

## **The Shape of Things to Come** –from The National Alliance Trainer’s Manual, 2012

**Why:** We used this as an ice breaker/ inclusion activity because it gets people thinking, laughing and discussing. It is a good way to begin the discussion on resiliency-personal resiliency or family resiliency. Background: The “shape” activity comes from the research of Dr. Susan Dellinger, the author and creator of Psycho- Geometrics. This system, developed in 1978, is a unique method of analyzing human personality on the basis of a preference for shapes. This system has been presented to over a million people worldwide.

**How:** This is a short, fun exercise that could be used to introduce the concept of behavior profiling. To set up for the exercise, hang a picture of each of the following shapes around the room:

- Box (square)
- Triangle
- Rectangle
- Circle
- Squiggle

Ask the participants to choose a shape that represents them at work. After they have chosen their shape, group them by the shapes they have chosen. Once in groups, ask each group to spend a couple of minutes discussing these questions:

Why did they choose this shape?

How does the shape represent them at work?

What is their best guess about the attributes of the shape they’ve chosen?

Ask each group to report out what they’ve discussed. After each group has given its report, share with them a little bit about what Dr. Dellinger’s research has discovered about each shape preference, as follows:

- **Box (square):** Hard worker; dependable; detail oriented; collector of data; likes to work independently
- **Triangle:** Upwardly mobile; shows leadership qualities; energetic; task and results oriented
- **Rectangle:** A shape in transition; can’t decide what shape it wants to be; explorer; risk-taker
- **Circle:** Interested in harmony; wants people to feel good about themselves; nurturer; people pleaser
- **Squiggle:** Innovative; unique; can be a bit disorganized; multi-tasker; likes several things going at once

Have questions about this tool? Contact: Jen at [jbourdo@tbaisd.org](mailto:jbourdo@tbaisd.org) or Julie at [jdiola@tbaisd.org](mailto:jdiola@tbaisd.org)

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