



# Goal-Directed Behavior

## Losing Gracefully

### Pre-Teaching/ Guiding Language:

While we all love to be the best, there will always be times where someone is better than us. Typically, we are not privy to see the losing team's post game locker rooms or the backstage reaction of the actor who lost the academy award. Therefore, we must learn and practice losing kindly and gracefully.

Your gut reaction when you lose is probably a mixture of embarrassment, hurt, and maybe some anger or frustration. While you watch the winner celebrate you are likely running through all the things in your head that you should have and could have done differently. Instead of racking your brain of the things you cannot change, remember these tips for how you can learn from your losses.

1. Someone beating you is not personal. You both wanted to win and only one of you could. Allow yourself to accept this fact while understanding you did your best.
2. Do not try to place the blame on someone else. You can't blame your coaches, teachers, or teammates. Instead of looking for someone to place blame on, sit down with your team or coaches and have a discussion about what may have gone wrong.
3. Process, renew, and refresh yourself. Once you make peace with your loss you can accept the necessary responsibilities and move on.

This strategy reinforces the skills taught in the high school student-directed strategy ***Lose Like a Winner.***

### Key Takeaways:

- Students will understand how to learn from their losses.
- Students will recognize the feelings of others whether they lose or win.
- Students will practice reflecting and being introspective after a loss.

### Duration + Materials:

- 40 minutes
- Board game or cards

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Blame-** Assign responsibility for a wrongdoing or fault.
- **Embarrassment-** A feeling of self-consciousness, shame, or awkwardness.
- **Renew-** Re-establish.



## Activity:

1. Use the guided language to invite students into a conversation about times they lost when they felt like they should have won.
2. Invite students to share their experiences and how it made them feel.
3. After students have had the opportunity to share, break them up into pairs or small groups.
  - a. This is at the discretion of the teacher, depending on the types of games you have access to and the number of students you have.
  - b. If you do not have access to games, allow students to play “Dots”, “Tik Tack Toe” or “Rock Paper Scissors”
4. Give students 15-20 minutes to play their games and keep score.
  - a. Set a timer so there is no confusion as to when time is up.
5. While students are playing be sure to remind them of the qualities of a good loser.
6. When the timer goes off, have students return to their seats.
7. Use the discussion questions to debrief with students about how it felt to lose and what they will do next time they are in a tough loss situation.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What was the most difficult part about losing?
2. How did it feel when you lost?
3. What did you learn from losing?
4. How would you react if the winner was a “sore winner”, gloating and rubbing it in your face?
5. Would it be hard for you to be kind if the winner was gloating?
6. What will you do the next time you experience a tough loss?

## Reinforcement Activities:

1. Continue to positively reinforce students when you see them win or lose gracefully.