

HABIT 4-Think WIN-WIN

“Life is an ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT Buffet”

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1b** Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

“What do we live for if not to make life less difficult for each other?” – George Eliot

Win-Lose - The Totem Pole. Habit 4: Think Win-Win teaches that Win-Lose is an attitude toward life that says the pie of success is only so big, and if you get a big piece, then someone else will get a small piece. Win-Lose is competitive – relationships, friendships, and loyalty are less important than winning the game, being the best, and having it your way. But in the end, Win-Lose will usually backfire. You may end up on the top of the totem pole, but you’ll be there alone and without friends. Change to WIN-WIN.

Lose-Win - The Doormat. How is a doormat useful? Pretty much, the only thing it’s good for is to wipe your feet on. Its only purpose is to serve others; it doesn’t get anything out of the job except being walked all over. When you think Lose-Win, you essentially become a doormat for other people. With Lose-Win thinking you’ll find yourself setting low or no expectations and compromising your standards again and again. Doesn’t sound like fun, does it? There is a time to lose, of course. Lose-Win is fine if the issue isn’t that important to you. Just make sure you stand up for the things you believe in and that matter most.

Lose-Lose - The Downward Spiral. Revenge is sweet, isn’t it? When someone hurts you, naturally you want to hurt him or her back. It is much easier to seek revenge than to grant forgiveness. However, by getting revenge, you may think you’re winning, but you’re really hurting only yourself. Lose-Lose is about revenge, winning at all costs, and obsessing about another in a negative way. Lose-Lose says, “If I’m going down then you’re going down with me, sucker.” Lose-Lose is not about winners; it’s about losers. You have to decide which team you’d rather be on.

Win-Win - The All-You-Can-Eat Buffet. Think Win-Win is an attitude about life. It’s a frame of mind that says I can win, and so can you. It’s not me or you; it’s both of us. Think Win-Win is the foundation for getting ahead in life by helping others get ahead.

People with a Win-Win attitude usually:

- Are happy when others succeed
- Help others succeed
- Think “abundance”
- Are willing to share recognition with others
- See life as an all-you-can-eat buffet for everybody.

Win the Private Victory First

Competition is a part of life. In high school, competition is everywhere — at sports games, debate competitions, school elections, etc. Competition isn't limited to organized events; you constantly compete for grades or attention too. Competition is healthy and promotes a Win-Win attitude when you compete against yourself, or when it challenges you to reach and stretch to become your best.

So how can you Think Win-Win where there's really going to be only one person or team who takes home the prize? You start with the Private Victory first. The Private Victory is about self-mastery and self-discipline. It is about performing your personal best and learning from defeat. Competition becomes dark and spirals into Win-Lose when you tie your self-worth into winning, or when you use it as a way to place yourself above others. Although you might not win every competition, if you can achieve a Private Victory in spite of your loss, you are a winner.

Keep Competition Healthy

Avoid competition and comparing. These habits can slowly eat you way from the inside. It is virtually impossible to Think Win-Win with them around. In some cases, competition is extremely healthy. It drives you to improve, to reach, and to stretch — to know how far you can push yourself. Competition becomes bad when you tie your self-worth to winning, or when you use it as a way to place yourself about others. Comparing yourself to others is almost always harmful. You're all on different development timetables — socially, mentally, and physically. Measuring your life based on how you stack up to others is always a bad idea.

The Fruits of Win-Win

How do you know if you are thinking Win-Win? The true test is how you feel. Win-Lose and Lose-Win thinking cloud your judgment and fill you with negative feelings. On the other hand, thinking Win-Win produces positive and serene thoughts and gives you confidence.

“Win-win is a paradigm, a mindset... You have to genuinely want to achieve a win-win solution and not just aim for it—and then just 'settle' for win-lose; if it proves too difficult.”

— Bizshift-trends.com

Baby Steps Choose one or two baby steps you can do to THINK WIN-WIN.

1. Pinpoint the areas of your life where you most struggle with comparisons. Perhaps it's with clothes, physical features, friends or talents.
2. If you play sports, show sportsmanship. Compliment someone from the opposing team after the match or game.
3. If someone owes you money, don't be afraid to mention it in a friendly way. "Did you forget about that ten bucks I loaned you last week? I could use it right now." Think win-win, not lose-win.
4. Without caring whether you win or lose, play a card, board, or computer game with others just for the fun of it.
5. Do you have an important test coming up soon? If so, form a study group and share your best ideas with each other. You'll all do better.
6. The next time someone close to you succeeds, be genuinely happy for them instead of feeling threatened.
7. Think about your general attitude toward life. Is it based on win-lose, lose-win, lose-lose, or win-win thinking? How is that attitude affecting you?
8. Think of a person who you feel is a model of win-win. What is it about this person you admire?
9. Are you in a lose-win relationship with a member of the opposite sex? If you are, then decide what must happen to make it a win for you or chose to go for no deal and get out of the relationship.

Sources:

Covey, Sean. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. New York: Fireside, 1998. Print.

Covey, Sean. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens Personal Workbook*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. Print.