

# Coping Skills Group

A Session-by-Session Guide

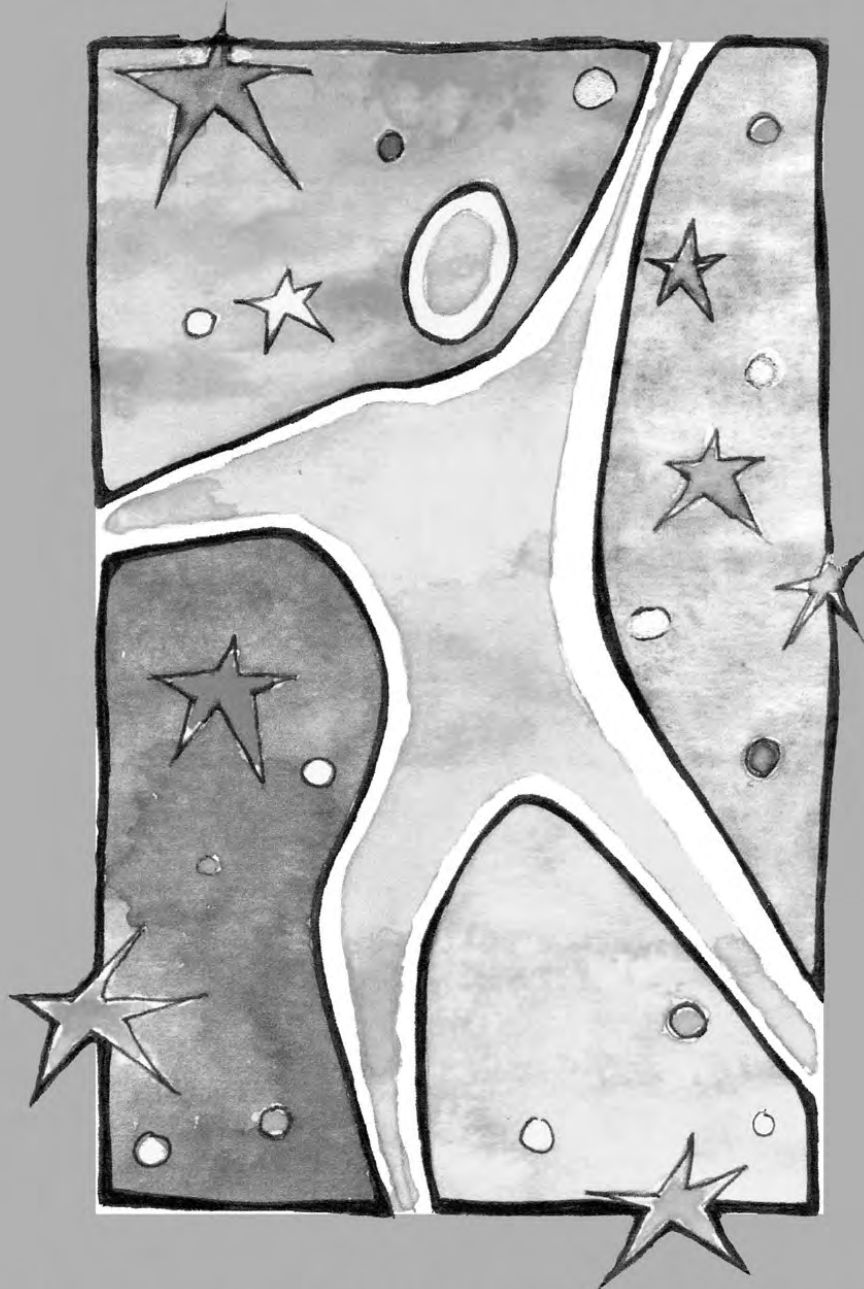


by Susan Gingerich, MSW, and Kim Mueser, Ph.D.



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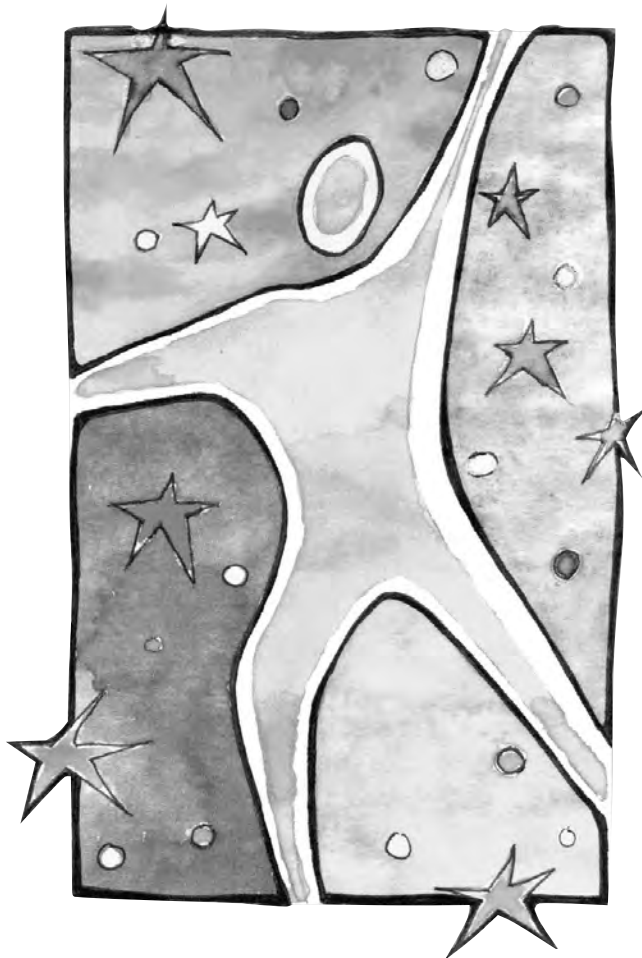
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# Dedication

This manual is dedicated to the unsung heroes of the mental health world, the practitioners working on the frontlines, tirelessly seeking to help individuals with severe mental illness develop skills for coping with their illness and moving forward in their lives.



*“See the Light Within,” NARSAD Artworks, [www.nawart.com](http://www.nawart.com). This watercolor was painted by Robert Blaney. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, his illustrations and poetry have appeared in several magazines, books, and exhibitions.*

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# Introduction

Clinicians who work with people who have the most troubling symptoms of mental illness have often been frustrated when looking for materials for conducting groups. Many books seem to be aimed at clients who have few symptoms and can handle extensive reading, complicated exercises, and unstructured discussions. Other books provide activities and games that require less concentration and reading, but offer few opportunities for clients to learn actual skills that will help them manage their mental illness and move forward in their lives.

Coping Skills Group: A Session-by-Session Guide was written to bridge that gap, by providing materials for conducting skill-building groups with clients who have significant problems related to their mental illness. It is a practical, step-by-step manual for group leaders, containing:

- Ten modules, each covering a major topic area related to coping skills
- Five sessions for each of the ten modules
- A structured, step-by-step group format
- 50 group leader instruction sheets
- 50 handouts for group members, with large print and jargon-free language
- A strong emphasis on group members putting knowledge, strategies, and skills into practice in their own lives

The Coping Skills Group curriculum is flexible and can be tailored to suit the needs of the clients, the agency, and the setting. Leaders can use the modules to set up weekly groups with a new topic every five weeks for ten months, or daily groups with a new topic every week for ten weeks. Agencies might even choose to offer two coping skills groups concurrently, each with a different topic. Group leaders have successfully used the modules at a variety of mental health agencies and facilities, including:

- Continuing day treatment programs
- Short-term inpatient psychiatric settings
- State hospitals
- Discharge preparation programs
- Community rehabilitation residences
- Group homes
- Outpatient programs at mental health centers

Coping Skills Group: A Session-by-Session Guide provides the necessary ingredients for even the busiest mental health practitioner to conduct groups that will improve their clients' ability to cope with their illness and move forward in their lives.



# Using the Modules

The curriculum of the Coping Skills Group is divided into ten modules, each with five sessions related to the overall topic. There are advantages to using the modules in order, because the later, more challenging modules (such as “Managing Anger” and “Avoiding Problems with Alcohol and Drugs”) build on the knowledge and skills established in earlier modules. However, it is also feasible to conduct the program on a cyclical basis and enroll clients at the beginning of each module.

I. Focusing on Our Strengths
II. Understanding Mental Illness
III. Reducing Stress
IV. Connecting with People
V. Expressing Our Positive Feelings
VI. Getting Closer to People
VII. Standing up for Ourselves in a Positive Way
VIII. Managing Anger
IX. Using Our Time Well
X. Avoiding Problems with Alcohol and Drugs

*(continued on next page)*

## Using the Modules *(continued)*

Although the modules are organized in a particular order, each one can stand alone, and the order of the modules can be altered to match the needs of the group members and the agency. Table 2 gives some examples of how specific modules can be used to address common treatment goals identified by people with mental illness.

<b>TREATMENT GOALS</b>	<b>RELEVANT COPING SKILLS MODULES</b>
Improving Mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on Our Strengths</li> <li>• Expressing Our Positive Feelings</li> </ul>
Making Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting with People</li> <li>• Getting Closer to People</li> </ul>
Managing Anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing up for Ourselves in a Positive Way</li> <li>• Managing Our Angry Feelings</li> </ul>
Reducing Substance Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Mental Illness</li> <li>• Reducing Stress</li> <li>• Avoiding Problems with Alcohol and Drugs</li> </ul>
Managing Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing Stress</li> <li>• Using Our Time Well</li> </ul>
Reducing Relapses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Mental illness</li> <li>• Reducing Stress</li> <li>• Using Our Time Well</li> <li>• Avoiding Problems with Alcohol and Drugs</li> </ul>
Developing Leisure and Recreational Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on Our Strengths</li> <li>• Connecting with People</li> </ul>
Getting a Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on Our Strengths</li> <li>• Using Our Time Well</li> </ul>

The first two or three sessions in each module provide information, raise awareness, identify a range of strategies, and help group members to apply what they are learning to their own experience. The last two or three sessions build on this increased understanding and motivation by teaching specific skills. These skills are practiced in and outside the sessions, as part of follow-up assignments.

# Format of the Sessions

Each session of the Coping Skills Group follows the same structure. After attending a few sessions, most group members become familiar and comfortable with the format. As group leaders use the same format consistently, it becomes second nature to them. A group leader instruction sheet is provided for each session in this book, which gives guidance about how to use the format for conducting a group on the specific topic of the session.

Group leaders can photocopy this table to use as a quick reminder before conducting a session.

**Table 3: Steps for Conducting Sessions  
of the Coping Skills Group**

1. Review the previous session and assignment.
2. Announce the topic of the session.
3. Establish a rationale for the session (why is it important or helpful?).
4. Distribute the handout and ask group members to take turns reading it aloud. Pause for discussion.
5. Ask group members to answer the questions on the handout.
6. Ask each group member to share one or more answers to the questions.
7. If a skill is included in the handout, teach it step-by-step.
8. Briefly summarize the session and progress made.
9. Involve group members in developing an assignment related to the topic. Tailor as needed.
10. Thank group members for their participation.

## **Description of the Steps for Conducting Sessions of the Coping Skills Group**

1. **Review the previous session and assignment.**
  - Remind the group members of the topic of the last session.
  - Ask group members what they thought were the main points from the last session and if they have any questions about what was covered.
  - Remind the group members of the assignment.
  - Go around the room, asking each member about his or her progress on the assignment, by asking, “How did the assignment go for you? What parts were you able to do?”

*(continued on next page)*

## Format of the Sessions

- Depending on the assignment and its relative importance, suggest doing some aspect of an incomplete assignment now, e.g., by answering a question or role playing a skill.
  - If relevant, problem-solve how the group members might be able to overcome obstacles to completing assignments.
  - In a kind way, let group members know that the assignment is important, and will help to further their learning.
- 2. Announce the topic of the session.**
  - 3. Establish a rationale for the topic.**
    - Find out what group members believe is important about the topic by asking questions and facilitating dialogue among members.
    - Contribute your own observations as well, but don't allow them to dominate the discussion.
    - Ask questions such as, "What are some reasons \_\_\_\_\_ could be helpful to us?" "Why might it be a good idea to know more about \_\_\_\_\_?" "Why might it be a good idea to know how to do \_\_\_\_\_?" "What happens if we don't know how to \_\_\_\_\_?"
    - Acknowledge all group members' answers.
    - Provide any additional rationales that were not mentioned.
  - 4. Distribute the handout and ask group members to take turns reading.**
    - Divide the reading so that more than one group member has a chance to read.
    - Pause frequently for discussion.
  - 5. Ask group members to answer the questions on the handout.**
    - Ask group members to read the questions aloud and allow a few minutes for everyone to complete them.
    - Questions can either be read aloud, completed, and discussed, one at a time, or all at once.
    - If someone is not able to write down his or her answers, the leader (or another group member) can help with the writing or the person can answer the questions verbally during the discussion which follows.
  - 6. Ask each group member to share one or more of his or her answers to the questions.**
    - Go around the room, making sure each person has an opportunity to speak.
    - The leader can include himself or herself in this process, sharing small pieces of information that are neither too personal nor too intimidating to group members.
    - Note the variety of the answers.
    - Note the similarities and common themes of answers.
    - Optional: use a flip chart or white board to write down answers to some questions.
  - 7. If a skill is included in the handout, teach it step-by-step, using the steps of social skills training (see details in Table 4, page XI).**
    - Review the rationale for the skill.

## Format of the Sessions *(continued)*

- Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Group members can practice how they would use the skill with the group leader or with another group member.
  - Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.
8. **Briefly summarize the session.**
- Use wording such as “Today we talked about \_\_\_\_\_ and practiced \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - Ask group members questions such as, “What did you think were the main points of the session?” or “What did you find most interesting?”
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment related to the topic of the session. Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment.**
- Avoid the traditional classroom process where assignments are inflexible and imposed on the students.
  - Engage the group members in a collaborative process of coming up with interesting assignments that they feel are meaningful and feasible.
  - Suggest a general assignment (such as those listed under step 9 in each group leader instruction sheet) and then involve the group members in tailoring it to be more specific to their interests, needs and abilities.
  - Check in with each group member about whether he or she has any questions about the general assignment, and ask how he or she plans to carry it out (e.g., time and place).
  - In tailoring the assignment, keep in mind that some group members may be more successful at doing the first one or two steps of a skill, instead of all of them.
  - Use positive wording, such as “For every session it’s helpful to do something on our own to follow up what we’re learning. In today’s session, we talked about . . .”
  - Refer in a positive way to following up the assignment. For example, “At the next session I look forward to hearing how it went. If it went well, that’s great. If it didn’t go so well, that’s O.K., too. Then we can do some troubleshooting together.”
  - Encourage group members to write down the assignment and any relevant details about where, when, and with whom they plan to do it.
  - Optional: Ask other staff members to help group members complete their assignments. This is especially helpful on inpatient units or in community residences.
  - Note: You can substitute other terms for “assignments,” such as “opportunities to practice,” “practice between sessions,” or “follow-up.”
10. **Thank group members for their participation.**
- End each session on a positive note.
  - Use wording such as, “I appreciated everyone’s ideas and comments today. I look forward to the next session and hearing about your assignments.”



# Social-Skills Training Techniques

Social skills training is based on learning theory (such as modeling, behavioral rehearsal, reinforcement, and shaping towards desired goals), and involves gradually teaching specific communication skills in a step-by-step fashion, usually in a group format. In Coping Skills Group, skills training techniques are very useful in sessions where the leader is teaching the group members a new skill. Detailed steps for social skills training are provided in Table 4.

**TABLE 4: SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP FORMAT**

1. **Establish a rationale for the skill.**
  - Elicit reasons for learning the skill from group members.
  - Acknowledge all contributions made by group members.
  - Provide any additional rationales not mentioned.
2. **Discuss the steps of the skill.**
  - Discuss the reasons for each step.
  - Check with group members for their understanding of the reasons.
3. **Model the skill using a role play and review the role play with the group members.**
  - Explain that you will demonstrate the skill in a role play.
  - When possible, use two group leaders to model the skill.
  - Keep role play brief and to the point.
  - Discuss whether each step of the skill was used in the role play.
  - Ask group members to evaluate the effectiveness of the role play.
4. **Engage a group member in a role play using the same situation modeled.**
  - Start with a member who is more skilled or is likely to be cooperative.
  - Request that the member try the skill in a role play with one of the leaders.
  - Ask the client questions to check his or her understanding of the goal of the role play.
  - Instruct the remaining group members to observe the client. Consider assigning each member a specific step or part of a step to observe.
5. **Provide positive feedback.**
  - Elicit positive feedback first from group members who have been assigned a specific step to observe.
5. **Provide positive feedback.** *(continued)*
  - Encourage feedback that is specific.
  - Cut off any negative feedback or criticism.
  - Praise all efforts.
6. **Provide corrective feedback (suggestions for improvement).**
  - Elicit suggestions for ways the client could do the skill better.
  - Limit feedback to one or two suggestions.
  - Strive to communicate the suggestions in a positive, upbeat manner.

## Social Skills Training Techniques *(continued)*

7. **Engage the client in another role play using the same situation.**
  - Request that the client change one behavior during role play.
  - Check the client's understanding of the suggestions.
  - Focus on behaviors that are salient and changeable.
8. **Provide additional feedback.**
  - First focus on the behavior that was to be changed.
  - Consider using other behavior-shaping strategies to improve client skills, such as coaching, prompting, and supplemental modeling.
  - Be generous but specific when providing feedback.
9. **Engage each group member in role plays and provide feedback, as in steps 4 through 8.**
10. **Assign homework, which will be reviewed at the beginning of the next session.**
  - Give an assignment to practice the skill--use homework record sheets.
  - Ask group members to identify situations in which they could use the skill.
  - When possible, tailor the assignment to each client's skill level.

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Social Skills Training for Schizophrenia: A Step-by-Step Guide, 2nd Edition. NY: Guilford Press. Pages 281-282.

## Parting Comments

First and foremost, the process of conducting Coping Skills Group involves conveying a message of hope, optimism, and confidence that people can grow and change. The long-term course of mental illness cannot be predicted, and no one can predict anyone's future. Studies have shown, however, that individuals who actively participate in their treatment and who develop effective coping skills have the most favorable course and outcome, including a better quality of life. Leaders of Coping Skills Group can be confident that they are providing essential tools that will not only help clients manage their illness more effectively, but also help them achieve some of their hopes and dreams.



## Module I:

# Focusing on Our Strengths

Session 1: Identifying What Each of Us Is Good At

Session 2: Using Our Strengths

Session 3: Noticing Other People's Strengths

Session 4: Building on Our Strengths

Session 5: Developing Friendships Based on Common Interests

# Identifying What Each of Us Is Good At



We all have weaknesses, but we also have strengths. It is important to be aware of our strengths, so that we don't get discouraged. Strengths include all kinds of abilities, talents, and skills, including the following examples:

- |                     |                   |              |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Loyalty             | Sense of humor    | Friendliness |
| Work-related skills | Sports            | Cooking      |
| Gardening           | Computers         | Art          |
| Determination       | Generosity        | Patience     |
| Hobbies             | Homemaking skills | Sewing       |
| Fixing things       | Music             | Poetry       |
| Other: _____        | Other: _____      | Other: _____ |

## Questions:

1. What do you think your strengths are? What are you good at? Give examples.

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2. What have other people told you that you're good at? Give examples.

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# Identifying What Each of Us Is Good At

*Goal:  
Each group member will identify at least one personal strength.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and practice assignment.  
If this is the first session of the Coping Skills Group, this step would not apply.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Sometimes it's important to think about our problems and how to solve them. At other times it's important to think about our strengths. What are some reasons it could be helpful to focus on our strengths?" Possible answers include:
  - Then we don't get too discouraged.
  - It reminds us that we're good at something.
  - It gives us more confidence to try something new.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.  
Encourage discussion.
5. **Ask group members** to write down their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers to the questions.  
If someone has a hard time identifying strengths, encourage other group members to say what they have noticed that the person is good at.
7. This session focuses on building awareness; no direct skill-teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - Keep an eye out for strengths you may have forgotten to write down. Notice if someone compliments you about a strength. Jot these down on your handout.
  - If you find yourself thinking negatively or getting down on yourself, try reminding yourself of your strengths. Repeat to yourself, "I may have some problems, but I am good at \_\_\_\_\_."
10. **Thank group members** for their participation. Ask them to bring their handouts to the next session.

# Using Our Strengths

**It is important to stay in practice with the things we're good at.  
For example,**

- If you're good at basketball, it helps to keep in practice by shooting hoops.
- If you're interested in politics, you need to stay up-to-date by reading the newspaper or watching the news.
- If you play a musical instrument, you need to practice.
- If you're good at cards or chess, it helps to play regularly with other people.
- If you are good at being friendly, it helps to greet people and have conversations.
- If you are good at being patient, you can use your patience when you are running late or have to stand in line.
- If you're good at homemaking, you can do activities related to cooking or cleaning.
- Other example: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other example: \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose one or two of your strengths and give an example of how you could stay in practice with each of them.**

Strength #1:	How I can stay in practice:
Strength #2:	How I can stay in practice:

# Using Our Strengths

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one way  
they can put their  
strengths into  
action.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how to keep our strengths alive, how to 'stay in shape,' not just physically, but mentally and emotionally. Why is it a good idea to practice our strengths? What happens if we don't use our abilities and skills?" Possible answers include:
  - Use it or lose it.
  - If you don't practice, you stop being good at something. Like basketball.
  - If you don't use your skill, you forget you have it.
  - If you don't stay in practice, you can get down on yourself.
4. **Ask group members to review** the strengths they identified in the last session, either by looking at the handout from session 1 or by remembering. Distribute the handout for this session and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to write** down their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers. If someone has a hard time identifying a way to practice his or her strength, encourage the rest of the group to offer suggestions.
7. This session focuses on building motivation; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - Make a specific plan about when, where, and with whom you can use one of your strengths. Try to complete at least one step in your plan.
  - If you find yourself thinking negatively about yourself, try turning your attention to using one of your strengths. For example, if you're feeling down, and are good at appreciating nature, try taking a walk. If you are artistic, try doing a quick sketch.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Noticing Other People's Strengths



Becoming aware of other people's strengths can help us to keep a positive attitude and to start conversations with others. The strengths you notice do not have to be major things. They can be relatively small things, like having a nice smile, being polite, or dressing well.

## Questions:

Turn to the person on your right. What strength does he or she have? What is he or she good at? If you don't know the person well, you can ask questions.

Person's name:

---

His or her strength:

---

---

## **Skill: Giving Compliments about Strengths or Skills**

1. Look at the person.
2. Use a friendly, sincere tone of voice.
3. Be specific about the strength or skill you are complimenting the person about.

# Noticing Other People's Strengths

*Goal:*  
Group members will identify each other's strengths and practice giving a compliment about strengths.

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale**, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how we can notice other people's strengths and compliment them. Why is it a good idea to notice other people's strengths? How could it be helpful to us?" Possible answers include:
  - It makes the other person feel good when you notice what he or she does well.
  - It gives you something positive to focus on.
  - You feel good yourself when you give a compliment.
  - You see the other person smile and realize you've made them happy.
  - Complimenting someone is good way to start a conversation.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the handout** by identifying the strength(s) of the person to their right, and then responding to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers.
7. **Teach the skill** of "Giving Compliments about a Strength or Skill," using the steps of social skills training:
  - Review the rationale for the skill.
  - Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill and lead a brief discussion of the importance of each step.
  - Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - Give each group member a chance to practice giving a compliment to the person on his or her right.
  - Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.
  - Ask group members what it felt like to give and receive a compliment about a strength or skill.

*(continued on next page)*



# Noticing Other People's Strengths

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve the group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - Give a compliment to someone about a strength he or she has. Be specific.
  - Try starting a conversation with someone based on his or her strength.
  - If you find yourself thinking negatively about your surroundings or the people around you, try turning your attention to focusing on someone else's strengths.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Building on Our Strengths



**Building on our strengths can give us something positive to focus on. It can also give us something to strive for. For example:**

- If you're good at basketball or another sport, you could try joining a team.
- If you're interested in politics, you could start reading a newspaper or magazine about current events, or reading another one if you already read one.
- If you play a musical instrument, you could take lessons again. Or find some other musicians to play with.
- If you are good at cooking, you could try learning to prepare something new, like baking bread or cooking a dish you never tried.
- If you are good at appreciating nature, you could visit a new park or go bird-watching.
- If you are good with animals, you could try volunteering at a zoo, veterinarian's office, or local animal shelter.

## Questions

1. What strength would you like to build on?

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2. What could you do to build on this strength? Be as specific as possible.

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3. What would be the first one or two steps you could take to build on this skill?

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# Building on Our Strengths

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one way  
they can improve  
upon a strength  
or skill.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how we can build on our strengths. Why is it a good idea to build up our strengths? Why not just keep things as they are? Possible answers include:
  - It gives you something to work for.
  - It keeps you fresh.
  - It gives you something positive to focus on.
  - It improves your self esteem.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to write** down their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers. If someone has a hard time identifying what he or she could do to build on a strength, encourage the rest of the group to offer suggestions.
7. This session focuses on building motivation; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - Plan how to take the first step towards building on your skill. Be specific about what you will do, when you will do it, and supplies that may be needed.
  - Find out information related to building on your skill. For example, find out about basketball teams you could join, or the cost of buying a basketball.
  - Take the first step towards building on your skill.
  - Help someone else in the group plan how he or she might take the first step towards building on his or her strength.
  - Help someone else in the group take a step toward building on his or her strength.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Developing Friendships Based on Common Interest



Friendships are based on many things, including whether people have interests in common. When two people have common interests, it's usually easier to think of things to do together. For example:

- If two people enjoy bicycling, they can plan to ride bikes together.
- If two people enjoy listening to music, they can listen to CDs or go to a concert together.
- If two people enjoy reading, they can go to a bookstore or attend a reading together.
- If two people enjoy nature, they could go for a walk in the park together.
- If two people enjoy animals, they could go to the zoo together.
- If two people enjoy drawing, they could go to an art museum together or sketch together.

## Questions

1. Whom do you know who shares one of your interests?  
A group member? A friend? A family member? A classmate?

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2. What activities could you suggest to the person that are related to your common interest?

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*(continued on next page)*

# Developing Friendships Based on Common Interests *(continued)*

## Questions *(continued)*

3. When would be a good time to ask the person to join you in the activity related to your common interest?

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## Skill: Suggesting an Activity Based on Common Interests

1. Ask the person what activities or hobbies he or she enjoys.
2. Tell the person what activities and hobbies you enjoy.
3. Try to find an activity or hobby you have in common.
4. Suggest doing something together based on what you have in common.

# Developing Friendships Based on Common Interests

**Goal:**  
Group members will identify interests they have in common with each other.

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how we can make friends with people based on interests you have in common. How could having common interests be helpful in a friendship?" Possible answers include:
  - If you have something in common, you have more to talk about.
  - It's easier to think of things to do together
  - You can help each other get better at the thing you have in common. For example, if you both like to play Scrabble, you can play together and become better players.
  - It gives you something positive to focus on.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to write** down their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers. If a group member has a hard time identifying someone that he or she could ask to join in an activity, encourage the rest of the group to offer suggestions.
7. **Teach the skill** of "Suggesting an Activity Based on Common Interests," using the steps of social skills training:
  - Review the rationale for the skill.
  - Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill, then briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - Give each group member a chance to role play how he or she would suggest an activity to the person he or she identified as having an interest in common.
  - Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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# Developing Friendships Based on Common Interests

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - Make a plan for talking to someone about what interests you have in common.
  - Make a plan to ask someone to join you in an activity based on common interests.
  - Think in advance about options for activities.
  - Follow through with asking someone to join you in an activity.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



## Module II:

# Understanding Mental Illness

Session 1: *Helpful Facts About Depression*

Session 2: *Helpful Facts About Schizophrenia*

Session 3: *Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder  
and Schizoaffective Disorder*

Session 4: *What Makes Symptoms Worse?*

Session 5: *What Makes Symptoms Better?*

# Helpful Facts

## About Depression



**Mental illnesses are like medical illnesses, such as diabetes or heart disease.** Like other illnesses, it is helpful for people to recognize the symptoms of depression, so that they can do something about it. Even if we don't have the symptoms ourselves, it can be helpful to recognize depression in other people, so we can better understand what they might be going through. We may also be able to assist them in getting help.

### Depression

Almost everyone experiences some symptoms of depression at some point in their life. In addition, between 15 percent and 20 percent of people experience severe depression that can disrupt their lives and their enjoyment of life. Thus, depression is a very common illness. Depression mostly affects people's mood, making them feel extremely sad and blue. Sometimes they might feel so depressed that they think there is no hope or that they are helpless to improve their situation. Depression can also affect people's sleep, appetite, and energy level. When people are extremely depressed, they sometimes think that life is not worth living and might have thoughts of hurting themselves or ending their lives.

### Symptoms of depression

- ⊗ Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up too early.
- ⊗ Sleeping too much.
- ⊗ Feeling tired and having low energy.
- ⊗ Feeling worthless, helpless, or hopeless.
- ⊗ Feeling guilty for things that are not one's fault.
- ⊗ Suicidal thoughts or actions.
- ⊗ Problems making decisions and concentrating.
- ⊗ Not eating enough, or eating too much.

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# Helpful Facts About Depression *(continued)*

## Famous people with depression

- ☼ Winston Churchill, prime minister of England during World War II.
- ☼ Mike Wallace, television news journalist for 60 Minutes.
- ☼ William Styron, Pulitzer Prize winner, author of Sophie's Choice.
- ☼ Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States during the Civil War.

## **Questions**

1. Have you experienced any of the symptoms of depression?  
If so, which one(s)? What was it like for you?

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2. Which of the symptoms of depression have you observed in someone else?  
Did the person act differently because of the symptoms?

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# Helpful Facts About Depression

*Goal:  
Group members  
will improve  
their ability  
to recognize  
symptoms  
of depression  
in themselves  
or others.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts to apply knowledge and practice skills.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session. Tell the group that even if they do not have depression, they will learn something helpful in this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some facts about depression. Why is it a good idea to know more about depression and its symptoms? How could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ Most people feel depressed sometimes.
  - ☉ I've been told I have depression.
  - ☉ My relative has depression.
  - ☉ If we know about depression in ourselves, we can get some help.
  - ☉ If we recognize depression in other people, we can understand them better and maybe get them some help.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask different group members to take turns reading aloud. Encourage discussion and providing examples of specific symptoms.
5. **Ask group members to write** down their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on building knowledge; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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## Helpful Facts About Depression

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### Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Write down a few ideas about why people might be reluctant to say they feel depressed.
  - ☉ If you have experienced depression, how long did it take you to recognize the symptoms? Did you think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If you have experienced depression, did anything help you to deal with the symptoms?
  - ☉ If someone you know experienced depression, how long did it take him or her to recognize the symptoms? Did he or she think it was something else?
  - ☉ If someone you know experienced depression, did anything help him or her to deal with the symptoms?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Helpful Facts About Schizophrenia



**Mental illnesses are like medical illnesses, such as diabetes or heart disease.** Like other illnesses, it is helpful for people to recognize the symptoms of schizophrenia, so that they can do something about it. Even if we don't have the symptoms ourselves, it can be helpful to recognize them in other people, so we can better understand what they might be going through. We may also be able to assist them in getting help.

**Schizophrenia is a common mental illness. About 1 in 100 (1%) of the people in the world develop schizophrenia at some point in their lives.** Schizophrenia mostly affects people's senses (what they hear, see, feel, and smell), thinking, and motivation. These symptoms can make it hard to know what's real and what's not real. Schizophrenia can interfere with many parts of people's lives, especially their work, social life, and ability to take care of themselves.

## Symptoms of schizophrenia

- ☼ Hallucinations: hearing, seeing, feeling, or smelling something that is not there. Hearing voices is most common.
- ☼ Delusions: having a strong belief that no one else believes or understands. Believing that people are against you (without any evidence) is a common paranoid delusion. Believing that you are very powerful or very rich (when you are not) is another common delusion.
- ☼ Thought disorder: trouble thinking and communicating. A person usually knows he or she has this symptom when others can't understand what he or she is talking about, even after several tries.
- ☼ Cognitive (thinking) problems: difficulty with concentration, memory and reasoning.

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# Helpful Facts About Schizophrenia

## Symptoms of schizophrenia (continued)

- ☼ Decline in social life, work, school, or ability to take care of oneself: spending less time socializing with other people, having problems doing work or going to school, not attending to basic self-care, such as personal hygiene.
- ☼ Negative symptoms: lack of energy, motivation, pleasure, and emotional expressiveness. A common sign of this symptom is when one doesn't enjoy the things he or she used to, and nothing seems worth doing. Another common sign is when one doesn't show his or her feelings by facial expressions and voice tone.

## Famous people who had schizophrenia

- ☼ Tom Harrell, a jazz trumpet player who has recorded over 20 CDs.
- ☼ Meera Popkin, a singer and actress who has starred in Broadway musicals, including *Cats* and *Miss Saigon*.
- ☼ John Nash, a mathematician who won the Nobel Prize for Economics. He is the subject of a book and a movie with the same title, *A Beautiful Mind*.

## Questions

1. Have you experienced some of the symptoms of schizophrenia?  
Which one(s)? What was it like for you?

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2. Have you seen the symptoms of schizophrenia in someone else?  
Did the person act differently because of the symptoms?

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# Helpful Facts About Schizophrenia

*Goal:  
Group members will improve their ability to recognize symptoms of schizophrenia in themselves or others.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session. Tell the group that even if they do not have schizophrenia, they will learn something helpful in this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some facts about schizophrenia. Why is it a good idea to know more about schizophrenia and its symptoms? How could that be helpful?"

Possible answers include:

- ☉ Schizophrenia is more common than people think.
  - ☉ I've been told that I have schizophrenia.
  - ☉ If I know when I'm having symptoms then I can understand what's happening better.
  - ☉ A relative of mine has schizophrenia.
  - ☉ If we recognize that other people have schizophrenia, we can understand them better and maybe get them some help.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask different group members to take turns reading aloud. Encourage discussion and providing examples of specific symptoms.
  5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
  6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
  7. This session emphasizes building knowledge; no direct skill teaching is required.
  8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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## Helpful Facts About Schizophrenia

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### Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Write down a few ideas about why people might be reluctant to say they have symptoms of schizophrenia.
  - ☉ If you have experienced symptoms of schizophrenia, how long did it take you to find out what it was? Did you think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If you have experienced symptoms of schizophrenia, did anything help you to deal with the symptoms?
  - ☉ If someone you know experienced symptoms of schizophrenia, how long did it take him or her to find out what it was? Did he or she think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If someone you know experienced symptoms of schizophrenia, did anything help him or her to deal with the symptoms?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder



**Mental illnesses are like medical illnesses, such as diabetes or heart disease. Like other illnesses, it is helpful for people to recognize the symptoms of bipolar disorder and schizoaffective disorder, so that they can do something about it. Even if we don't have the symptoms ourselves, it can be helpful to recognize them in other people, so we can better understand what they might be going through. We may also be able to assist them in getting help.**

## **Bipolar Disorder**

Bipolar disorder is a common mental illness. About 1 in 100 (1%) people develop bipolar disorder at some point in their life. Bipolar disorder causes people to have extreme moods, sometimes called "mood swings." For no reason, people with bipolar disorder might feel depressed and have low energy. At another time, for no reason, people might feel manic; that is, they might feel on top of the world and extremely energetic. Those periods of feeling very low or very high usually last for days and weeks, and sometimes even months. Sometimes people with bipolar disorder can also have psychotic symptoms that affect their senses, thinking, and beliefs.

Another name for bipolar disorder is "manic-depression," because it causes both the symptoms of mania (feeling on top of the world and extremely energetic) and depression.

### Depressed symptoms of bipolar disorder

- ❁ Sad mood.
- ❁ Trouble falling asleep and staying asleep. Waking up too early.
- ❁ Sleeping too much.
- ❁ Feeling tired and having low energy.

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# Helpful Facts about Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder *(continued)*

## Depressed symptoms of bipolar disorder *(continued)*

- ☼ Feeling worthless, helpless, or hopeless.
- ☼ Feeling guilty for things that aren't one's fault.
- ☼ Suicidal thoughts or actions.
- ☼ Problems making decisions and concentrating.
- ☼ Not eating enough, or eating too much.

## Manic symptoms of bipolar disorder

- ☼ Feeling extremely happy or excited, out of proportion to what's happening in one's life.
- ☼ Feeling extremely self-confident, out of proportion to one's ability.
- ☼ Feeling irritable.
- ☼ Sleeping less.
- ☼ Talking a lot.
- ☼ Racing thoughts, and jumping from topic to topic.
- ☼ Being extremely active and energetic.
- ☼ Having faulty judgment, putting oneself in risky situations, like driving very fast or spending money that one doesn't have.

## Psychotic symptoms that can occur in bipolar disorder

- ☼ Hallucinations: hearing, seeing, feeling, or smelling something that is not there.
- ☼ Hearing voices is most common.
- ☼ Delusions: having a strong belief that no one else believes or understands.
- ☼ Believing that people are against you (without any evidence) is a common paranoid delusion. Believing that you are very powerful or very rich (when you are not) is another common delusion.
- ☼ Thought disorder: trouble thinking and communicating. A person usually knows he or she has this symptom when others can't understand what he or she is talking about, even after several tries.

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# Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder *(continued)*

## Famous people who had bipolar disorder

- ❁ Carrie Fisher, author and actress who played Princess Leia in *Star Wars* as well as other roles.
- ❁ Vincent Van Gogh, one of the most famous painters who ever lived.
- ❁ Ted Turner, millionaire businessman, founder of Cable Network News (CNN), the Turner Broadcasting System (TBS), and other television stations.
- ❁ Jane Pauley, television news journalist.

## Questions

1. Have you ever experienced the symptoms of bipolar disorder? Which ones? What was it like for you?

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2. Have you seen the symptoms of bipolar disorder in someone else? Did the person act differently because of the symptoms?

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## Schizoaffective Disorder

Schizoaffective disorder is also a common mental illness. About 1 out of 200 (0.5%) people develop schizoaffective disorder at some time in their life. It can be especially difficult to diagnose because its symptoms overlap with those of other mental illnesses.

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# Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder *(continued)*

## Symptoms of Schizoaffective Disorder

- ☼ Psychotic symptoms
- ☼ Negative symptoms
- ☼ Mania
- ☼ Depression

As you can see by the list of symptoms, schizoaffective disorder is very similar to schizophrenia. People with both disorders have psychotic symptoms (such as hallucinations and delusions) and negative symptoms (lacking energy, motivation, pleasure, and emotional expressiveness). Unlike schizophrenia, however, people with schizoaffective disorder experience symptoms of mania (extremely high moods) and/or depression (extremely low moods).

Schizoaffective disorder also shares some of the mood symptoms of bipolar disorder and depression. The major difference is that people with schizoaffective disorder have psychotic symptoms even when they are not depressed or manic. People with depression or bipolar disorder, however, usually only have psychotic symptoms when they are depressed or manic.

## **Questions**

1. Have you experienced the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder? Which ones? What was it like for you? Did you ever receive another diagnosis, such as bipolar disorder, depression, or schizophrenia?

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2. Have you seen the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder in someone else? Did the person act differently because of the symptoms?

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# Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder

## Leader's Guide:

NOTE: This topic may require more than one session.

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts to apply knowledge or practice something that was learned in the previous session.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session. Tell the group members that even if they do not have bipolar disorder or schizoaffective disorder, they will learn something helpful.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some facts about bipolar disorder and schizoaffective disorder. Why is it a good idea to know more about these disorders and their symptoms? How could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ Bipolar disorder is more common than people think.
  - ☉ I've been told I have bipolar disorder.
  - ☉ I've been told I have schizoaffective disorder.
  - ☉ If I know what my symptoms are, I can understand what's happening better.
  - ☉ A relative of mine has bipolar disorder.
  - ☉ A relative of mine has schizoaffective disorder.
  - ☉ If we recognize that other people have symptoms of bipolar disorder or schizoaffective disorder, we can understand them better and maybe get them some help.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask different group members to take turns reading aloud. Encourage discussion and providing examples of specific symptoms. It is best to complete the section about bipolar disorder (including answering the questions) before starting the section about schizoaffective disorder.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session emphasizes building knowledge; no direct skill teaching is required.

## Goal:

*Group members will improve their ability to recognize the symptoms of bipolar disorder in themselves or others.*

*Group members will improve their ability to recognize the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder in themselves or others.*

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## Helpful Facts About Bipolar Disorder and Schizoaffective Disorder

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### Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing specific assignments. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Write down a few ideas about why people might be reluctant to say they have symptoms of bipolar disorder.
  - ☉ If you have experienced symptoms of bipolar disorder, how long did it take you to find out what it was? Did you think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If you have experienced symptoms of bipolar disorder, what helped you deal with them?
  - ☉ If someone you know experienced symptoms of bipolar disorder, how long did it take him or her to find out what it was? Did he or she think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If someone you know has experienced symptoms of bipolar disorder, what helped him or her to deal with them?
  - ☉ If you have experienced the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder, how long did it take you to find out what it was? Did you (or the doctors) think it was something else at first?
  - ☉ If you have experienced the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder, what helped you to deal with them?
  - ☉ If someone you know has experienced the symptoms of schizoaffective disorder, what helped him or her deal with them?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# What Makes Symptoms Worse?



Scientists do not know exactly what causes mental illness or why some people develop mental illness and others do not. One of the strongest scientific theories is that mental illness is biological in nature but is affected by stress in the environment.

Some things make the symptoms of mental illness better, while others make the symptoms worse. This handout focuses on what makes symptoms worse.

## Not Taking Medication Regularly

Medications are one of the most powerful tools available for reducing symptoms and preventing relapses. When they are not taken regularly, symptoms can get worse.

## Stress

Stress tends to make symptoms of mental illness worse. A few examples of stress that especially affect mental illness are:

- ⊗ Relationships with a lot of conflict, such as when people are very critical, argue frequently, and get angry with each other, or when they try very hard to control each other's lives.
- ⊗ Loneliness.
- ⊗ Boredom.
- ⊗ Not having enough to do.
- ⊗ Being put under a lot of pressure, such as at work or school.
- ⊗ Not exercising or eating well.
- ⊗ Life events, such as losing a loved one, moving, or having a baby.

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# What Makes Symptoms Worse? *(continued)*

## Alcohol and drugs

Having a mental illness makes people more sensitive to alcohol and drugs. Alcohol and drug use can affect our brain chemistry in ways that lead to worse symptoms. Drinking and using drugs can also cause legal, financial, and health problems, which can lead to stress. Using alcohol and drugs can also interfere with medication that people take to help control the symptoms of mental illness.

## **Questions**

1. Have you ever noticed stress making symptoms worse, either in yourself or someone else? What happened?

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2. Have you ever noticed that drinking or using drugs made symptoms worse, either in yourself or someone else? What happened?

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## Skill #1: Asking Yourself Questions When Your Symptoms Start to Get Worse

1. Ask yourself, "Have I been taking my medication regularly?"
2. Ask yourself about stress, including questions such as
  - ☉ "Have I been under stress?"
  - ☉ "Have I had any major changes in my life recently?"
  - ☉ "Have I been criticized a lot or in a lot of arguments recently?"
  - ☉ "Have I been spending a lot of time alone in my room or apartment, with very little to do?"
3. Ask yourself, "Have I been drinking or using drugs?"

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# What Makes Symptoms Worse? *(continued)*

## Skill #2: Asking Questions When the Symptoms of a Friend or Loved One Get Worse

1. Use a calm, kind voice.
2. Ask the person, "Have you been taking your medication regularly?"
3. Ask the person about stress, including questions such as
  - ☉ "Have you been under stress?"
  - ☉ "Have you had any major changes in your life recently?"
  - ☉ "Have you been criticized a lot or in a lot of arguments recently?"
  - ☉ "Have you been spending a lot of time alone in your room or apartment, with very little to do?"
4. Ask the person, "Have you been drinking or using drugs?"

# What Makes Symptoms Worse?

*Goal:  
Group members will identify at least one thing that makes symptoms of mental illness worse.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session. Tell group members that even if they don't have mental illness, they can learn something that will be helpful to others.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some of the things that can make the symptoms of mental illness worse. Why is it a good idea to know more about what makes symptoms worse? How could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ If we have mental illness and know what makes symptoms worse, we can try not to do those things.
  - ☉ If we know other people who have mental illness, we can encourage them not to do things that make their symptoms worse.
  - ☉ If I know what not to do, maybe I can avoid going back to the hospital.
  - ☉ I have a relative with mental illness, and I want to help him/her.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. **Teach Skill #1 and Skill #2**, using the steps of social skills training. Skill #1 involves asking oneself questions about symptoms. The best way to model and role play this skill is to say, "We're going to practice saying out loud what we would ordinarily be thinking to ourselves." It may not be necessary (or desirable) to have all members practice Skill #1 aloud. Skill #2 involves asking another person questions about their symptoms. Both skills are included because some people may not have a mental illness or may not acknowledge that they have one.
  - ☉ Review the rationale for the skill.
  - ☉ Ask group member to read the steps of the skill and briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ☉ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.

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# What Makes Symptoms Worse?

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## Leader's Guide:

### 7. Teach Skill #1 and Skill #2 (*continued*)

- ☉ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play.
- ☉ Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
- ☉ If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

### 8. Briefly summarize what happened in the group session.

### 9. Ask group members to do an assignment. Involve group members in establishing specific assignments. Possibilities include:

- ☉ How could people take their medication more regularly? If you take medication, what works best for you?
- ☉ What are your ideas about how people can cope better with stress? What works best for you?
- ☉ What are your ideas about how people can avoid drinking and using drugs? If you were trying to avoid drinking and using drugs, what would you do?
- ☉ Review the steps of the skills you learned today. Test yourself to see if you can remember the three questions you would ask yourself or a loved one if symptoms started to get worse.
- ☉ Discuss this handout with a staff member or loved one.
- ☉ What other illnesses get worse if you drink, use drugs, don't take medication regularly, or are exposed to high levels of stress? Write down a few examples.

### 10. Thank group members for their participation.

# What Makes Symptoms Better?



**Scientists do not know exactly what causes mental illness or why some people develop mental illness and others do not. One important theory is that mental illnesses are biological in nature, but are affected by stress in the environment.**

**There are some things that make the symptoms better, and others that make them worse. This handout focuses on what helps make symptoms better.**

## Taking Medication Regularly

Medications are one of the most powerful tools available for reducing symptoms and preventing relapses. Medications need to be taken as the doctor prescribes in order to help the symptoms. It is important to talk to one's doctor or nurse about how a medication affects the symptoms, and whether it is causing side effects.

## Coping with Stress and Symptoms

Stress tends to make symptoms worse, so it helps to be able to cope effectively with stress. Many people find that activities such as exercising, talking to someone, using relaxation techniques, or writing in a journal help them to reduce stress.

People can also learn skills for coping with symptoms, which can help make them less severe or happen less often. For example, many people who hear voices find that distracting themselves by listening to music on headphones makes the hallucinations less severe. Some people with depression cope with having a poor appetite by eating small portions of food several times a day. Many people with bipolar disorder who have trouble sleeping find that exercising during the day helps them to sleep better at night.

*(continued on next page)*



# What Makes Symptoms Better? *(continued)*

## Avoiding Alcohol and Drugs

Having a mental illness makes people more sensitive to alcohol and drugs, even in small amounts. Alcohol and drugs can make symptoms worse and can interfere with the medication. When people avoid drinking and using drugs, it helps them to control their symptoms better.

## Maintaining Social Support

Supportive people can help reduce stress, because they give us someone to talk to and do things with. Supportive people can also tell their friends and loved ones if they see any signs of symptoms getting worse and can help them get treatment if they need it. It is important to connect with people in one's support system on a regular basis.

## Participating in Meaningful Activities

Everyone benefits from having something meaningful to do in his or her life. Participating in activities that are meaningful can help people reduce stress. Reducing stress helps to reduce symptoms. Some examples of meaningful activities are volunteering, working, going to school, parenting, enjoying nature, playing music, doing artwork, and participating in hobbies, clubs, or sports.

## **Questions**

1. Which of the things described above would be good for anyone, whether or not he or she has a mental illness?

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2. Which of the things described above are you doing?

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3. Which of the things described in #2 would you like to start doing or do more often?

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# What Makes Symptoms Better? *(continued)*

## Keeping Track of Positive Behaviors

It is a good idea for people to make sure that they are regularly doing positive things for themselves, whether or not they have a mental illness. Try using the checklist below to check off the behaviors that you have done in the past week, using the column labeled "Week 1." Next week, use the column labeled "Week 2," and so on.

### **Checklist for Positive Behaviors**

<b>I have been . . . .</b>	<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Week 5</b>
Taking medication regularly					
Coping with stress					
Coping with symptoms					
Avoiding drugs and alcohol					
Maintaining social support					
Participating in meaningful activities					
Other:					

# What Makes Symptoms Better?

*Goal:  
Group members will identify at least one thing that makes the symptoms of mental illness better.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some of the things that can make the symptoms of mental illness better. Why is it a good idea to know more about what makes symptoms better? How could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ If we have mental illness and know what makes symptoms better, we can try to do those things.
  - ☉ If other people have mental illness, we can encourage them to do things that make their symptoms better.
  - ☉ If I know helpful things to do, maybe I can avoid going back to the hospital.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers.
7. **Teach the group how to use the "Checklist for Positive Behaviors."** This can be used for oneself, or to help a close friend or loved one keep track of the positive things he or she is doing. Emphasize that the checklist does not just apply to mental illness. You can model how you might use the checklist, being mindful not to reveal information that is too personal, or you can use a made-up example of someone who has been doing some of the positive things.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing specific assignments. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ What other illnesses have symptoms that get better because of any of the following: medication, coping skills, avoiding alcohol and drugs, social support, and meaningful activities? Write down a few examples.
  - ☉ If you have a mental illness (or any other illness) that could benefit from the things we talked about today, pick one thing. What are some of the steps you could take to put it into action?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

## Module III: Reducing Stress

Session 1: What Causes Stress?

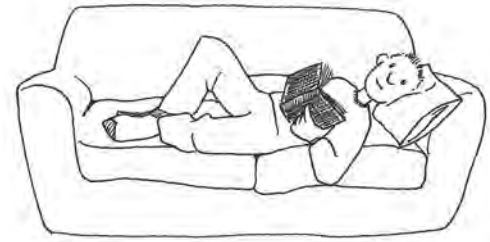
Session 2: Signs That We're Under Stress

Session 3: Strategies for Reducing Stress

Session 4: Muscle Relaxation Exercises

Session 5: Breathing and Imagery Exercises

# What Causes Stress?



**Stress is a word that people often use to describe feeling tension or pressure. Stress is a natural part of life, and everyone experiences it. Stress can even be the result of a positive event, such as getting a new job or having a new boyfriend or girlfriend.**

**Stress is very individual. What is stressful to one person may not be stressful to another. For example, to mountain climbers it is exciting to climb a tall peak, but to someone else it might be frightening and stressful.**

**Psychologists have identified two sources of stress that are common to most people: life events and daily stresses.**

## Life Events Checklist

Check off the life events you experienced in the past year.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Health problem
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being admitted to the hospital
- \_\_\_\_\_ Broke up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- \_\_\_\_\_ New boyfriend or girlfriend
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial problem
- \_\_\_\_\_ New job or volunteer position
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lost a job or volunteer position
- \_\_\_\_\_ New apartment or roommate(s)
- \_\_\_\_\_ No place to live
- \_\_\_\_\_ Victim of a crime
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accused of a crime or convicted of a crime
- \_\_\_\_\_ Injury or illness of a loved one
- \_\_\_\_\_ Loss of a loved one
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marriage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Divorce
- \_\_\_\_\_ Birth of a baby
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*(continued on next page)*

# What Causes Stress? *(continued)*

## Daily Stresses Checklist

Check off the daily stresses you experienced in the past week.

- Feeling rushed at home or at work
- Having a difficult deadline to meet
- Too noisy at home or at work
- Being around critical people, having arguments or fights
- Crowded living situation or work situation
- Disorganized environment at home or work
- Unclean environment at home or work
- Living in a high crime area
- Lack of transportation
- Little or nothing to do; boredom
- Too many things to do
- Loneliness
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Questions**

1. Which life event from the past year had the most influence on you?

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2. Which type of daily stress causes the most tension for you?

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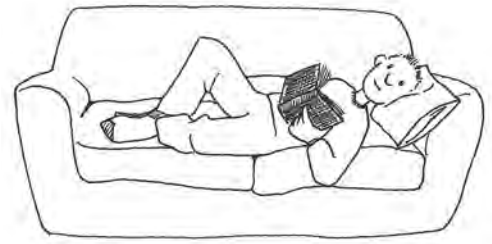
# What Causes Stress?

*Goal:  
Each group members will identify at least one stressful life event and one daily stress that affects him or her.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, by saying something like, "We're going to be talking today about what causes stress. Why is it helpful to know what causes stress? What good can that do?" Possible answers include:
  - \* I'm under a lot of stress.
  - \* Stress makes my blood pressure worse.
  - \* When I'm under stress, I start to drink or get into arguments.
  - \* I feel depressed or anxious when I'm under stress.
  - \* Stress makes the symptoms of my mental illness worse.
  - \* If we know what causes stress maybe we can avoid those things.
  - \* If we know what causes stress, we can look for better ways to handle the situation.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete** the checklists. It is preferable to ask group members to complete the Life Events Checklist and discuss it before moving onto the Daily Stresses Checklist.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of their answers from the checklists.
7. This session focuses on building awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Keep an eye out for daily stresses that you experience. You can use the checklist from today's handout. Add additional examples.
  - \* Notice if there are certain places, times, people or situations that are stressful.
  - \* Notice when people around you mention being under stress.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Signs That We're Under Stress



**Sometimes we are under stress and don't realize it. Stress can affect us both physically and emotionally. Recognizing our own personal signs that we're under stress can help us to do something about it.**

## Signs of Stress Checklist

Check off the signs of stress that you have experienced in the past week.

- |                          |   |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Problems falling asleep or staying asleep |                          |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Problems with sleeping too much           |                          |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Eating too little                         |                          |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Eating too much                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Feeling restless             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Headaches                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Feeling down                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Back pain                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Indigestion, stomachaches    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shaking or trembling                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Diarrhea                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Back pain                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Desire to drink or use drugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Feeling irritable                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Forgetful                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Feeling anxious                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____                 |

## Questions

1. Which sign of stress are you most likely to have?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you do when you notice signs of stress? What helps?

\_\_\_\_\_



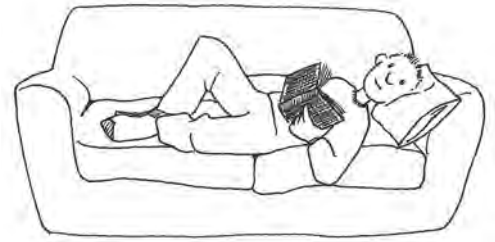
# Signs That We're Under Stress

*Goal:  
Each group member will identify at least one sign that he or she is under*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about recognizing the signs that we're under stress. How could this help you? What happens if we don't recognize we're under stress?" Possible answers include:
  - ✿ Sometimes I don't know I'm under stress until it really builds up.
  - ✿ If you don't know you're under stress, you could blow up at someone.
  - ✿ If you don't know you're under stress, you can't do anything to help yourself.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the "Signs of Stress Checklist."**
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers.
7. This session focuses on building awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ Notice the signs of stress that you experience between this session and the next. Use the handout as a reminder. Write down any new signs that you notice.
  - ✿ Notice when you experience the most signs of stress.
  - ✿ Notice if you hear other people commenting on stress or signs of stress.
  - ✿ Notice articles in newspapers and magazines about stress. Notice characters on television and in movies who complain about stress or who appear stressed.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Strategies for Reducing Stress



Once you recognize the signs that you are under stress, it is important to develop strategies for reducing stress. Not everyone reduces stress in the same way, so it is helpful to become familiar with a number of different strategies. Also, different situations call for different strategies. For example, you can't go jogging if you feel stressed out in a job interview, but you can do other things, such as deep breathing.

## Stress-Reducing Strategies Checklist

Check off which of the following strategies you already use or would like to try out:

Strategy	I already use this	I would like to try this
Taking a break from a stressful situation		
Exercising		
Talking to someone I can trust		
Writing in a journal		
Using humor		
Listening to music		
Playing an instrument		
Looking at artwork		
Doing artwork		
Reading		
Doing creative writing		
Cooking		
Knitting or other handicraft		

*(continued on next page)*

# Strategies for Reducing Stress *(continued)*

Strategy	I already use this	I would like to try this
Talking to myself in a positive way ("positive self-talk")		
Deep breathing		
Imagining a peaceful scene		
Muscle relaxation		
Yoga stretches		
Other:		
Other:		

## Questions

1. Which of the strategies works the best for you?

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2. Which new strategy are you most interested in trying?

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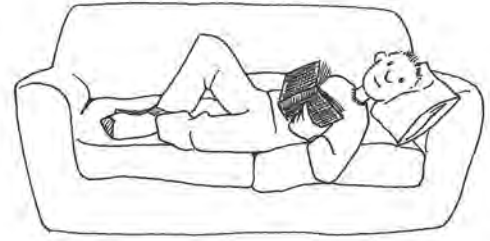
# Strategies for Reducing Stress

*Goal:  
Group members will identify at least one strategy for reducing stress that they would like to try.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Why might it be useful to know some ways to reduce stress? If stress is a natural part of life, why not just ignore it?" You can also ask groups members for ways that they currently reduce their stress. Possible answers include:
  - ✿ If I don't reduce stress it just gets worse. It doesn't usually go away by itself.
  - ✿ Stress gets in the way of doing what I want to do. I can't enjoy myself when I'm stressed out.
  - ✿ Stress can wear you down.
  - ✿ If I could handle stress better, maybe I could handle a higher-paying job.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the checklist in the handout.**
6. **Ask each group member to share** some of their answers from the checklist.
7. This session focuses on building motivation; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ Notice when you're under stress, and try out one of the strategies you picked out today.
  - ✿ Notice when other people are using strategies for reducing stress. For example, notice when someone excuses themselves from a stressful situation or says something like, "I'm going for a walk to cool off."
  - ✿ Notice if there are times when you feel under stress and DON'T do anything to try to reduce it. What happens? What might you do differently if it happens again?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Muscle Relaxation Exercises



Some people find that muscle relaxation exercises are helpful in reducing stress. It takes time to learn and practice them, but it can be worth the effort. Two types of simple muscle relaxation techniques are described below. They are not strenuous and can be done while sitting in a comfortable chair.

The group leader will guide you through these exercises. If a movement does not feel good to you, modify it or replace it with a movement that feels good to you.

Keep in mind that learning how to relax is a skill, which like any other skill, gets better with more practice.

## Tense and Release Exercise

### Hands

- ✿ Make a fist with both hands. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Relax your hands. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Repeat the tensing and relaxing cycle a total of five times.
- ✿ Press your palms together, pushing against each other. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Relax your hands and hold them in your lap for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Repeat the tensing and relaxing cycle a total of five times.

### Shoulders

- ✿ Lift your shoulders up towards your ears. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Relax your shoulders and arms. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Repeat the tensing and relaxing cycle a total of five times.

### Legs

- ✿ Raise your knees by lifting your heels off the floor and leaving your toes on the floor. Hold this position 5 seconds.
- ✿ Lower your heels to the floor and relax your legs. Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- ✿ Repeat the tensing and relaxing cycle a total of five times.

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# Muscle Relaxation Exercises *(continued)*

## Stretching Exercise

1. Let your head drop gently forward, with your chin toward your chest. Count to 5, then return to the neutral position. Tilt your head to the right, so that your right ear is approximately over your right shoulder. Count to 5, then return to the neutral position. Let your head drop gently backwards, with your chin pointing toward the ceiling. Count to 5, then return to the neutral position. Tilt your head to the left, so that your left ear is approximately over your left shoulder. Count to 5, then return to the neutral position.
2. Repeat these movements with your head five times.
3. Lace the fingers of your two hands together, weaving them together like a basket. With your palms facing inward, toward your chest, extend your arms out in front of you. Hold this position for five seconds. Then reverse your palms so that they are facing away from you. Hold this position for five seconds.
4. Repeat these alternating movements with your hands and arms five times.
5. Roll your shoulders forward in a smooth gentle fashion. Rotate in a circular motion five times.
6. Reverse the motion, and roll your shoulders backward in a smooth gentle fashion. Rotate in a circular motion five times.

## Questions

1. Which of the exercises did you find most relaxing?

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2. When would be good times and places to practice one or both of these exercises?

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# Muscle Relaxation Exercises

*Goal:  
Group members will practice two muscle relaxation exercises ("Tense and Release" and "Stretching") and determine whether they find these exercises relaxing.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about reducing stress by relaxing our muscles. Why might it be a good idea to learn how to relax our muscles?" Possible answers include:
  - ❁ When you're under stress your muscles get tense.
  - ❁ I feel tense in my body, but I don't have anyone to give me a massage.
  - ❁ If I relax my body, my mind feels more relaxed.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the introductory paragraph aloud.
- 5-6. **There are no questions or checklists** to be completed in this handout.
- 7A. **Teach the tense-and-release exercise** by reading through the steps and demonstrating as you read. Ask the group members to do the steps as you model them. Then go through the same procedure again, perhaps asking a group member to lead the exercise. Ask group members how much they experienced a feeling of relaxation. Remind group members that learning how to relax by using the tense-and-release exercise is a skill that gets better with practice.
- 7B. **Teach the stretching exercise** by reading through the steps and demonstrating as you read. Ask the group members to do the steps as you model them. Then go through the same procedure again, perhaps asking a group member to lead the exercise. Ask group members how much they experienced a feeling of relaxation. Remind group members that learning how to relax by using stretching is a skill that gets better with practice.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session. Ask group members which relaxation exercise they like best and if they have ideas for adapting the exercise to better suit them. For example, if in the stretching exercise, it felt unpleasant to do the head rolls, someone might choose to substitute more over-arm stretches.

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# Muscle Relaxation Exercises

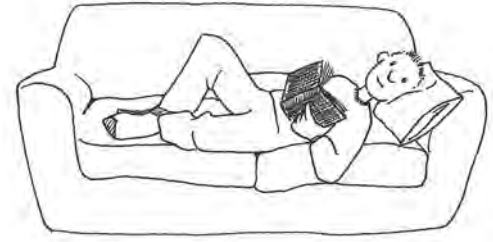
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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ When you recognize that you are under stress, practice doing the tense-and-release exercise. Notice how much it increases your relaxation.
  - ✿ Practice doing the tense-and-release exercise daily, even if you don't notice feeling under stress. Notice if it helps you prevent feeling stressed.
  - ✿ When you recognize that you are under stress, practice doing the stretching exercise. Notice how much it increases your relaxation.
  - ✿ Practice doing the tense-and-release exercise daily, even if you don't notice feeling under stress. Notice if it helps you prevent feeling stressed.
  - ✿ Practice one or two steps of the muscle relaxation exercise of your choice.
  - ✿ Make up your own muscle relaxation exercise.
  
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



# Breathing and Imagery Exercises



Some people find deep breathing exercises to be very relaxing. Others prefer a technique where they imagine a peaceful scene of their choice. Some people like to combine both methods. Keep in mind that learning how to relax is a skill, which like any other skill, gets better with more practice.

The group leader will guide you through the steps of each of the following relaxation exercises.

## Deep Breathing

1. Take a deep, slow breath. Try to fill your lower lungs with air. Take about five seconds to take a full breath. If you feel dizzy, try taking a normal breath instead of a deep breath.
2. Hold the breath for five seconds.
3. Slowly let out your breath. Take about five seconds to slowly and completely exhale.
4. Repeat this cycle of breathing in and out deeply and slowly a total of five times.
5. If you still feel tense, try repeating the cycle several more times.

## Imagery

1. Think of a scene that is peaceful to you. This may be a country scene or a city scene. It may be alone or with people. It may involve a specific kind of weather or scenery. It may be a place you have been before or a place you have always wanted to visit.
2. Close your eyes and imagine that peaceful scene. Take your mind off whatever is causing you stress. Focus your thoughts on the peaceful scene.

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# Breathing and Imagery Exercises

## Imagery *(continued)*

3. Imagine how it might look or feel to be in that scene. What colors do you see? What sounds do you hear? What scents are in the air? What is the temperature? Is there a breeze?
4. Spend 5 to 10 minutes imagining your peaceful scene.

## **Questions**

1. Which of the relaxation exercises did you find relaxing?

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2. When would be good times and places to practice one or both of these exercises?

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# Breathing and Imagery Exercises

*Goal:  
Group members will practice breathing and imagery exercises and determine whether they contribute to a feeling of relaxation.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Today we're going to practice some ways of reducing stress based on breathing and using our imagination. What might be useful about knowing these ways of reducing stress in addition to the muscle relaxation exercises we learned in our last session?" Possible answers include:
  - ✿ Sometimes it might work better.
  - ✿ Sometimes you can't use muscle relaxation because it draws attention to yourself.
  - ✿ The more ideas you have for reducing stress, the better.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the introductory paragraph aloud.
- 5-6. **There are no questions or checklists** to be completed in this handout.
- 7A. **Teach the deep breathing exercise** by reading through the steps and demonstrating as you read. Ask the group members to do the steps as you model them. Then go through the same procedure again, perhaps asking a group member to lead the exercise. Ask group members how much they experienced a feeling of relaxation.
- 7B. **Teach the imagery exercise** by reading through the steps and demonstrating as you read. Ask the group members to do the steps as you model them. Then go through the same procedure again, perhaps asking a group member to lead the exercise. Ask group members how much they experienced a feeling of relaxation. Ask group members to describe the peaceful scene they imagined.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session. Ask group members if they have ideas for adapting the exercise to better suit them. Emphasize that relaxing by using breathing and imagination exercises are skills that get better with practice

*(continued on next page)*

# Breathing and Imagery Exercises

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ When you recognize that you are under stress, practice doing the deep breathing exercise. Notice how much it increases your relaxation.
  - ✿ Practice doing the deep breathing exercise daily, even if you aren't aware of feeling under stress. Notice if it helps you prevent feeling stressed.
  - ✿ When you recognize that you are under stress, practice doing the imagery exercise. Notice how much it increases your relaxation.
  - ✿ Practice doing the imagery exercise daily, even if you are not aware of feeling under stress. Notice if it helps you prevent feeling stressed.
  - ✿ Practice one or two steps of either the deep breathing or the imagery exercise.
  - ✿ Make up your own breathing or imagery exercise.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



## Module IV: **Connecting with People**

Session 1: **Choosing a Good Time and Place to Start a Conversation**

Session 2: **Pleasant Greetings and Voice Tones**

Session 3: **Tips for Starting Conversations**

Session 4: **Keeping a Conversation Going by Listening  
and Asking Questions**

Session 5: **Sharing Information About Ourselves**

# Choosing a Good Time and Place to Start a Conversation



**We can talk to people whenever we want to. However, conversations usually go better when we choose a time and a place that is good for the other person.**

It is usually a bad time to talk to someone when he or she is:

- ☉ Busy doing something that takes concentration.
- ☉ Having a private conversation with someone else.
- ☉ Taking care of personal hygiene.
- ☉ Locking or unlocking a door.
- ☉ Watching or listening closely to something.
- ☉ Wanting to be alone.
- ☉ Very angry or disturbed.
- ☉ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

It is usually a good time to talk to someone when he or she is:

- ☉ Sitting or standing quietly.
- ☉ Calm.
- ☉ Smiling or has a neutral expression.
- ☉ Doing something that does not require complete attention.
- ☉ Taking a break from something that requires complete attention.
- ☉ Having a cup of coffee or a meal.
- ☉ Participating in the same activity.
- ☉ Watching the same television show or movie (during a commercial or after the movie).
- ☉ Listening to the same music (during a break between songs).
- ☉ Waiting in the same line.
- ☉ Looking at the same thing (for example, a bulletin board or artwork).
- ☉ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Choosing a Good Time and Place to Start a Conversation *(continued)*

## Questions

1. Give an example of a time in the past week when you started a conversation with someone. When and where did you start the conversation? How did it go?

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2. Give an example of a time in the past week when someone started a conversation with you. From your point of view, did the person choose a good time and place?

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# Choosing a Good Time and Place to Start a Conversation

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one good  
time and place  
for starting a  
conversation.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about choosing a good time and place for starting a conversation with someone. Why is it a good idea to think about where and when we talk to other people? How could that help us?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ People respond better when it's a good time and place for them.
  - ☉ Sometimes conversations don't work out for me. Maybe if I chose a different time and location it might go better.
  - ☉ If you choose the right time and place, it gets things off to a good start.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Try starting a conversation with someone at one of the good times and places that were identified today. How did it go?
  - ☉ Notice when other people start conversations with you. Which of the times and places were good for starting a conversation from your point of view?
  - ☉ Notice when people are more likely to be talking in your surroundings. What are the common times and places that people tend to talk?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pleasant Greetings and Voice Tones



**Starting a conversation with a pleasant greeting and voice tone makes people more likely to want to talk to us. How would you describe the following greetings?**

<b>Greeting</b>	<u>Pleasant</u>	<u>Not so pleasant</u>
Hi	_____	_____
What's up?	_____	_____
You look sick today	_____	_____
Hey	_____	_____
Good morning	_____	_____
Where's my breakfast?	_____	_____
Nice to see you	_____	_____
Can you give me a cigarette?	_____	_____
I like the shirt you're wearing	_____	_____
Other: _____	_____	_____

When starting a conversation, it also helps to use a pleasant tone of voice. People usually like voices that are:

- ☉ Not too loud or too soft
- ☉ Friendly
- ☉ Not harsh or critical
- ☉ Not high-pitched
- ☉ Clear

*(continued on next page)*

# Pleasant Greetings and Voice Tones *(continued)*

Please check off which of the following cartoon or movie characters have pleasant or unpleasant voices. This is just a matter of opinion, so there are no right answers and no wrong answers.

<b>Cartoon character</b>	<u>Pleasant Voice</u>	<u>Unpleasant Voice</u>
Woody Woodpecker	_____	_____
Snow White	_____	_____
Elmer Fudd	_____	_____
Cinderella	_____	_____
Cinderella's stepmother	_____	_____
Wicked Witch of the West <i>(in The Wizard of Oz)</i>	_____	_____
Glenda, the Witch of the East <i>(in The Wizard of Oz)</i>	_____	_____
Mr. Burns <i>(in The Simpsons)</i>	_____	_____

## Questions

1. How do you like other people to greet you?

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2. Give an example of someone you know who has a pleasant voice.

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# Pleasant Greetings and Voice Tones

*Goal:  
Group members will identify a pleasant greeting and voice tone they can use for starting a conversation*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about the kinds of greetings and voice tones work that best when we're starting a conversation. Why is it a good idea to think about this? How could it help us?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ If you don't greet people, they think it's rude.
  - ☉ If people can't hear you, they won't answer you.
  - ☉ If you're too loud, they might be scared of you.
  - ☉ If you're pleasant to people, they will probably be pleasant back.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud. Ask group members to demonstrate or act out some of the examples. When discussing voice tones, for example, ask someone to show the difference between saying, "Hi, how are you?" using a voice that's too soft and one that's too loud. When discussing cartoon characters' voices, ask group members to demonstrate a few.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Practice greeting at least two people each day. How did it go?
  - ☉ Notice when other people greet you. What greetings did they use? What kind of voice tones did they use?
  - ☉ Notice when people are greeting each other. What greetings and voice tones did they use?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Tips for Starting Conversations



When starting a conversation with a new person, it helps to have some ideas about what to talk about. Here are three common types of conversation starters:

## 1. Neutral topics that are of general interest

- |           |                     |          |
|-----------|---------------------|----------|
| ☉ Weather | ☉ Television shows  | ☉ Music  |
| ☉ Sports  | ☉ Current events    | ☉ Movies |
| ☉ Food    | ☉ Nature or seasons | ☉ Pets   |
| ☉ Art     | ☉ of the year       |          |

## 2. Our surroundings

- ☉ An event or activity ("I enjoy the music at this party; how about you?" "The topic of the class was interesting today" "I haven't played volleyball since I was a kid" "The coffee tastes fresh today")
- ☉ The building or the room ("I had a hard time finding this place" "I like the pictures in this room" "Have you seen the great view from the window?")
- ☉ The other people ("I took a class from this teacher before" "Some of the Halloween costumes at this party are really creative" "People had a lot of good comments today")

## 3. The other person

- ☉ Compliments that are not too personal ("You seem to know the routine here" "I like the color of your shirt" "Your comment in the class today was right on target" "You are good at basketball")
- ☉ Offers of assistance that are not intrusive ("Would you like some help setting up the refreshments?" "I can help you hand out those papers" "Your hands are full; I'd be glad to hold the door for you")
- ☉ Questions that aren't too personal ("How do you know the host of this party?" "What do you like best about this class?" "Have you been following the Phillies this season?").

*(continued on next page)*

# Tips for Starting Conversations *(continued)*

## Skill: Starting a Conversation

1. Look at the person.
2. Greet the person. Introduce yourself if necessary.
3. Bring up a topic or ask a question.
4. Decide if the person is interested in talking further. Is he or she looking at you? Saying more about the topic? Nodding? Smiling?

How could you start a conversation in the following situations?

- ☉ You are taking a class with someone.
- ☉ You are at Thanksgiving dinner sitting next to a relative you haven't seen in a few years.
- ☉ A person sits down at your table at lunch.
- ☉ You are standing in line with someone waiting to check out books at the library.
- ☉ A new person joins your support group.
- ☉ Someone asks if he or she can pet your dog while you are taking him for a walk.
- ☉ Someone sits down next to you while you are waiting to hear a presentation about hiking.
- ☉ The person sitting across from you at the coffee shop is reading a book that you read recently.
- ☉ Someone in your group brings up a topic that you think is important.
- ☉ You have been invited to play poker at the house of a new acquaintance. When you arrive, he or she is still preparing for guests.

# Tips for Starting Conversations

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify a  
topic they can use  
to start a  
conversation.*

## Leader's Guide:

NOTE: This topic may require more than one session.

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about what kinds of topics we can use to start conversations. Why is it a good idea to think in advance about what we can talk about with someone? How could it help us?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ Sometimes my mind goes blank when I want to talk to someone.
  - ☉ I feel shy speaking to new people.
  - ☉ I might feel more confident starting a new conversation with someone if I knew what I was going to say.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
- 5-6. There are no checklists or questions to be completed prior to teaching the skill.
7. **Teach the skill** "Starting a Conversation" using the steps of social-skills training:
  - ☉ Review the rationale for the skill.
  - ☉ Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ☉ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - ☉ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play.
  - ☉ Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - ☉ If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

You can use a "round robin" for setting up role plays, where each group member takes a turn starting a conversation with the person to his or her right.

After group members have practiced the skill, ask them how they would start conversations in the situations listed at the end of the handout. Encourage people to respond by saying the actual words they would use in the situations; e.g., "I would say, 'I notice that you are reading the new Stephen King novel. I'm reading that, too. What do you think of it so far?'" There may not be enough time to use all the situations listed.

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

*(continued on next page)*

# Tips for Starting Conversations

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Practice starting a conversation each day. What topic(s) did you use? How did the person respond?
  - ☉ Notice when other people start conversations with you. What topics did they use?
  - ☉ Notice when people are talking to each other. Were they looking at each other? What topic were they talking about?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



# Keeping a Conversation Going by Listening and Asking Questions



To keep a conversation going, it helps to show the other person that we are listening and paying attention. This lets the other person know that we care about him or her. If we do all the talking, the other person will get bored or will think that we are not interested in hearing his or her point of view.

## Skill: Listening and Asking Questions

1. Look at the person.
2. Show you are listening by nodding your head, smiling, or saying "uh-huh."
3. Ask questions to find out more information or to make sure you understand.
4. Repeat back the person's main points or make a comment about what he or she said.

In the following situations, how would you show you were listening? What questions would you ask?"

- ☉ Someone is telling you about a class he is taking.
- ☉ Someone is telling you about her Thanksgiving.
- ☉ Someone is telling you about his favorite fast food restaurant.
- ☉ Someone is telling you about her favorite pet.
- ☉ Someone is talking to you about a book or newspaper article he just read.
- ☉ Someone is telling you about how she lets off steam when she's under stress.
- ☉ Someone is talking to you about a game he likes to play.
- ☉ Someone is talking to you about the neighborhood where she grew up.

# Keeping a Conversation Going by Listening and Asking Question

*Goal:  
Group members  
will practice  
listening and  
asking a  
question in  
a conversation.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how to ask questions and show the other person that we are listening when we're having a conversation. Why is it a good idea to listen to the other person? Can't we just do all the talking? Why is asking questions helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ If you don't listen, the person will think you aren't really interested.
  - ☉ I get tired of doing the talking. I run out of things to say.
  - ☉ Conversations should be two-way streets.
  - ☉ If you ask questions, you can find out what the other person thinks.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask a group member to read the opening paragraph. Pause for discussion. Ask group members what it's like to converse with someone who does not seem to be listening. Ask group members for examples of good listeners, either people they know or see on television (such as Oprah Winfrey).
- 5-6. There are no questions or checklists to complete prior to teaching the skill.
7. **Teach the skill** "Listening and Asking Questions," using the steps of social skills training.
  - ☉ Review the rationale for the skill.
  - ☉ Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ☉ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - ☉ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. You can use a "round robin" for setting up role plays, where each group member takes a turn starting a conversation with the person to his or her right, who practices the steps of listening and asking questions. Or you can pair up group members according to their seating. Assign one member of each pair to initiate a conversation and the other to listen and ask questions. Then ask the individuals to switch roles.

*(continued on next page)*

# Keeping a Conversation Going by Listening and Asking Questions

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

- ☉ Encourage group members to think in advance of subjects they can use when they are the “talker” in the role play. For example, the “talker” can tell the “listener” something interesting that he or she has done in the last few days.

After group members have practiced the skill, ask them how they would keep a conversation going by listening and asking questions in the situations listed at the end of the handout. You can include yourself in this activity. Encourage people to respond by saying the actual words they would use in the situation; e.g., “I would say, ‘I like playing cards, too. My favorite game is poker. Do you play poker?’” There may not be enough time to use all the situations listed.

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☉ Practice starting a conversation and keeping it going. What topic did you use? How did you show you were listening? What questions did you ask?
  - ☉ Notice when other people start conversations with you. What topics did they use? How did they show they were listening? What questions did they ask?
  - ☉ Notice when people talk to each other. Do they look at each other? Are they both doing some of the talking?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Sharing Information About Ourselves



When we are first getting to know people, it is important to avoid telling them very private information about ourselves. However, as we get to know people better, we can gradually start telling them more things. This is a way of becoming closer to them.

In general, people talk about the same amount in a conversation. For example, when two people are in a conversation, each person should be talking about half the time. Also, when people are sharing information about themselves, they usually tell each other about the same amount. For example, if one person tells about his or her family background, the other person will usually follow by telling the same amount about his or her own family.

People often share the following kinds of information about themselves:

- ☉ Things they like to do
- ☉ Their thoughts
- ☉ Their opinions
- ☉ Their feelings
- ☉ Their current experiences
- ☉ Their past experiences

## Skill: Sharing Information About Ourselves

1. Listen to what the other person is telling about himself or herself.
2. Ask the person questions or comment on what he or she is saying.
3. Share some similar information.
4. Keep the conversation balanced (each person speaks about the same amount).

*(continued on next page)*

# Sharing Information About Ourselves *(continued)*

How would you share information about yourself in the following situations?

- ☉ Someone tells you about a walk he just took.
- ☉ Someone tells you about a game she really likes to play.
- ☉ Someone tells you what he thinks about a current news event.
- ☉ Someone tells you his feelings about being not being able to go home for the holidays.
- ☉ Someone tells you her feelings about completing a difficult task.
- ☉ Someone tells you his recent experience with a government office (for example, getting a driver's license, changing addresses at the post office, applying for benefits, paying taxes, straightening out healthcare coverage).
- ☉ Someone is telling you about her experience in cooking a new dish or going to a new restaurant.
- ☉ Someone is telling you about his family growing up (for example, parents, siblings, childhood pets, neighborhood).
- ☉ Someone is talking to you about past accomplishments.
- ☉ Someone is talking to you about past disappointments.

# Sharing Information About Ourselves

*Goal:  
Group members  
will practice  
sharing at least  
one thing about  
themselves when  
they are having  
conversations  
with other  
people.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how we can share information about ourselves when we're getting to know someone better. Why is it a good idea to be able to do this? Can't we just talk about the other person? Can't we just stay on general topics?" Possible answers include:
  - ☉ If you don't talk about personal things, the relationship won't get closer.
  - ☉ If only one person talks about himself or herself, it's not a two-way street.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask a group member to read the opening paragraph.
- 5-6. There are no questions or checklists to be completed prior to teaching the skill.
7. **Teach the skill** of "Sharing Information About Ourselves," using the steps of social skills training:
  - ☉ Review the rationale for the skill.
  - ☉ Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ☉ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - ☉ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. You can set up role plays using a "round robin," where each group member takes a turn being the "talker" for the person on his or her right, who then becomes the "talker" for the person on his or her right. Or you can pair up group members according to their seating. Assign one member of each pair to initiate sharing personal information in a conversation and the other to follow it up by sharing information about himself or herself. Then ask the individuals to switch roles.
  - ☉ Encourage group member to think in advance about what they would like to share with someone in a role play (e.g., activities they enjoy, their feelings about the group, etc.).

*(continued on next page)*

# Sharing Information About Ourselves

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## Leader's Guide:

### 7. **Teach the Skill** (*continued*)

- ☀ Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members. This includes the “talker” and the “listener.”
- ☀ If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

After teaching the skill and providing each group member an opportunity for role playing as described above, lead a discussion where you ask group members how they would share information about themselves in the situations listed at the end of the handout. Encourage people to use the same words they would in the actual situation; e.g., “I would say, ‘I had a dog that I liked when I was a kid, too. His name was Radar, and he used to sleep at the end of my bed every night.’” There may not be enough time to talk about all the situations.

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session. Ask group members what it was like to share information about themselves. What did they think was the most important part of the group?
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ☀ In a conversation with someone you already know, try sharing a small piece of personal information. How did it go?
  - ☀ Notice when someone shares personal information with you. Did you feel comfortable?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

## Module V: Expressing Our Positive Feelings

Session 1: Recognizing Our Positive Feelings

Session 2: What Makes Us Feel Good?

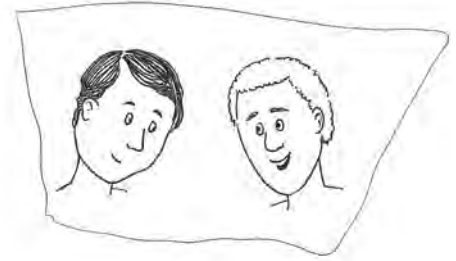
Session 3: What Makes Us Laugh?

Session 4: Giving Compliments

Session 5: Expressing Appreciation



# Recognizing Our Positive Feelings



Being aware of our positive feelings helps us balance out the negative feelings (like anger or sadness) that we might have. Being aware of our positive feelings makes it easier to enjoy life and other people. When we express positive feelings, it also makes other people more likely to want to talk to us.

## Positive Feelings

Feeling	Definition	Example of when you felt this <i>(writing down is optional)</i>
BLISSFUL	Experiencing great joy or intense happiness	
CALM	Peaceful, tranquil, and still	
CONFIDENT	Believing in your ability; self-assured	
CONNECTED TO SOMEONE	Feeling linked together or united with someone; feeling part of someone's life; feeling that you understand the person and he or she understands you	
DETERMINED	Having made up your mind; being prepared to do what's needed	
ENERGETIC	Vigorous; forceful	
EXCITED	Stirred up in a positive way	
HAPPY	Pleased; content; joyful	
HOPEFUL	Expecting good things to happen; inspired	

*(continued on next page)*

# Recognizing Our Positive Feelings

## Positive Feelings *(continued)*

<b>Feeling</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example of when you felt this <i>(writing down is optional)</i></b>
INTERESTED	Curious; paying close attention	
JOYFUL	Delighted; full of gladness	
LOVED	Being the object of someone's affection; feeling cared for	
OPTIMISTIC	Expecting success	
PREPARED	Ready; having done everything necessary	
PEACEFUL	Calm; quiet; tranquil	
PROUD	Satisfaction with your achievement; having self-respect	
RELIEVED	Freed up from a burden or something that was worrying you or distressing you	
STRONG	Powerful; capable; having the resources needed	
WARM	Feeling kindly, affectionate, and sympathetic to another person; being cordial and welcoming	
OTHER:		
OTHER:		

# Recognizing Our Positive Feelings

*Goal:  
Group members  
will increase their  
awareness of  
positive  
feelings.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session by saying something like, "Sometimes we are so aware of things that are going wrong that we get out of touch with what's going well, what makes us happy. How can it be helpful to recognize when we're feeling good or happy?" Possible answers include:
  - \* If we just focus on the negative feelings, like being angry or sad, we can get depressed or discouraged.
  - \* Being able to talk about the good things makes life more balanced.
  - \* Otherwise we'll only notice when things bother us and make us feel bad.
  - \* If we just talk about the bad things or feeling upset, other people don't want to talk to us.
  - \* Telling other people what makes us happy sometimes leads them to do things that make us feel good.
- 4-6. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud. As a group member reads the name and description of each positive feeling, ask for an example of the last time he or she felt that way. Ask other group members to give examples of when they felt that way.

There is usually not enough time for each group member to give an example of every feeling on the list. It is important, however, to encourage each member to give a few examples of feelings. During the session, it is not necessary to ask group members to fill in the "examples" column. You can ask people to write down some examples as part of their assignment.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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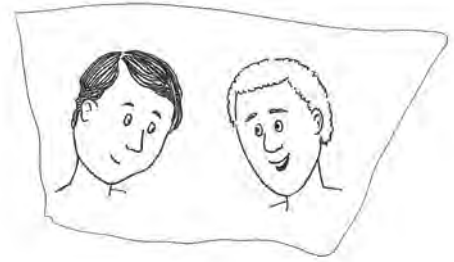
# Recognizing Our Positive Feelings

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice when you are experiencing any of the positive feelings we discussed today.
  - \* Mark them on your handout.
  - \* Write down some examples of a few of the feelings listed on your handout.
  - \* Notice if there are particular places, times, people or situations that lead to more positive feelings.
  - \* Notice when people around you mention positive feelings. Jot them down.
  
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# What Makes Us Feel Good?



It is important to know what makes us feel good about ourselves, and what gives us pleasure. This will help keep us from focusing on things that make us angry or discouraged. After identifying what gives us positive feelings, the next step is to figure out how we can include these pleasant activities in our daily life.

## Pleasant Activities Checklist

Check off the activities that make you feel good.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ Conversation with others                   | _____ Taking a walk                    |
| _____ Drawing                                    | _____ Having coffee with someone       |
| _____ Playing a musical instrument               | _____ Listening to music               |
| _____ Eating a favorite food                     | _____ Watching a sunset                |
| _____ Sharing a meal with someone                | _____ Helping someone                  |
| _____ Gardening                                  | _____ Doing a favor                    |
| _____ Playing a game                             | _____ Playing a sport                  |
| _____ Watching a sport                           | _____ Exercising                       |
| _____ Jogging                                    | _____ Comforting someone               |
| _____ Looking at the stars<br>and constellations | _____ Dancing                          |
| _____ Reading a magazine or book                 | _____ Cooking or baking                |
| _____ Shopping                                   | _____ Reading the newspaper            |
| _____ Understanding someone's<br>point of view   | _____ Doing a job well                 |
| _____ Looking up subjects<br>on the Internet     | _____ Telling a joke                   |
| _____ Writing                                    | _____ Teaching something<br>to someone |
| _____ Hobby                                      | _____ Taking care of a pet             |
|  | _____ Other: _____                     |
|  | _____ Other: _____                     |

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# What makes Us Feel Good? (continued)

## Schedule for Fun

Choose one fun activity to do each day for the next week. You don't have to choose a different activity every day, but try to schedule some variety.

Day 1 (today): \_\_\_\_\_

Day 2 (tomorrow): \_\_\_\_\_

Day 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Day 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Day 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Day 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Day 7 \_\_\_\_\_

# What Makes Us Feel Good?

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one activity  
that makes them  
feel good.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and practice assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about the kinds of things that make us feel good. Why is it a good idea to be aware of what makes us feel good? How could it be helpful to us?" Possible answers include:
  - \* If I know what makes me happy then I can try to do it more often.
  - \* If I do more things that make me feel good, it might counteract some of the bad things that happen.
  - \* Letting other people know what things make us happy sometimes leads them to do more of those things.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the handout** in two phases: 1) "Pleasant Activities Checklist," and 2) "Schedule for Fun." Pause in between for discussion, as described in step 6.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more answers from both parts of the completed handout. 1) You can offer a few examples of activities from the checklist that you enjoy. Then go around the room, making sure each person has a chance to answer. If possible, tally up the activities that are most commonly chosen and write them on a flip chart or white board. 2) Ask a few group members to share how they filled in the blanks of the "Schedule for Fun." Emphasize how doing something fun every day, even for a few minutes, can improve one's mood and sense of optimism.
7. This session focuses on increasing motivation; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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# What Makes Us Feel Good?

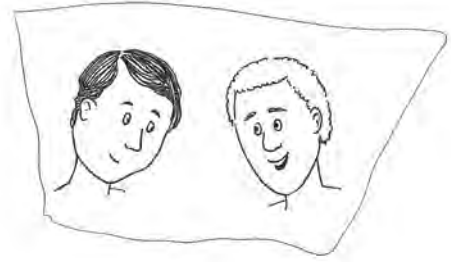
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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✧ Review the “Schedule for Fun Activities” that you completed in the session. Follow up on the activity that you filled in for tomorrow. Choose a time of day and a place to do the activity.
  - ✧ Follow up on doing more of the fun activities you chose for the rest of the week.
  - ✧ Take a step towards doing one of the fun activities you identified. For example, if you would like to draw, but don't have a good sketch pad, find out the cost of one and where it can be purchased. If you would like to play cards, find someone who also likes to play and talk about some games you can play together.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



# What Makes Us Laugh?



**Being able to laugh can lift our mood and make us feel better. It also gives us something positive to talk about. Each of us thinks different things are funny.**

Answer the following questions based on your own experience.

1. What television shows did you think were funny when you were a kid?

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2. What television shows do you think are funny now?

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3. What are some of your favorite comedy movies?

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4. Who is your favorite comedian?

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5. What is an example of a joke that you like?

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6. What made you laugh in the last few days?

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# What Makes Us Laugh?

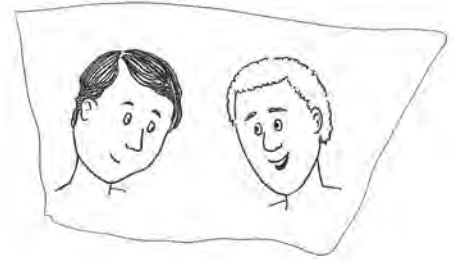
*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one thing  
that makes them  
laugh.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and practice assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Why do you think it's good to have a sense of humor? Has anyone ever heard the expression, 'Laughter is the best medicine'? What does that mean?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Everybody likes to laugh.
  - \* We've got to keep our sense of humor.
  - \* Humor helps us keep things in perspective. It's important not to take everything so seriously.
  - \* Laughing about something is refreshing. It gives us a break.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read aloud the first paragraph.
5. **Ask group members to take turns reading** the questions aloud, pausing for everyone to answer them on their handout.
6. **Ask each group member to share** his or her answers to the questions. Ask group members to elaborate on their answers, perhaps giving an example of a funny character from a television show.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Try watching a funny television show.
  - \* Try renting a comedy.
  - \* Read the comics in today's newspaper.
  - \* Look at cartoons in a magazine like *Reader's Digest* or *The New Yorker*.
  - \* Look for a joke book in the library or at a bookstore.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

*continued on next page*

# Giving Compliments



**One way to express positive feelings is to give compliments.** We can give compliments about something that can be seen, such as clothing, shoes, haircuts, jewelry, good posture, or a nice smile. Compliments can also be given about what someone does, such as helping another person, paying attention, playing a sport well, doing artwork, or carrying on a good conversation.

## Questions

1. Whom would you like to compliment in your own life? Friend?  
Family member? Classmate? Co-worker? Group member?

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2. What would you like to compliment him or her about?

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3. When would be a good time and place to compliment this person?

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## Skill: Giving A Compliment

1. Look at the person.
2. Be specific about what you like about the person.
3. Use a friendly, sincere tone.

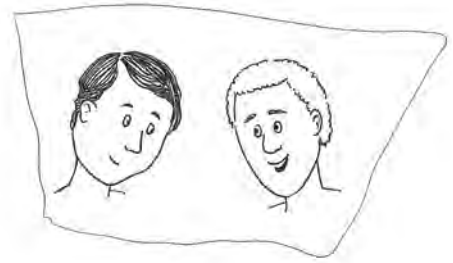
# Giving Compliments

*Goal:  
Group members  
will increase their  
ability to give  
compliments to  
others.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and practice assignment. Praise all efforts to apply knowledge or practice a skill.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about how we can give compliments to people. How do you think that relates to our overall topic of 'Expressing Our Positive Feelings?' How could it help us to give compliments to other people?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Giving compliments is a positive thing to do.
  - \* Giving a compliment makes the other person feel better.
  - \* Giving a compliment makes you feel better, too.
  - \* Giving compliments can help you get to know someone.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the first paragraph.
5. **Ask group members to write down** their answers to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more answers from the handout.
7. **Teach the skill of "Giving Compliments,"** using the steps of social-skills training:
  - \* Review the rationale for the skill.
  - \* Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - \* Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - \* Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Group members can practice how they would give a compliment to the people they identified in answering the questions on the handout. If they prefer, they can give compliments to someone in the group.
  - \* Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - \* If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Give a compliment to the person you identified in today's session.
  - \* Try to give a compliment to one person every day.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Expressing Appreciation



**One way to express positive feelings is to let people know when we appreciate something.** Expressing appreciation usually involves noticing people's internal qualities, such as their honesty, concern for others, integrity, creativity, love for another person, directness, or dependability. Appreciation can also involve gratitude and thanking a person for something he or she did for.

**Expressing appreciation makes the other person feel good.** It may also encourage him or her to continue doing positive things. In addition, expressing appreciation can make relationships stronger.

## Questions

1. Whom would you like to express appreciation to? Friend? Family member? Classmate? Co-worker? Group member?

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2. What quality does that person have that you would like to express appreciation for? Or what has the person done for you that you are grateful for?

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3. When would be a good time and place to express your appreciation?

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## Skill: Expressing Appreciation

1. Look at the person.
2. Be specific about the quality the person has that you appreciate. Or be specific about the positive thing the person has done for you.
3. Use phrases such as:
  - \* "Something I appreciate about you is \_\_\_\_\_."
  - \* "Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_."
  - \* "It means a lot to me that you \_\_\_\_\_."
4. Keep the conversation balanced (each person speaks about the same amount).

# Expressing Appreciation

*Goal:  
Group members  
will increase their  
ability  
to express  
appreciation  
to others.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about expressing appreciation, which is a little different than giving a compliment. Expressing appreciation usually involves noticing someone's internal qualities, such as their honesty or concern for others. Appreciation can also involve gratitude and thanking a person for something he or she did for us. How could it be helpful to us to express our appreciation?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Expressing appreciation is a positive thing to do.
  - \* Expressing appreciation makes the person feel good.
  - \* Expressing appreciation to someone make you feel good.
  - \* If you express appreciation, the person will probably do positive things for you again.
  - \* Expressing appreciation can make your relationship stronger.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the opening paragraph.
5. **Ask group members to write** down answers to the questions.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of their answers.
7. **Teach the skill** of "Expressing Appreciation," using the steps of social-skills training:
  - \* Review the rationale for the skill.
  - \* Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - \* Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.

*(continued on next page)*

# Expressing Appreciation

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## Leader's Guide:

### 7. **Teach the skill** *(continued)*

- \* Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Group members can practice how they would express appreciation to the people they identified in answering the questions. Or they can express appreciation to a specific person in the group. Or each group member can turn to the person on his or her right and think of something to express appreciation for. It does not have to be something major, especially if he or she doesn't know the person well. Something minor, such as having a pleasant tone of voice or making interesting comments, is fine to express appreciation for.
- \* Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
- \* If indicated and if time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

### 8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

### 9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:

- \* Make a plan to express appreciation to the person you identified in today's session.
- \* Try to express appreciation to one person every day.

### 10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

## Module VI:

# Getting Closer to People

Session 1: **Caring About What Other People Feel**

Session 2: **Recognizing the Other Person's Feelings**

Session 3: **Understanding the Other Person's Point of View**

Session 4: **Finding Out What Makes the Other Person Happy**

Session 5: **Doing Things to Show We Care**



# Caring About What Other People Feel



## Caring Relationships

Caring relationships usually don't happen overnight. It takes time and effort to get close to another person, but it pays off because of the pleasure and satisfaction it brings. Many people say it's easier to handle the ups and downs of life when they have someone who understands and supports them.

Close relationships, other than those between a parent and child, are usually mutual. That is, a close relationship should be a two-way street. Each person gives something to the relationship and each person receives something. Each person cares about the other person and his or her feelings.

## Caring About Feelings

In order to care about someone, we first need to understand what he or she is feeling. It can be helpful to get in the habit of asking ourselves the following two questions:

- ◆ "What is the other person feeling?"
- ◆ "What would I be feeling if I were in his or her shoes?"

## Asking Ourselves, "What Is the Other Person Feeling?"

People differ in how they respond to different life experiences. However, some situations naturally seem to bring out certain emotions in people. Read through the following examples, and fill in the blank about what you think the person would probably feel in that situation. It is likely that the person would feel more than one emotion.

*(continued on next page)*

# Caring About What Other People Feel

## Asking Ourselves, "What Is the Other Person Feeling?" (continued)

1. Before leaving for work one morning, Tamika's roommate told her that she was planning to cook dinner for the two of them that night. When Tamika arrived home at 6:00 PM, she found the apartment dark. She unlocked the door and turned on the light. Suddenly her roommate walked out of the kitchen carrying a cake with lighted candles. Several of Tamika's friends and relatives were with her. They were all singing "Happy Birthday." Tamika was probably feeling \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Antonio usually called his grandfather at least once a week. They talked about a variety of subjects, including Antonio's courses at the community college, his grandfather's garden, and their favorite baseball team. One day Antonio's mother called to say that his grandfather was very sick and in the hospital. Antonio probably felt \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Celeste had been looking for work for several weeks. Sometimes the jobs were already filled, and sometimes she didn't have the experience the employer was looking for. She was determined to find part-time work, however, and continued to apply for jobs. One day she handed in her application at a local grocery store. The manager asked her to wait while he read it. He asked her a few questions about her past work experience. Finally, he said, "When can you start?" Celeste was probably feeling \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Ed was walking home from the store one day with a few bags of groceries. When he arrived at a busy intersection, he waited for the traffic light to change. He glanced to check for cars before he started to cross the street. As he stepped off the curb, a car came to a screeching halt near him. The driver had not been paying attention and did not realize the light had turned red. Ed probably felt \_\_\_\_\_.

(continued on next page)

# Caring About What Other People Feel

Asking Ourselves, "What Is the Other Person Feeling?" (continued)

5. Keith had been seeing Dr. Greene for over ten years. She had helped him find a medication that helped his symptoms and they had a trusting relationship. The last time Keith attended his appointment, Dr. Greene said she was retiring in a month. Keith probably felt
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## Questions

1. Imagine that you are one of the people in the situations described above. How would you want someone to respond if you told him or her about your experience?

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2. Think about the last time that someone told you about his or her feelings. What did you say? What did you do?

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# Caring About What Other People Feel

*Goal:  
Group members will understand the importance of being able to identify what other people are feeling.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session. Note that this session requires more rationale-building. You can start by saying something like,

“Today we're going to start talking about ways to get closer to people. Most people enjoy having at least one caring relationship with another person, and many people enjoy caring relationships with several close friends. In a close relationship, we feel cared for by the other person AND the other person feels cared for by us. How would you describe a close relationship? What do you think a caring relationship should be like?” Possible answers include:

- ◆ Honest
- ◆ Non-judgmental
- ◆ Respectful
- ◆ Enjoyable
- ◆ Supportive
- ◆ Helpful
- ◆ Trusting
- ◆ Equal partnership
- ◆ Reciprocal (each person giving and getting about the same)

“A caring relationship, except for a parent and child, is a two-way street, in which each person gets something and each person gives something. When people care about each other, they usually start by caring about each other's feelings. Why do you think it's important to care about the other person's feelings in a close relationship? How does it make you feel when someone cares about your emotions? How does it make you feel if someone doesn't care about your feelings?” Possible answers include:

- ◆ If someone cares about my feelings, he cares about the real me.
- ◆ If you care about someone's feelings, you will treat the person better and try to make them happy. And that person will probably reciprocate.
- ◆ If someone cares about my feelings, it feels special.
- ◆ If a person doesn't care about my feelings, I usually end up getting hurt.
- ◆ If I don't know what the other person is feeling, I might be taken off guard by what she does.

*(continued on next page)*

# Caring About What Other People Feel

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## Leader's Guide:

### 3. **Establish the rationale** (*continued*)

- ◆ If the other person doesn't know what I'm feeling, she won't understand what makes me tick.
- ◆ If I care about the other person's feelings, he will probably care more about mine.
- ◆ When I care about someone's feelings and she feels happy, then I feel some of that happiness too.
- ◆ When someone is unhappy that I care about, I want to help him feel better.

### 4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.

### 5. **Ask group members to respond** to the situations described in the section "Asking Ourselves, 'What is the Other Person Feeling?'" Ask a group member to read each situation aloud and allow a few minutes for the group members to fill in the blank. These situations are somewhat longer than the usual reading material in the handouts. It may be necessary for you to read them aloud. Emphasize that the people in the situations may be feeling more than one emotion.

### 6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of their responses to the situations. Then ask group members to answer the two discussion questions and share some of their answers to these questions.

### 7. This session focuses on increasing understanding; no direct skill teaching is required.

### 8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

### 9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:

- ◆ In your daily interactions, try to figure out what other people are feeling.
- ◆ When you are watching television or a movie, see if you can guess what the characters are feeling.
- ◆ Discuss this handout with a friend, family member, or a staff member.

### 10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Recognizing the Other Person's Feelings



People's facial expression and voice tone can give us clues about how they are feeling. When we get in the habit of looking at people's faces and listening to their voice tones, we can be more aware of their feelings. When we look at the other person's face, his or her eyes and mouth are usually the most important.

The following table lists a few common emotions and the facial expressions and voice tones that often go with them. Review the table and see if you agree with the descriptions.

## Facial Expressions and Voice Tones of Common Emotions

Emotion	Facial Expression	Voice Tone	Other Clues that are Sometimes Present
HAPPY	mouth is smiling, eyes light up	upbeat, pleasant, animated, somewhat higher pitched	laughter
SAD	mouth in a straight line or turned down, eyes downcast	lower pitched, flat tone, monotone or trembling	eyes watering, tearfulness, looking down, shoulders dropped
AFRAID	eyes opened wide, eyebrows raised, mouth sometimes open	higher pitched, sometimes shaky	hands shaking, tension in the body, eyes darting
ANGRY	frowning, eyes narrowed, mouth or jaw clenched	harsher tone, sometimes loud	hands or fists clenched, tension in the body, chin up and extended

*(continued on next page)*

# Recognizing the Other Person's Feelings

*(continued)*

## Questions

1. Name an emotion that is not listed on the table. Describe the facial expression and voice tone that usually go with this emotion.

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2. Give an example of someone who has an expressive face and voice.

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# Recognizing the Other Person's Feelings

*Goal:  
Group members will increase their ability to recognize emotions by observing other people's facial expressions and voice tones.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session. Say something like, "Today we're going to continue talking about ways to get closer to people. In the last session we talked about how it's important to care about the other person's feelings. We practiced thinking about how a person might be feeling in a particular situation. Today we're going to talk about how to recognize other people's emotions by looking at their facial expressions and listening to their voice tones. Why is it helpful to be able to know what someone else is feeling?" Possible answers include:
  - ◆ I would understand the person better.
  - ◆ I would know how to react to the person.
  - ◆ I would be less likely to hurt the person's feelings.
  - ◆ If I don't know that the other person is feeling, I won't understand why he is acting the way he is.
  - ◆ If I care about someone and want to help her to be happy, knowing how she feels is important.
  - ◆ If I care about the other person's feelings, he or she will probably reciprocate by caring about my feelings.

If time, ask group members to generate a list of as many different emotions as possible, writing them on a flip chart or white board. Note the wide variety and quantity of emotions that are possible to experience.

4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask a group member to read the first paragraph.
- 5-6. **Ask group members to take turns reading aloud and discussing** the emotions listed in the table "Facial Expressions and Voice Tones of Common Emotions." Ask group members if they agree with the descriptions. Ask them if they would add any clues to the descriptions. After demonstrating one of the emotions yourself, ask group members to demonstrate the facial expressions and voice tones of the emotions listed.

If there is time, you can play, "Name that Emotion," where you write down on slips of paper the names of different common emotions. You can include the emotions listed in the table as well as emotions such as surprise, nervousness, confusion, disbelief,

*(continued on next page)*



# Recognizing the Other Person's Feelings

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

- 5-6. **Ask group members to take turns reading aloud and discussing** excitement, pride, interest, etc. Put the names in a hat, shake the hat, and take turns pulling a piece of paper out of the hat. Each person who pulls out a piece of paper tries to communicate that emotion to the rest of the group using facial expressions and gestures, but **WITHOUT WORDS**. The other group members then try to guess the emotion. You can include yourself in this activity. It's important that all group members get turns both demonstrating and guessing emotions.
7. This session focuses on building awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ◆ In your daily interactions, try looking at other people's expressions and listening to their voice tones. What emotions do you think they are having?
  - ◆ When you are watching television or a movie, look at the expressions and listen to the voice tones of the characters. Soap operas are particularly good for this. What emotions do you think the characters are having?
  - ◆ Try watching a TV show with the sound off and seeing whether you can guess the feelings of the different characters.
  - ◆ Practice reading other people's emotions by role playing with a significant other or staff member.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Understanding the Other Person's Point of View



**Part of caring about other people is trying to understand them. What is important to them? What are their beliefs and values? What do they like and dislike? When people are in a close relationship, each person cares about what the other is thinking.**

Knowing what other people think also makes it easier to understand their behavior. For example, if we know that someone cares deeply about politics, it would make sense that he or she would spend free time volunteering to work on a political campaign.

To get closer to someone, it can be helpful to get in the habit of asking ourselves the following two questions:

- ◆ What is the other person thinking?
- ◆ What would I be thinking if I were in his or her shoes?

## Listening

We can learn a lot about what the other person is thinking by listening to what he or she talks about. For example, we can notice the topics that the other person chooses, such as:

Work	Music	Books
Family	Politics	Science
Current events	Spirituality	Funny incidents
Nature	Emotions	Movies
Art	Computers	Food

*(continued on next page)*

# Understanding the Other Person's Point of View *(continued)*

## Asking Questions

When the other person is talking about something that is important to him or her, we can ask questions to learn more. For example, if someone is talking about a new class that he is taking, we could say, "That sounds like an interesting class. I'd like to know more about it. What do you think of the teacher? What do you like most about the class?"

We can also start conversations about the topics that are important to the person. For example, if someone tells us about his or her new job, we could bring up the subject a few days later and ask for an update. We could say, "I enjoyed hearing about your new job. How is your new supervisor working out?"

Finally, we can ask questions about the person's opinion. For example, if someone is interested in nature and gardening, we could ask, "I've been reading in the paper that we are not having much rain this year. Do you think it's going to hurt the plants in your garden?"

## Checking Out What We Hear

When the other person is talking, it's a good idea to check out that we understand correctly. This lets the other person know that we're listening, and can help to correct any mistakes we have in understanding what they mean. We can summarize what we heard in our own words. For example, we could say, "It sounds like you are really enjoying that new computer game. Am I right about that?"

## **Questions**

1. How do you think other people feel when you show an interest in their thoughts and opinions?

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2. Give an example of someone who expressed an interest in your thoughts and opinions. How did it make you feel?

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# Understanding the Other Person's Point of View

*Goal:  
Group members  
will increase their  
interest  
in understanding  
the other  
person's point  
of view.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session. Say something like, "Today we're going to continue talking about ways to get closer to people. In the last sessions we talked about how it's important to care about other people's feelings. Today we're going to talk about how it's also important to care about what other people think. 'What's important to them?' 'What do they like?' 'What is their opinion on a particular matter?' 'What interests them?' Why do you think it's important to care about what the other person is thinking?" Possible answers include:
  - ◆ To really understand a person, you have to know what matters to her.
  - ◆ It would make me more comfortable if I knew what the other person was thinking. Sometimes I worry that people are against me, and checking in with them shows me that isn't true.
  - ◆ If you don't know what the other person is thinking, you don't know what she likes or dislikes.
  - ◆ If I don't know that the other person is thinking, I won't be able to understand the reasons he says and does certain things.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
- 5-6. **Demonstrate each of the skills** (listening, asking questions, checking out what we hear) as they are discussed, then ask one or two group members to role play how they would use the skill. For example, for listening, you could ask a few group members to pick one of the topics listed, and then show the group how they would ask questions about the topic in order to learn more about the other person's thoughts and opinions. Give positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from the rest of the group.
7. This session focuses on increasing interest; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

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# Understanding the Other Person's Point of View

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ◆ In your daily interactions, notice what topics other people talk about. List a few of them.
  - ◆ When you interact with people, try bringing up topics that may interest them. Ask some questions. What do you learn from their answers?
  - ◆ In your daily interactions, try to check out what you hear. Were you correct?
  - ◆ Practice learning more about other people's thoughts and opinions by role playing with a significant other or a staff member.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Finding Out What Makes the Other Person Happy



**In close relationships, people care about what makes each other happy. Sometimes the same things make us happy. But since people often like different things, we cannot assume that the other person likes what we like.**

Therefore, it is important to figure out the other person's preferences, so that we can please him or her. Since close relationships are two-way streets, when we please the other person, he or she is more likely to want to please us. Plus, when we really care about someone, we can experience some of the same emotions that person does, such as feeling happy when they are happy.

What are some of the steps for understanding what makes another person happy?

On a regular basis, ask the person how his or her day went.

- ◆ Listen for the parts of the day that he or she enjoyed or found interesting.
- ◆ Ask questions about what made those parts of the day enjoyable or interesting.
- ◆ Notice what he or she did not enjoy about the day.

When you do something together, talk about the experience.

- ◆ Talk about what each of you enjoyed or did not enjoy.
- ◆ Ask questions like "What did you like about doing that?" "What was your favorite part?"
- ◆ Ask, "Was there anything you didn't like?" "What was your least favorite part?"
- ◆ Find out if the person would like to repeat the experience.

Ask the other person about his or her opinions on a variety of subjects.

- ◆ "Which baseball team has the best chance of winning the World Series this year?"
- ◆ "In your opinion, what is a good way to celebrate someone's birthday?"
- ◆ "What kind of music do you like best?"
- ◆ "What's your favorite television show?"

*(continued on next page)*

# Finding Out What Makes the Other Person Happy *(continued)*

## Questions

1. Describe the last time you did something to make another person happy.

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2. The last time you made someone happy, how did it make you feel?

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# Finding Out What Makes the Other Person Happy

*Goal:  
Group members  
will learn more  
about how to  
make someone  
else happy.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session. Say something like, "Today we're going to talk about how it's important to try to make each other happy in a close relationship. Why do you think it's good to know what makes the other person happy? Is it also important to know what makes them unhappy?" Possible answers include:
  - ◆ Part of being in a close relationship is pleasing each other. We all want someone to do things that make us happy!
  - ◆ It's a good feeling when I see that I've made someone else happy. It makes me happy to see them happy.
  - ◆ If we want people to do nice things for us, we need to do nice things for them.
  - ◆ If we don't know what makes someone unhappy, we might do something that annoys him or her without realizing it.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
- 5-6. There are no questions or checklists to be completed prior to teaching the skills.
7. **Teach each of the skills** (asking how someone's day went, talking about a shared experience, asking the other person about his or her opinion), starting with demonstrating how you would use the skill. Then ask one or two group members to role play how they would use the skill. For example, you could ask a few group members to role play how they would ask each other about their day. You could ask a few group members to role play asking each other how they like participating in the Coping Skills Group. Give positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from the rest of the group.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

*(continued on next page)*



# Finding Out What Makes the Other Person Happy

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing specific assignments. Possibilities include:
  - ◆ In your daily interactions, ask at least one person about his or her day.
  - ◆ When you are doing something with someone, try asking what he or she thinks about the experience.
  - ◆ In your daily interactions, try to ask other people their opinions about a variety of subjects.
  - ◆ Try using some of the steps you learned today to learn something about what makes a significant other happy.
  
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Doing Things to Show We Care



**In close relationships, people often go out of their way to do things that show they care about each other. This helps keep their relationships strong. Here are some suggestions:**

Plan activities that you both can enjoy.

- ◆ If you both like the outdoors, plan to go on a walk together or to the zoo.
- ◆ If you both like movies, pick out a video or a movie on TV that you both can enjoy.
- ◆ If you both like art, plan a trip to the art museum or look at an art book together.
- ◆ If you both like music, listen to the radio or to a CD together.

Be willing to compromise.

- ◆ Try to reach an agreement that is acceptable to both of you.
- ◆ Explain your viewpoint, and listen to the other person's viewpoint
- ◆ Suggest compromises that take both of your viewpoints into consideration.

Help the other person when he or she needs assistance.

- ◆ If the person is sick, bring medicine or food.
- ◆ If the person is moving, help pack.
- ◆ If the person has lost a loved one, provide a shoulder to cry on.
- ◆ If the person is busy, do an errand for him or her.
- ◆ If the person doesn't understand something, try to explain it.

Do things to make the other person happy.

- ◆ If the person likes flowers, give her a bouquet or potted plant.
- ◆ If the person has a favorite dish, make or buy it for him.
- ◆ If the person enjoys listening to jazz, turn the radio to the jazz station sometimes.
- ◆ If the person has a good sense of humor, tell him a joke or a funny story.
- ◆ Help the person celebrate birthdays, holidays, and special events.
- ◆ If you're having trouble agreeing on something to do together or a movie to see, sometimes give in and make the other person happy.

*(continued on next page)*

# Doing Things to Show We Care *(continued)*

## Questions

1. Describe the last time that you helped someone. How do you think it made the person feel?

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2. The last time you helped someone, how did it make you feel?

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# Doing Things to Show We Care

*Goal:  
Group members  
will identify at  
least one thing  
they could do  
to show other  
people that they  
care.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session. Say something like, "Today we're going to talk about how it's important in a close relationship to demonstrate to another person that we care about them. Telling a person that we care is important. Why do you think it's also important to show the other person we care, by doing special things?" Possible answers include:
  - ◆ Actions speak louder than words.
  - ◆ Maybe if I show the person I care, she will show me that she cares too.
  - ◆ If we want people to do nice things for us, we need to do nice things for them.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members take turns reading aloud.
- 5-6. There are no questions or checklists to be completed prior to step 7.
7. **Ask one or two group members to give additional examples** for each of the suggestions for showing the other person that you care. For example, for "planning activities that you both enjoy," you could ask a few group members to suggest activities that they would want to do with someone. Ask group members to answer the discussion questions and to share some of their answers.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing specific assignments. Possibilities include:
  - ◆ Try asking someone to join you in an activity that you both might enjoy.
  - ◆ If you are in a situation where you want something different than the other person wants, try making a compromise.
  - ◆ Look for opportunities to help out another person.
  - ◆ Try doing something to make a significant other happy.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



## Module VII:

# **Standing Up for Ourselves in a Positive Way**

Session 1: **Assertiveness**

Session 2: **Avoiding Being Aggressive**

Session 3: **Avoiding Being Passive**

Session 4: **Being Assertive by Making Requests**

Session 5: **Being Assertive by Refusing Requests**

# Assertiveness

## People who are assertive:

- ★ State their feelings honestly
- ★ Speak firmly, but calmly
- ★ Express positive feelings often
- ★ Say "No" when necessary
- ★ Ask for what they need
- ★ Respect the rights of others



## How do assertive people express themselves?

- ★ **VOICE TONE AND VOLUME.** Assertive people don't whisper or mumble. They speak with a strong voice, but don't shout or speak harshly.
- ★ **EYE CONTACT.** Assertive people don't look away from the person or look down at the floor. They look at the person.
- ★ **FACIAL EXPRESSION.** The facial expressions of assertive people match what they are saying. This means that they smile when they give compliments or express positive feelings, but not when they are unhappy or expressing angry feelings.
- ★ **PERSONAL DISTANCE.** Assertive people don't stand too close or too far away from the person they are talking to. They usually stand at least an arm's length away (three or four feet), so the other person doesn't feel crowded or intimidated.

## Questions

1. Whom do you know who is assertive? Give an example of a situation when he or she expressed himself or herself in an assertive way.

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2. In the past week, what is an example of a situation when you were assertive? How did you express yourself in an assertive way?

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# Assertiveness

## Goal:

Group members will identify at least one characteristic of being assertive.

Group members will increase their ability to recognize when they are being

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module and the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Our next series of sessions focuses on how we can assert ourselves, which means standing up for ourselves in a positive way. We're going to talk about being more aware of whether or not we are acting assertively. Why do you think it's a good idea to learn how to assert ourselves? What happens when we don't assert ourselves?"

Possible answers include:

- ★ If we don't assert ourselves, people will walk all over us.
- ★ If we assert ourselves too forcefully or too often, it will scare people off.

Before distributing the handout, ask group members to define *assertive* in their own words. What are the characteristics of assertive people? How do they act? Write the answers on a flip chart or white board.

4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud, pausing for discussion. Ask group members to demonstrate a brief example of each assertive behavior (e.g., voice tone, eye contact, expression, and distance).
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing knowledge; no direct skill teaching required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ★ Notice situations when you need to assert yourself. Use some of the assertive behaviors we talked about today, including voice tone, eye contact, facial expression, and personal distance. Which ones were you able to use?

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## Assertiveness

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### Leader's Guide:

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** *(continued)*

- ★ If you are in a situation where it is difficult to be assertive, write down some of the things that made it hard.
- ★ Notice when other people are assertive with you. Which of the assertive behaviors did they use (voice tone, eye contact, facial expression and personal distance)?
- ★ Notice assertive characters on television or in a movie. Which of the assertive behaviors did they use?

10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Avoiding Being Aggressive

Sometimes we mean to act assertively, but end up coming across too strong. This leads other people to see our behavior as aggressive. It helps to be aware of our own behavior, and to notice when we communicate in a way that might frighten or intimidate others when we don't mean to.



## What is aggressive behavior?

- ★ VOICE TONE AND VOLUME. Shouting or speaking in a very loud, forceful voice is aggressive. Speaking in a harsh, critical tone is aggressive.
- ★ EYE CONTACT. Glaring or staring intently at the other person without blinking can be seen as aggressive.
- ★ PERSONAL DISTANCE. Standing too close to the other person can be aggressive. Closer than an arm's length (about three feet) is too close.
- ★ FACIAL EXPRESSION. Frowning, grimacing, clenching one's jaw, and narrowing one's eyes, can be aggressive expressions. Making a fist or pointing one's finger are often considered aggressive.

## Questions

1. Describe a situation when you saw someone acting in an aggressive way. Please choose an example of a person who is not a member of this group. Did the person do some of the behaviors that are listed above?

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2. How did it make you feel when the other person acted aggressively?

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3. Has anyone ever told you that you were acting aggressively? Did the person say that you were doing some of the behaviors listed above? Did you know you were being aggressive?

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# Avoiding Being Aggressive

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "We're going to talk about being aware of whether or not we are acting in an aggressive way. Why do you think it's important to avoid being aggressive with other people? What happens when people are aggressive?" Possible answers include:
  - ★ Being aggressive can scare people off.
  - ★ Aggression tends to lead to violence, which has gotten me in trouble.
  - ★ I hurt my friend's feelings by being aggressive.

Before distributing the handout, ask group members what *aggressive* means to them. What is an aggressive person like? How do they act? What behaviors do aggressive people engage in? Write group members' answers on a flip chart or white board.

4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud, pausing for discussion. Ask group members to demonstrate a brief example of each aggressive behavior as well as an assertive alternative (e.g., voice tone, eye contact, expression, and personal distance). For example, you could ask a group member to demonstrate saying something neutral, such as "I'd like to talk to you about something" using an aggressive voice tone and an assertive voice tone. Then ask the other group members for feedback. Avoid criticizing a group member's past behavior as being aggressive.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

**Goal:**  
Group members will identify at least one characteristic of being aggressive.  
Group members will increase their ability to recognize when they are being aggressive rather than assertive.

*(continued on next page)*

# Avoiding Being Aggressive

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ★ Notice when you engage in some of the aggressive behaviors discussed in the group today. For example, did you raise your voice or shout? Were there times when you felt like being aggressive but refrained?
  - ★ Try to be assertive like we talked about in the last group, including using an assertive voice tone, eye contact, facial expression, and personal distance. Which ones were you able to use?
  - ★ Notice when other people are aggressive with you or with someone else. Which of the aggressive behaviors did they show (voice tone, eye contact, facial expression, and personal distance)?
  - ★ Notice aggressive characters on television or in a movie. Which of the aggressive behaviors did they use? Can you find examples of characters on television who are acting assertively?
  
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Avoiding Being Passive

Sometimes we don't act as assertively as we would like to. This causes other people to see our behavior as passive, which may make it easier for them to take advantage of us. To prevent this from happening, it can be helpful to be aware when we are acting passively and when we are acting assertively.



What is passive behavior?

- ★ VOICE TONE AND VOLUME. Speaking extremely softly or mumbling is passive.
- ★ EYE CONTACT. Looking down at the floor or away from the person is passive.
- ★ PERSONAL DISTANCE. Standing too far from the other person can be passive.
- ★ FACIAL EXPRESSION. Not showing your expressions, even when you are having strong feelings, can be passive.

## Questions

1. Describe a situation when someone was acting in a passive way. Please choose an example of a person who is not a member of this group. Did the person do some of the behaviors that are listed above?

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2. When someone acts passively toward you, how does it make you feel?

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3. Has anyone ever told you that you were acting passively? Were you told that you were doing some of the behaviors listed above? Did you know you were acting passively?

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# Avoiding Being Passive

## Goal:

*Group members will identify at least one characteristic of being passive.*

*Group members will increase their ability to recognize when they are being passive rather than assertive.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "We're going to talk about being more aware of whether or not we are acting in a passive way. Why do you think it's a good idea to avoid being passive with other people? What happens when we are passive?" Possible answers include:
  - ★ If we're passive, people will walk all over us.
  - ★ People will take advantage of us if we are passive.
  - ★ When I've been passive in the past, anger built up and I exploded.

Before distributing the handout, ask group members what they think *passive* means. What is a passive person like? What is his or her behavior like? Write group members' answers on a flip chart or white board.

4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud, pausing for discussion. Ask group members to demonstrate a brief example of each passive behavior as well as an assertive alternative (e.g., voice tone, eye contact, expression, and personal distance). For example, a group member could demonstrate telling a waitperson, "I would like to place my order now please," speaking in a meek, soft tone, contrasting it with a strong, assertive tone. Avoid criticizing group members' past behavior as being passive.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ★ Notice situations when you engaged in some of the passive behaviors discussed in group today. For example, were there times when you spoke too softly?

*(continued on next page)*

# Avoiding Being Passive

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## Leader's Guide:

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** *(continued)*
  - ★ Try to use some of the assertive behaviors we talked about in earlier group sessions, including an assertive voice tone and volume, eye contact, facial expression, and personal distance. Which ones were you able to use?
  - ★ Notice when other people are passive. Which passive behaviors did they show (voice tone and volume, eye contact, facial expression, and personal distance)?
  - ★ Notice passive characters on television or in a movie. Which passive behaviors did they show?
  
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Being Assertive by Making Requests



I. Being assertive sometimes involves asking other people for things. If we are aggressive and make demands, people may get angry and not do what we ask. If we are passive and speak meekly, we may not be taken seriously. When we make requests in an assertive way, however, we are more likely to get what we want or need. Of course, there are no guarantees!

## II. Skill: Making a Request

1. Look at the person. Use a pleasant facial expression.
2. Speak in a calm voice that is loud enough for the other person to hear.
3. Keep a comfortable distance from the other person (at least three or four feet).
4. Be specific about what you would like the other person to do.
5. Use phrases such as "I would appreciate it if \_\_\_\_\_" or "I would like you to \_\_\_\_\_." Include the word "please" if it is appropriate.

## III. How could you use the steps of "Making a Request" in the following situations?

- ★ Asking a friend to go to a movie with you
- ★ Asking the waiter to bring you a menu
- ★ Asking a relative to borrow a CD
- ★ Asking your roommate to turn down his or her music
- ★ Asking someone on the street for directions
- ★ Asking a friend for a ride
- ★ Asking a friend to return the money he or she borrowed

*(continued on next page)*



# Being Assertive by Making Requests

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "We're going to talk about being assertive by making requests for what we need. Why do you think it's a good idea to ask directly for what we need? What happens when we demand things? What happens when we make hints about what we want rather than asking directly?" Possible answers include:
  - ★ Asking for things directly might get me what I need.
  - ★ If I ask for things directly, maybe I won't get ignored.
  - ★ When I demand something, the other person usually gets annoyed and doesn't give it to me.
  - ★ Hints sometimes don't work.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask a group member to read aloud the first paragraph. Pause for discussion and examples.
- 5-7. **Teach the skill** of "Making a Request" by using the steps of social-skills training:
  - ★ Review the rationale for the skill. Remind group members that asking for something directly is no guarantee that we will get what we want, but it gives us a better chance.
  - ★ Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ★ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - ★ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Encourage group members to think of a request that is similar to the kind of requests they need to make in their own environment, such as asking for directions. Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - ★ If indicated and time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

*Goal:*  
Group members will practice making requests in an assertive way.

*Group members will increase their confidence in making direct requests (rather than being aggressive or passive) in their own lives.*

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## Being Assertive by Making Requests

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### Leader's Guide:

#### 5-7. **Teach the skill** (*continued*)

After teaching the skill of “Making a Request” as described above, you can lead a discussion using the situations for making a request listed at the end of the handout. Encourage group members to use the actual wording that they would use in making a request in the real situation; e.g., “I would appreciate it if you could return my CD by the end of the week.” There may not be enough time to go through the entire list of situations.

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session..
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ★ Notice situations when you need to ask someone for something. Try using the steps of “Making a Request.” Which steps were you able to use?
  - ★ Notice when other people make requests. Were they able to use the steps of “Making a Request”:
  - ★ Ask someone to do a role play with you of “Making a Request.”
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Being Assertive by Refusing Requests

- I. Being assertive means that we sometimes have to tell people we can't do what they are asking. Sometimes we are too busy or unable to do what they are asking. At other times we may feel that what they are asking is not reasonable or realistic.



If we are aggressive and reply in a rough or rude way, we can hurt other people's feelings or make them angry. However, if we passively respond to other people's requests by doing what they want, or refusing in a passive way, they may not take us seriously. When we refuse requests in an assertive way, we are more likely to avoid doing things we don't want to do, without hurting someone's feelings or causing a hostile reaction.

## II. Skill: Refusing a Request

1. Look at the person. Use a serious facial expression, but avoid glaring or frowning.
2. Speak in a calm, firm voice that is loud enough for the other person to hear.
3. Keep a comfortable distance from the other person (at least three or four feet).
4. Be clear that you cannot do what the other person is asking.
5. Use phrases such as "I'm sorry, but I cannot \_\_\_\_\_" or "I won't be able to \_\_\_\_\_." Include a reason if it seems appropriate.

## III. How would you use the steps of "Refusing a Request" in the following situations?

- ★ Your friend wants to borrow a CD, but you are planning to listen to it.
- ★ Someone you don't know well asks to borrow money from you.
- ★ A friend asks to borrow money from you but you don't have any to spare until your next paycheck arrives.

*(continued on next page)*

# Being Assertive by Refusing Requests

III. How would you use the steps of "Refusing a Request" in the following situations? *(continued)*

- ★ A waiter asks you to sit in the smoking section of the restaurant, but you don't want to.
- ★ Your roommate wants you to watch the basketball game on television with him, but you have other plans.
- ★ A relative asks you to do an errand.
- ★ Someone who is in a hurry asks to cut in front of you in line, but you are in a hurry, too.

# Being Assertive by Refusing Requests

**Goal:**  
*Group members will practice refusing requests in an assertive way.*

*Group members will increase their confidence in refusing requests to do things they don't want to do, rather than giving in or getting angry.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
  2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
  3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "We're going to talk about being assertive by refusing requests that we either cannot or do not want to do. Why do you think it's a good idea to be able to refuse requests assertively? What happens when we respond to requests by getting aggressive? Or when we go ahead and do things that people ask, even though we're not comfortable?" Possible answers include:
    - ★ If we refuse requests, people won't take advantage of us.
    - ★ If we can refuse a request without getting into an argument, it could save a lot of stress.
  4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask a group member to read the first paragraph. Pause for discussion and examples.
- 5-7. **Teach the skill** "Refusing a Request" by using the steps of social-skills training:
- ★ Review the rationale for the skill.
  - ★ Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - ★ Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - ★ Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Encourage group members to think of examples of requests they need to refuse in their own environment.
  - ★ Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - ★ If indicated and time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

After teaching the skill, you can lead a discussion using the situations for refusing a request that are listed at the end of the handout. Encourage group members to use the wording that they would use in the real situation; e.g., "I cannot loan you money because I only have enough to get me through the day." There may not be enough time to go through the entire list of situations.

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## Being Assertive by Refusing Requests

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### Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ★ Try using the steps of “Refusing a Request” when someone asks you to do something that you can’t or don’t want to do. Which steps of the skill did you use?
  - ★ Notice when other people are responding to requests. Did they use the steps of the skill of “Refusing a Request” or were they aggressive or passive?
  - ★ Ask someone to do a role play with you of “Refusing a Request.”
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



## Module VIII: **Managing Anger**

Session 1: **What Makes Us Angry?**

Session 2: **Recognizing the Signs of Anger**

Session 3: **Choices for Responding to Angry Feelings**

Session 4: **Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively**

Session 5: **Making Compromises That Are Fair to Both People**



# What Makes Us Angry?



**Anger is a natural part of life.** Things don't always go our way, and life seems unfair to all of us at some point. Everyone feels angry or annoyed at least once in a while. Some situations are more likely to make us angry or annoyed than others. For example, many people feel angry when they are criticized or when pressured to do something they don't want to do.

**Many people experience anger in response to other emotions.** For example, sometimes when people feel anxious, frustrated, sad, embarrassed, or lonely, they get angry. Situations or emotions that make us angry or annoyed can be described as triggers for our anger. Being aware of our own individual triggers can help us in two ways:

- \* We can avoid some of the situations that make us angry or annoyed.
- \* We can be more prepared for dealing with angry feelings when they arise.

## Common Situations that Make People Annoyed or Angry

The following list gives examples of situations that often cause strong emotions, including anger or annoyance. How would you feel in these situations?

- \_\_\_\_\_ You are waiting in line to get lunch. Someone cuts in front of you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone keeps asking you for cigarettes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You put a can of your favorite soda in the refrigerator to drink later. When you go to get it, someone has already taken it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your friend constantly tries to persuade you to use drugs, even though you don't want to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your roommate is supposed to take out the garbage every day, but instead lets it pile up all week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You had a birthday, but your brother forgot it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You have been in the hospital for over a week, but no one has visited you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your friend is 40 minutes late to meet you for lunch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your roommate continues to talk on the phone for 10 minutes after you tell him that you need to make an important call.

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# What Makes Us Angry? *(continued)*

## Questions

1. In the past week, what is an example of a situation that made you feel angry or annoyed?

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2. What do you do that makes other people annoyed or angry? Have they told you about their feelings?

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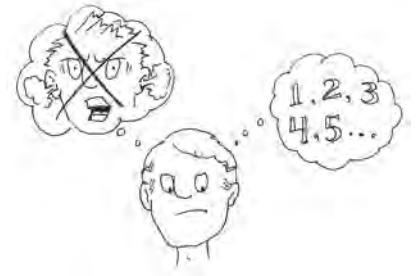
# What Makes Us Angry?

*Goal:  
Each group member will identify at least one situation that makes him or her feel angry.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "People get angry or annoyed because of different things. Why is it a good idea to recognize the kinds of situations that make each of us angry? How could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Maybe we can avoid those kinds of situations.
  - \* Maybe we can think in advance about how we could handle those situations better so we won't get as angry.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask one or more group members to read the opening paragraph. Encourage discussion about the connection between anger and experiencing emotional pain. For example, ask if anyone in the group has felt angry because he or she felt rejected or hurt in some way. Ask other group members to take turns reading aloud the list of common situations that make people angry. As a situation is read, ask group members how they would feel in the situation. Encourage them to add to the list examples of other situations that commonly make them mad.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers.
7. This group focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice situations when you feel angry or annoyed. What happened to trigger your anger? What other feelings did you have at the time (such as feeling rejected, frustrated, sad, embarrassed, etc.)?
  - \* Notice situations when people get angry at you. What do you think you did to trigger the other person's anger? What other feelings do you think he or she had at the same time as anger?
  - \* Notice when you successfully avoid a situation that usually makes you angry or annoyed. How did you do it?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Recognizing the Signs of Anger



**We all have different responses to feeling angry or annoyed.** We may have physical signs, emotional signs, or behavioral signs – or a combination of all of these. Recognizing these signs helps us to deal with angry feelings before they build up further. When we don't recognize we are getting annoyed, the situation can get out of hand and lead to a heated argument or even a physical fight. Or we may not realize that something is making us angry until it's too late to do anything about it.

**The earlier we recognize that we're starting to get angry or annoyed the better.** Knowing our first signs of anger can help us stay in control of the situation and give us more time to think about what we want to do.

**Please complete the following checklist.** Put a check mark next to the words that describe what you experience when you start to get angry or annoyed. After you have completed the checklist, circle one or two of the very earliest signs that you experience.

## SIGNS OF ANGER CHECKLIST

### Physical Signs

- \_\_\_\_\_ headache
- \_\_\_\_\_ stomachache
- \_\_\_\_\_ gritting your teeth
- \_\_\_\_\_ dizziness
- \_\_\_\_\_ heart racing
- \_\_\_\_\_ sweaty palms
- \_\_\_\_\_ blushing or getting red-faced
- \_\_\_\_\_ eyes watering or filling with tears
- \_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emotional Signs

- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling anxious
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling trapped
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling like running away
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling hurt
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling resentful
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling scared
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling hurt
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling like hitting someone
- \_\_\_\_\_ feeling like drinking or using drugs
- \_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

*(continued on next page)*

# Recognizing the Signs of Anger

(continued)

## Behavioral Signs

- \_\_\_\_\_ frowning
- \_\_\_\_\_ clenching your hand
- \_\_\_\_\_ raising your voice
- \_\_\_\_\_ making sarcastic remarks
- \_\_\_\_\_ making critical remarks
- \_\_\_\_\_ withdrawing
- \_\_\_\_\_ getting silent
- \_\_\_\_\_ tapping the table
- \_\_\_\_\_ tapping your foot
- \_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Thinking/Cognitive Signs

- \_\_\_\_\_ telling yourself something is unfair
- \_\_\_\_\_ being morally outraged
- \_\_\_\_\_ being very critical of other people
- \_\_\_\_\_ dwelling on upsetting things that have happened to you in the past

## **Questions**

1. Give an example of when you recognized signs that you were feeling annoyed and were able to resolve the situation before it got out of hand.

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2. Give an example of when you recognized the signs that someone else was getting angry at you. Were you able to resolve the situation before it got out of hand?

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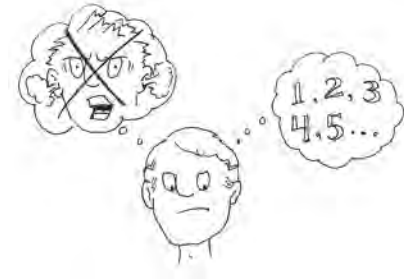
# Recognizing the Signs of Anger

*Goal:  
Each group member will identify at least one sign that he or she is starting to feel angry or annoyed.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we will focus on recognizing the signs that we're starting to feel angry. Why do you think it's a good idea to know when we are starting to feel angry? How could that be helpful to us?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Sometimes I don't know I'm starting to feel angry or annoyed until I find myself in an argument.
  - \* If I know I'm starting to feel annoyed maybe I can resolve the situation before it gets out of hand.
  - \* Sometimes I don't realize a situation has made me angry until it's too late to do anything about it.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the checklist** on the handout. You can ask group members to complete one category at a time (e.g., "physical signs") or all at once.
6. **Ask group members to share** their responses on the "Signs of Anger" checklist. It is usually best to discuss one category (such as "emotional signs") at a time.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice situations when you get angry or annoyed. Which of the signs of anger did you experience?
  - \* Notice when other people get annoyed or angry. Which signs of anger did you see?
  - \* Notice when characters on TV get angry. What signs of anger do they show?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Choices for Responding to Angry Feelings



I. **Sometimes when we're annoyed at someone, we may respond in ways that don't help resolve the situation.** In fact, sometimes our responses make things worse. Which of the following things have you done when you're annoyed or angry at someone?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Keeping your feelings bottled up. Not saying anything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Raising your voice at the other person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Criticizing the other person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Swearing at the person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Breaking things or hitting or shoving someone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Having a tirade in which you blame the person for many things that have happened in the past.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blaming yourself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ruminating (brooding) and thinking a lot about things that happened before that upset you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Holding onto your annoyance or anger even after the situation is resolved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Drinking or doing drugs.

II. **It's important to remember that we can make choices about how we respond to people.** When we start to feel ourselves getting annoyed or angry, it's usually a good idea to slow down and think about what might make the situation better. Every situation is different, so it's helpful to think about a wide range of **choices**, such as the following:

1. Tell the other person what you are feeling, and suggest how the situation can be resolved. If the situation cannot be resolved, suggest how it could be prevented in the future.
2. Try to come up with a compromise that is fair to both people.
3. If the situation is not serious, decide to ignore it. Focus on other things.
4. Calm yourself down by counting to ten or doing some deep breathing.
5. Disagree with the other person without arguing.

*(continued on next page)*

# Choices for Responding to Angry Feelings

## II. Choices *(continued)*

6. Ask the person to stop the behavior that is making you annoyed or angry.
7. Get someone else involved who can help resolve the situation.
8. Tell the person that you need to take a break, and temporarily leave the situation.

## III. How would you choose to respond to annoyed or angry feelings in the following situations? There is usually more than one good choice for each situation. Fill in the number(s) of your choices, based on the list above. It's OK to use some choices more than once.

- \_\_\_\_\_ A friend is eager to tell you something and interrupts your conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A friend is talking to you on the phone and is speaking very loudly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone (who is bigger than you) keeps hassling you for money and follows you down the street.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your best friend, who is usually very calm, is irritable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your uncle has different political views than you and is trying to convince you to vote for a candidate that you don't support.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You and your boyfriend or girlfriend have been arguing about the same topic for almost an hour.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone cuts in front of you in line.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your brother forgot your birthday.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your roommate spills a bottle of spaghetti sauce on the floor and does not clean it up.

## Questions

1. Give an example of someone you know who handles annoyance and anger well. What choices does he or she make?

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2. Give an example of someone whose anger or annoyance often gets out of hand. What choices does he or she make?

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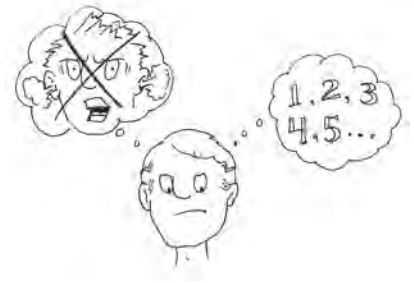
# Choices for Responding to Angry Feelings

*Goal:  
Group members will increase their awareness of different options for responding to situations that make them angry.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we will focus on the different options for responding to angry feelings. Why do you think it's a good idea to have more than one way to respond to angry feelings? How could it be helpful to make choices rather than just react in an angry situation?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Not every situation is the same. Some choices are better in different situations.
  - \* If I made a choice about how I react, instead of just withdrawing like I usually do, maybe things would turn out better.
  - \* Sometimes the best solution to a problem situation isn't the first thing that comes to mind.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
- 5-6. **Ask group members to complete the checklist.** Encourage group members to share some of their answers and give examples when possible.
7. **Ask group members to practice the skill** of making choices by completing the fill-in-the-blank exercise in Section III and role playing some of their responses. Ask group members to answer the final questions and share some of their answers.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice situations when you feel annoyed or angry. Try to identify at least one or two ways you could choose to respond to the situation.
  - \* Notice situations when another person gets angry or annoyed. Identify one or two ways that he or she could have responded.
  - \* Notice what choices TV characters often make when they are angry.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively



- I. **We all get annoyed or angry at someone from time to time.** It's important to make choices about how we respond to our feelings. One way of responding to annoyance is to tell the person directly about our feelings.

**Expressing your annoyed or angry feelings directly can help the other person understand your point of view.** Making a constructive suggestion makes it less likely that the situation will happen again in the future. To be most effective, you may need to wait until you have cooled down and are feeling calm.

## II. Skill: Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively

1. Look at the person. Speak calmly and firmly.
2. Tell the person what he or she did that made you angry or annoyed.  
Be brief.
3. Tell the person how you feel. Be brief.
4. Suggest how the situation could be prevented in the future.

## III. How could you use the steps of "Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively" in the following situations?

- \* Your roommate borrows your new sweater without asking.
- \* Your friend says he or she will meet you at the video store at 8:00 PM. You wait there until 9:00 PM, but your friend doesn't show up.
- \* You tell your partner that you are making a special dinner for his or her birthday. When your partner arrives home, he or she says, "Sorry, I already ate three slices of pizza."
- \* You are at a family dinner. One of your relatives tells a story that involves information that you told him or her was private.
- \* Your roommate spills a jar of mustard on the floor and does not clean it up.
- \* You are eating dinner with your brother at a nice restaurant. He answers a call on his cell phone and carries on a loud conversation for several minutes.

# Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively

**Goal:**  
 Group members will practice the skill of "Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively."  
 Group members will gain confidence in using the skill in their own life.

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we will talk about expressing anger or annoyance directly to someone. This is one of our choices for responding to angry feelings. What are the advantages of expressing your feelings directly to someone? Are there some situations when it would be better not to express your feelings directly?" Possible answers include:
  - \* If people know that what they are doing is annoying me or making me angry, maybe they will stop.
  - \* It's better than keeping things bottled up.
  - \* I don't think it's always a good idea. If it's a stranger or someone I don't know very well, maybe he or she doesn't care about my feelings.
  - \* Expressing minor annoyance can change the situation and may even prevent angry feelings from developing.
- 4-6. **Distribute the handout.** This handout is divided into three sections. Ask group members to take turns reading aloud the text in each section. Allow time for teaching the skill ("Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively"), and discussing how it could be applied in the specific situations in Section III.
7. **Teach the skill** "Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively," using the steps of social-skills training:
  - \* Review the rationale for the skill.
  - \* Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - \* Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - \* Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Because the skill involves unpleasant feelings, group members may be more comfortable practicing with the leader. Role plays can be developed from real-life situations provided by the group members or from the situations described in Section III of the handout.

*(continued on next page)*

# Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively

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## Leader's Guide:

7. **Teach the skill** *(continued)*
  - \* Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other members.
  - \* If indicated and time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice situations when you feel annoyed or angry. If it is appropriate to the situation, try expressing your feelings directly, using the steps of the skill “Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively.”
  - \* Notice when other people are annoyed or angry at each other. Identify situations when you think that using the skill of “Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively” would have been helpful.
  - \* Ask someone to do a role play with you of “Expressing Angry Feelings Constructively.”
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Making Compromises That Are Fair to Both People



## I. Sometimes we find ourselves in situations where we disagree with another person.

For example:

- \* Two people might want to do something together, but disagree about the most enjoyable thing to do.
- \* Two people might want to solve a problem, but have different ideas about the best solution.
- \* One person would like the other person to change something, and he or she doesn't want to.

If disagreements are not resolved quickly, they can lead to strong feelings of annoyance or anger.

**One way that people can resolve conflicts peacefully is to work out a compromise.** In a compromise, people exchange views with one another and try to come up with a solution that is satisfactory to both parties. Although it can take some effort to come up with a compromise, it is usually worth it, because a mutual solution is more likely to work than one where only one person gets what he or she wants.

## II. Skill: Compromising

1. Look at the person.
2. Explain your viewpoint briefly.
3. Listen to the other person's viewpoint.
4. Repeat back what you heard.
5. Suggest a compromise where both people get some of what they want.
6. Suggest other compromises if necessary.

*(continued on next page)*

# Making Compromises That Are Fair to Both People *(continued)*

## III. How could you use the steps of "Compromising" in the following situations?

- \* Your roommate likes to fall asleep with the radio on. You have trouble sleeping because it keeps you awake.
- \* You want to go out for pizza, but your friend wants to have hamburgers and french fries.
- \* You and your sister want to go see a movie. You want to see a comedy, but she wants to see an action movie.
- \* Your friend calls you every morning at 8:00 AM. You wish that he would not call so often.
- \* A friend wants to go to a bar together. You have decided not to drink.
- \* Your roommate wants to paint the apartment in a new color. You do not like the color of paint that he has chosen.
- \* You and your roommate share all the housework. She never does the dishes, so you do them instead.
- \* You feel drowsy from your medication. Your doctor feels that he is prescribing the right dosage.

## IV. **Sometimes we can find ourselves in situations where another person gets more angry at us, no matter what we do to try to resolve the conflict.** If that happens, it may be best to temporarily leave the situation. You can calmly let the person know that you are finding the situation stressful and need to take a break. If it's appropriate, tell him or her that you will discuss the problem again at another time.

# Making Compromises That Are Fair to Both People

*Goal:  
Group members  
will practice the  
skill of making  
compromises.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we will talk about how we can compromise with someone in a way that is fair to both people. This is one of our choices for responding to angry feelings. Why do you think it's a good idea to try to make a compromise when we're in a situation that's making us annoyed or angry? How could that help?" Possible answers include:
  - \* Sometimes I start to get annoyed with my friend when we're trying to figure out what we can do together. It might work better to come up with a compromise.
  - \* Sometimes when I'm disagreeing with someone, each of us just keeps repeating the same point and nothing gets resolved. A compromise might help us get beyond that.
  - \* Being able to compromise would lead to solutions other than one person getting his or her own way. In a compromise both people should get something they want.
  - \* A lot of arguments could be prevented.
- 4-6. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
7. **Teach the skill** "Compromising," using the steps of social-skills training:
  - \* Review the rationale for the skill.
  - \* Ask a group member to read the steps of the skill; briefly discuss the importance of each step.
  - \* Model (demonstrate) the skill and get feedback from group members.
  - \* Give each group member a chance to practice the skill in a role play. Because the skill involves potential conflict, group members may be more comfortable practicing with the leader. Group members can practice in role plays reflecting situations from their life or can use the situations described in Section III of the handout.
  - \* Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
  - \* If indicated and time allows, offer a small suggestion for improvement.

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# Making Compromises That Are Fair to Both People

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - \* Notice situations when you are experiencing annoyance or anger. If it is appropriate to the situation, try making a compromise with the other person, using the steps of the skill.
  - \* Notice when other people are angry or annoyed at each other. Would compromising have been helpful in the situation?
  - \* When you are watching television or a movie, notice when characters are angry at each other. Would compromising have been helpful in the situation?
  - \* Ask someone to do a role play to practice compromising.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.





Module IX:

*Using Our Time Well*

Session 1: *Finding the Right Balance of Work*

Session 2: *Finding the Right Balance of Fun*

Session 3: *Finding the Right Balance of  
Spending Time with Other People*

Session 4: *Making a Morning Schedule*

Session 5: *Making an Afternoon and Evening Schedule*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Finding the Right Balance of Work



It's important to have a balance of work and play in our lives. If all we do is work and don't take time to do things for fun, we may end up being exhausted and stressed out. However, if all we do is rest, relax, and do things for fun, we may end up feeling bored, and find that our life lacks meaning. In fact, it can be stressful to have too little or too much work!

## Work-Related Activities Checklist

In this handout, we use the word "work" to mean activities that involve making, doing, or learning something. "Work" can also mean taking care of someone. These activities may be paid or unpaid. The following checklist contains common examples of work-related activities. Check off the ones you do now and the ones you used to do.

Work-related Activity	I do this now	I used to do this
Paid employment		
Volunteer job		
Taking care of a household		
Preparing meals for others		
Parenting		
Taking care of a relative		
Going to school		
Homework		
Vocational training		
Other:		
Other:		

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# *Finding the Right Balance of Work* (continued)

## **Questions**

1. Pick a typical day in the past week. What kind of work-related activities did you do? How many hours did you spend on these activities?

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2. Are your work-related activities meaningful to you?

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3. Would you like to do more work-related activities? What kind?

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4. Would you like to spend less time on work-related activities? Which ones would you like to decrease?

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# *Finding the Right Balance of Work*

**Goal:**  
Groups members will evaluate the amount and type of work-related activities in which they

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like, "Most people find that it's important to have a balance in how their time is spent. They like to spend some time working, and some time relaxing and enjoying themselves. By 'working' we mean things like jobs, volunteer work, going to school, taking classes, taking care of a household, being a parent, and taking care of a relative. What do you think about the work activities that you do?" Possible answers include:
  - ❁ I don't have enough work to do. I'm bored.
  - ❁ I would like to be working.
  - ❁ Maybe I work too much.
  - ❁ I have things that I want to do, but I don't get much done.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group member to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete** the checklist and answer the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions. Encourage discussion by asking for a few details. For example, if a group member says that she takes care of children, you can ask how old the children are and if she enjoys it. If a group member says that he used to take college classes, you can ask about the type of courses, and which ones were his favorites.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❁ Make a list of the work-related activities that you enjoy most in your life.
  - ❁ Make a list of work-related activities you might like to add to your current life.
  - ❁ If you want to spend more time on work-related activities, try doing a project, such as volunteering to do an errand for someone or organizing your room.
  - ❁ Get some ideas about different types of work-related activities by asking other people what they enjoy doing.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Finding the Right Balance of Fun



It's important to take time to do things for fun and relaxation, so we don't end up either working all the time or doing nothing in our spare time. It's helpful to balance our daily activities so that we have enough time for both work and fun.

## Recreation and Leisure Activities Checklist

In this handout, we use the term "recreation and leisure" to mean activities that are fun, relaxing, and enjoyable. Some common recreation and leisure activities are listed on the following checklist. Check off the ones you do now or that you used to do.

Recreation and Leisure Activity	I do this now	I used to do this
Watching sports		
Playing sports		
Reading		
Writing		
Playing music		
Listening to music		
Playing games (board, video, or card)		
Hobbies		
Spending time with friends		
Cooking for enjoyment		
Dancing		
Exercising		
Artwork		
Crafts		
Watching television		
Watching movies		
Other:		

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# *Finding the Right Balance of Fun* (continued)

## **Questions**

1. Pick a typical day in the past week. What kinds of recreation and leisure activities did you do? How many hours did you spend on the activities?

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2. Which of your recreation and leisure activities do you enjoy the most?

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3. Would you like to do more fun things in your spare time? What kind?

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# *Finding the Right Balance of Fun*

*Goal:  
Group members  
will evaluate  
the amount  
and type of  
recreation and  
leisure activities  
that they*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Most people find that it's important to have a balance in their time. They like to spend some time doing work-related activities, but also like to have time for relaxing and enjoying themselves. What do you think about the things you do for fun?" Possible answers include:
  - ❁ I don't work, and I don't have anything to do that I care about or enjoy. It gets on my nerves.
  - ❁ I don't have time for anything but work.
  - ❁ I don't have much to do with my time. I run out of ideas and just watch TV.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the opening paragraph, encouraging discussion. Then ask another group member to read the recreation and leisure activities on the checklist, pausing for discussion.
5. **Ask group members to complete the checklist** and answer the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the checklist and questionnaire. To encourage discussion, you can ask for a few details. For example, if a group member says she enjoys doing crossword puzzles, you can ask where she finds the best puzzles. If a person says he hangs out with friends, you can ask what they like to do together.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.

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## *Finding the Right Balance of Fun*

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### **Leader's Guide:** *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❁ Make a list of the recreation and leisure activities that you enjoyed most in your life.
  - ❁ Make a list of recreation and leisure activities you might like to add to your current life.
  - ❁ If you want to spend more time on activities for fun and relaxation, try one out. For example, if you want to play more games, you could try playing a game of solitaire for 15-30 minutes. If you would like to do more reading in your spare time, you could visit a library or a bookstore and look at books or magazines for 15-30 minutes.
  - ❁ Get ideas about different types of recreation and leisure activities by asking other people what they enjoy doing in their spare time.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Finding the Right Balance in Spending Time with Other People



**Everyone needs time alone.** If we're constantly with others, we don't have time to think and reflect or to do things on our own. However, if we spend all our time alone, we can end up feeling lonely and out of touch with the rest of the world. Some of us may even end up sleeping much of the time, and letting life pass us by. Therefore, it's important to find a balance in our daily activities so that we have time to be alone, but also have time to spend with other people. Spending some time every day with other people helps us feel connected to the rest of the world.

## Checklist of Activities with Other People

Activities with other people can be informal or formal. Some common activities are listed in the following checklist. Check off the activities that you do with others at least once a week, and those activities that you used to do.

Activities with Others	I do this at least once a week	I used to do this
Spending time with family		
Spending time with friends		
Spending time with my significant other/partner		
Working		
Volunteering		
Attending classes		
Buying things at stores		
Interacting with neighbors		

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# Finding the Right Balance in Spending Time with Other People

## Checklist of Activities with Other People *(continued)*

Activities with Others	I do this at least once a week	I used to do this
Participating in group therapy		
Playing games with others		
Playing or listening to music with others		
Talking with friends or family on the phone		
Playing sports with others		
Watching television with others		
Other:		

## Questions

1. Pick a typical day in the past week. How many hours of the day did you spend with other people? What did you do?

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2. Pick a typical day in the past week. How many hours did you spend alone?

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3. On a typical day, what times do you go to bed and get up?

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4. Do you enjoy your time with others? Do you feel connected to a community or group of people?

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# *Finding the Right Balance in Spending Time with Other People*

**Goal:**  
Each group member will evaluate the amount of time that he or she spends alone and the amount of time he or she spends with other people.

## **Leader's Guide:**

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Most people find that it's important to have a balance in their time. They like to spend some time with other people, but also to have time alone. What do you think about spending time with other people? What's the balance like for you?" Possible answers include:
  - ❁ I'm around people all the time. There's never any privacy.
  - ❁ I spend most of my time alone. I'm not happy with that.
  - ❁ I'd like to do things with other people, but it doesn't always work out.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
5. **Ask group members to complete the checklist** and answer the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask each group member to share** one or more of his or her answers to the checklist and questions. To encourage discussion, you can ask for a few details. For example, if a group member says he enjoys spending time with his family, you can ask what they did the last time they were together.
7. This session focuses on increasing awareness; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

*(continued on next page)*

## *Finding the Right Balance in Spending Time with Other People*

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### **Leader's Guide:** *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ Make a list of activities that you most enjoy doing with others. These can be activities from the present or the past.
  - ✿ Make a list of activities that you might like to start doing with others.
  - ✿ If you want to spend more time with others, try doing it. For example, if you want to spend more time with friends, you could ask a friend to listen to a new CD together or play a game of cards
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Making a Morning Schedule



**Most of us feel better when we have a regular schedule that has a balance of work and recreation, and a balance of time alone and time with others.** To make a schedule, start by deciding what time you plan to wake up, eat your breakfast, and get dressed. Then decide the kinds of activities that you want to do in the morning and when you want to take a break. Keep in mind some changes you might like to make in the balance of your work, recreation, and social activities. Making a morning schedule will help you get your day off to a good start.

Here is an example of the morning schedule of a person who works part-time:

Time	Activity
7:00 a.m.	Wake up. Take a shower. Get dressed. Have breakfast. Brush teeth.
8:00 a.m.	Stop at corner store to pick up newspaper. Say "hello" to Juan, the clerk at the store. Take bus to job.
9:00 a.m.	Arrive at work. Start job. Interact with co-workers as part of job.
10:30 a.m.	15-minute coffee break. Look at front page of newspaper. Return to work.
12:00 Noon	End of workday. Return home for lunch.

*(continued on next page)*

# Make a Morning Schedule *(continued)*

Try making a morning schedule for your own activities, using the blank schedule below:

## Morning Schedule

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
7 : 00 a.m.	
8 : 00 a.m.	
9 : 00 a.m.	
10 : 00 a.m.	
11 : 00 a.m.	
12 : 00 Noon	

# Making a Morning Schedule

**Goal:**  
Each group member will make a personal morning schedule that balances work, recreation, and

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "It can be difficult to have a balance of the things we've been talking about: work, recreation, and time with others. Having a routine schedule can sometimes be helpful. What do you think could be the advantage to having a routine? In what ways could that be helpful?" Possible answers include:
  - ❁ I just do whatever comes up. Sometimes that works OK, but sometimes I haven't done much by the end of the day.
  - ❁ Having a routine might help me feel more organized.
  - ❁ If I followed a schedule, maybe it would give me a sense of accomplishment.
  - ❁ Having a schedule gives me something to get up for. I could look forward to doing the things on my list.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud, encouraging discussion. Ask group members what they think of the sample schedule. For example, is 7:00 a.m. a good time to get up? Do they prefer to take a shower in the morning or at night or not every day? Do they commonly greet or speak to any of the merchants they do business with? Do they think the person's schedule has a balance of work, recreation, and time with other people?
5. **Ask group members to complete a morning schedule** for themselves, using the blank schedule on the handout. Members can complete the schedule based on their current situation or based on a schedule they would like to have in the future.
6. **Ask each group member to read aloud** his or her schedule and allow a few minutes for discussion. Note the variety of the schedules and the similarities. Note whether there is a balance of work, recreation, and time with other people.
7. **Review the skill** for following a schedule. You may want to write down the following steps on a flip chart or white board.
  - ❁ Post the schedule or keep it with you (e.g., in your pocket).
  - ❁ Refer to the schedule during the day.
  - ❁ Keep track of the time (using your own watch or a clock in a public place).

*(continued on next page)*



## *Making a Morning Schedule*

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### Leader's Guide:

7. **Review the skill** (*continued*)
  - ✿ Give yourself a little push to move on to the next activity on your schedule.
  - ✿ Give yourself credit for accomplishing the activities on your schedule (e.g., check them off or cross them off, give yourself a pat on the back).
  - ✿ Revise the schedule as needed.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ Post the schedule you made or keep it in your pocket.
  - ✿ Tomorrow morning, try to follow the schedule you made as much as possible. Evaluate how well you followed the schedule and whether you thought it was practical. What was easy to do? What was challenging to do?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Making an Afternoon and Evening Schedule

**Most of us feel better when we have a regular schedule with a balance of work, recreation, and social activities.** In the last session, you made a morning schedule for yourself to get the day off to a good start. Next it's important to decide the kinds of activities that you want to do in the afternoon and evening, including time for breaks.



Here is an example of the afternoon and evening schedule of a person who works part-time:

Time	Activity
12:00 Noon	Take bus home from work. Stop at corner store to pick up groceries for lunch or dinner. Say "Hi" to Juan at the store.
1:00 p.m.	Arrive home, take off shoes. Make and eat lunch.
2:00 p.m.	Relax, read the rest of the paper. Straighten up the house.
4:00 p.m.	Take a walk or bike ride.
6:00 p.m.	Prepare and eat dinner.
7:00 p.m.	Clean up kitchen, do laundry if necessary. Call my brother to see how he is doing (once or twice a week).
8:00 p.m.	Watch TV or call a friend to come over and watch a video.
9:00 p.m.	Same as above.
10:00 p.m.	Get ready for bed. Make sure I have clean clothes to wear tomorrow. Read or do a crossword puzzle in bed.
11:00 p.m.	Lights out.

(continued on next page)

# Making an Afternoon and Evening Schedule *(continued)*

Use the blank schedule below to make an afternoon and evening schedule for yourself.

## Afternoon and Evening Schedule

Time	Activity
1 : 00 p.m.	
2 : 00 p.m.	
3 : 00 p.m.	
4 : 00 p.m.	
5 : 00 p.m.	
6 : 00 p.m.	
7 : 00 p.m.	
8 : 00 p.m.	
9 : 00 p.m.	
10 : 00 p.m.	
11 : 00 p.m.	

# Making an Afternoon and Evening Schedule

**Goal:**  
Each group member will make a personal afternoon and evening schedule that balances work, recreation, and time with others.

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Having an afternoon and evening routine can be helpful in maintaining a balance in our day. What do you think would be the advantages to having a routine in the afternoon and evening?" Possible answers include:
  - ✿ I have trouble getting things done in the afternoon. I just veg out. Sometimes that's OK, but sometimes I look back and don't feel very satisfied.
  - ✿ Having a routine might help me be more organized in the evening.
  - ✿ It would give me something to look forward to, something to stay awake for.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the opening paragraph, encouraging discussion. Then ask another group member to read the example of the afternoon schedule of a person who works part-time, pausing for discussion. Ask the group members what they think of the schedule. For example, is 6:00 p.m. a good time to eat dinner? Would they prefer to shop once a week rather or two or three times per week? Would they prefer to take a walk before dinner or after dinner? Do they think there is balance in the person's schedule?
5. **Ask group members to complete** an afternoon and evening schedule for themselves, using the blank schedule on the handout. Group members can choose to complete the schedule based on their current situation or based on the schedule they would like to have in the future.
6. **Ask each group member to read his or her schedule aloud** and allow a few minutes for discussion. Go around the room. Note the variety of the schedules and the similarities. Note whether there is a balance of work, recreation, and time with other people.

*(continued on next page)*

## *Making an Afternoon and Evening Schedule*

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### **Leader's Guide:** *(continued)*

7. **Review the skills of following a schedule.** You may want to write down the following skill on a flip chart or white board.
  - ✿ Post the schedule or keep it with you (e.g., in your pocket).
  - ✿ Refer to the schedule during the day.
  - ✿ Keep track of the time (use your own watch or a clock in a public place).
  - ✿ Give yourself a little push to move on to the next activity on your schedule.
  - ✿ Give yourself credit for accomplishing the activities on your schedule (e.g., check them off or cross them off, and give yourself a pat on the back).
  - ✿ Revise the schedule as needed.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ✿ Post the schedule you have made or keep it in your pocket.
  - ✿ Tomorrow afternoon and evening, try to follow the schedule you made as much as possible. Evaluate how well you followed the schedule and whether you thought it was practical. What was easy to do? What was challenging to do?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

## Module X: Avoiding Problems with Alcohol and Drugs

- Session 1: Myths and Facts About Alcohol
- Session 2: Myths and Facts About Marijuana and Cocaine
- Session 3: Advantages and Disadvantages of Drinking or Using Drugs
- Session 4: Alternatives to Alcohol and Drugs
- Session 5: Responding to People Who Offer Us Alcohol or Drugs

# Myths and Facts About Alcohol



Alcohol is found in beer, wine, and “hard” liquor such as whiskey, vodka, rum, and tequila. It has a strong effect on the brain and changes people’s thinking, emotions, and behavior. Drinking is very common in our society, but it is not well understood by most people. Because there are many myths about alcohol, it is important for everyone to know the facts.

Myth: *Alcohol improves your mood.*

FACT: Most people usually feel more relaxed when they drink a small amount of alcohol (for example one drink). However, when people drink more, they often feel more depressed.

Myth: *It’s a good sign when people can drink a lot and not seem drunk.*

FACT: This is actually a sign that their bodies are becoming tolerant to alcohol. They are developing a dependency. The more people drink, the more alcohol it takes to cause the same effects.

Myth: *If you just drink beer or wine, you won’t have problems with alcohol.*

FACT: An ounce of hard liquor such as whiskey contains as much alcohol as 4 ounces of wine or 12 ounces of beer. Drinking a six-pack of beer is equal to drinking 6 ounces of hard liquor. Lots of people experience problems with drinking just beer or wine.

Myth: *Some people can drink a lot and still be in control.*

FACT: Alcohol causes slower reaction times, interferes with good judgment, and increases the chances of people doing something they will regret later. Many people don’t realize when they are impaired by alcohol, and go on to have car accidents, engage in unprotected sex, or enter into unsafe situations and become victims of crime.

*(continued on next page)*

# Myths and Facts About Alcohol *(continued)*

Myth: *Drinking coffee will sober someone up quickly.*

**FACT:** It takes time for the body to metabolize alcohol and eliminate it from your system. Depending on a person's weight, it usually takes about two to three hours to eliminate the alcohol content of two drinks (two 12-ounce beers, two ounces of hard liquor, two 4-ounce glasses of wine). Nothing speeds up the body's natural process, not even coffee.

Myth: *Alcohol improves sexual performance.*

**FACT:** Alcohol reduces sexual performance. Or, as Shakespeare said, drink "...prokoves the desire, but it takes away the performance." (Macbeth, Act II, Scenes 3)

Myth: *Drinking helps you sleep better.*

**FACT:** Although drinking a lot of alcohol can cause people to fall asleep, it is not a restful sleep. Most people who have been drinking heavily wake up feeling tired and in a bad mood.

Myth: *A few drinks will help you cope better with your symptoms and your mood.*

**FACT:** Alcohol can make the symptoms of mental illness worse. It can also interfere with medication for mental illness.

## Questions

1. How do movies and television contribute to the myths about alcohol?

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2. When you were growing up, did people in your family drink?  
How did it affect them?

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# Myths and Facts About Alcohol

*Goal:  
Group  
members will  
learn accurate  
information in  
order to correct  
some common  
myths about  
alcohol.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the overall theme of this module.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic of the session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some facts about alcohol. Why is it a good idea to know what's true about alcohol? How could that help us?" Possible answers include:
  - ❖ People say a lot of things about alcohol that aren't true. We can make better decisions for ourselves if we know the truth.
  - ❖ Most of us got wrong information when we were kids.

If there is time, ask group members to give examples of things they have heard about alcohol that they think are not true. List them on a flip chart or white board.

4. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud. When reading myths, pause for discussion before reading the accompanying fact.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing knowledge; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing a specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❖ When you are watching television, listening to the radio, or reading newspapers or magazines, notice the advertisements about alcohol. What kind of experiences do they show people having when they drink?
  - ❖ When you are watching TV or a movie, notice the characters who drink. What kind of experiences do they have? Do they ever have problems with alcohol?
  - ❖ Jot down the initials of the members of your family who have had alcohol problems at some point in their lifetime. Include parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and children. How many are there?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Myths and Facts About Marijuana and Cocaine



Although marijuana and cocaine are illegal, they have become more and more available in our society. People are beginning to use both these drugs at very young ages. Like alcohol, marijuana and cocaine have a strong effect on the brain and cause changes in people's thinking, emotions, and behavior. Marijuana is most commonly smoked. Cocaine can be snorted, smoked, or injected. "Crack" is a form of cocaine. Because there are many myths about marijuana and cocaine, it is important for everyone to know the facts.

Myth: *Each joint of marijuana is about the same strength.*

FACT: The strength of marijuana depends on the amount of the chemical THC it contains. The THC in marijuana varies, and has been increasing since the 1970's.

Myth: *A few days after smoking marijuana, THC does not show up in a person's urine.*

FACT: People who regularly smoke a lot of marijuana can have traces of THC in their urine for weeks.

Myth: *Marijuana always improves your mood.*

FACT: Marijuana makes some people initially feel less depressed and in a good mood. However, it also makes some people feel anxious, panicked, or paranoid (thinking that other people or forces are out to get them). Marijuana often makes psychotic symptoms worse, such as hearing voices.

Myth: *It's safe to smoke and drive.*

FACT: Marijuana affects many skills related to driving safely: alertness, reaction times, judgment of distances, and coordination.

*(continued on next page)*

# Myths and Facts About Marijuana and Cocaine *(continued)*

Myth: *Cocaine improves your mood for a long time.*

FACT: When people snort, smoke, or inject cocaine, at first they usually feel alert, energetic, and self-confident. However, this effect only lasts for a short while, from 10 to 30 minutes. Afterwards people tend to “crash” and feel irritable, tense, and tired.

Myth: *Cocaine is not habit-forming.*

FACT: For some people who use cocaine, the drug becomes the focal point of their life. They enjoy the feeling of cocaine so much that nothing else is as important, including money, food, and sex.

Myth: *Using cocaine is helpful when you want to be creative or study.*

FACT: Although cocaine initially makes people feel more energetic and alert, the effect does not last long enough to complete most creative projects or to study effectively.

Myth: *Smoking a joint or using crack or cocaine will help you cope better with the symptoms of a mental illness.*

FACT: Marijuana, cocaine, and crack can make the symptoms of mental illness worse. They can also interfere with medication for mental illness.

## Questions

1. How do music, movies, and television contribute to the myths about marijuana and cocaine?

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2. When you were growing up, did people in your family use drugs? How did it affect them?

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# Myths and Facts About Marijuana and Cocaine

*Goal:  
Group members will learn accurate information in order to correct some common myths about marijuana and cocaine.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the session, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some facts about drugs, particularly marijuana and cocaine. Why is it a good idea to know what's true about these drugs? How could that help us?"

- ❖ People say a lot of things about drugs that aren't true. It helps us make better decisions for ourselves if we know the truth.
- ❖ Especially when we were young, we got wrong information.

If there is time, ask group members to give examples of things they have heard about drugs that they think are not true. List them on a flip chart or white board.

4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud. When reading myths, pause for discussion before reading the accompanying fact.
5. **Ask group members to answer** the questions on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing knowledge; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in establishing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❖ When you are watching TV or a movie, notice the characters who use drugs. What kind of experiences are the characters having? Do any of these characters have problems with drugs?
  - ❖ When you are listening to music, notice the songs with words about people using drugs. Which songs put drugs in a positive light? In a negative light?
  - ❖ Jot down the initials of the members of your family who have had drug problems at some point in their life. Include parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and children. How many are there?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

# Advantages and Disadvantages of Drinking or Using Drugs



Most things in life have both advantages and disadvantages, including drinking and using drugs. To make good decisions about drinking or using drugs, it can be helpful for people to become aware of both the advantages and the disadvantages that they experience from their substance use.

1. Advantages of drinking or using drugs. Many people say that they drink or use drugs for the following reasons. Check off the ones that are true for you, and add other reasons.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to talk to other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Something to do           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Makes me feel more amorous     | <input type="checkbox"/> Something to look forward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Makes me feel like I belong    | <input type="checkbox"/> Less nervous              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less depressed                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep better              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More relaxed                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gives me pleasure         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gives me energy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Can forget my problems    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm used to it                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone I know does it   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If I don't do it, I feel bad   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____              |

2. Disadvantages of drinking or using drugs. There can be unpleasant consequences for drinking and using drugs. Many people say that they have experienced the following ones. Please check off the consequences that are true for you and add others.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puts me in dangerous situations | <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with the law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with partner           | <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with family  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble working                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble with school   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble taking care of children | <input type="checkbox"/> Used up my money      |

*(continued on next page)*

# Advantages and Disadvantages of Drinking or Using Drugs

## 2. Disadvantages of drinking or using drugs. (continued)

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| _____ Loss of housing                  | _____ Health problems             |
| _____ Difficulty concentrating         | _____ Made me feel scared         |
| _____ Did impulsive things I regretted | _____ Made me feel out of control |
| _____ Injured myself or someone else   | _____ Hard to get ahead in life   |
| _____ Bad role model for my kid        | _____ Lost job                    |
| _____ Used up my time                  | _____ Other: _____                |
| _____ Other: _____                     | _____ Other: _____                |

## 3. Weighing the advantages and the disadvantages. Look back at the advantages and disadvantages you checked off. Put an extra check next to the ones that are more important to you. For example, if you lost your job because of alcohol or drugs, and that is very painful to you, put two checks next to "lost job."

Write down the items with two checkmarks under the correct column in the following table:

Advantages of drinking and using drugs	Disadvantages of drinking and using drugs

### Question

On balance, do you think that there are more advantages or disadvantages to drinking and doing drugs?

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# Advantages and Disadvantages of Drinking or Using Drugs

*Goal:  
Group members will weigh the advantages and disadvantages of drinking or using drugs.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for the topic, saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about the fact that drinking and using drugs have both advantages and disadvantages. Why is it a good idea to talk about both? Why don't we just talk about the disadvantages?" Possible answers include:
  - ❖ People wouldn't drink or use drugs if there wasn't something they liked about it.
  - ❖ If we don't talk about both sides, it's not the complete story.
4. **Distribute the handout** and ask a group member to read the opening paragraph.
5. **Ask group members to complete the two checklists** on the handout. It is helpful to ask group members to take turns reading the items aloud before completing the checklists.
6. **Ask each group member to share** some of the items they checked off. Sometimes it works well to review each item, asking "How many checked off 'easier to talk to people' as an advantage?" Tally up the most common answers.
7. **Teach the steps of "weighing the advantages and the disadvantages."** Ask a group member to read the last paragraph out loud and then ask group members to put an extra checkmark next to the most significant advantages and disadvantages. Then ask group members to list these items in the appropriate columns of the table of advantages and disadvantages. Show an example of doing this. Then ask people to "weigh" whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa. Be receptive to everyone's answers. It usually takes a long time for people to decide to change their drinking or drug use. Thinking about the costs and benefits of their behavior is a very good first step towards change.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.

*(continued on next page)*

# Advantages and Disadvantages of Drinking or Using Drugs

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## Leader's Guide: *(continued)*

9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❖ Have you known someone who cut down on drinking or taking drugs? Why and how did they do this?
  - ❖ Have you ever cut down or tried to cut down on drinking or taking drugs? Why? What happened?
  - ❖ What do you think is helpful to people who are trying to cut down on drinking or taking drugs?
  - ❖ Do you think it's better to try to cut down gradually or to stop altogether?
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



# Alternatives to Alcohol and Drugs



## People drink and use drugs for different reasons.

Often they drink or use drugs to try to solve a problem, such as feeling tense or depressed, or to make new friends. When people decide that alcohol or drugs are causing more problems than they solve, they consider cutting back or quitting. Many people find that it helps to figure out what they can do instead of drinking or using drugs.

In the last session, you completed a checklist of some of the advantages of drinking or using drugs. For example, you may have checked off that drinking or taking drugs helped you to relax, socialize, or sleep. The following chart can help you identify some alternative things that you can do that may be more effective.

Common reasons people use drugs or alcohol	Possible Alternatives
Relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Deep breathing</li> <li>❖ Muscle relaxation</li> <li>❖ Imagining a peaceful scene</li> <li>❖ Yoga, meditation</li> <li>❖ Taking a walk</li> <li>❖ Drawing or crafts</li> <li>❖ Warm showers</li> <li>❖ Reading</li> </ul>
Socializing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Developing hobbies or interests, such as the things you used to do</li> <li>❖ Seeking out people who share your interests (other than drugs or alcohol)</li> <li>❖ Volunteering at an organization where others share your values</li> <li>❖ Joining a support group</li> <li>❖ Taking a social skills class</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>

# Alternatives to Drugs and Alcohol *(continued)*

Common reasons people use drugs or alcohol	Possible Alternatives
Improving Mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Exercising</li> <li>✦ Setting one or two daily goals for yourself</li> <li>✦ Doing something mentally or physically active to distract yourself from problems</li> <li>✦ Reviewing a list of your positive characteristics and accomplishments</li> <li>✦ Maintaining a healthy diet and sleep routine</li> <li>✦ Scheduling at least one pleasant thing to do each day</li> <li>✦ Talking to people you can trust about how you are feeling</li> <li>✦ Joining a support group</li> </ul>
Habit or routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Develop a new daily schedule that keeps you busy</li> <li>✦ Sign up for an activity or a class</li> <li>✦ Figure out substitute activities for the times and situations when you are most tempted to use</li> <li>✦ Find out what other people do with their time that is not related to drugs and alcohol</li> </ul>
Sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Developing a regular routine for going to bed and getting up at the same time</li> <li>✦ Exercising during the day</li> <li>✦ Avoiding violent or upsetting television programs before going to bed</li> <li>✦ Avoiding napping</li> <li>✦ Avoiding caffeine after 6 PM</li> <li>✦ Developing a routine of doing something relaxing before doing to bed (for example, listening to music, taking a warm shower or reading)</li> </ul>

*(continued on next page)*

# Alternatives to Drugs and Alcohol *(continued)*

Common reasons people use drugs or alcohol	Possible Alternatives
Excitement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Take up an exciting sport, such as roller blading, skateboarding, or mountain biking</li><li>✦ Plan a trip to a place that you've never been</li><li>✦ Try rock-climbing at a gym</li><li>✦ Learn about a different culture; learn at least a few phrases in the language of the culture; sample the music and food of the culture</li><li>✦ Learn to play a musical instrument</li><li>✦ Learn to draw or paint or sculpt</li><li>✦ Try creative writing, such as fiction and poetry</li></ul>
Other: _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ _____</li><li>✦ _____</li><li>✦ _____</li></ul>

## Questions

1. If you decided to cut down or quit drinking, which alternative(s) would you use?

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2. What are the steps to put the alternative(s) into practice?

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# Alternatives to Alcohol and Drugs

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of this session.
3. **Establish the rationale** for today's session, saying something like "Today we're going to talk about some of the different reasons we use alcohol or drugs. Then we'll figure out some other things we could do instead to get a similar result. When could it be helpful to have alternatives for alcohol and drugs?" Possible answers include:
  - ✦ When we don't want to drink or use drugs for the time being.
  - ✦ When we're afraid to drink or use drugs with specific people. Some people are dangerous.
  - ✦ When we want to cut down or quit using.
4. **Distribute the handout.** Ask group members to take turns reading aloud, including the items in each category of the table.
5. **Ask group members to answer the questions** on the handout.
6. **Ask group members to share** one or more of their answers to the questions.
7. This session focuses on increasing motivation; no direct skill teaching is required.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Possibilities include:
  - ✦ Focus on one of the alternatives you chose, and practice doing it at least once.
  - ✦ Focus on one of the alternatives you chose, and make a list of supplies you would need to put it into practice.
  - ✦ Focus on one of the alternatives and talk to a friend about doing the activity together.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.

## Goal:

*Group members will identify at least one reason they drink or take drugs.*

*Group members will identify at least one alternative activity that they could do to get a similar effect.*

# Responding to People Who Offer Us Alcohol or Drugs



**Because drinking and using drugs are very common, people often approach others to get high or to drink.** If you have decided that you don't want to drink or use drugs, it is helpful to have some ideas about how you can respond. Different situations call for different responses.

For example, if a family member or friend asks us to drink or use drugs, we might want to refuse, but still have a relationship with him or her. Therefore we might explain to the person why we don't want to drink or use drugs, such as having concerns about its effects on mental illness, work, and relationships. We might also suggest an alternative activity that we could do together.

If a stranger or drug dealer approaches us, we probably want to respond differently. We might keep our conversation very brief and avoid making direct eye contact. We would probably not provide an explanation, which would just prolong the conversation and encourage debate, and would try to leave as soon as possible.

**It can be helpful to have a variety of options for responding to offers at different times and in different situations.** The following are a few of the most common options for refusing offers to drink or use drugs. You may have additional ideas.

- Option #1. Avoid people who usually invite you to use drugs or alcohol.
- Option #2. Say "no" but suggest an alternative activity.
- Option #3. Just say "no" and repeat it if the person keeps asking.
- Option #4. Say "no" and provide an explanation.
- Option #5. Say "no" and if the person keeps asking, tell him or her how it makes you feel.
- Option #6. Explain that you find the situation stressful and that you need to leave.

*(continued on next page)*

# Responding to People Who Offer Us Alcohol or Drugs *(continued)*

## Choosing Options

Read the following situations. If you have decided you don't want to drink or use drugs, which response option would you choose?

- \_\_\_\_\_ A friendly co-worker asks you to join him or her for a joint after work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Some old friends ask you to go to a party. You know there will be lots of cocaine and alcohol there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your ex-drug dealer approaches you and complains that you don't buy from him anymore.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A stranger approaches you on the street and pressures you to buy drugs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your girlfriend or boyfriend wants to split a bottle of champagne to celebrate the anniversary of your first date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A friend suggests you go to a bar and have a beer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You are at a music concert with a new friend. He or she wants to smoke a joint "to enjoy the music better."
- \_\_\_\_\_ You just finished your first week on a new job and your father wants to celebrate by getting a couple of six-packs of beer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You are playing cards with a group of friends. The rest of them are drinking whiskey and pressure you to join them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ While riding the bus, you see two people you knew in high school. They get off at your stop and follow you, repeatedly asking you to get high with them.

# Responding to People Who Offer Us Alcohol or Drugs

*Goal:  
Group members will identify and demonstrate (in a role play) at least one strategy they can use to refuse offers to drink or use drugs.*

## Leader's Guide:

1. **Review** the previous session and assignment. Praise all efforts.
2. **Announce** the topic of today's session.
3. **Establish the rationale** by saying something like, "Today we're going to talk about some different ways we can respond to people who ask us to use alcohol or drugs. How could it help us to have some strategies in mind before it happens?" Possible answers include:
  - ❖ We won't be caught off guard.
  - ❖ It's better to plan in advance. Then we'll know what to say.
  - ❖ There's always someone around to try to tempt us or pressure us.
- 4-6. **Distribute the handout** and ask group members to take turns reading aloud.
7. **Model (demonstrate) in brief role plays how you would use the response options**, and ask for feedback. Ask group members when it would be most appropriate to use the different options. For example, Option #4 ("Say 'no' and provide a brief explanation") would probably be most appropriate in responding to a friend or family member with whom you have a caring relationship. Then ask group members to take turns reading the situations listed under "Choosing Options." Ask them to identify the response they would choose for each situation, and to demonstrate in a role play how they would use it. Give each group member positive feedback and encourage positive feedback from other group members.
8. **Briefly summarize** what happened in the group session.
9. **Ask group members to do an assignment.** Involve group members in developing the specific assignment. Possibilities include:
  - ❖ Focus on one of the response options you chose in the session, and practice it in a role play with a friend or staff member.
  - ❖ Write down an example of a situation where you expect to be offered alcohol or drugs. What response would work best?
  - ❖ Write down any other options you know for responding to offers to drink or use drugs.
10. **Thank group members** for their participation.



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**NOTES**



## About the Authors

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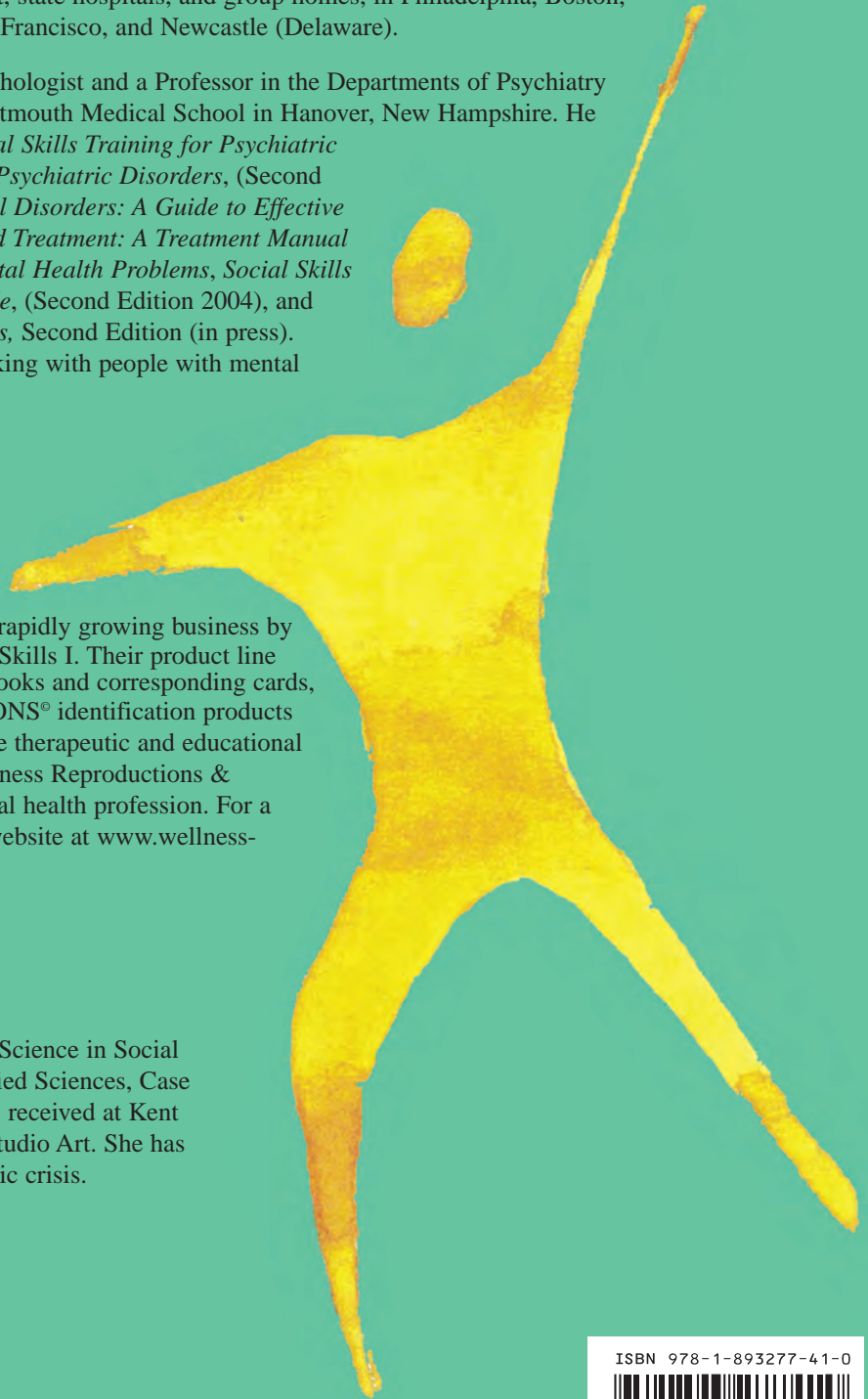
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## About the Producers

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