

## Hand[s] in [Our] Pocket[s]

**Goals:** To increase self-awareness, emotional expression, autonomy, self-esteem

**Intervention:** This lesson plan relies heavily on a crowd-favorite, “Hand in My Pocket” by Alanis Morissette. The lesson begins by asking the residents to think of things they consider to be “in their control” and “out of their control.” The residents are provided a blank piece of paper and asked to trace one of their hands. As an alternative, the residents can be provided a template of a hand (template attached below). The residents are asked to list the things that are in their control inside the hand, and things that are outside of their control outside of the hand. Or as a group, brainstorm a version of this list and write it down on the whiteboard.

Next, provide the residents the worksheet (see below) which includes the lyrics to the song “Hand in My Pocket” by Alanis Morissette (first page) and play the song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTgrASzzUXU>. [A video that includes only the lyrics is recommended in order to encourage the residents to focus on the lyrics rather than the official video]. After listening to the song, the residents are encouraged analysis the lyrics. The song includes themes of acceptance, moving forward, change, and control. The residents are then encouraged to think of and write their own version of a verse of the song using the lyrics substitution worksheet (second page). Ask them to first identify something that is out of their control, and then something that is in their control as their way to cope. Example: “I’m broke but I’m happy” might be re-written as “I’m hurt but I’m coping.”

Here’s a version of creator of this activity, Erin Seibert’s group’s lyrics substitution:

I’m broke but I’m giving  
I’m hated but I’m loved  
I seem distant but I care.

I’m abused but I’m a survivor  
I’m brokenhearted but I’m going on  
I’m not perfect but I’m better off than most.

I’m hopeless but I’m determined  
I’m insane but I’m medicated  
I’m suffering but I am blessed.

I’m lost but I’m hopeful  
I’m sour but I’m sweet  
I’m unhealthy but my soul is good.

And what it all comes down to  
Is that everything’s going to be alright  
‘cause I got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is on my heart.

And what it all comes down to  
Is that everything’s going to be a mystery  
‘cause I got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is pointed to the sky.

**Considerations:** Residents may focus on their challenges and write two negatives in a row (e.g., “I’m broke but I’m unemployed”), so be sure to stress that they write the challenge *first* and then the way in which they’re coping with that challenge (“I’m broke but I’m loved”).

**Adaptations:** Have the residents write a group version of the lyrics substitution to relieve the pressure of coming up with six of their own re-written lines of the song. This allows the residents to determine only one line of the song within a group version.

**Takeaway:** The residents leave with a sense of self-worth and are often extremely proud of the group collaboration on their lyrics substitution. It also challenges them to consider things that are within their control and aspects of their life they have the ability to change.



Hand

Template-Hand In O

## Hand In My Pocket by Alanis Morissette

I'm broke but I'm happy, I'm poor but I'm kind  
I'm short but I'm healthy, yeah  
I'm high but I'm grounded, I'm sane but I'm overwhelmed  
I'm lost but I'm hopeful, baby  
What it all comes down to  
Is that everything's gonna be fine, fine, fine  
'Cause I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is giving a high five

I feel drunk but I'm sober, I'm young and I'm underpaid  
I'm tired but I'm working, yeah  
I care but I'm restless, I'm here but I'm really gone  
I'm wrong and I'm sorry baby

What it all comes down to  
Is that everything is going to be quite alright  
'Cause I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is flicking a cigarette  
What it all comes down to  
Is that I haven't got it all figured out just yet  
'Cause I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other...

What it all comes down to  
Is that I haven't got it all figured out just yet  
'Cause I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is giving a peace sign

I'm free but I'm focused, I'm green but I'm wise  
I'm hard but I'm friendly, baby  
I'm sad but I'm laughing, I'm brave but I'm chicken shit  
I'm sick but I'm pretty baby

And what it all boils down to  
Is that no one's really got it figured out just yet  
I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is playing the piano

And what it all comes down to, my friends, yeah  
Is that everything is just fine fine fine  
I've got one hand in my pocket  
And the other one is hailing a taxi cab

## Lyrics Substitution

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm \_\_\_\_\_

And what it all comes down to

Is that everything is going to be \_\_\_\_\_

'Cause I got one hand in my pocket

And the other one is \_\_\_\_\_