

WHAT ARE THEY THINKING?

WHAT TO SAY

Skills to Introduce – Flexible Thinking

- **“Cognitive reappraisal or flexible thinking** refers to being able to look at a situation in different ways and using that thinking to change how we feel about the situation.”
- **“Flexible thinking** includes evaluating the thoughts we have that are making us feel sad or nervous and coming up with other possible thoughts we could have about the situation.”
- **“For example,** we might think ‘my friends are going to think that what I say is stupid’ → an alternative thought could be ‘they could agree with what I have to say or find it interesting.’”

Requires Resources? Yes
Grade Level: 6-8; 9-12
Indoor/Outdoor: Indoor
Group Size: 4+

WHAT TO DO

What you Need

- ▶ Images or videos of scenarios

How to Play

The goal of this game is for students to look at images and come up with ideas about the pictured scenarios.

2. Divide students into groups and task them to come up with what characters are thinking, what could be happening and what might happen next.
3. It is important for students to know that there are no wrong or right answers.

Potential Adaptations

- ▶ Divide the students into teams and ask them to list greatest number of alternative explanations.
- ▶ Prompt students to discuss which alternative explanations would lead to the most preferred result.

Have teams act out how a scene might play out depending on what thoughts the people in the picture are having. Have the students reflect on how the scene looks different depending on which thoughts the people in the picture have.

WHAT TO ASK

- ▶ How easy or difficult was it for you to describe what the people in the images were thinking and doing?
- ▶ How are your own thoughts tied to how you are feeling?
- ▶ How do your thoughts relate to what is happening in your body?
- ▶ To what extent do you use flexible thinking?
- ▶ How does flexible thinking change the way you feel?
- ▶ What are some situations where you can use flexible thinking?