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EBT 1210-002
Final Project

This was one of the more difficult projects for me to complete because I do not have a strong emotional charge on guns. While I am saddened by the epidemic of gun violence in America, I have not been personally touched by it so it feels like an issue that is "far removed" from me. While I understand that that is actually NOT the case, I did have a difficult time feeling creatively about solutions for the problem of gun violence. In fact, I spent a couple different sessions of brainstorming only to come up with four ideas for *categories*, only one of which was I able to actually spark other ideas to form some sort of solution.
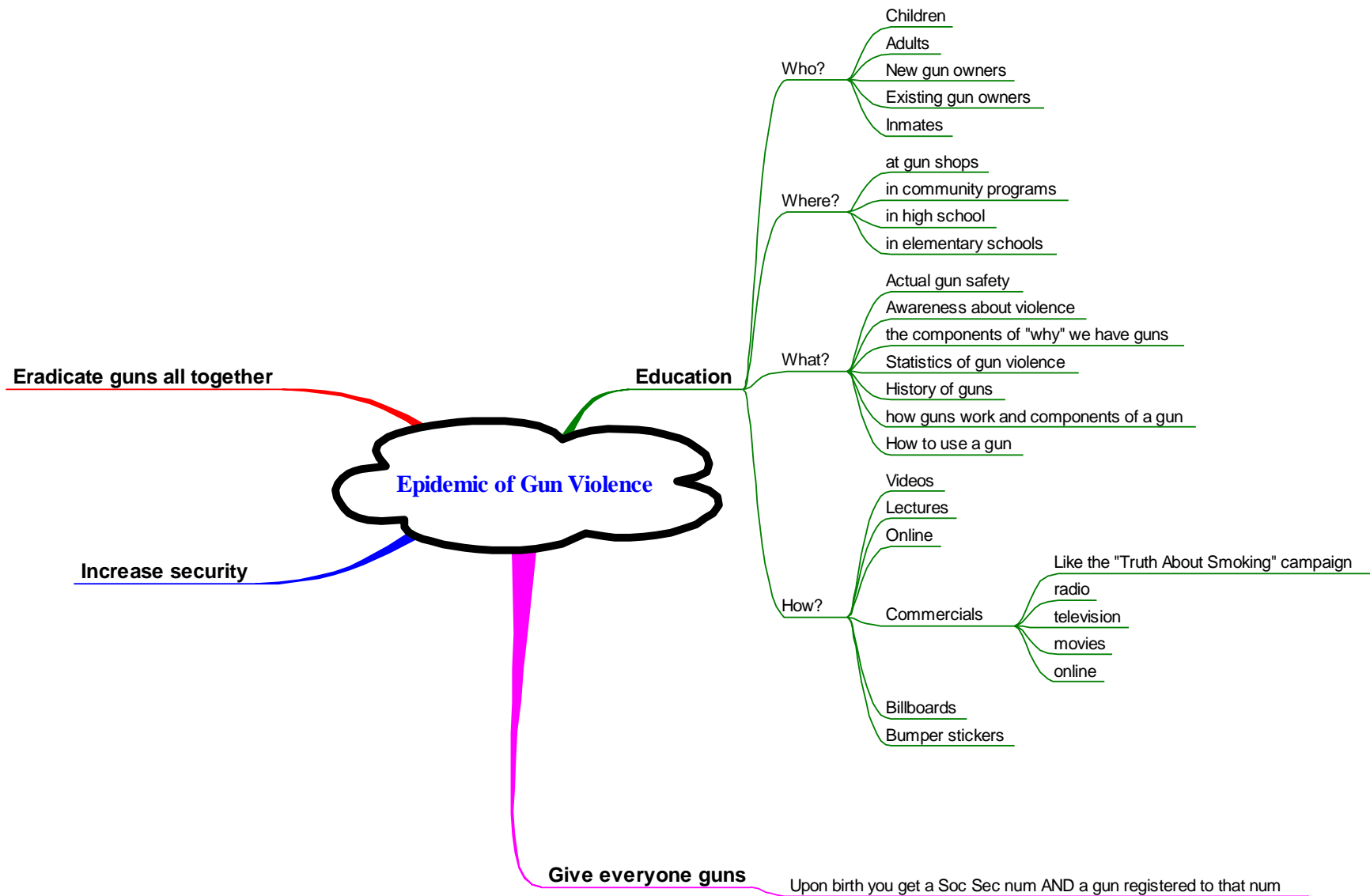
What I have come to understand about myself is that, for me to feel creative about a problem solving process, it has to be something tangible with which I can interact. If I feel as though the problem is "outside" of me or "bigger" than me or "not applicable" to me, then I struggle with finding creative solutions, mostly because - and I know how this sounds - I do not care enough to generate a solution.

Tools used:

1. **Radial outline:** (see next page)

> This tool was used because it is how I best brainstorm ANY idea and I like to start with this to see what ideas I can generate. It helps me to see them down on paper or on a computer screen and I really love this "MindMan" software one of my coaches gave me for this very thing.

Epidemic of Gun Violence

Eradicate guns all together

Increase security

Education

- **Who?**
  - Children
  - Adults
  - New gun owners
  - Existing gun owners
  - Inmates
- **Where?**
  - at gun shops
  - in community programs
  - in high school
  - in elementary schools
- **What?**
  - Actual gun safety
  - Awareness about violence
  - the components of "why" we have guns
  - Statistics of gun violence
  - History of guns
  - how guns work and components of a gun
  - How to use a gun
- **How?**
  - Videos
  - Lectures
  - Online
  - Commercials
    - Like the "Truth About Smoking" campaign
    - radio
    - television
    - movies
    - online
  - Billboards
  - Bumper stickers

Give everyone guns
- Upon birth you get a Soc Sec num AND a gun registered to that num

2. **Identifying categories before specific alternatives:**

   Due to the difficulty I was having with this project, the ONLY thing I could come up with in the beginning was the four, very vague categories that I have listed. And, in fact, when I first sat down with it, the only two ideas (which ended up being categories) that I could come up with were "Eradicate guns" and "Educate." Over time, the other two categories came to me after I did the next step.

3. **Looking for fresh perspectives:**

   As I mentioned in the opening paragraphs, I was having difficulty with this particular problem and finding any solutions. For me, looking for fresh perspectives started with me owning the fact that I was having difficulties so that it could open the way for something else to show up, which naturally led to the next step.

4. **Evaluating throughout the creative process:**

   The two other categories showed up, but they did not feel like plausible ideas to start with. However, I was in a panic because I could not come up with ideas so I continued to try to "make" myself turn them into plausible ideas. Granted, they possibly could be reasonable, but I just was not seeing the plausibility in them. I had to get clear with myself and that led me to the next step.

5. **Choosing by elimination with extraction:**

   After the other two categories showed up, I still was not having any luck with fleshing out the categories. I felt frustrated and stared at it for a long

time and finally allowed myself to admit that "eradicating guns" and "giving everyone guns" were both ridiculous ideas. And, even though I later had an idea pop in about "giving everyone guns," I gave myself permission to stop paying attention to those and, instead, pay attention to the idea that did excite me: Education.

6. **Move my body:**

One tool that is not discussed in this book, but happens to be one of my most powerful tools, is the process of giving the "problem" time and space by actually getting up and moving away from the project and physically moving my body. Today, as I found myself staring at this project for the fifth day in a row with absolutely no new ideas, I decided to let it be for a bit and go for a walk. I went on the walk not to find ideas, but, rather, to clear my mind and move my body. With finals weeks upon me, I have been sitting A LOT doing homework and I was feeling restless. I closed down my computer and went out for a delightful walk in the beautiful spring day. I soaked in the sights, sounds and scents of the day and came back feeling refreshed. When I reopened my mind map on this project, I suddenly had all kinds of ideas on how to flesh out the "education" category, even though *that* was not the focus of my walk.

7. **Simplifying:**

I have a tendency to make things really difficult for myself so to remind myself to keep it simple was an ongoing part of this process. However, once I got to this stage in the creative process, I realized that "simplifying"

for me meant going with the most natural response and following that through. Thus, I had rapid-fire ideas coming through about "Education."

8. **Thinking wordlessly:**

   I LOVE that this is one of the ideas for creative problem solving because "words" and "language" have been a huge learning forum for me as of late. Because I am a visionary, I have a tendency to think in images, rather than words. When I got to this stage in the process, I was ready to allow myself to think in pictures. When I did, I could see the actual classes being taught. I could hear the commercials. I could see the videos. It was cool!

Potential Solutions:

1. Eradicate guns all together

2. Increase security

3. Give everyone guns

4. Education

Three Best Solutions:

Given that I only came up with four solutions and I believe only one of which is actually a truly viable, doable solution, I will expand on each solution I came up with.

1. Eradicate guns all together

   This is just plain silly. There is no way we could get rid of guns all together AND I would not want us to get rid of guns all together.

2. Increase security

   I had no idea how this would even begin to work as we have already such high security throughout this country. However, it *could be* a

viable option if someone was more creative in this category than, apparently, I was able to be.

3. Give everyone guns

As I was brainstorming for the "Education" piece, I had the random thought pop in that it would actually be easy to assign one gun to every person. When babies are born, their parents register them for a Social Security number. At that time, the government could issue them a card AND a standard-issue gun that is registered to that Social Security number. I did not spend any time fleshing out this idea because I could already see the nightmare of legal tape and, possibly, an entirely new branch of bureaucracy we would have to deal with. However, it seems like it could be a possibility if someone could figure out a system for handling it easefully… and also a system for what happens when a person's identity AND gun is stolen… a whole new can of worms opens there.

4. Education

As you can see from my mind map, "Education" held a lot of creative juice for me. I was able to see an entire system of programs that were offered to everyone for developing awareness on gun violence and gun safety. It became a feasible idea for these classes, seminars, workshops, teleseminars, webinars and videos to be offered to people of all ages and in all walks of life.

I believe this is the most superior to all of my other options because I believe that, as with all things in life, education is the most

viable course of action. When someone understands a concept, a belief, a way of life or a process, they are able to incorporate it into their lives in a way that is beneficial or at least become more tolerant of others who do. Education is what breaks down the barriers between nations. It breaks down difficulties in communication. It softens judgment and prejudices.

Educating *everyone* on the statistics of gun violence, the outcomes, and the history and about gun safety provides an equal playing field for everyone. Given that guns are here to stay, educating everyone on them seems to be the most practical direction to go.