Bullying: Individual Heart Exercise Student Worksheet

The Heart

On your paper draw a large heart that fills up the middle like the one in the picture below:

![Heart drawing](image)

Each of us begins life as a baby depending on others to care for us. Imagine that you are holding a newborn baby—what words or thoughts come to mind—write them down inside your heart. If you need a little help, type the words “cute babies” into an image search and then describe what you see. When you have at least 10 words in your heart describe the feelings you experienced when writing down the words about babies here:

Hurts

As we continue the journey from infant to young child we often have things said to us by adults that are not so nice to hear and cause shame and embarrassment. Go to the webpage Student Reporting Labs Share Bullying Stories, Solutions [http://to.pbs.org/18H3Alk](http://to.pbs.org/18H3Alk) and choose 15 student stories to listen to. Listen to the stories and for each unkind words/phrases that were said to the students you chose draw a slash through your heart and write the specific hurtful word on the slash. See the heart below:

![Heart with slashes](image)

Then reflect on your own experiences and add words or phrases you have heard and draw a slash for each one as you did for the students you listened to. If you are having trouble thinking of these words, use these questions to help you get started:
• Have you ever been made fun of? What was said to you?
• Think of people who have a disability or are not good at certain subjects in school—what do teachers and fellow students say to them?
• What if someone speaks with an accent or doesn’t speak “proper” English?
• What if a child was born with a big body?
• What if someone has different clothing?
• What if a person has a different religion from most people or different traditions?
• What if people have a different color of skin or different culture—what are they called or teased about? What bad things are girls called, how about boys?
• What if your family doesn’t have very much money?
• What if someone is transgender or gay? What is said to them?

What feelings do you have after writing down all those hurtful words? In the space below describe those feelings:

**Shields**

When people are called these words enough they often start to believe them and find ways to shield themselves from the pain. For example, someone who is being called stupid might act silly or stop talking in class. When you are teased or made fun of what do you feel like doing? Think back to the students you heard from and write down ways they coped with bullying. For each behavior students used to shield themselves from the pain draw a shield/line between the hurtful words and the ways that people cope with feeling badly about themselves. See the example below:

![Shields Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

How can putting up walls can lead to negative behavior including things that may numb the pain, but not improve the situation? Do you see examples of people who are coping with bullying around you? What does that look like? In the space below describe your responses to those questions.
Assessing the Damage

To reflect on your experience answer the following questions:

1. Remember how your heart looked and felt in the first part of this exercise? Describe it.

2. How did your heart change once it had been called bad names?

3. How hard is it to get back to the original innocent heart once walls have been put up to protect it from dealing with the pain?

4. How did it make you feel to watch the students on SRL talk about being bullied?

Class Debrief

As an entire class, discuss your answers from “Assessing the Damage”. If there are any insights, questions, or feelings you want to share from the lesson with your classmates use this time to speak about them.