Making Connections:
A Social Support Model of College Adjustment
TI 086 – Thematic Group

By
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Brief Overview

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Group members will learn to recognize and articulate how their social interactions impact their overall functioning and psychological health. Treatment goals of the initial phase are to: identify specific circumstances in which social support is lacking, utilize psychoeducation to define and clarify different types of social support, pinpoint barriers to accessing social support, aid recognition of current maladaptive patterns, and develop awareness of origins of characteristic relational styles. In order to improve interpersonal functioning and develop their ability to access healthy forms of social support, group members will practice skills both in session and out of session designed to improve relational outcomes. Participants will develop the ability to generalize and implement more adaptive beliefs and behaviors. Treatment goals of this change stage include: identifying trigger situations and/or factors, developing alternative strategies, testing and implementing alternatives, maintenance of gains in order to prevent relapse, and termination.

The 61-page manual includes a reference section and 22 handouts comprising the appendices.

GOALS:

1. Provide a positive group atmosphere in which participants will try out new behaviors and feel relatively comfortable disclosing personal information to other group members and co-facilitators.

2. Address group members’ potential maladaptive levels of anxiety that may disrupt effective functioning in social situations

3. Allow participants to further articulate and understand their problems in accessing social support, as well as developing and practicing alternative modes of functioning

4. Help group members to cultivate and maintain greater levels of flexibility and comfort with interpersonal relationships

TARGET: This thematic group is intended for students who are having difficulty adjusting to college, particularly those with difficulty forming or maintaining relationships. It is anticipated that this group will be most helpful for first-year students, transfer students, international students, as well as any students who may have difficulty linking up with campus social resources.

STAFF: 2 co-leaders

LENGTH: Seven 1 1/2-hr. weekly sessions

SIZE: 10-12
# Making Connections: A Social Support Model of College Adjustment

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Making Connections: A Social Support Model of College Adjustment – TI 086

Introduction

Successful college adjustment is facilitated by a number of developmental tasks, including the ability to develop healthy interpersonal relationships and social support networks (Misra & McKean, 2000). Because for many students the transition to college involves living away from home and family members for the first time, it may be an especially important developmental stage. The transition to a college environment is likely to be a significant source of stress (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Research suggests that both social support and healthy parental attachment are related to adaptive modes of adjustment to college (Coble, Gantt, & Mallinckrodt, 1996; Rice, FitzGerald, & Whaley, 1995). In comparison with passing students, withdrawing students experience more debilitating social isolation on campus (Power, 1988). Social support interventions have been suggested to offer a potentially useful approach for prevention practitioners to address college transition issues (Zea, Jararna, & Bianchi, 1995).

Change Model

The change model for this structured, theme-centered group consists of two phases. Each phase has several steps designed to attain desired objectives and ultimately to increase participants’ ability to develop more adaptive social support networks in order to improve college adjustment and retention.

Phase 1: Problem recognition and articulation (Activation stage)

It is conceptualized that a growing awareness and understanding of issues impacting social relationships will be necessary to allow group members to pursue adaptive changes in their lives. Group members will learn to recognize and articulate how their social interactions impact their overall functioning and psychological health. Treatment goals of the initial phase are to: identify specific circumstances in which social support is lacking, utilize psychoeducation to define and clarify different types of social support, pinpoint barriers to accessing social support, aid recognition of current maladaptive patterns, and develop awareness of origins of characteristic relational styles.

Phase 2: Developing alternative modes of functioning (Change stage)

In order to improve interpersonal functioning and develop their ability to access healthy forms of social support, group members will practice skills both in session and out of session designed to improve relational outcomes. Participants will develop the ability to generalize and implement more adaptive beliefs and behaviors. Treatment goals
of this change stage include: identifying trigger situations and/or factors, developing alternative strategies, testing and implementing alternatives, maintenance of gains in order to prevent relapse, and termination.

**Goals**

This college adjustment workshop is designed to:

1. Provide a positive group atmosphere in which participants will try out new behaviors and feel relatively comfortable disclosing personal information to other group members and co-facilitators.

2. Address group members’ potential maladaptive levels of anxiety that may disrupt effective functioning in social situations.

3. Allow participants to further articulate and understand their problems in accessing social support, as well as developing and practicing alternative modes of functioning.

4. Help group members to cultivate and maintain greater levels of flexibility and comfort with interpersonal relationships.

**Group Design**

This theme-centered psychotherapy group is designed with a structured seven-session format, with one-and-a-half hour sessions held once weekly. The sessions are designed to provide a change model that will help group members to more successfully adapt to the transition to college life. Each session will address a specific stage of the change process of group members’ understanding and attempts to change characteristic interpersonal patterns. All group members will be encouraged to participate in each group activity, while group leaders will remain sensitive to individual group members’ comfort level. The group will incorporate individual, dyadic, and group level activities and interventions. The ideal number of group participants is 10-12 (plus co-facilitators) and ideally should be composed of both males and females. It is important that the co-facilitators are able to model healthy interpersonal styles, and it is desirable that there is one facilitator of each sex.

The group will provide its members with (1) the opportunity to identify specific instances in which they lack adequate coping skills, (2) psychoeducation about different types of potentially available social support and the barriers to accessing these resources, and (3) assistance in developing insight regarding current maladaptive patterns. This group will also focus on methods to diminish anxiety related to interpersonal
relationships that we anticipate many of our prospective members may experience. Our change model incorporates both CBT and attachment perspectives in helping group members to better understand the origins of their relational styles, as well as to develop alternative strategies geared towards the maintenance and continued development of healthier adaptive patterns. This group will feature a mix of psychoeducational techniques, experiential exercises, and large group-process formats in order to help members gain comfort in experimenting with alternative modes of functioning. All sessions will include homework used to allow group members to practice applying the change model in their lives and also serve as a segue for discussion at the start of each new group session.

Population

This thematic group is intended for students who are having difficulty adjusting to college, particularly those with difficulty forming or maintaining relationships. It is anticipated that this group will be most helpful for first-year students, transfer students, and international students, as well as any students who may have difficulty linking up with campus social resources. It is best suited to individuals who have the ability to develop insight into the origin and maintenance of their habitual interpersonal styles, as well as a willingness to explore and practice alternative relational dynamics both during and outside of group sessions.

Group Screening Interviews

Individual pre-group screening interviews, conducted by the group co-facilitators, will last approximately 50 minutes. Co-facilitators will describe the format and content of the group and assess the match of the goals of the group with the prospective group member’s goals and expectations. Group leaders will also assess and evaluate the prospective group member’s interpersonal style and level of distress, as well as their degree of insight and psychological mindedness. Following each screening interview, co-facilitators will decide on the appropriateness of prospective group members for inclusion in the group.

Materials

Because the sessions involve both didactic input and experiential activities, various handout sheets are used, both during sessions and for post-session homework exercises (see Appendices). These are listed for each session.
Session 1: Identifying Instances in Which Social Support is Lacking

Session Goals:

- Initiate the process of building group familiarity, trust, and cohesion
- Reduce anxiety and avoidance among group members
- Build listening skills among group members
- Introduce concept of social support

Handouts:

- Sentence Completion Form
- Active Listening Skills
- Types of Social Support
- Interpersonal Support Evaluation Log

Agenda

A) Opening and Introductions (5 -10 min.)

- Group co-facilitators introduce themselves and provide an overview of the format of the group. They review and emphasize that this group will provide a safe forum to (a) explore and address challenges of forming and maintaining interpersonal relationships and to (b) give the opportunity to learn new ways of connecting with others and forming positive relationships.

- Group members are asked to introduce themselves one by one and state what their major is, where they are from, and what they hope to get out of the group.

B) Making Contact Exercise (25 – 40 min.)

- Group co-facilitators introduce a structured “meet and greet” exercise. Group members are asked to circulate to meet others in the group.

- Each group member is given a Sentence Completion Form to explore themes of hopes and fears for the group. This will allow members to answer non-threatening questions in a structured manner while at the same time initiating contact with other group members. Group members are asked to circulate for about 5 min., ask one group member 3 questions, then move on to the next group member for 3 questions, and so on.
• After 5 min., the exercise is processed: What were some answers that people heard? What was it like? What was it like being a listener/speaker?

• Group co-facilitators then provide conversation extenders to assist group members in the “meet and greet” exercise. These include:
  o Thought empathy: Paraphrasing the other person’s words.
  o Feeling empathy: Acknowledge how they’re probably feeling, given what they are saying to you.
  o Find something positive to reply to the person. This indicates genuine curiosity and respect.
  o Identifying with the person.
  o Inquiry: Ask gentle, probing questions to learn more about what the other person is thinking and feeling.

• Group members continue with exercise for another 5-10 minutes. Then, co-facilitators engage the group again in large-group processing of the exercise. They write down common themes on a notebook. In addition, they process specific experiences of the exercise. For example: What was it like being a speaker? What was it like being a listener? What was it like to use conversation extenders?

C) Review of Group Rules and Expectations (5-10 min.)

• Co-facilitators engage group members in a discussion about rules and expectations of the group (i.e., punctuality, participation, attending each session, completing homework assignments, issues of confidentiality, notifying group facilitators in case of anticipated absence or emergency, how to handle running into each other on campus, out-of-group interactions).

D) Didactic: Introduce Concept of Social Support Through Presentation and Discussion (30 min.)

• Co-facilitators ask group members about the different kinds of social interactions and social involvement that they experience in everyday life.

• Time allowing, group co-facilitators provide psychoeducation on different types of social support (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983).
o Belonging support – spending time with others recreationally, companionship (i.e., buddies, roommates, membership in social groups)

o Self-esteem support – know you’re doing okay compared to others, having positive self-comparisons available (i.e., having friends and/or colleagues from whom you can receive honest feedback about yourself; feeling you have people around you available with whom you are “on the same level”)

o Appraisal support – feeling that you have others you can confide in (disclosure capacity – feeling that you have people available with whom you can share personal matters freely and with whom this relationship is reciprocal)

o Tangible Support – material support (knowing someone who can help you out with material things, money, furniture, car, etc.)

  • Co-facilitators process with group members which types of social support they feel they have available and which types are not so much available

E) Homework: (5 min.)

Social Support Self-Assessment: The Interpersonal Support Evaluation Log assessment is provided and explained to group members.
Session 2: Psychoeducation and Recognition of Different Types of Social Support
(“Defining Social Support”)

Session Goals:

• Increase approach among group members
• Raise consciousness among group members about different types of social support available to them
• Assist group members in identifying strengths and opportunities in their current social support network
• Increase awareness of self-view in social situations

Handouts:

• Self-Concept & Self-Esteem
• Self-Esteem Scale

Agenda

A) Talker/Listener/Observer Exercise (15-20 min.)

• Break into groups of 3 or 4. One person is assigned the role of a talker, one or two people are assigned the roles of questioners/listeners, and the other person is a time keeper/observer. Members take turns in each role. For 3 minutes, the “talker” is asked to share thoughts about a good movie he or she has recently seen or a good book recently read/are currently reading. Other group members: ask questions about it.
• Process Exercise (what was it like to be a talker, a listener, a questioner, an observer?) What was it like being observed?

B) Didactic: Review of Concept of Social Support (10-15 min.)

• Co-facilitators ask group members about different kinds of social interactions and social involvement they experience in everyday life. Which ones are more difficult, which ones are working well?
• Group co-facilitators briefly review different types of social support
  o Belonging support – spending time with others recreationally, companionship (i.e., buddies, roommates, membership in social groups)
o Self-esteem support – know you’re doing okay compared to others, having positive self-comparisons available (i.e., having friends and/or colleagues from whom you can receive honest feedback about yourself; feeling you have people around you available with whom you are “on the same level”)

o Appraisal support – feeling that you have others you can confide in (disclosure capacity – feeling that you have people available with whom you can share personal matters freely and with whom this relationship is reciprocal)

C) Discussion and Processing of Homework: Social Support Self-Assessment (25-35 min.)
o Did any particular items get you thinking?
o Were there any surprises for you when you were answering the questions?

• Co-facilitators engage group members in a discussion about the results of their social support self-assessment.

• Do these results match with your view of yourself and your interactions with others?

• Members are encouraged to share which areas of social support they currently feel fulfilled in and which areas they feel they are lacking support.

• Members are encouraged to share what barriers they are currently experiencing in each type of social support.

• Group members are asked to brainstorm which factors they have found to interfere with each type of support. These factors are written down on a noteboard and are used as a lead into the following didactic component. Shyness, Avoidance, Anxiety.

• Incorporate review of different types of social support

D) Didactic: Topic of Self-View/Self-Concept (5 min.)

• Co-facilitators introduce the topic of self-view/self-concept. (See Self-Concept & Self-Esteem Handout.)

o A mental image that individuals have of themselves that includes both strengths and weaknesses in one’s personality.
This incorporates the ratio of positive to negative things we say about ourselves.

- Negative labels given to us in childhood by important people tend to become internalized and often become exaggerated in adulthood, causing low self-esteem.
  - Having internalized these “labels” from others can cause a person to set unrealistically high standards for themselves. In addition, because of having set these high standards, people often compare themselves with others.
  - If we are unable to reach those high standards in comparing our self-concept with others, we tend to get hard on ourselves and possibly engage in negative self-talk (this topic will be continued over the next few sessions).

- Our self-concept forms certain beliefs we have about ourselves and others. These beliefs are often applied in everyday life and lead us to interpret situations in a certain way.
  - For example, social situations or making new friends can be interpreted as pleasant, fun, anxiety-provoking, undoable, and many more things, depending on the beliefs we hold about ourselves.

E) Self View Exercise (10-15 min.)
- Group members fill out and score Self-Esteem Inventory
- Co-facilitators facilitate discussion of how self-esteem may impact relationships

F) Homework (5 min.)
- Group members are asked to list ten self-descriptive adjectives and assign a plus, a negative, or neutral to each adjective and total each category. They are asked to bring back this list to the next session.
Session 3: Barriers to Accessing Social Support

Session Goals:

- Increase approach and cohesion among group members
- Allow members to contrast positive social evidence with negative self-beliefs
- Explore barriers that get in the way of making connections – such as thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are based on one’s self-concept.
- Activate typical response patterns (thoughts, feelings, behaviors) to social situations using a challenging exercise
- Extend the session’s gains through a homework exercise

Handouts:

- Triangle of Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviors
- Speech Topics
- Friends

Special Materials: Blank stickie labels

Agenda

A) Ice Breaker Exercise/Process Homework (20-25 min.)

- Give positive feedback exercise: Each member is given blank stickie labels and asked to write a positive feedback message to each of their left and right neighbors in the group. Members move around and stick these messages onto the back of the respective members. Each person then reads their positive feedback that they received back to the group. The purpose of this exercise is to build cohesion among members and give members the opportunity to practice giving positive feedback and receiving a compliment in a non-threatening setting. Simultaneously, this exercise provides the opportunity for members to recognize positive aspects about themselves that come across in social situations.
- Process Exercise: What is it like to give positive feedback? What was it like to receive these messages? How do they stand in contrast to the adjectives you wrote down about yourself in your homework assignment?
B) Didactic: Lecture on Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors, and Core Beliefs (10 min.)

- Co-facilitators provide psychoeducation on how situations trigger thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. (See Triangle of Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviors handout.) In order to illustrate, facilitators use a diagram of a triangle showing “thoughts,” “feelings,” and “behaviors” at each point to discuss the dynamic interplay among these three aspects. Co-facilitators describe how interpersonal behaviors both affect and are affected by individuals’ thoughts and feelings about social situations.

- Group members are asked to incorporate the adjectives of their homework assignment into this discussion.

C) “Too Hard” Exercise (35 min.)

- Group co-facilitators introduce an exercise in which group members are asked to put themselves in a challenging situation in the group. Members are given a list of speech topics. They are allegedly asked to give a speech to the group. Once co-facilitators have introduced the exercise in much anxiety-provoking detail, they indicate that the exercise will not take place after all.

- Members are asked to place themselves back in the situation and pay special attention to their thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and physical reactions. They are asked to share these reactions with the group. Co-facilitators keep track of these three categories of reactions on a notebook.

- Members are asked to think about the first time they remember feeling the way they did in this “too hard” exercise. The are asked the following questions:
  - What was the situation?
  - Who was present?
  - What did others say at the time?
  - What were their feelings?
  - What decision did they make about themselves (e.g., I am inadequate, clumsy, invisible)
  - Did they notice that they had misinterpreted the situation or missed any signals? Did other people interpret the situation differently?
  - When was there a challenging situation when they acted/reacted differently? How was it different?
• Members jot down the answers to these questions and are then encouraged to share them with the group. They will be asked to keep their answers for a later point in time in the group.

D) Homework: “Making New Contacts” Exercise (15-20 min.)

• Group members are given an introduction to the distinction between friends and acquaintances (Friends: What They Are, How To Find Them Handout).

• Group members are assigned to initiate a conversation with someone in their dorm/apartment/class whom they’ve been interested in getting to know better but would normally not speak to. (This person should be someone whom they do NOT know well – someone you kind of know but maybe not talk to them too much) Members are asked to initiate a conversation with this person and interact with them for at least 3-5 minutes. Optional: smile and say hello to someone (graded exercise).
Session 4: Understanding Current Maladaptive Patterns

Session Goals:

- Process homework assignment as a guide to understanding thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in challenging social situations
- Allow members to explore their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in novel social, anxiety-provoking situations
- Further cohesion and self-disclosure through small-group processing
- Introduction to self-protective functions of negative self-talk

Handouts:

- Emotional Vocabulary
- Thought Response Record
- Checklist of Cognitive Distortions
- How to Reduce Negative Moods by Changing your Thinking
- Messages from My Past Worksheet
- Getting Close

Agenda

A) Didactic: Group Facilitators Briefly Review Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors Triangle (5 min.)

- Describe and review CBT triangle, which was introduced in the last session, on poster board
- Give members Emotional Vocabulary handout to aid in identification in different grades and types of emotions

B) Guided Imagery Exercise (40 min.)

- Co-facilitators guide the group through their homework experience. Members are asked to re-experience and re-visualize the situation. They focus on thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and physical sensations as they re-experience the social situation.
- The group is broken down into groups of 3 to 4 to process a list of questions for each member:
  - Hand out Thought Response Record
o Have members discuss and fill out answers to first 3 questions (1, 2, 2A)

o Then, have subgroups continue on to question 2B (behaviors)

- Return to large group to process experiences of thought and feelings
- How did these thoughts and feelings affect behavior?
  o Was there anything unusual about yourself that you noticed?
  o How could the interaction have gone better?
  o How could the interaction have gone worse?

- Continue large group discussion of commonalities of experience

C) Didactic: Function of Social Fears and Negative Beliefs (Cognitive Distortions) (20 min.)

- Co-facilitators engage group into a psychoeducational discussion of negative beliefs commonly held by individuals who feel unsatisfied with their social connections. Some commonly held beliefs are:
  o That others will think you are stupid, so you avoid talking
  o That other will reject you, so you tend to stay with people you know and with whom you feel safe
  o Being afraid of closeness, so you keep everything at a small-talk level on a superficial basis so new friendships don’t develop.

- Group facilitators hand out and discuss Checklist of Cognitive Distortions and How To Reduce Negative Moods By Changing Your Thinking

- In small groups, group members discuss and fill out answers to questions (2C, 3, 4, 5)

- Co-facilitators brainstorm with the group about the pros and cons of these beliefs.
- Co-facilitators explain that these beliefs are commonly held for the purpose of self-protection. While these beliefs are designed to protect from harm, they can also cut off from involvement

D) Homework (5 min.):

- Messages from My Past Worksheet: Members are given the worksheet and are asked to fill in messages from their past that they received from important figures.
• Supplemental Handout: Getting Close. This handout provides information and strategies on developing meaningful relationships.
Session 5: Origins of Relational Styles and Core Beliefs

Session Goals

- Increase understanding of the influence that family has on personal and social development
- Assist members to connect early experiences to current functioning
- Teach members about attachment theory and early attachment patterns
- Provide information about adult attachment styles and encourage members to describe themselves using attachment conceptualizations
- Assist members to gain insight concerning the origins of their characteristic modes of relating to others

Handouts

- Early (Infant) attachment Styles
- Attachment Styles
- Roots of Attachment Styles
- How to end a conversation
- Self-Monitoring Journal

Agenda

A) Messages From My Past Worksheet (25 min.)

- Co-facilitators will discuss how early experiences can affect ways in which we organize and respond to the world in the future, focusing on how gaining an awareness of the origin of current interpersonal styles is the first step towards being able to change them
- Group will process last week’s homework: Message From My Past worksheet
- Group facilitators will help members to discuss and process their responses
  - “Do you notice certain characteristics or patterns in your responses?”
  - “Did these messages affect you as a child?”
  - “Do these messages still continue to affect you today?”
- Co-facilitators will attempt to raise awareness of the strong emotional components that these messages may still trigger
B) Didactic: Early Attachment Patterns (10 min.)

- Group facilitators will provide psychoeducational information about early attachment patterns and use the notebook to present common early attachment styles. (See Early [Infant] Attachment Styles handout.)
  - Focus on how early caregiver/child interactions may influence attachment patterns.
  - Group facilitators will present how early infant relational patterns are designed for protection, but may not be adaptive later in life.
  - Group facilitators will foster discussion among group members by asking how these early strategies in infants may affect later development.
  - Members will be asked if they have any guesses as to which type of infant/caregiver attachment pattern(s) they experienced.

C) Didactic: Adult Attachment Styles (15 min.)

- Group facilitators will discuss how early attachment patterns may affect adult relationship patterns. (See Attachment Styles handout.)
- Group facilitators will provide a handout on adult attachment styles and discuss how people enact the different adult attachment styles.
- Members will be asked which adult attachment styles they most often employ and to discuss the pros and cons of their characteristic styles.

D) Exercise: Roots of Attachment Style Handout (25 min.)

- Group facilitators will distribute handout and emphasize the importance of gaining insight into how early experiences may affect later development
- Group members fill out worksheet
- Group facilitators invite members to discuss their responses
- Ask members if they feel they have learned about the origins of their relationship styles
  - “Was this strategy initially helpful to you growing up?” or “What were you trying to accomplish when you started to develop these relationship patterns?”
  - “Are there negative consequences to your current relationship styles?”
E) Didactic: How to End a Conversation (5 min.)

- Members are provided with this handout.
- Strategies are reviewed by group facilitators.
- Members are given an opportunity to discuss the handout and voice their reactions.

F) Exercise and Homework: Planning specific strategies for change (10 min.)

- Group members will be asked to consider a social situation that they have been unable to manage in the past, or a new situation they would like to approach using the new skills they have developed in the group.
- Group members will be encouraged to develop a realistic plan of action to start a conversation with at least one new person during the week (as an “experiment”).
- Co-facilitators will assist members to process expectations (fears?) about the assignment and will reinforce the relationship between anxiety and “fight or flight” reactions.
- Group members will be given the Self-Monitoring Journal and will learn how to record their experiences before, during and after their homework experiences.
Session 6: Identifying Trigger Situations and Developing Alternative Strategies

Session Goals:

• Identify and explore problematic social situations
• Psychoeducation about anxiety and “fight or flight” response
• Visualization combined with relaxation to decrease characteristic anxious responses
• Planning for approach behaviors and addressing triggering events

Handouts:

• Relax
• Making Connections

Agenda

A) Process Approaching Social Situations Homework (15 min.)

• Group members will discuss their experiences and homework logs (Self-Monitoring Journal).
  o Co-facilitators will encourage exploration of maladaptive thoughts and more realistic responses.
  o Co-facilitators will assist members to process experiences of the assignment and will reinforce the relationship between anxiety and “fight or flight” reactions.
• Co-facilitators will attempt to raise awareness of the strong emotional components that these thoughts may trigger and how they are related to early messages.

B) The Impact of Stress & Anxiety on Interpersonal Interactions (10 min.)

• Group facilitators will discuss how stress and anxiety contribute to a negative self-image and reduced social network.
  o Introduction of stress as a curvilinear function (on noteboard). Performance is optimal with a medium amount of stress/anxiety; however, performance is suboptimal with low and high amounts of stress/anxiety.
o The relationship between anxiety and self-focus (reciprocal feedback loop on noteboard).

o Anxiety and the “fight or flight” response.

C) Guided Imagery & Relaxation (30-40 min.)

- Group facilitators will ask members to pinpoint a social situation that felt awkward and anxiety producing.

- Group facilitators will lead members through individualized guided imagery, asking them to close their eyes and visualize a problematic social interaction in order to help members to reestablish an emotion connection to the experience.

- Group facilitators will assist members to process thoughts, feelings, and self-talk that they are experiencing during the visualization exercise.
  
  o “Did you notice becoming more anxious when experiencing these thoughts?”
  
  o Focus on relationship between relaxation and anxiety.

- Co-facilitators will lead the group members through a progressive relaxation exercise (inducing the relaxation response).

- Group members will be invited to discuss this experience and how they feel after the exercise.
  
  o “Socially, what might disrupt this sense of calm?”
  
  o Guide participants to notice reactions (e.g. – fear, anxiety) and how these affect their ability to perform in social situations.
  
  o Group facilitators will encourage members to connect thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to the trigger situation experiences they have described.

- Group members will then be asked to imagine and visualize the same scenario, but this time in a situation where they are confident and able to master the situation.

- Discussion of bodily responses to second visualization and comparison to first experience.

- Group facilitators will reinforce the difficulties associated with excess anxiety in social situations and distribute relaxation response handout.
D) Identification of Specific Problematic Components of Trigger Situations (25 min.)

- Discuss situations in which people feel more comfortable.
  - “What are the exceptions?”
- Discuss whether member’s expectations were congruent with their actual experiences approaching others.
- Encourage members to discuss how they would handle these situations differently in the future (“How did your difficulties being relaxed impact this experience for you?”).
- Members will then enlist each others’ help in generating alternative social behaviors.

E) Homework (5 min.):

- Participants will identify 5 things they have learned about themselves in group, as well as short- and long-term future goals.
- Participants fill out wish slips with a positive future wish for each other group member (anonymous optional).
- Participants are encouraged to practice the relaxation response during the week.
Session 7: Maintenance of Gains and Termination

Session Goals:

- Review attempts at change and difficulties associated with these attempts
- Generate ways of applying new skills to everyday lives
- Reinforce gains and connections
- Introduce concept of relapse prevention
- To provide participants with an opportunity to give feedback on the group
- To give participate to “say goodbye” to each another and the group as a whole, and prepare for life after the group

Agenda

A) Review of Group Concepts (40 min.)

- Group facilitators will review important concepts from the change model and provide summary handouts to group members.
- Group facilitators provide clarification of any concepts on which members have questions or comments.

B) Relapse Prevention (15 min.)

- Define relapse and normalize its frequency after one changes a behavior pattern.
- Discuss predictors of relapse: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental factors.
- Reinforce importance of relaxation response.

C) Discussion of Group Experience (20 min.)

- Process 1st part of homework, what have members learned about themselves?
- Gains of group members, sense of progress to date.
- What did you find most helpful?
- Disappointments/struggles in the group.
- What did you find least helpful?
- Process 2nd part of homework – members disclose and discuss their future goals.
D) Saying Goodbye to the Group (15 min.)

- Exchange of wish slips
- Processing of wish slips
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their anxiety, time management, and leisure satisfaction. American Journal of 
Health Studies, 16(1), 41.

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competence: Explaining the adaptation to college of ethnically diverse students. 
American Journal of Community Psychology, 23(4), 509-531.
Sentence Completion Exercise

1. I know somebody’s a good friend when __________________________

2. It’s important for me to be good friend because ______________________

3. If I could change one way I interact with others, it would be __________

4. When I am in a group of people, I feel ____________________________

5. Introducing myself to people makes me____________________________

6. I wish people would be more__________________________

7. The one thing people need to understand about me is_______________

8. The things I don’t like about this exercise are ______________________

9. I hesitated to join this group because _____________________________

10. I was looking forward to joining this group because ________________

11. “Making Connections” means to me_______________________________

12. My greatest hope for this group is _______________________________

13. My greatest fear for this group is ________________________________

14. The one thing I’d like to take from this group is____________________

15. When I meet someone who seems interesting to me, I _______________

16. Relationships are important because ____________________________

17. When I am in a group of people, I think____________________________
Active Listening Skills:

- **Thought empathy**: Paraphrasing the other person’s words. Mirror what the other person is saying in a non-judgmental way.
  
  - **Goal**: Understand where the other person is coming from.
  - **Examples**: “It sounds like you’re looking forward to this group to learn new things about yourself”. “What you seem to be saying is that friendships are really important to you”.

- **Feeling empathy**: Acknowledge how the other person is probably feeling, given what they are saying to you.
  
  - **Goal**: See if you are reading the other person’s feeling correctly.
  - **Examples**: “I take it that you are curious about this group.”

- **Identify with the other person’s answer, if possible**: Or, if not, recast what you’re hearing into a similar experience that you can relate to.
  
  - **Examples**: “I am also looking forward to joining this group because I like to meet new people”. “I feel the same way. I wish people would be more open, too.”

- **Find something positive to reply to the person**.
  
  - **Goal**: To show genuine curiosity and respect.
  - **Examples**: “Thank you for sharing. It was great chatting with you”.

- **Inquiry**: Ask gentle questions about what the person just told you.
  
  - **Goal**: to learn more about what the other person is thinking and feeling:
  - **Examples**: How come...? This is because...? How did you come to be...? What do you think about....? How do you feel about...?
# Types of Social Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Support</th>
<th>Belonging Support</th>
<th>Self-Esteem Support</th>
<th>Appraisal Support</th>
<th>Tangible Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What it means</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spending time with others in your free time</td>
<td>Knowing people that are “your equal” or “on the same level” – you can compare yourself with them in a positive way</td>
<td>Feeling that you have others you can confide in and trust with your personal concerns</td>
<td>Knowing you have someone to depend on for material goods</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Having others around for companionship (for “hanging out”)</td>
<td>Knowing you’re okay compared to other people around you</td>
<td>Knowing someone who won’t judge you</td>
<td>Examples: Knowing someone who could give you a ride, whom you could borrow notes from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These friendships can be “close”, but don’t necessarily have to be close.</td>
<td>Examples: Having friends or colleagues from whom you can get honest feedback, having friends you can identify with, knowing people with characteristics and interests similar to yours</td>
<td>Having someone close by who can be helpful when you’re dealing with a difficulty situation</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Buddies, roommates, being a member of a social group (fraternity, sorority, church groups, clubs, teams, etc.)</td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> A friend or group of friends with whom you’re comfortable talking about anything with</td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Clearinghouse for Structured/Thematic Groups
Interpersonal Support Evaluation List

Instructions:

This scale is made up of a list of statements each of which may or may not be true about you. For each statement we would like you to circle probably TRUE (PT) if the statement is true about you or probably False (PF) if the statement is not true about you.

You may find that many of the statements are neither clearly true nor clearly false. In these cases, try to decide quickly whether probably TRUE (PT) or probably FALSE (PF) is most descriptive of you. Although some questions will be difficult to answer, it is important that you pick one alternative or the other. Remember to circle only one of the alternatives for each statement.

Please read each item quickly, but carefully before responding. Remember that this is not a test and there are not right or wrong answers.

Tangible Support

| 1. | I know someone who would give me some old dishes if I moved into my own apartment. | PT   | PF   |
| 2. | If I wanted a date for a party next weekend, I know someone at school or in town who would fix me up. | PT   | PF   |
| 3. | I know someone at school or in town who would bring my meals to my room or apartment if I were sick. | PT   | PF   |
| 4. | I don’t know anyone who would give me some old furniture if I moved into my own apartment. | PT   | PF   |
| 5. | I don’t know anyone at school or in town who would help me study for an exam by spending several hours reading me questions. | PT   | PF   |
| 6. | I don’t know anyone at school or in town who would loan me their car for a couple of hours. | PT   | PF   |
| 7. | I don’t know anyone at school or in town who would get assignments for me from my teachers if I was sick. | PT   | PF   |

Scoring: 1 point for answering “PT” for questions 1-3, 1 point for answering “PF” for questions 4-7
**Belonging Support**

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>There are people at school or in town who I regularly run with, exercise with, or play sports with.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I hang out in a friend’s room or apartment quite a lot</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I can get a date who I enjoy spending time with whenever I want</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>If I decided at dinner time to take a study break this evening and go to a movie, I could easily find someone to go with me</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>People hang out in my room or apartment during the day or in the evening</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I belong to a group at school or in town that meets regularly or does things together regularly</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I am not a member of any social groups (such as church groups, clubs, teams, etc.)</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Lately, I often feel lonely, like I don’t have anyone to reach out to</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I don’t have friends at school or in town who would comfort me by showing some physical affection</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I don’t often get invited to do things with other people</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I don’t talk to a member of my family at least once a week</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I don’t usually spend two evenings on the weekend doing something with others.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring:** 1 point for answering “PT” for questions 1-6, 1 point for answering “PF” for questions 7-12
### Appraisal Support

1. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about problems I might have budgeting my time between school and my social life. | PT | PF |
2. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have adjusting to college life. | PT | PF |
3. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have meeting people. | PT | PF |
4. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable discussing any sexual problems I might have. | PT | PF |
5. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have with drugs. | PT | PF |
6. There isn’t anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have making friends. | PT | PF |
7. There isn’t anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have getting along with my parents. | PT | PF |
8. There isn’t anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about difficulties with my social life. | PT | PF |
9. There isn’t anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about my feelings of loneliness and depression. | PT | PF |
10. I don’t know anyone at school or in town who makes my problems clearer and easier to understand. | PT | PF |
11. Lately, when I’ve been troubled, I keep things to myself. | PT | PF |

**Scoring:** 1 point for answering “PT” for questions 1-5, 1 point for answering “PF” for questions 6-11
### Self-Esteem Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most people who know me well think highly of me.</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>PF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Most of my friends think that I’m smart.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most of my friends don’t do as well as I do in school.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I will have a better future than most other people will.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Most of my friends have not adjusted to college as easily as I have.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Most people think I have a good sense of humor.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I don’t feel friendly with any teaching assistants, professors, campus or student officials.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Most of my friends are more satisfied or happier with themselves than I am.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Most of my friends are more popular than I am.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Most of my friends are more interesting than I am.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Most of my friends have more control over what happens to them than I do.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Most people are more attractive than I am.</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring:** 1 point for answering “PT” for questions 1-6, 1 point for answering “PF” for questions 7-12
Session 2 Handouts
**Self-Concept & Self-Esteem**

The self-concept (self-identity) is the mental notion a person has about its physical, psychological, and social attributes; as well as its attitudes, beliefs and ideas. The self-concept consists of the self-image and the self-esteem. *(Wikipedia.org Encyclopedia)*

---

**Self-Concept**

Self-Image (mental)                Self-Esteem (emotional)

Physical
Social
Mental
Attitudes
Beliefs
Ideas
Strengths & Weaknesses

**Self-Esteem and Self-Image** are developed by how we talk to ourselves.

**Self-Esteem:**

- Comes from the information we receive about ourselves from the world and others.
- We internalize feedback about how well we meet the norms and expectations of society/family/friends

**Becoming Aware:**

- Ask yourself: How do I feel about myself in different situations?
- Think about: How did I develop these beliefs?
Persons with high self-esteem

- Are likely to think well of others.
- Expect to be accepted by others.
- Evaluate their own performance more favourably than people with low self-esteem.
- Perform well when being watched: not afraid of the reaction of others.
- Work harder for people who demand high standards of performance.
- Are inclined to feel comfortable with others they view as superior in some way.
- Are able to defend themselves against negative comments of others.

Persons with low self-esteem

- Are likely to disapprove of others.
- Expect to be rejected by others.
- Evaluate their own performance less favourably than people with high self-esteem.
- Perform poorly when being watched: are sensitive to possible negative reaction.
- Work harder for undemanding, less critical people.
- Feel threatened by people they view as superior in some way.
- Have difficulty defending themselves against other people’s negative comments; more easily influenced.

**Self-Esteem Scale**  
(Adapted from Rosenberg, 1965)

Answer each statement based on the following scale:

1 2 3 4 5

*Strongly* *Moderately* *neither* *Moderately* *Strongly*

*Disagree* *Disagree* *D or A* *Agree* *Agree*

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

3. All in all, I am inclined to think I am a failure.

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

---

**Scoring the Rosenberg self-esteem scale:**

Items 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10 are scored in reverse (5 = 1, 4 = 2, etc.)

SES score can range from 10 to 50

A score of 30 would indicate a truly neutral self-esteem
Session 3 Handouts
**Triangle of Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors**

- **Thoughts**
  - Example: “I am stupid and boring.”

- **Feelings**
  - Example: Sad, depressed, or anxious

- **Behaviors**
  - Example: Withdrawing from the situation, not approaching the person

**Moods, thoughts and actions tend to influence each other**

A negative Triangle can be caused by:

Unrealistic Expectations of one’s own behavior (*Ex: “it is unacceptable to make a mistake”* Or “I always make a fool of myself in front of other people” or “I have nothing important or interesting to say”)

Distorted perception of other people (*ex: ”People won’t like me unless I am the most interesting and perfect person”* or “when other people compliment me, I question their intentions” or “other people treat me unfairly”)

---

The Clearinghouse for Structured/Thematic Groups
Speech Topics

Give a 5-minute speech to the group on the most challenging or scary social situation you have experienced. Tell the group what the situation was, how you felt, what you did, and the outcome of the situation.

Give a 5-minute speech to the group on the most challenging or scary social situation you have experienced. Tell the group what the situation was, how you felt, what you did, and the outcome of the situation.

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Give a 5-minute speech to the group on the most challenging or scary social situation you have experienced. Tell the group what the situation was, how you felt, what you did, and the outcome of the situation.
**Friends: What They Are, How to Find Them**

Friendships are usually based on:
- Being physically close (someone living close by)
- Being involved in mutual activities
- Similar attitudes, values, background
- Similar personalities and interests
- Expressing mutual liking

**Start small, in logical places, and build:**
- Think of the people you know casually – which ones would you like to be closer to, to have as friends? Decide on several people that you will make a serious effort to get to know better – in the hope of making new friendships out of casual acquaintances.
- Smile, nod, say hello to the people you encounter. For example: Make a brief comment to a classmate sitting nearby or a roommate about the homework, text, teacher, exam, department, etc this week.
- At the next class session or meeting repeat this process with the same person and include an additional classmate or roommate in the conversation. Keep repeating the process until a handful of people start to feel more familiar to you and it seems more natural to talk to them.
- A next logical step would be to get some of them together for study or recreation. An invitation to join you for a casual activity, such as a coffee break, studying for an exam together, go get a pizza, attending an event (at dorm, on campus, going to a movie), or going out for a walk.
- Consider participating in a special interest group/service organization. Nothing helps people get to know each other better than working on a common project together.

**Speak up:** Talk in a moderately louder voice, and don’t be afraid if your statement overlaps the previous speaker a bit. Frequent eye contact is essential in communication. A relaxed, but alert posture is more approachable than a rigid one.

**Have something to say:** Become knowledgeable about current events, campus news. If you have a specialized interest, learn to talk about it so that beginners as well as experts can understand you. Collect amusing stories or jokes to tell.

**Be a curious listener:** Ask questions that are open ended; that is, not answered with a simple yes or no. Open-ended questions start with "why, how, what, when". Give compliments when appropriate. In social settings, take the risk to approach another person who looks shy.

**PRACTICE:** Take every opportunity that comes along to improve your skills.
Session 4 Handouts
## Emotional Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mild</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Strong</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Happiness:</strong></td>
<td>Contented</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>Delighted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depression:</strong></td>
<td>Disappointed</td>
<td>Demoralized</td>
<td>Despondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inadequateness:</strong></td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>Worthless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fear:</strong></td>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Apprehensive</td>
<td>Petrified</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Confusion:</strong></td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>Startled</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Caring:</strong></td>
<td>Considerate</td>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hurt:</strong></td>
<td>Neglected</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Anguished</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Anger:</strong></td>
<td>Resentful</td>
<td>Annoyed</td>
<td>Enraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loneliness:</strong></td>
<td>Insulated</td>
<td>Alienated</td>
<td>Abandoned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remorse:</strong></td>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
<td>Ashamed</td>
<td>Humiliated</td>
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Thought Response Record

1. EVENT (Date, Time, What Happened):

2. THOUGHTS AT THE TIME ("IDENTIFICATION"):

2A. FEELINGS AT THE TIME (and level of intensity of these feelings):

2B. BEHAVIORS AT THE TIME:

2C. COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS (see Checklist of Cognitive Distortions):

3. EVALUATION OF ORIGINAL THOUGHTS (What is the evidence?):

4. RESPONSE TO ORIGINAL THOUGHTS (More helpful thoughts):

5. FEELINGS NOW (and level of intensity of these feelings):
Checklist of Cognitive Distortions

1. **All-or-nothing thinking**: You restrict possibilities and options to only two choices: yes or no (all or nothing).

2. **Over generalization**: You view a single, negative event as a continuing and never-ending pattern of defeat.

3. **Negative Mental filter**: You dwell mostly on the negatives and generally ignore the positives.

4. **Discounting the positives**: You insist your achievements or positive efforts do not count.

5. **Jumping to conclusions**:
   - A. **Mind-reading**: You assume that people are reacting negatively to you without any objective evidence.
   - B. **Fortune-Telling**: You predict that things will turn out badly without any objective evidence.

6. **Magnification or minimization**: You blow things way out of proportion or minimize their importance.

7. **Emotional reasoning**: You base your reasoning from your feelings: "I feel like a loser, so I must be one."

8. "**Mustabatory thinking**" or "**Shoulding All Over Yourself**": You criticize yourself or other people with "musts," "shoulds," "oughts," and "have tos."

9. **Labeling**: Instead of saying "I made a mistake," you tell yourself "I'm an idiot" or "I'm a loser."

10. **Personalization**: You blame yourself almost completely for something for which you were not entirely responsible.
How to Reduce Negative Moods by Changing Your Thinking

INTRODUCTION:
Although there are a number of ways to reduce negative moods, one of the most effective is to change your thought patterns. Like all other skills, this technique takes some practice; however, once you get control over your thinking, you will feel much better.

THE COGNITIVE MODEL:
First, it is important to realize that our moods are determined by our thoughts. We may experience the same event, but depending on how we think about it will determine how we feel about it. For example, if someone criticizes us, and we take it personally, we might feel depressed and/or anxious. On the other hand, if the same person criticizes us, and we think how this person actually goes a round criticizing everyone, instead of feeling sad or angry, we might feel sorry for them.

THE TECHNIQUE:
There are three main steps to changing your thoughts: Identify, Evaluate, and Respond.

- Identification: First, you need to identify what thoughts you have that immediately come before your negative feelings. So, when you feel bad, say to yourself, "What just went through my mind?" Write down negative thoughts—especially thoughts you have about yourself. Example: "I am so stupid."

- Evaluation: Second, determine if the thought is true. As human beings, we are not perfect, and we tend often to think in negative ways, especially when we are depressed or anxious. Evaluate whether the thought is true by seeing if matches one of the types of "cognitive distortions" listed on another sheet. Also, question, "Is there evidence this is not true?" You can also ask yourself what you would say to a friend who had this thought. Essentially, you are "attacking" your negative thought-saying to yourself (why it is wrong). Example: "This kind of thinking matches the distortion called `labeling,' the evidence actually is that I am smart, at least at time, and I would tell a friend in my situation that overall they are a nice person (which is what you can tell yourself)."

- Responding: Third, once you have determined the thought is distorted, untrue, not backed up by evidence, or simply not helpful-respond to the thought with a better thought-one that is not distorted, is true, is backed by evidence, or is more helpful. Example: "I am smart. Occasionally, I make mistakes- but that is human. I am a good person. I feel bad for this person who criticizes everyone."
WHEN and HOW:
This technique is best learned at the beginning by writing everything down—the unhelpful thoughts, the evaluations (including distortions), and the responses. Writing can be done immediately, if possible, or later in the same day or same week. The sooner you get it written, the more clearly you will remember your thoughts, and the more quickly you will feel better. After doing this many times on paper, you can begin to do it in your head. Eventually, it will become an automatic process, and your thoughts will not lead you to depression or anxiety.

For more information on feeling better through changing your thoughts, we recommend:

- Feeling Good or The Feeling Good Handbook by David D. Burns, M.D.
- Mind over Mood by Dennis Greenberger, Ph.D. & Christine A. Padesky, Ph.D.
- The Anxiety & Phobia Workbook by Edmund J. Bourne, Ph.D.
Messages from my Past Worksheet

Please take a moment to think about how certain messages you got from important people in your life may have shaped the person you are today. Take a minute to write down the messages, and who you received them from.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Source (examples: parents, siblings, teachers, peers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


**Getting Close**

Developing meaningful relationships is a concern for all of us. Getting close to others, sharing our joys, sorrows, needs, wants, affections, and excitements is risky business. What is it that interferes with us getting close to each other? Often it is one or more of these common fears:

1. **Fear of becoming known as we really are.** Opening ourselves to others and their reactions is not only difficult for us, but is puts a demand on others to be likewise.
2. **Fear of pain and disappointment.** Mass media and advertisers have tried to convince us that we should be 100% happy 24 hours a day. Hurt, pain, disappointment, and loneliness are not comfortable feelings, but they are human. Without the risk of experiencing them, one can never experience loving and being loved.
3. **Fear of losing our freedom.** Can I risk giving up some of mine to care about you without you wanting to take it all away? Can I be both close and separate with you?
4. **Fear of being a taker as well as a giver.** It is difficult for most of us to receive; yet if we don't, no one can experience the joy of giving to us.
5. **Fear of judgment.** People are reluctant to disclose themselves because they dread the moral judgment of their friends, family, minister, and the law.
6. **Fear that showing love and affection is not proper.** This is especially true for men, but NOT restricted to them. Somehow we have been convinced that this is a sign of weakness rather than a sign of courage.

**REWARDS For Conquering Our Fears of Getting Close**

If we learn to communicate effectively with others and are willing to risk sharing our own feelings and respect other's feelings, many rewards will await us as we learn to get close to another person.

*Obviously, a very special relationship.* Getting close means you can need someone else and he/she can need you. It means when you feel discouraged or upset, someone is there to comfort and care about you, and you can do likewise.

*You acquire faith in yourself, faith in others, and an ability to be faithful to others.* It enables you to live fully in the present and to have meaning and purpose for your own existence.

*You become more sensitive to yourself,* with choices about how, when, and where you wish to share your feelings. You KNOW when you are experiencing love, joy, anger, etc.
Session 5 Handouts
**Early (Infant) Attachment Styles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL OF SELF (Dependence)</th>
<th>Positive (Low)</th>
<th>Negative (High)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Secure** infants either seek proximity or contact or else greet the parent at a distance with a smile or wave.

**Avoidant** infants avoid the parent.

**Resistant / ambivalent** infants either passively or actively show hostility toward the parent.
Attachment Styles

Bartholomew developed the idea of 4 adult attachment styles, based on combinations of self-esteem and interpersonal trust. However, your attachment style CAN change because of your experiences in relationships (good or bad), and some studies even show NO connection between someone's attachment style as a baby and their style as an adult. So don't think that your attachment style as an adult is completely connected to the way you were treated as a baby...it might be the exact opposite.

Here are the 4 adult styles. Read the statements under each category, and decide which category most fits your personality.

Secure Attachment Style (High self-esteem, Interpersonal Trust)
1.) I find it easy to meet new people.
2.) I enjoy looking at myself in the mirror.
3.) I'm very happy with my life right now.
4.) Dancing is great.

Dismissing Attachment Style (High self-esteem, Interpersonal Mistrust)
1.) I had rather depend on myself than on other people.
2.) I don't like to reveal things about myself to others.
3.) My friends seldom live up to my expectations.
4.) I can get along quite well without a close emotional relationship in my life.

Fearful-Avoidant Attachment Style (Low self-esteem, Interpersonal Mistrust)
1.) Whenever I hear a doorbell ring, I'm usually a little worried about who it might be.
2.) I feel that most people don't like me.
3.) I don't have much to be proud of.
4.) It's really much safer just to think about a relationship instead of actually initiating one.

Preoccupied Attachment Style (Low self-esteem, Interpersonal Trust)
1.) I am more affectionate than my partner.
2.) I fall in love easily.
3.) Sometimes I tell people too much about myself.
4.) My most important goal is to be truly appreciated by another person.
People with a secure attachment style like themselves and others, seek closeness, and feel comfortable in relationships. They are very trusting of romantic partners and have a good relationship with their parents. They are less likely to get angry, but when they do, they are more likely to look for constructive solutions, rather than punishment or revenge. They form long-lasting, committed relationships and get along well with others. Secure people are altogether more balanced than people with any other style.

People with a dismissing attachment style tend to have a very positive (sometimes unrealistically positive) self-concept and believe they are worthwhile and independent. They feel that they "deserve" a close relationship, but avoid actually getting close to someone, because they expect the worst from others. They tend to see relationships negatively and avoid face-to-face interactions (preferring contact like email). They also have a tendency to drink alone.

People with a fearful-avoidant attachment style see both themselves and others negatively. They minimize closeness with others in order to avoid rejection. They are often hostile and don't realize when they are getting angry. Fearful-avoidant people tend to have problems getting along with others, are often jealous, and tend to use alcohol to reduce anxiety in social situations.

People with a preoccupied attachment style have a negative view of themselves, but expect that others will be loving and accepting. As a result, they look for closeness in relationships (sometimes excessive closeness) but are scared of being rejected. Preoccupied people, along with those who are fearful-avoidant, are prone to feelings of shame.
Roots of Attachment Styles

Everyone has a beginning to the history of their Attachment Style, but finding it isn't always easy. The behavior contained in your Attachment Style was at one point in your life successful in meeting a need or achieving a goal. This first success is the time that you should focus on in trying to understand the roots of your style of relating.

- When did you first exhibit the thoughts, feelings, or behavior that now makes up your attachment styles?

- Was your behavior initially successful? Why or why not?

- How did this behavior turn into a habitual pattern?

- What would you say, then, is the root of your attachment style? In other words, what was going on in your life that caused you to adopt these patterns of thoughts, feelings, or behaviors?
How to End a Conversation

Get 3 Messages Across:
1. You will be leaving (the conversation, the location, etc.) soon
2. You enjoyed talking to the person
3. You hope there will be more contact in the future

Some Strategies to Do This:
1. Reinforcement: Short words of agreement to the last thing the person said (“sure, Ok, right”, etc.)
2. Appreciation: A statement that you enjoyed the interaction (for example: “I really enjoyed talking to you”).
3. Completion Sentence: For example, “That’s about the sum of it.”

Non-Verbal Signals that Tell a Conversation is About to End:
- Breaking of eye contact
- Movement of legs and feet toward the exit
- Leaning forward
- Nodding, smiling
- Handshake
## Self-Monitoring Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>Problematic Thinking</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Alternative Thought or Response</th>
<th>Alternative Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking to someone you’re interested in for the first time.</td>
<td>“They will notice how nervous I am and look down on me.” “I shouldn’t be so nervous. I should be in control of my emotions at all times.”</td>
<td>Mind reading</td>
<td>Anxious, nervous</td>
<td>Keep the conversation brief and superficial. Give up early.</td>
<td>“It’s ok and normal to be nervous. Everybody gets nervous at times. I can still have a good conversation.”</td>
<td>You prolong the conversation and show interest in the person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 6 Handouts
This is a series of relaxation techniques that you can do almost anywhere and any time. They do not take very long to do. Do not force yourself to relax - just let it happen

**Breathing:**

- **2-Step breath** - Fill the bottom of your lungs first, then add the top as you breathe through your nose. Breath out slowly. Feel the tension flowing out.

**Tense-Relax Muscles:**

- Tighten the muscle that you want to relax. Focus on and feel the tension where you have tightened. Now let the muscle become loose and limp. Feel the relaxation flow into the muscle.

**Body Scan:**

- With your mind, briefly scan every muscle in your body from the tips of your toes to the top of your head. If you sense a tight muscle, just let it become limp and relaxed.

**Limp Rag Doll:**

- Do the 2-Step breath two times. With your mind, imagine that you are a limp rag doll. Feel your mind and body become limp and relaxed.
  
  **You may use whatever image you like best**

**Mind Quieting:**

- To quiet your mind first, focus on your breathing. As you breathe in, say slowly to yourself "I am" and as you breathe out, say slowly to yourself "calm." When your mind feels calm you may focus only on your breathing, with no thoughts at all.

**Shoulders, Arms and Hands Heavy and Warm:**

- Put your mind into your shoulders, arms and hands - imagine and experience them becoming heavy, relaxed and warm.
Making Connections: Gains and Goals

Things I have learned about myself and other people in this group:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Short-term Goals for Making Connections:
1.
2.
3.

Long-term Goals for Making Connections:
1.
2.
3.