people
- Try saying something like, “I’d prefer not to hear this, I think you should talk to the person directly”

Step 2: Listen

- If the person speaking is too upset to stop talking or to take responsibility for speaking directly to the person they are speaking about, offer a safe place for them to share any feelings and beliefs they need to share (support them in emptying their balloon).
- Share compassion for the speaker’s feelings without adding to the separation or agreeing with the speaker’s judgments.

Note – If you find yourself with a similar feeling, judgment or concern about a person, your job as a Challenger is to clear up your concern or judgment directly with the person it is with.

Step 3: Get a Commitment

- Confirm that the speaker can drop their concern, stop talking negatively or is willing to speak directly with the person they have judgments or concerns about.
- Clarify a time when the speaker would be willing to clear up their concern directly. Offer to support the person if it seems appropriate or necessary.

Note – Remind the speaker that spreading rumors or holding resentments can actually hurt the person who says or carries them more than the person who the rumor is about.

Step 4: Check Back

- Set a time to double check that the person has followed through on their commitment.
- Offer your support if the person fails to follow through or has a difficulty getting the desired results.

Step 5: Never Repeat

- Let the rumor end with you! Do not pass on to other people rumors that you hear. Remember there are two sides to every story.