

# Group Application - Frustration Tolerance, The “Media” Method

## Learning Objectives:

- Understand the concept of frustration tolerance
- Learn and practice the “Media Method” and the “Power of the Pause”
- Develop personal strategies for managing frustration
- Build group support and understanding

## Pre-Session Setup

- Arrange room with clear spaces for team building activities
- Prepare Jenga blocks or plastic cups for each team
- Set up visual aids including Media Method posters
- Have personal plan templates and handouts ready
- Test timer functionality

## Part 1: Opening Activity - "Tower of Frustration" (10 minutes)

### Materials Needed:

- Jenga blocks or plastic cups
- Timer
- Small rewards (optional)

### Setup:

1. Divide participants into teams of 3-4
2. Give each team equal building materials
3. Clear space for each team

### Instructions:

1. Teams must build the tallest tower possible in 2 minutes
2. Add challenge: Must use non-dominant hand
3. Add challenge: Cannot speak during building
4. Add final challenge: Last 30 seconds with eyes closed

### Opening Script

"Welcome everyone! Today we're going to explore something we all deal with: frustration. But we're going to start with a fun challenge that might just bring up some of those feelings we'll be talking about. Let's divide into teams of 3-4 people. [Assist with division] Each team will get identical building materials. Your challenge is to build the tallest tower possible in just 2 minutes. Sounds simple, right? Well, there's a catch..."

- "First round: Build normally for 30 seconds to get comfortable with the materials." [Allow 30 seconds]
- "Now the real challenge begins! You must use only your non-dominant hand. Right-handed people use left, left-handed people use right." [Start timer]
- "One minute remaining! And now... complete silence! No talking allowed!" [At 30 seconds remaining] "Final challenge - everyone close your eyes! Keep building!"
- [After time expires] "Time's up! Everyone step back from your towers."

### Debrief Discussion

"Let's talk about what just happened:

- What frustrated you the most during this activity?
- How did your body feel when you were frustrated?
- What helped you keep going despite the challenges?"

[Allow 2-3 responses for each question, validating all contributions]

## Part 2: Understanding Frustration (10 minutes)

"Let's define frustration together. Who can share what frustration means to them?" [Gather 2-3 responses]

Guide discussion to include these common triggers:

- Difficult schoolwork
- Being broke/not finding a job
- Hungry/cold
- Relationship challenges
- Sports/performance pressure
- People being late
- Video games

"Frustration is what we feel when something blocks us from reaching our goal or when things don't go as planned. Like a song that's playing too loud, or isn't the track you wanted, frustration is a signal that something needs to change. Frustration is completely normal. Everyone in this room experiences it, including me. The good news is we can learn to manage it better, which brings us to our main tool - The Media Method."

## Part 3: The Media Method (15 minutes)

Put your hand up if you've experienced any of these:

- Racing heart, tight muscles, hot face, clenched fists, pacing, headache, bouncing your leg, stuttering.

Pause & Breathe

"Just like hitting pause on your favorite song, sometimes we need to pause ourselves. Imagine a bottle of soda that's been shaken up. What happens if we open it right away? But what if we let it sit for a minute?"



- When frustration hits, hit your internal pause button
- Take a moment to breathe
- Give yourself permission to stop

Discussion:

- "Think about this: has anyone ever told you to hold your breath when you're frustrated, or to make a tight fist? Why do you think no one has told you to do that?"
- "Have you ever paused, or seen someone else pause?"
- "What does it look like for you to pause?"
- "In the past, what has helped you to pause?"
- "If we don't pause, we can sometimes make a problem bigger. Have you seen that happen before?"
- "Can you tell us about a time when you didn't pause, and it made things worse?"

"Pausing can help us survive a situation without making it worse. Now, let's learn a powerful pausing technique - Box Breathing:" [Demonstrate] "Breathe in for 4 counts, hold for 4, out for 4, hold for 4. Let's try it together..." [Lead one round of box breathing]

Check the Track



"Just like checking what song is playing, check in with yourself:

- What am I feeling right now?
- What's the one thing bothering you the most right now?

Rewind

"Remember, you have options:



- What's one tiny thing that might help, even a little bit? You don't have to figure it all out. Just one small thing."
- Is there another way? Can I ask for help? What worked before?
- Who's one person you trust that you could talk to?

Play



"When you're ready to press play again (play doesn't have to be right now)

- Choose one small action and take it slow
- Walk away or step outside for fresh air
- Test a person that you trust
- Play music
- It's okay to start over

#### **Part 4: Practice Scenarios (10 minutes)**

"Let's practice with real situations. I'll describe a scenario, and we'll work through it together using our Media Method."

Present each scenario, guiding group through the method:

1. "You've been stuck on a math problem for 5 minutes..."
2. "You keep losing at an important game..."
3. "Your friend isn't responding to your messages..."

For Each Scenario:

1. Identify frustration triggers
2. Practice Pause Method
3. Share solutions
4. Discuss outcomes

#### **Part 5: Closing Exercise: Personal Pause Plan (5 minutes)**

Remember, just like finding the right song for the moment, managing frustration is about finding what works for you. Keep your plan handy and practice these skills. Next time we meet, we'll share out how it worked.

Create Individual Cards:

- Pause & Breathe: List Personal Calming Techniques
- Check the Track: Write Emotional Awareness Strategies
- Rewind: Note what's worked before, or what you've learned in this program
- Play: List small actions to take, and people you can talk to or text

**Facilitator Notes:**

- Address disruptions calmly
- Use Media Method yourself
- Model good frustration tolerance
- Provide individual support
- Extension Activities
  - Create Stoplight posters
  - Design phone wallpapers

Resources:

<https://www.spiral2grow.com/traffic-light-system-to-overcome-anger/>  
[https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/Content/what to do in a crisis aggression/course/assets/f5fe19bea0d81b3789fbbc3805ce8d791d7be8c3.pdf](https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/Content/what%20to%20do%20in%20a%20crisis%20aggression/course/assets/f5fe19bea0d81b3789fbbc3805ce8d791d7be8c3.pdf)  
<https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/teaching-kids-how-to-calm-their-emotions-the-stoplight-approach>  
<https://www.withyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/My-Anger-Traffic-Lights.pdf>  
<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/traffic-light-toolkit-for-emotional-regulation/>  
<https://everydayspeech.com/blog-posts/no-prep-social-skills-sel-activity/teaching-the-conversation-stoplight-a-social-emotional-learning-activity/>  
<https://theplaytherapist.com/using-jenga-in-play-therapy/>  
<https://elunanetwork.org/resources/activity-emotional-jenga/>  
<https://www.counselorchelsey.com/blog/jengainschoolcounseling>  
<https://psychcentral.com/anxiety/impulsive-vs-intrusive-thoughts#Takeaway>