

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Gaining Control: Anger Management Group for Adolescents

A graduation project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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Marriage and Family Therapy

By

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## ABSTRACT

Gaining Control: Anger Management Group for Adolescents

By

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Master of Science in Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy

Anger is an emotion frequently experienced by people in response to threat, frustration, pain, and so forth (Hendricks, Bore, Aslinia, & Morriss, 2013). The expression of anger depends on the magnitude of the emotion, situation, and preference in coping methods (Novaco, 1976). Regardless of whether an individual expresses anger in- or outwards, there are social, mental, and physical consequences on ineffective communication of anger. Among individuals of all age groups, adolescents are most negatively impacted by the inability to cope and adequately express anger (Herrmann & McWhirter, 2003). With proper training, adolescents can learn to express their anger effectively, and, therefore, decrease the negative outcome of anger (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2017).

Most of the current anger management groups for adolescents focus on utilizing the cognitive-behavioral model or other single theoretical approach. However, people vary in their abilities to learn in different modalities based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2008). Therefore, the current project aims to integrate different intelligences to the cognitive-behavioral approach to maximize the efficacy of the treatment.

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Anger can be caused by internal or external factors and is a common “emotional state that varies in intensity from feelings of mild irritation and annoyance to intense fury and rage” (Spielberger & Sarason, 1996). When a person experiences anger, the brain releases catecholamine, cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline, which increases the heart and breathing rate, heightens the blood pressure, tenses up muscles to help prepare the body to cope with anger (Hendricks et al., 2013). Therefore, anger helps us to detect and respond to upsetting situations and serves as a primitive defense system to keep people safe (Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014). Although, experiencing anger can be beneficial for survival by triggering the fight-or-flight system, prolonged experience of anger can negatively impact an individual’s wellbeing (Hendricks et al., 2013). Thus, it is essential to learn to cope with anger in a healthy, effective manner.

When anger pushes an individual to stand up for oneself, the person may feel a sense of control, which leads people to have a more optimistic, hopeful attitude towards adversities (Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003). Lerner et al. (2003) found that when anger was evoked, participants perceived a lower risk for a terrorist attack, while participants perceived a higher risk for a terrorist attack when other emotions (e.g., sadness, and so forth) were evoked. Thus, Lerner et al. (2003) suggested that people generally feel better when they are able to express anger towards an unfortunate event.

In addition to the positive feelings when allowed to express anger, when a person’s boundaries are crossed, the person generally describes a lasting effect on the emotional well-being, whereas the person who crosses other’s boundaries often consider the incident as a closed, isolated event that does not have a lasting effect (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Wotman, 1990). Therefore, Baumeister et al. (1990) suggested that the

difference in perception between the victim and the perpetrator often creates misunderstandings that can be detrimental to the relationship. Anger typically provokes discomfort in the person who is angry and the recipient of the emotion. However, anger can help enhance interpersonal relationships when boundaries and needs are communicated with each other. Furthermore, when boundaries and needs are communicated clearly, other potential problems, such as other conflicts and violence, can be prevented (Van Kleef & Cote, 2007).

Despite the adaptive functions of anger, anger can become problematic when expressed inappropriately or suppressed. When an individual is angry, the brain can overreact, which results in aggressive behaviors, or underreact, which can lead to development of mental illnesses (Hendricks et al., 2013). Additionally, anger increases the heart rate and blood pressure, which can lead to “a higher risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke,” and other physical issues, such as weaken the immune system, suppress thyroid functioning, decrease bone density, and create hormonal imbalance (Hendricks et al., 2013). Moreover, the perceived social support is lower when an individual tends to suppress anger, which may lead to withdrawal and have negative feelings about oneself (Dahlen & Martin, 2005). Hence, either the being aggressive towards or avoiding others can negatively impact the interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the inability to cope with anger can affect an individual’s decision-making process in that ill-adjusted people towards anger tend to blame others, judge behaviors of others in unrelated cases harshly, dismiss the mitigating circumstances in the situation, and fail to consider whether their decisions were defensible (Lerner & Shonk, 2010).

The negative impacts of anger are specifically an issue for adolescents (Herrmann & McWhirter, 2003). According to Hemphill et al. (2010), violent behaviors resulting

from anger are more severe in adolescents than in early and middle childhood; roughly 13 adolescents are murdered, and 1,600 adolescents require medical attention due to violence each day (CDC, 2017). Herrmann and McWhirter (2003) stated that even though the overall crime and violence in adolescents has shown a decrease in recent years, juvenile violence and aggression remains a problem for the society, including school violence, underage substance abuse, poor parent-child relationships, juvenile delinquency, an increase in health care costs, and disruption of social services (CDC, 2017; Alavinezhad, Mousavi, & Sohrabi, 2014). The violence and aggressive behaviors are often a result of anger and the adolescents' inability to cope with their anger in an appropriate, effective manner (Kellner & Bry, 1999). Therefore, teaching essential skills to understand and manage anger can prevent problematic behaviors in adolescents and decrease the burden to the society (CDC, 2017).

### **Statement of Problem**

Researchers and the federal government have largely focused their effort to teach adolescents anger management skills in education, corrections, and community mental health settings as youth violence resulting from anger has become a global health issue (Gaines & M. Barry, 2008). The widely adopted modality of treatment for anger is group therapy. Group therapy is often utilized not only because it is the most cost-effective way to teaching adolescents a healthy, effective, and socially acceptable way to express anger, but also because adolescents are more likely to open up to other teenager than to adults (Down, Willner, Watts, & Griffiths, 2011; Jacobs, Schimmel, Masson, & Harvill, 2016). Most anger management groups utilize the cognitive-behavioral approach (DiGiuseppe, 1999; Glancy & Saini, 2005; Down et al., 2011), which typically involves utilizing a person's linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences (Pearson, 2011). However,

based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, each person acquires skills and knowledge differently (American Psychological Association [APA], 2002; Gardner, 2008). Therefore, designing an anger management group utilizing multiple intelligence domains, which includes spatial, musical, and bodily-kinesthetic components, can maximize the efficacy and benefits of the treatment.

### **Purpose of Project**

The current project aims to provide adolescents the tools to manage their anger in a healthy, effective way through group counseling. Chapter II outlines issues of anger in adolescents, key developmental components of adolescents, and a cognitive-behavioral based approach incorporating Gardner's multiple intelligences for the anger management group. Chapter III discusses the setup of the group, including the target population and group format. Additionally, an overview of the group will detail the purpose and goal of each session. The expected outcome, limitations, and future implications will be discussed in chapter IV. Lastly, the appendix will include materials for the group, including treatment consent, referral form, and the workbook for the group.

### **Terminology**

**Anger:** A common human emotion that is often experienced in response to threat, unfairness, frustration, pain, or any situations that prevent people from attaining goals (Hendricks et al., 2013). The intensity of anger ranges from mild irritation to rage, and it includes cognitive, psychological, physical, and behavioral components (Hendricks et al., 2013; Scanlan, Parker, & Montague, 2016).

**Adolescence:** A transitional period between childhood and adulthood, and the actual age range of adolescence depends on the onset of puberty (Mossler, 2015). For this project, the age range for adolescence is between the ages of 13 to 18.

**Adolescent:** Also known as a teenager. A term to describe a youth between the ages of 13 and 18.

**Aggression:** Intentionally harmful behaviors, including physical, verbal, and emotional, and attitudes towards others, which is often a result of anger from an emotional perspective (Karatas & Gokcakan, 2009).

**Cognitive-behavioral approach:** A therapeutic approach that addresses the relationship between the cognition, emotion, and behavior (Gehart, 2014). The term will be used interchangeably with cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) in this project.

**Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT):** See cognitive-behavioral approach. The term will be used interchangeably with cognitive-behavioral approach in this project.

**Emotional intelligence:** The ability to recognize and manage own emotions, to empathize with and relate to others, to self-motivate, and handle relationships (Goleman, 1997).

**Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences:** Gardner (2008) suggests that people have different cognitive strengths in various domains, including musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, linguistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and naturalist intelligence.

**Psychoeducation:** The teaching of psychological and relational aspects of the problems and how best to manage them (Gehart, 2014).

**Self-awareness:** A conscious knowledge of one's own emotions, thoughts, behaviors, and characters (Goleman, 1997).

**Self-compassion:** A concept originated from Buddhist philosophy. It involves treating oneself with kindness, care, and support in times of struggle. There are three

components of self-compassion: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (Neff, 2003).

### **Summary**

It is essential to recognize the severity of the problem by examining recent statistics of anger-related youth violence around the world as the negative impact of anger on adolescents presents an ongoing issue for the society. Adolescents express anger inappropriately because they lack the ability to recognize their anger and the skills to cope and manage their anger. However, teaching anger management skills can prevent problematic behaviors triggered by anger. Gaining knowledge to teenage development can help clinicians to communicate better with adolescents during treatments. To maximize the efficiency of the treatment, multiple theoretical approaches to therapy should be integrated. Therefore, an understanding of benefits in each therapeutic approach can help clinicians select suitable methods to incorporate in the treatment.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Introduction

Anger is a healthy, natural human emotion and only becomes an issue when its effect is detrimental to a person's wellbeing. Although it has gained wide-spread attention due to its negative outcome, including violence and poor intrapersonal relationships, studies and interventions for anger are often not as extensive compared to other emotional issues, such as depression, anxiety, and so forth (Howells & Day, 2003; Novaco, 1976). Anger serves positive functions in coping with stressful situations and can be harmful to individuals when left unaddressed (Novaco, 1976; Henricks et al., 2013). Among individuals of all age groups, adolescents are most negatively impacted by anger provoked behaviors (Herrmann & McWhirter, 2003). In the U.S., youth violence is "a leading cause of injury and death" among youths between the ages of 15 and 24 (CDC, 2017). In Australia, over 24,000 youths who sought help at a youth mental health center reported anger-related issues as one of the main presenting problems (Scalan, Parker, & Montague, 2016). In the U.K., approximately 74,800 youths were arrested by the police in 2017 due to anger-provoked violence (Ministry of Justice, 2018). The high rate of adolescents engaging in problematic behaviors may likely be a result of being unaware of appropriate expressions of anger.

As a result of lacking appropriate, effective coping and communication skills, adolescents display their anger in the form of anger-in and anger-out; anger-in refers to the suppression of anger, while anger-out refers to the expression of anger in an aggressive manner (Dahlen & Martin, 2005). Both anger-in and anger-out result in issues for adolescents, such as, school violence, juvenile delinquency, poor health, poor intrapersonal relationships, and an increase in developing mental illnesses (Dahlen &

Martin, 2005; CDC, 2017; Alavinezhad, Mousavi, & Sohrabi, 2014). In addition to experiencing problems on an individual level, the issues can create a burden to the society, including, increasing health care costs, decreasing property values, disrupting social services, and threatening the sustainability of businesses (CDC, 2017). Thus, providing adolescents the necessary skills to understand and manage anger decreases personal and societal consequences of the emotion (CDC, 2017).

### **The Developing Adolescents**

To effectively communicate and teach adolescents anger management skills, clinicians must have an understanding of typical adolescent development (APA, 2002). In addition to the physical changes experienced by adolescents, adolescence is a crucial stage for cognitive, emotional, and social development (APA, 2002; Mossler, 2015).

#### **Cognitive Development**

Compared to early- and middle-childhood, adolescents begin to “develop a sense of uniqueness and heightened feelings of self-consciousness” (Mossler, 2015), which often leads to poor decision making, such as engaging in risky behaviors, the lack of perspective-taking skills, frequent challenging authority figures, and so forth (APA, 2002). To help with adolescents’ cognitive development, one can help them gain perspectives of others, expand the range of options, understand the effects of emotions on judgments and behaviors, develop a sense of competence, and recognize moral values (APA, 2002).

#### **Emotional Development**

Adolescents’ emotional development is largely influenced by the development of identity, which involves one’s beliefs and feelings about oneself in relation to others (APA, 2002). To cultivate a realistic sense of self, one must raise the emotional

intelligence, which is the ability to manage emotions and relate with others (Goleman, 1997). Developing emotional intelligence includes increasing self-awareness, managing own emotions, cultivating empathy, and handling relationships (APA, 2002; Goleman, 1997). As adolescents learn about their own identities, feelings of the self-identity emerge due to its relational context with others. Although self-esteem is extensively discussed, it is often contingent upon social comparisons, which can often lead to an unstable view of self-worth (Neff, 2003). Neff (2003) suggests that cultivating self-compassion as an alternative to self-esteem helps individuals gain a more realistic understanding of the self.

### **Social Development**

When a person enters adolescence, peers become more central than families in establishing independence and developing self-identity, which can, in turn, result in more frequent conflicts between parents and adolescents (APA, 2002). Positive social relationships during adolescence predicts better psychosocial adjustment and self-image, while social isolation or poor social skills can lead to aggression or depression (APA, 2002). Therefore, when considering the modalities of teaching anger management skills, a group-oriented approach may be beneficial in developing adolescents' interpersonal skills (Carchedi, Paul, Lodesky, & Gould, 2013), which is essential at this stage of development due to adolescents' perceived importance of peer groups.

### **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy**

To help adolescents cope with their anger, Feindler and Ecton (1986) suggest anger management trainings to include psychoeducation on cognitive and behavioral components of anger, cognitive and behavioral techniques to manage anger, and application of newly acquired skills, such as relaxation techniques, assertiveness, self-awareness, empathy, and problem-solving skills (Kellner & Bry, 1999). Cognitive-

behavioral Therapy is one of the most commonly used therapeutic approach in group therapies given its widely studied, evidence-based approach (Gehart, 2014). Cognitive-behavioral Therapy has gained its popularity because the behaviors are often observable, and, therefore, can provide clinicians with a measurable outcome to determine the effectiveness of the group. Furthermore, cognitive-behavioral therapy emphasizes psychoeducation on the relationships between cognition, behaviors, and emotions (Gehart, 2014), which provides participants a different perspective and approach to changing their thoughts and behaviors. Moreover, cognitive-behavioral therapy helps with reconstructing irrational, automatic thoughts, which helps to decrease emotional reactions towards triggers (Gehart, 2014). Lastly, a cognitive-behavioral therapist assigns homework to practice newly acquired skills to help maintain the effectiveness (Gehart, 2014).

In an anger management program, the utilization of a cognitive-behavioral approach can help them understand when the emotion is triggered, and the relationship between the feeling, thoughts, and actions. Furthermore, psychoeducation on effective and healthy coping skills can help to reduce their physical and behavioral reactions towards anger (Kellner and Bry, 1999). Moreover, teaching to differentiate between constructive and destructive anger can help adolescents learn that feelings of anger serve its purpose and how to appropriately communicate their feelings more constructively.

In addition to psychoeducation, cognitive-behavioral therapy teaches the ABCs – identifying the activating event, the belief about the event, and the behavioral and emotional consequence of the event (Gehart, 2014). This is to help clients learn the underlying implication of their emotions and behaviors, which are the irrational thoughts that members often associate with the events. To change the illogical belief and reduce

emotional reactions toward the events, the cognitive-behavioral approach emphasizes on constructing a more realistic, alternative thought using thought records (Gehart, 2014).

Based on the cognitive behavioral model that Feindler and Ecton (1986) proposed, they conducted a study on seven emotionally disturbed adolescents. All seven students underwent an anger management program, which was held for ten weeks with each session lasting 30 minutes. The sessions covered psychoeducation on physiology of anger and taught participants to identify the physiological signs of anger arousal, personal triggers, and the prosocial cues for evaluating how they managed their anger (Feindler & Ecton, 1986). Their finding suggested an improvement on participants' anger management skills (Feindler & Ecton, 1986).

Other studies also supported the effectiveness of the cognitive-behavioral approach to anger management. Karatas and Gokcakan (2009) indicated a benefit of utilizing a cognitive-behavioral approach to teach adolescents how to manage their anger. They conducted a study on 200 ninth-grade students in which the students were randomly assigned to two experimental groups and one control group. The experimental groups consisted of a group-based cognitive behavioral therapy group and group-based psychodrama therapy group. All three groups were administered a pre- and post-test on aggression, anger, hostility, and indirect aggression scores. Their results found that students who received group-based cognitive behavioral therapy showed a significant decrease in their aggression, anger, hostility, and indirect aggression scores compared with the control group (Kellner & Bry, 1999).

### **Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

Each person varies in skills and abilities based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences perspective (Gardner, 2008). Furthermore, Gardner (2008) states that

incorporating a few intelligences can increase students' learning on tasks. The practical implementation of the theory of multiple intelligences has been well-studied in education and business settings. However, few studies investigate its efficacy in counseling (Pearson, 2011). Pearson (2011) suggests that utilizing multiple intelligences in a therapeutic setting can increase the client-therapy alliance and encourage client feedback. Moreover, O'Brien and Burnett (2000) explain that when multiple intelligences are integrated in therapy with children, it enhances children's expressions of their experiences. Therefore, helping adolescences develop different areas of intelligence can increase their sense of competence and chances of success (APA, 2002).

Gardner (2008) proposes that there are eight different cognitive abilities: logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, and spiritual intelligences. The logical-mathematical intelligence relates to a person's reasoning abilities. The linguistic intelligence is related to words and language. The spatial intelligence describes the ability to create mental images through visions (O'Brien & Burnett, 2000). The ability to gain knowledge about the body and its movements is describe as the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. A person with musical intelligence can recognize tones, rhythm, and beat (O'Brien & Burnett, 2000). Interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence describes a person's ability to relate with others and the self (Gardner, 2008). Naturalist intelligence is related to the understanding of nature (Mossler, 2015). O'Brien and Burnett (2000) state that once clients begin to understand their own thoughts and feelings, they can utilize the different domains of multiple intelligences to help express their insights.

In a cognitive-behavioral based anger management program for adolescents, the facilitator can teach participants about emotions by providing a list of feeling words,

having participants act out different emotions, or drawing pictures on various emotions, which incorporates the linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, and spatial intelligences, respectively. To learn about their triggers of anger, adolescents can be prompted to identify the ABCs through thought records, which is related to linguistics and intrapersonal intelligences. Once the irrational thoughts associated with the events are identified, adolescents can practice combating illogical thinking with a healthier, realistic view through role-plays, which uses interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, logical-mathematical, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences.

Given the basic framework of the cognitive-behavioral approach, designing learning activities in an anger management program integrating multiple intelligences can allow clinicians to have more flexibility in treatment (Pearson, 2011). Additionally, it can help to enhance therapeutic alliances and increase adolescents' ability to express themselves (Pearson, 2011). Furthermore, recognizing the importance of using multiple intelligences in anger management programs can help foster success of the treatment and heighten adolescents' sense of competence (APA, 2002). Thus, applying the concepts of multiple intelligences in the cognitive-behavioral based treatment approach in anger management training for adolescents is highly recommended.

### **Summary**

Anger is a common emotional expression to distress, and it only becomes functional when inappropriately expressed or suppressed. When anger is not properly expressed, an individual may engage in aggressive behaviors, become isolated, have low self-esteem, and be impacted negatively in other physical and psychological aspects. On the contrary, effective expressions of anger can help a person stay safe, promote healthy boundaries, enhance intra- and interpersonal relationships, and so forth. Therefore,

acquiring anger management skills is essential, especially when starting at a young age. Given the high incidents of violence among adolescents, it would be beneficial to encourage and place adolescents to participate in anger management programs based on the cognitive behavioral approach. Additionally, to maximize learning and promote success in adolescents' anger management treatment, activities designed for the treatment must utilize multiple intelligences. Through increasing awareness of anger in self and others and learning the essential skills to cope and manage anger, the probability of adolescents being negatively impacted by anger can be decreased and positive effects of anger can be promoted.

## **CHAPTER III: PROJECT AUDIENCE AND IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS**

### **Target Population**

Violence and relational aggression resulted from anger is prominent in adolescents, and adolescents lack the skills to appropriately express and regulate their anger (Hemphill et al., 2010). Therefore, the target population of the group are adolescents who engage in inappropriate behaviors (e.g., school violence, underage substance abuse, poor parent-child relationship, etc.) as indicated by self, school staff, parents, probation officers, and so forth. However, group members must be carefully screened through individual and group interviews to ensure that the participants' goals and needs "are compatible with the goals of the group, who will not impede the group process, and whose well-being will not be jeopardized by the group experience" (American Counseling Association, 2014, p. 6). During the individual interviews, group leaders can determine whether the group can help adolescents enhance self-awareness, communication skills, and their ability to self-regulate. Whereas, group interviews can help to evaluate interactions and likelihood of cooperation of prospective members (Ritchie and Huss, 2000) to exclude adolescents who may disrupt the group process and hinder the success of the group.

Group members may feel reluctant to disclose crucial information that can hinder their process due to feelings of discomfort within mixed-ethnic and coed groups. Thus, group leaders may consider separating members based on ethnicities and genders or discussing this issue during the screening process and the initial phase of group counseling given that there are benefits to both homo- and heterogeneous groups (Ritchie and Huss, 2000). Furthermore, due to legal and ethical concerns regarding privacies, group leaders must inform parents and school staff of adherence to confidentiality

policies. Moreover, to protect the dignities of members, group leaders should avoid naming the group with the potential of labeling members of having anger issues.

### **Group Format**

The group will consist of eight members with closed-group membership to ensure adequate participation of each member and to avoid allotting group time to introduce new members (Jacobs et al., 2016). Group members are allowed up to two absences with extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness with doctor's note provided, death of a family member, etc.), and absences must be discussed in advance with the group leader. The group is held at their own schools for the ease of access and meets either before or after school based on students' preference as indicated during the interviews to avoid disrupting their learning. The group meets once a week for two hours per meeting and is held for a total of 12 weeks given the length of a typical school schedule. However, facilitators will spend additional time prior to the starting of the group for recruitment and screening (see Appendix A and Appendix B).

During each group meeting, the group leader will begin with a warm-up to introduce members to each other during the first meeting and check in with members' status and progress during subsequent meetings. Then, the group leader will provide members with handouts, which includes the week's agenda, activities, psychoeducational materials, and homework. Each meeting will consist of psychoeducation to provide adequate information on the cognitive and behavioral components of anger and tools to help manage anger. Additionally, activities and discussions will be included in each meeting to allow members to practice the newly acquired skills, to share their experiences during the process, and to address their concerns.

Activities will be drawn from various sources based on the topics each week, such as a list of coping skills, challenging distorted thinking, with resources listed at the end of the handouts. Some activities may require specific materials, such as construction paper, markers, and so forth, which will be prepared by the group leader prior to each group. Some activities may require a larger space to allow for movement, which needs to be factored in when selecting the appropriate location for the group.

### **General Overview of the Group**

#### **Session one: Building rapport.**

This is the first group meeting and the primary goal of this meeting is to build a therapeutic rapport with group members. Therefore, the meeting consists of introducing the group leader and group members, overview of the group format, introducing the goals of the group, and establishing rules and guidelines of the group. A copy of each client's informed consent (see Appendix C) and the group leader's contact information will be provided. The group will establish rules and guidelines together to help each participant feel safe in the group, and the group leader will let the group members decide on a name for their group. At the end of the meeting, the group leader will check-in with group members to see how each member feels about the group.

#### **Session two: Learning about anger.**

The primary goal of this group is to provide psychoeducation on anger. The group leader will begin with a 5-minute warm up to check in with the group members. Then, the group leader will ask group members to share how anger affects their behaviors and relationships with others. The group leaders will distribute handouts and provide psychoeducation on anger, the underlying emotions associated with anger (see Appendix D), when anger is appropriate, and provide participants with a list of feeling words to

help further identify the underlying emotions associated with anger (see Appendix E). Then, the group leader will distribute construction paper and markers and prompt the group members to draw or write about how emotions affect their bodies, thoughts, and behaviors. Afterwards, the group leader and the group will discuss their experience with the activity. The group leader will assign homework for group members to journal their feelings throughout the week and check-in with what each member have learned during the session.

### **Session three: Coping skills.**

The primary goal of this session is to learn various coping skills to allow group members to better handle their emotions. The session will begin with a warm-up to check in with each member's current state using the subjective units of distress (SUD) scale and homework progress. Then, the group leaders will facilitate a discussion on coping skills and provide psychoeducation on why learning effective coping skills is essential for their well-being. The group leaders will teach some coping skills to the group members, such as progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness, coloring, and so forth. Afterwards, the group leader will provide a list of suggested coping skills (see Appendix F) and facilitate a discussion about the list of coping skills, such as what stands out to the members, and what would members like to try. The group leader will ask each member to practice coping skills throughout the week as the week's assignment and check-in with each member's SUD.

### **Session four: Cognitive reconstructing.**

The primary goal of this session is to learn about distorted thoughts and how to change their distorted thoughts. The group leader will begin the group with a warm-up activity to check in with group members' current state and their experiences with the

homework assignment. The group leader will, then, provide psychoeducation on the relationship between thoughts, behaviors, and emotions (see Appendix G). Additionally, the group leader will provide a list of cognitive distortions and facilitate a discussion on members' own experiences with the distortions. Then, the group leader will distribute the thought record worksheets (see Appendix H) and ask the participants to practice filling out the worksheet. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the group and assign thought records to use throughout the week.

**Session five: Effective communication skills.**

The primary goal of the session is to enhance group members' communication skills and appropriate expression of their anger. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will facilitate an activity (see Appendix I and Appendix J) to help participants understand the differences in the interpretation of a message between the speaker and the listener. Afterwards, the group leader will provide handouts on effective communication skills, including the use of "I" message (see Appendix K) and reflective and active listening (see Appendix L). The group leader will ask the group members to break into dyads and practice the skills with each other. Then, the group leader will bring the group back and facilitate a discussion on their experiences. At the end of the group, the group leader will ask members to practice the newly acquired skills and journal throughout the week regarding the experience. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the session.

**Session six: Effective communication skills continued.**

The primary goal of the session is to enhance group members' communication skills and appropriate expression of their anger. The group leader will start the group with

a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will review the “I” messages and reflective listening with the members. Afterwards, the group leader will distribute a handout and facilitate a discussion on assertive, passive, and passive aggressive communication (see Appendix M). The participants will break into groups to practice the communication skills. Afterwards, the group leader may ask for volunteers to role play the scenarios in front of the group and ask the group for feedback. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the session and assign members to continue with journaling their feelings and thought records throughout the week. The group leader will also encourage the participants to practice utilizing the newly learned, effective communication skills with others throughout the week.

**Session seven: Review session.**

The primary goal of this session is to allow participants to practice the skills that they have learned during the previous weeks, answer questions that participants may have regarding anger management, and clarify concepts that have already been covered. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will provide an overview of the concepts covered during the past weeks and facilitate activities to review the different emotions, identity triggers, discuss effective coping methods, and practice effective communication skills.

**Session eight: Setting boundaries.**

The primary goal of this session is to teach participants how to set healthy boundaries with themselves and others. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then the group leader will

distribute handouts to provide psychoeducation on what a boundary is, how to identify own boundaries, and how to set boundaries effectively (see Appendix N). The group leader will ask the participants to review the handout carefully and fill out the boundary exploration sheet. Once all participants have completed the worksheet, the group leader will facilitate a discussion and role play a situation related to boundary setting. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the session, and the group leader will encourage members to start setting boundaries for as this week's homework assignment.

**Session nine: Identifying personal values.**

The primary goal of this session is to help members identify their personal values. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will distribute a value discussion handout and value exploration worksheets (see Appendix O) and allow participants to work independently on the worksheet. Participants will be allowed to listen to their own music with their headphones on if it helps provide a calm environment for them to process their thoughts. Afterwards, the facilitator will allocate some time to allow discussion regarding their values exploration. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the session, and the group leader will ask the participants to complete the worksheets at home if they are not able to finish it during the session.

**Session ten: The authentic self.**

The primary goal of the group is to enhance participants' awareness of one's own qualities. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will distribute construction paper and markers, and facilitate an art activity to explore how each member sees themselves

and what qualities they show others (see Appendix P). Once participants complete the activity, the group leader will facilitate a discussion on their thoughts about the activity. The group leader will proceed with introducing the concept of self-compassion and lead the group to discussion questions to help members understand the discrepancies between how we treat ourselves and others (see Appendix Q). The group leader may ask participants to practice self-compassion by engaging in positive self-talk through role playing during the session. Towards the end of the session, the group leader will distribute the self-esteem journal (see Appendix R) as the assignment for the week and check-in with participants on their feelings.

**Session eleven: Review session.**

The primary goal of this session is to allow participants to practice the skills that they have learned during the previous weeks, answer questions that participants may have regarding anger management, and clarify concepts that have already been covered. The group leader will start the group with a quick check in on their status and progress of their assignments. Then, the group leader will review communication skills, boundaries, personal values, and authenticity. The group leader will provide scenarios for participants to practice communication skills through role plays and discussions. The group will end with a check-in on what the members have learned during the session and assign members to continue with journaling their feelings and thought records throughout the week. The group leader will also encourage the participants to practice utilizing the newly learned, effective communication skills with others throughout the week.

**Session twelve: Closing and graduation.**

The primary goal of this group is to terminate the group and celebrate the successes of the members. The group will begin with a warm-up activity to check in with

members' status and the progress of their assignments. The group leader will summarize what was taught and discussed throughout the process and facilitate a discussion on what has been learned and what the members will take away from the group. At the end of the session, the group leader will provide each member with a letter of completion and a certificate of participation.

## CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

Although anger is a normal human emotion that is often triggered when a person feels threatened in a situation, it can negatively impact a person's wellbeing if not handled appropriately (Novaco, 1976; Henricks et al., 2013). When anger is not expressed and managed appropriately, the individual may suffer from physical consequences, such as heart attack or stroke (Hendricks et al., 2013), emotional issues, such as depression or low self-concept (Hendricks et al., 2013; Dahlen & Martin, 2005), and interpersonal conflicts, such as violence (Alvanizezhad, Mousavi, & Sohrabi, 2014). Furthermore, anger issues can negatively impact the society, including increased health care costs and disruption in social services (CDC, 2017). Among all age groups, adolescents are most negatively impacted by unresolved anger (Herrmann & McWhirter, 2003). Therefore, teaching adolescents the essential skills to managing their anger can help prevent personal and societal problems (CDC, 2017).

To design an effective anger management program, it is beneficial to consider utilizing cognitive-behavioral therapy as it is a well-researched approach (Gehart, 2014). To maximize the benefits and success of the group therapy, the program must incorporate activities that integrates the multiple intelligences (APA, 2002). Therefore, this project is designed to provide a general outline and example of activities utilizing the different domains of intelligences. The outline of each session provides the goals of treatment and a general framework for the group. However, it remains vague to provide group leaders the flexibility to adopt their personal styles to the group. Future research can incorporate a pre- and posttest to measure participants' anger ratings to evaluate the efficacy of an anger management group that contains activities with various domains of multiple intelligences.

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**APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

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

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ May we leave a message? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Who referred you to the service? \_\_\_\_\_

**LIVING ARRANGEMENTS**

Who do you live with? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of moves in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

Ever placed or lived away from family? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT(S) / LEGAL GUARDIAN(S)**

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INTAKE FORM

### Participant Intake Form

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

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Who referred you to this service (e.g., self, school counselor, parent, probation officer, and etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe, in details, the most recent event that triggered your anger:

- When did the event occur?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Where did the event occur?

\_\_\_\_\_

- With whom?

\_\_\_\_\_

- What happened?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- How did the angry episode end?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

On average, how many days out of the week do you feel angry? \_\_\_\_\_ days

When you become angry, how long do you remain angry? \_\_\_\_\_

On the line below, please mark the intensity of your anger during a typical angry episode”

-----|  
Not angry at all Furious

When did you first noticed that your anger is affecting you?

---

How has anger affected you (e.g., school and/or relationships)?

---

---

---

What kind of person are you when you are angry?

---

What happens in your house when you are angry?

---

---

How does your family members behave when they are angry? How do you know that they are angry? (please describe each member)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What behavior(s) would you like to change when you are angry?

---

---

How would you know when you have changed?

---

---

How would others know when you have changed?

---

---

**APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT TO  
TREATMENT FORM**

**Participant Information and Consent to Treatment**

Participation of this service is mutual in which the facilitator contributes knowledge and skills in anger management, whereas the participant attends and participates in weekly activities. If, for any reasons, your participation and progress may be hindered, please communicate with the facilitator prior to the beginning of each group. If the participant misses two sessions, the participant will no longer be able to continue further in the service and may have to sign up for a different group when it becomes available. Additionally, you may not be able to attend a session if you arrive late. The general goals of this program are to increase participant's self-awareness of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, to learn appropriate communication of thoughts and feelings, to expand the repertoire of coping skills, and to understand how anger impacts self and others. The results of participating in this service are not guaranteed, and, sometimes, you may feel worse before starting to feel better.

Consents of participation of the service are considered to be confidential. Both the participant and the facilitator cannot share any verbal information or written records with another party without a written consent of the participant. Noted exceptions are as follows:

- The obligation of reporting to authorities of any suspicion of abuse, endangerment, or neglect of any child or dependent adult.
- The duty to warn and protect the intended victim and authorities when it appears that the participant or a person known to the participant intends to hurt another person.
- The need to take appropriate steps when it appears evident that the client will most probably engage in a suicide attempt.
- When the court issues a legitimate subpoena for information stated on the subpoena.

I acknowledge that I am solely responsible for my attendance of the service and to complete the program in the amount of time allocated as required. I have read and understand the information contained in this form and have been given the opportunity to have any and all questions answered relevant to my participation of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intake Facilitator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D: ANGER ICEBERG

# Anger Iceberg

Icebergs are large pieces of ice found floating in the open ocean. What you can see from the surface can be misleading. Most of the iceberg is hidden below the water.

This is how anger works. Often when we are angry, there are other emotions hidden under the surface.



The Gottman Institute

Adapted from the Gottman Institute

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE FEELINGS WORD LIST

# Feelings

## Word List



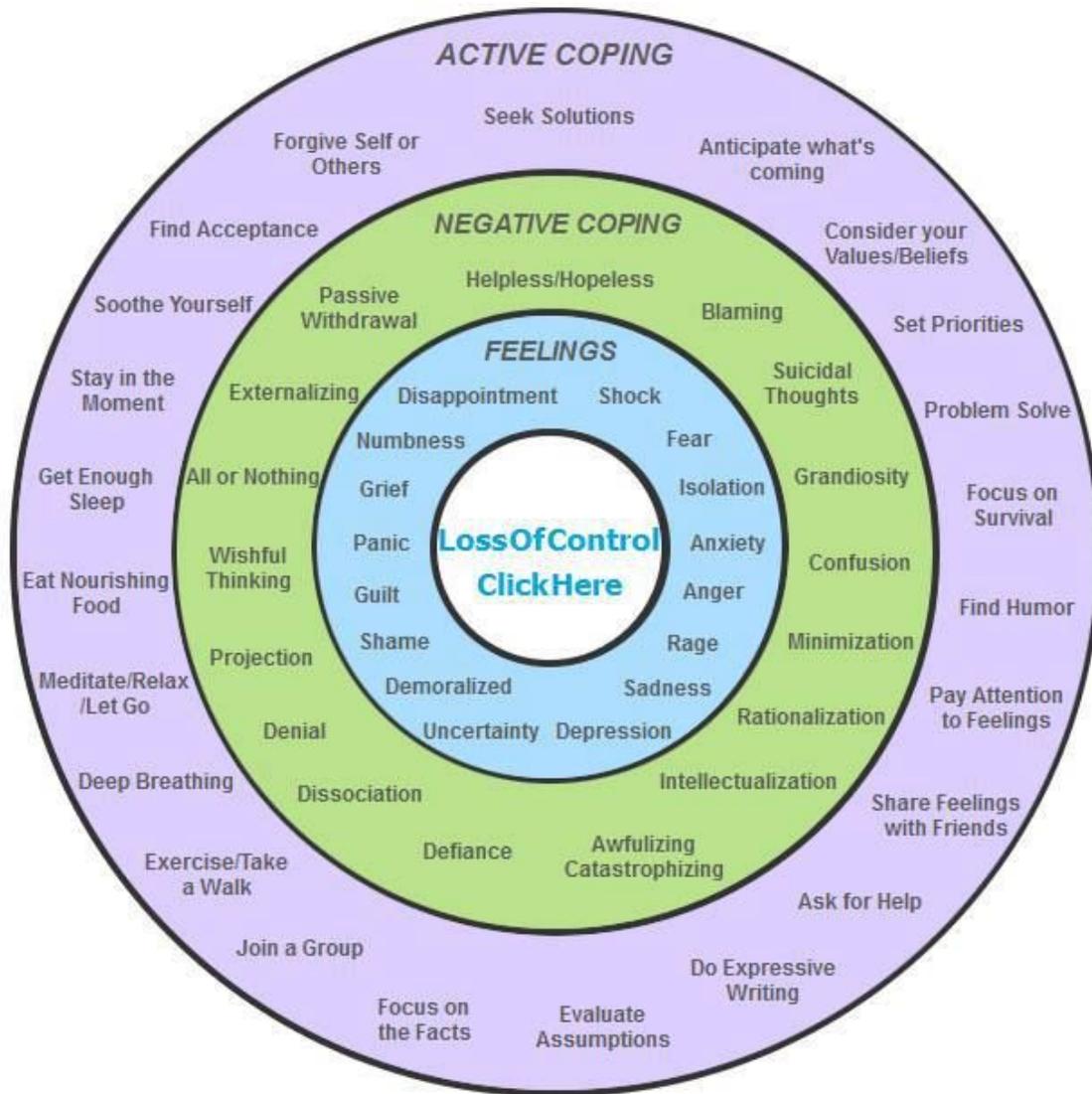
<p><b>Happy</b></p> <p>Adored Alive Appreciated Cheerful Ecstatic Excited Grateful Glad Hopeful Jolly Jovial Joyful Loved Merry Optimistic Pleased Satisfied Tender Terrific Thankful Uplifted Warm</p>	<p><b>Mad</b></p> <p>Aggravated Accused Angry Bitter Cross Defensive Frustrated Furious Hostile Impatient Infuriated Insulted Jaded Offended Ornery Outraged Pestered Rebellious Resistant Revengeful Scorned Spiteful Testy Used Violated</p>	<p><b>Sad</b></p> <p>Alone Blue Burdened Depressed Devastated Disappointed Discouraged Grief-stricken Gloomy Hopeless Let down Lonely Heartbroken Melancholy Miserable Neglected Pessimistic Remorseful Resentful Solemn Threatened</p>	<p><b>Scared</b></p> <p>Afraid Alarmed Anxious Bashful Cautious Fearful Frightened Horrorified Lost Haunted Helpless Hesitant Insecure Nervous Petrified Puzzled Reassured Reserved Sheepish Tearful Uncomfortable Useless</p>	<p><b>Surprise</b></p> <p>Astonished Curious Delighted Enchanted Exhilarated Incredulous Inquisitive Impressed Mystified Passionate Playful Replenished Splendid Shocked Stunned</p>	<p><b>Disgust</b></p> <p>Embarrassed Exposed Guilty Ignored Inadequate Incompetent Inhibited Inept Inferior Insignificant Sick Shame Squashed Stupid Ugly Unaccepted</p>
---	--	---	--	--	--



(c) 2014 Julie de Azevedo Hanks Wasatch Family Therapy.com JulieHanks.com

Adapted from Wasatch Family Therapy

**APPENDIX F: EXAMPLE OF COPING SKILLS**



Adapted from <https://katiesteeletherapy.com/2015/07/18/coping-skills/>

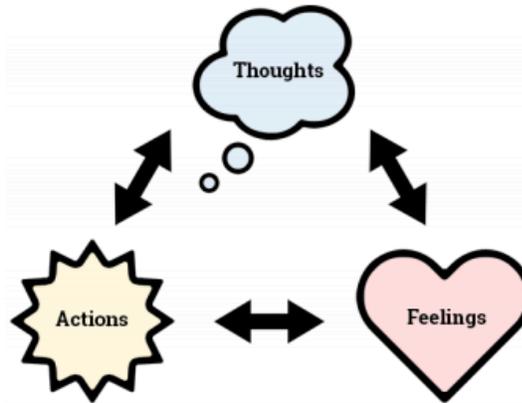
## APPENDIX G: SAMPLE PSYCHOEDUCATION MATERIAL FOR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS

### Thoughts Feelings Actions

Everyone has problems, both big and small. To better solve your big problems, it helps to learn how your **thoughts**, **feelings**, and **actions** are connected.

Imagine you have an upcoming test, and you think "I'm going to fail". Because of this thought, you start to worry. You are so worried that you feel sick just thinking about the test. Because it's so uncomfortable, you decide not to study.

The thought ("I'm going to fail") led to a feeling (worry), which led to an action (not studying). What might have changed if you had a different thought?



**Thoughts** are the words that run through your mind. They're the things you tell yourself about what's going on around you. There are many different thoughts you could have about a single situation.



**Feelings** come and go as different things happen to you. You might feel happy, angry, and sad, all in one day. Some feelings are uncomfortable, but they are not bad. Everyone has these feelings from time-to-time.



**Actions** are the things you do, or the way you behave. Your thoughts and feelings have a big impact on how you act. If you feel happy, you are likely to do nice things. But if you feel angry, you might want to act mean.

# Thoughts Feelings Actions

## What happened?

My friend Emma hasn't spoken to me as much as usual over the past week.

### My Thoughts

I thought: "Emma hasn't talked to me much this week. She must be mad at me."

Because I was upset I ignored Emma and avoided her at school.

### My Actions

I felt sad and hurt.

### My Feelings

Just because you have a thought doesn't mean it's true. Your thoughts are guesses about why something happened, or about something that might happen. Coming up with new thoughts will help you see a situation differently.



### New Thoughts



### New Feelings



### New Actions

	 New Thoughts	 New Feelings	 New Actions
<b>1</b>	"Emma might be upset with me, but maybe not. I don't know."	Concerned that Emma <i>might</i> be upset, but I'm not as sad as I was.	Ask Emma if she is mad at me, or if she has another problem.
<b>2</b>	"Emma has probably been busy with school or something else."	Disappointed I haven't talked to Emma, but understanding.	I'll stay friendly with Emma, as usual. I'll be sure to say "hi" anyway.
<b>3</b>	"Maybe Emma is upset about something unrelated to me."	Worried about how Emma is feeling.	Ask Emma what's going on, and if she needs help.

## APPENDIX H: SAMPLE THOUGHT RECORD LOG

### Thought Log

Event	Thought	Consequence / Behavior	Rational Counterstatement
<i>Example:</i> Supervisor at work is angry.	"I must have made a mistake—now I've done it. They'll fire for me sure."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling of sadness and anxiety</li> <li>• Spend time obsessing over mistakes</li> </ul>	"My supervisor could've been angry about anything. They are usually happy with my work, so even if I've made a mistake it isn't a big deal."

Adapted from Therapist Aid

**APPENDIX I: SAMPLE ACTIVITY FOR COMMUNICATION SKILL**  
**(LISTENER VS. SPEAKER EXERCISE)**

## **Back-to-Back Drawing**

### **Communication Exercise**

#### **Instructions**

- 1** Pair off group members, and instruct them to sit back-to-back.
- 2** Give one member (the "listener") a blank piece of paper and a pencil, and the other member (the "speaker") a geometrical image from pages 2 – 4.
- 3** Ask the speaker to describe the geometrical image in detail. The drawer will attempt to recreate the image on their blank piece of paper, based upon the instructions. Neither member can see the others' paper, and the listener may not communicate with the speaker. Allow 5 – 10 minutes for this portion of the exercise.

#### **Discussion Questions**

##### **Speaker**

What steps did you take to make sure your instructions would be clear? How can these steps be translated to real-life conversations?

What was it like not having feedback from the listener during the exercise?

What we mean to say, and how it's interpreted, are often not the same. What can you do while speaking to reduce the risk of miscommunication in real-life conversations?

##### **Listener**

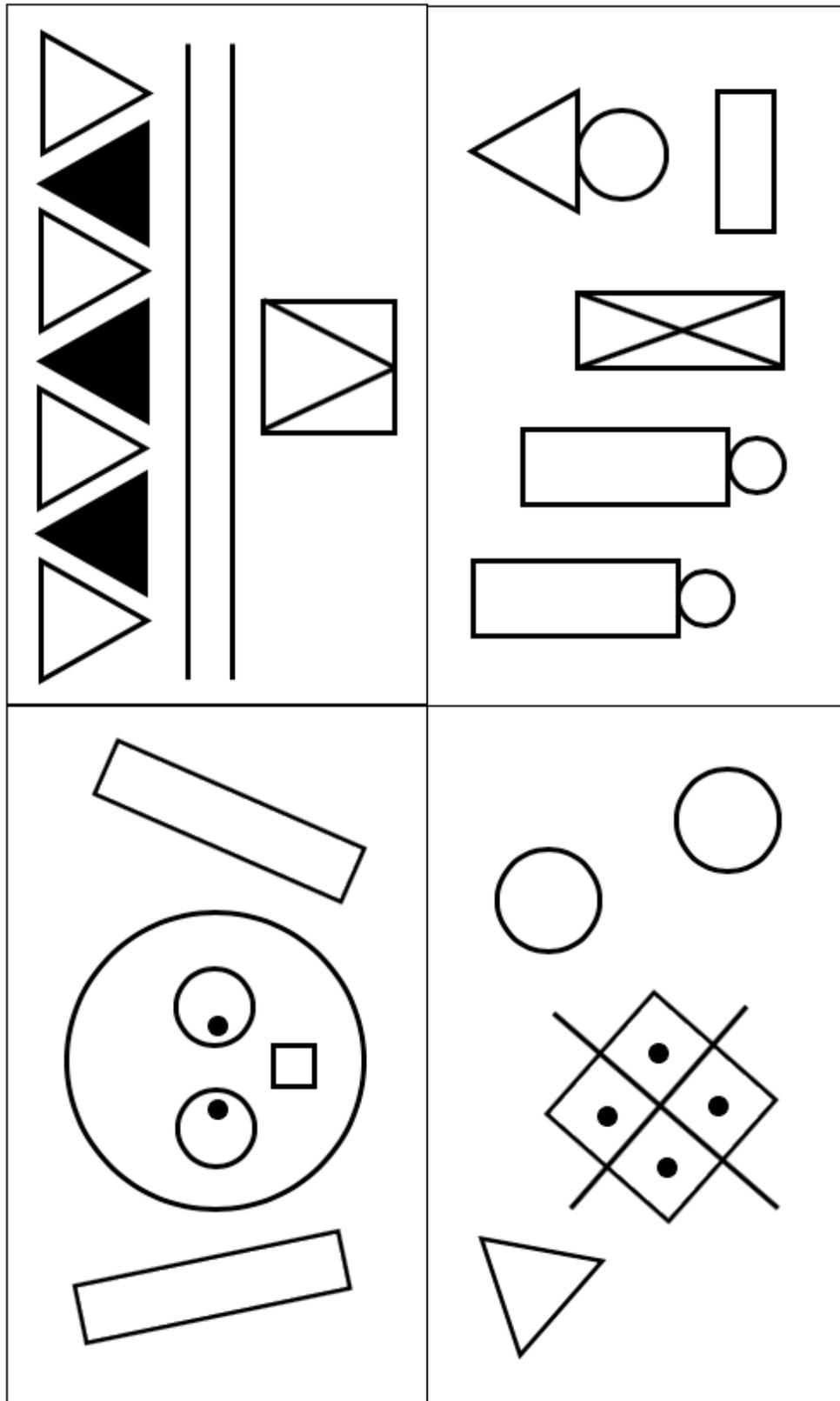
What did you like about the speaker's instructions?

Did you find that any of the speaker's instructions were ambiguous, or difficult to follow?

How do you think your results would've been different if you had been able to communicate with the speaker?

Communication is as much about being a good listener as being a good speaker. What steps can you take while listening to reduce misunderstandings in real-life situations?

APPENDIX J: SAMPLE IMAGES FOR LISTENER VS. SPEAKER EXERCISE



## APPENDIX K: “I” MESSAGE

### “I” Statements

When a person feels that they are being blamed—whether rightly or wrongly—it’s common that they respond with defensiveness. **“I” statements** are a simple way of speaking that will help you avoid this trap by reducing feelings of blame. A good “I” statement takes responsibility for one’s own feelings, while tactfully describing a problem.

“I feel *emotion word* when *explanation*.”

- ✓ “I feel...” must be followed with an emotion word, such as “angry”, “hurt”, or “worried”.
- ✓ Careful wording won’t help if your voice still sounds blaming. Use a soft and even tone.
- ✓ In your explanation, gently describe how the other person’s actions affect you.

#### Examples

<b>Blaming</b>	“You can’t keep coming home so late! It’s so inconsiderate.”
<b>“I” Statement</b>	“I feel worried when you come home late. I can’t even sleep.”

<b>Blaming</b>	“You never call me. I guess we just won’t talk anymore.”
<b>“I” Statement</b>	“I feel hurt when you go so long without calling. I’m afraid you don’t care.”

#### Practice

<b>Scenario</b>	A friend always cancels plans at the last minute. Recently, you were waiting for them at a restaurant, when they called to say they couldn’t make it.
<b>“I” Statement</b>	

<b>Scenario</b>	You are working on a group project, and one member is not completing their portion. You have repeatedly had to finish their work.
<b>“I” Statement</b>	

<b>Scenario</b>	Your boss keeps dumping new work on you, with little instruction, and not enough time. Despite working overtime, you’re weeks behind.
<b>“I” Statement</b>	

APPENDIX L: SAMPLE ACTIVITY FOR COMMUNICATION SKILL  
(REFLECTION)

## Reflections

### Communication Skill

Using a technique called **reflection** can quickly help you become a better listener. When reflecting, you will repeat back what someone has just said to you, but in your own words. This shows that you didn't just hear the other person, but you are trying to understand them.

Reflecting what another person says can feel funny at first. You might think the other person will be annoyed at you for repeating them. However, when used correctly, reflections receive a positive reaction and drive a conversation forward. **Here's an example:**

**Speaker:** "I get so angry when you spend so much money without telling me. We're trying to save for a house!"

**Listener:** "We're working hard to save for a house, so it's really frustrating when it seems like I don't care."

### ✓ Quick Tips

The tone of voice you use for reflections is important. Use a tone that comes across as a statement, with a bit of uncertainty. Your goal is to express: "I think this is what you're telling me, but correct me if I'm wrong." Your reflections don't have to be perfect. If the other person corrects you, that's good! Now you have a better understanding of what they're trying to say.

Try to reflect emotions, even if the person you're listening to didn't clearly describe them. You may be able to pick up on how they feel by their tone of voice or body language.

Switch up your phrasing, or your reflections *will* start to sound forced. Try some of these:

- "I hear you saying that..."
- "It sounds like you feel..."
- "You're telling me that..."

Focus on reflecting the main point. Don't worry too much about all the little details, especially if the speaker had a lot to say.

# Reflections

## Communication Skill

### Practice

"I was in a bad mood yesterday because work has been so stressful. I just can't keep up with everything I have to do."

**Reflection:**

"I feel like I'm doing all of the work around the house. I need you to help me clean and do the dishes more often."

**Reflection:**

"I've been worried when you don't answer your phone. I always think something might've happened to you."

**Reflection:**

"I don't understand what she wants from me. First she says she wants one thing, then another."

**Reflection:**

**APPENDIX M: SAMPLE PSYCHOEDUCATION MATERIAL FOR PASSIVE,  
AGGRESSIVE, AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION**

**Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Communication**

**Passive Communication**

During passive communication, a person prioritizes the needs, wants, and feelings of others, even at their own expense. The person does not express their own needs, or does not stand up for them. This can lead to being taken advantage of, even by well-meaning people who are unaware of the passive communicator's needs and wants.

- Soft spoken / quiet
- Allows others to take advantage
- Prioritizes needs of others
- Poor eye contact / looks down or away
- Does not express one's own needs or wants
- Lack of confidence

**Aggressive Communication**

Through aggressive communication, a person expresses that only their own needs, wants, and feelings matter. The other person is bullied, and their needs are ignored.

- Easily frustrated
- Speaks in a loud or overbearing way
- Unwilling to compromise
- Use of criticism, humiliation, and domination
- Frequently interrupts or does not listen
- Disrespectful toward others

**Assertive Communication**

Assertive communication emphasizes the importance of *both* peoples' needs. During assertive communication, a person stands up for their own needs, wants, and feelings, but also listens to and respects the needs of others. Assertive communication is defined by confidence, and a willingness to compromise.

- Listens without interruption
- Clearly states needs and wants
- Willing to compromise
- Stands up for own rights
- Confident tone / body language
- Good eye contact

**Examples**

<b>Scenario</b>	A friend asks to borrow your car. This will be a big inconvenience for you.
<b>Passive</b>	Umm, yeah, I guess that's fine. Do you need me to fill the tank?
<b>Aggressive</b>	No way! Why would I let you borrow my car? You're crazy to even ask.
<b>Assertive</b>	I need my car that day, but I'll have time to drop you off.

## Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Communication

### Practice

<b>Scenario</b>	Your boss asks you to stay late, while everyone else leaves. You're always the one who stays late, and tonight you have plans.
<b>Passive</b>	
<b>Aggressive</b>	
<b>Assertive</b>	

<b>Scenario</b>	Your partner left a mess in the kitchen, and you're too busy to clean.
<b>Passive</b>	
<b>Aggressive</b>	
<b>Assertive</b>	

<b>Scenario</b>	You're at a restaurant, and the server brought you the wrong dish.
<b>Passive</b>	
<b>Aggressive</b>	
<b>Assertive</b>	

<b>Scenario</b>	A friend showed up at your house uninvited. Usually you would be happy to let them in, but this time you're busy.
<b>Passive</b>	
<b>Aggressive</b>	
<b>Assertive</b>	

# Assertive Communication



**Assertive Communication:** A communication style in which a person stands up for their own needs and wants, while also taking into consideration the needs and wants of others, without behaving passively or aggressively.

## Traits of Assertive Communicators

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- Clearly state needs and wants
- Eye contact
- Listens to others without interruption
- Appropriate speaking volume
- Steady tone of voice
- Confident body language

## Assertiveness Tips

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**Respect yourself.** Your needs, wants, and rights are as important as anyone else's. It's fine to express what you want, so long as you are respectful toward the rights of others.

**Express your thoughts and feelings calmly.** Giving the silent treatment, yelling, threatening, and shaming are all great examples of what not to do. Take responsibility for your emotions, and express them in a calm and factual manner. Try starting sentences with "I feel...".

**Plan what you're going to say.** Know your wants and needs, and how you can express them, before entering a conversation. Come up with specific sentences and words you can use.

**Say "no" when you need to.** You can't make everyone happy all the time. When you need to say "no", do so clearly, without lying about the reasons. Offer to help find another solution.

## Examples of Assertive Communication

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"I've been feeling frustrated about doing most of the chores around the house. I understand that you're busy, but I need help. How can we make this work?"

*The speaker takes responsibility for their feelings without blaming, and clearly describes their needs.*

"I won't be able to take you to the airport on Friday. I've had a long week, and I want to rest."

*The speaker respects their own needs and wants by clearly saying "no".*

"I'm having a hard time sleeping when your music is on. What if you use headphones, or I can help you move the speakers to another room."

*The speaker describes their needs, while also considering the needs and wants of the other person.*

## Assertive Communication

### Practice

**Tip:** Before responding, consider what your wants and needs might be in each situation.

**Your Partner:** "I know you have plans for the weekend, but I really need you to watch the kids. I have a friend coming to town, and we made plans."

**Assertive Response:**

**Situation:** You've just received your food at a restaurant, and it was prepared incorrectly. Your sandwich seems to have extra mayo, instead of no mayo.

**Assertive Statement:**

**Your Friend:** "Hey, can I borrow some money? I want to buy these shoes, but I left my wallet at home. I'll pay you back soon, I swear. It won't be like last time."

**Assertive Response:**

**Situation:** Your neighbor is adding an expansion to their house, and the crew starts working, very loudly, at 5 AM. It has woken you up every day for a week.

**Assertive Statement:**

# APPENDIX N: SAMPLE PSYCHOEDUCATION MATERIAL FOR BOUNDARY-SETTING

## What are Personal Boundaries?

**Personal boundaries** are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. A person with healthy boundaries can say “no” to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

A person who always keeps others at a distance (whether emotionally, physically, or otherwise) is said to have *rigid boundaries*. Alternatively, someone who tends to get too involved with others has *porous boundaries*.

Common traits of rigid, porous, and healthy boundaries.		
Rigid Boundaries	Porous Boundaries	Healthy Boundaries
<p>Avoids intimacy and close relationships.</p> <p>Unlikely to ask for help.</p> <p>Has few close relationships.</p> <p>Very protective of personal information.</p> <p>May seem detached, even with romantic partners.</p> <p>Keeps others at a distance to avoid the possibility of rejection.</p>	<p>Overshares personal information.</p> <p>Difficulty saying “no” to the requests of others.</p> <p>Overinvolved with others’ problems.</p> <p>Dependent on the opinions of others.</p> <p>Accepting of abuse or disrespect.</p> <p>Fears rejection if they do not comply with others.</p>	<p>Values own opinions.</p> <p>Doesn’t compromise values for others.</p> <p>Shares personal information in an appropriate way (does not over or under share).</p> <p>Knows personal wants and needs, and can communicate them.</p> <p>Accepting when others say “no” to them.</p>



Most people have a mix of different boundary types. For example, someone could have healthy boundaries at work, porous boundaries in romantic relationships, and a mix of all three types with their family.



The appropriateness of boundaries depends heavily on setting. What’s appropriate to say when you’re out with friends might not be appropriate when you’re at work.



Some cultures have very different expectations when it comes to boundaries. For example, in some cultures it’s considered wildly inappropriate to express emotions publicly. In other cultures, emotional expression is encouraged.

# What are Personal Boundaries?

## Types of Boundaries

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**Physical boundaries** refer to personal space and physical touch. Healthy physical boundaries include an awareness of what's appropriate, and what's not, in various settings and types of relationships (hug, shake hands, or kiss?). Physical boundaries may be violated if someone touches you when you don't want them to, or when they invade your personal space (for example, rummaging through your bedroom).

**Intellectual boundaries** refer to thoughts and ideas. Healthy intellectual boundaries include respect for others' ideas, and an awareness of appropriate discussion (should we talk about the weather, or politics?). Intellectual boundaries are violated when someone dismisses or belittles another person's thoughts or ideas.

**Emotional boundaries** refer to a person's feelings. Healthy emotional boundaries include limitations on when to share, and when not to share, personal information. For example, gradually sharing personal information during the development of a relationship, as opposed to revealing everything to everyone. Emotional boundaries are violated when someone criticizes, belittles, or invalidates another person's feelings.

**Sexual boundaries** refer to the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of sexuality. Healthy sexual boundaries involve mutual understanding and respect of limitations and desires between sexual partners. Sexual boundaries can be violated with unwanted sexual touch, pressure to engage in sexual acts, leering, or sexual comments.

**Material boundaries** refer to money and possessions. Healthy material boundaries involve setting limits on what you will share, and with whom. For example, it may be appropriate to lend a car to a family member, but probably not to someone you met this morning. Material boundaries are violated when someone steals or damages another person's possessions, or when they pressure them to give or lend them their possessions.

**Time boundaries** refer to how a person uses their time. To have healthy time boundaries, a person must set aside enough time for each facet of their life such as work, relationships, and hobbies. Time boundaries are violated when another person demands too much of another's time.

## Tips for Healthy Boundaries



**Personal boundaries** are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. A person with healthy boundaries can say “no” to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

### **Know your limits.**

Before becoming involved in a situation, know what’s acceptable to you, and what isn’t. It’s best to be *as specific as possible*, or you might be pulled into the trap of giving just a little bit more, over and over, until you’ve given far too much.

### **Know your values.**

Every person’s limits are different, and they’re often determined by their personal values. For example, if you value family above all else, this might lead to stricter limits on how late you will stay at work, away from family. Know what’s most important to you, and protect it.

### **Listen to your emotions.**

If you notice feelings of discomfort or resentment, don’t bury them. Try to understand what your feelings are telling you. Resentment, for example, can often be traced to feelings of being taken advantage of.

### **Have self-respect.**

If you always give in to others, ask if you are showing as much respect to yourself as you show to others. Boundaries that are too open might be due to misguided attempts to be liked by elevating other people’s needs above one’s own.

### **Have respect for others.**

Be sure that your actions are not self-serving, at the expense of others. Interactions should not be about winning, or taking as much as possible. Instead, consider what’s fair to everyone, given the setting and relationship. You might “win”, but at the cost of a relationship’s long-term health.

### **Be assertive.**

When you know it’s time to set a boundary, don’t be shy. Say “no” respectfully, but without ambiguity. If you can make a compromise while respecting your own boundaries, try it. This is a good way to soften the “no”, while showing respect to everyone involved.

### **Consider the long view.**

Some days you will give more than you take, and other days you will take more than you give. Be willing to take a longer view of relationships, when appropriate. But if you’re *always* the one who’s giving or taking, there might be a problem.

## Boundary Exploration

Think about a person, or a group of people, with whom you struggle to set healthy boundaries. This could mean that your boundaries are too rigid (you keep this person at a distance), too porous (you open up too much), or there's some other problem that isn't so easily labeled.

**Who do you struggle to set healthy boundaries with?** (e.g. "my husband" or "coworkers")

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In your relationship with the person you listed above, how are your boundaries in each of the following categories? Add a check in the appropriate column for each boundary category.

Boundary Category	Porous	Rigid	Healthy	Other
Physical Boundaries				
Intellectual Boundaries				
Emotional Boundaries				
Sexual Boundaries				
Material Boundaries				
Time Boundaries				

Take a moment to imagine what it will be like when you begin to establish healthy boundaries with this person. If your boundaries are too rigid, that might mean opening up. If they're porous, it might mean setting limits and saying "no" when you don't want to do something.

**What are some specific actions you can take to improve your boundaries?**

**How do you think the other person will respond to these changes?**

**How do you think your life will be different once you've established healthy boundaries?**

## APPENDIX O: SAMPLE ACTIVITY FOR VALUE EXPLORATION

### Values Discussion Questions

**1** Values tend to change as we pass through different stages of life. For example, the things that a teenager values are usually very different than what a parent values. Think back to a different stage of your life. How were your values different? How are they the same?

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**2** Everyone has a personal set of values, built from their unique life experiences. One important factor in what we value are the values of our friends, families, and society. How do your values *differ* from your friends and family? How do they differ from the society you live in?

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**3** Think of a person who you respect or look up to. What do you think their most important values might be? What strengths or qualities do they have that you admire?

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**4** We can learn a lot about our own values by the way we react to other people. Think of behaviors that you disapprove of, or dislike, from others. What does this tell you about your own values? How would you behave differently if you were in their position?

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**5** Think of a value you have now that you did not used to have, or a value that has become more important to you. What life experiences led to this value changing? How does this change affect you now?

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**6** The values we hold do not always align with our actions. Some values are difficult to live up to, or other priorities get in the way. Which of these values do you hope to focus on in the future? What life changes would you need to make to accomplish this?

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**7** How our values are shown differ from setting to setting. For example, your family might see a different side of you than friends, co-workers, or an authority figure. Think of three people from different parts of your life. How do you think each of them would describe your values? What evidence do they have?

## Exploring Values

Your **values** are the things you believe are most important. Values help to determine your priorities in life, and heavily influence decision-making. For example, a person who values wealth might prioritize their career, while a person who values family might try to spend more time at home. When a person's actions do not match their values (e.g. valuing family, but working a lot), they may become discontent.

**Value are often passed down by family, and the society you live in. To begin exploring your own values, think about the values of the people who surround you.**

My mother's values:	My father's values:
1	1
2	2
3	3

The values of a person I respect:	Society's values:
1	1
2	2
3	3

The values I would like to live by:	The values I actually live by:
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4

# Values

## Self-Exploration

Values are the things in life that you feel are most important. While one person might value their family relationships above all else, another person might value their career. Everyone's values are different, and there's no "correct" set of values.

**Instructions:** Understanding your values will help you better focus on what's important to you. This worksheet will help you think, in detail, about what your values might be. If there are any sections that do not apply to you, feel free to skip them.



Family



Marriage



Parenting



Friends



Leisure



Work



Spirituality



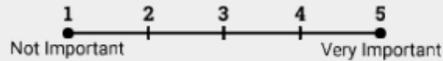
Community



Health



### Family Relationships (other than marriage)



Ideally, what would your family relationships be like?

What personal qualities would you like to contribute to your family?

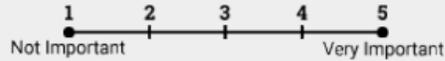
Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve this area?

# Values

## Self-Exploration



### Marriage / Intimate Relationships



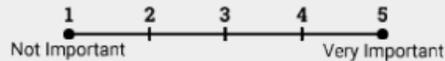
How would you describe your ideal marriage or intimate relationship?

In your ideal marriage or intimate relationship, how would you treat your partner?

Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward your marriage or intimate relationships? If not, how would you like to improve this area?



### Parenting



Which of your personal qualities can you use within the role of being a parent?

How would you like your son or daughter to describe you, as a parent?

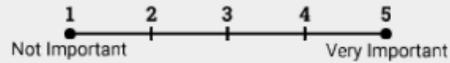
Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?

# Values

## Self-Exploration



### Friendships / Social Relationships



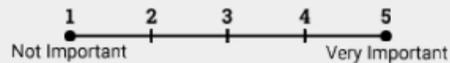
What sort of friendships would you like to have?

How can you contribute to building your ideal friendships?

Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?



### Work / Career / Education



What's important to you about your work, career, or education?

How would you like others to view you within your professional roles?

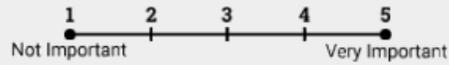
Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?

# Values

## Self-Exploration



### Recreation / Relaxation



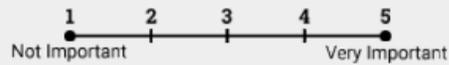
What are your ideal forms of recreation and relaxation?

Why are recreation and relaxation important to you?

Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?



### Spirituality



What does "spirituality" mean to you?

In what ways is spirituality important to you?

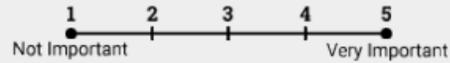
Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?

# Values

## Self-Exploration



### Community / Citizenship



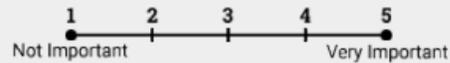
How would you like to contribute to your community, or the world?

What does it mean to you to be a good member of your community, or a good citizen?

Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?



### Physical Health / Well-Being



Ideally, how would you take care of your physical health and well-being?

Why is physical health important to you?

Do you feel that you are contributing enough time and effort toward this area of your life? If not, how would you like to improve?

## APPENDIX P: SAMPLE ACTIVITY FOR SELF EXPLORATION



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### Inside/Outside / Adentro/Afuera

Author: Karen Akamine | Category: Children's Windows | Added: 11/2015

#### Objective

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Helps create awareness and a stronger sense of self by exploring the self that we allow others to see and the self that is on the inside. In this workshop, participants use creative paper folding, symbolism and journaling to represent their inside and outside selves.

This project was brought to us by Karen Akamine who was trained at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena. The concept was adapted into this workshop by the AWWB staff.

#### Age Range

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6 and up

#### Materials

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- Colored construction paper
- Copy paper
- Cray-Pas
- Colored pencils
- Pens

#### Suggested Time Frame

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Intro
2 min
Opening
8 min
Warm Up
10 min

Adapted from A Window Between Worlds

<b>Creation</b> 30 min
<b>Closing</b> 10 min
<b>Total</b> 01:00 hr

### Setup

We recommend that you prepare the supplies and set up in advance to help things go smoothly. You might want to create an example of the journaling page with copy paper as well as different types of folds (see figures below) with construction paper.



*Table Set-Up*

### Introduction

When possible, try to individually welcome each participant and let them know you are glad they are there. One-on-one contact can help them get connected and feel safe and comfortable enough to truly use their Windows time for themselves.

"Before we begin, I want you to know that this workshop is a window of time for you. This means that this is a safe space to notice your thoughts, feelings, and needs. Since this space is your window of time, everything you do or say is voluntary. I will offer a suggested workshop idea, share about the materials we have available, and invite you to create. Just because I choose to demonstrate a certain way though does not mean there is a right or wrong way to do this. It doesn't matter what it looks like. What matters is taking this time to truly honor your thoughts and feelings, however they come out. Please ask for what you need, and know that I am here to support you. If you are having trouble thinking or draw a blank on what to create or write, feel free to just play with the materials."

### Opening

"The workshop we are doing today is called Inside/Outside. It is a chance to explore the 'you' that people see on the outside, and the 'you' that you know is on the inside. We will be using folded paper, Cray-Pas, and colored pencils to create our inside and outside selves with words, shapes, and symbols.

"Before we start, I invite you to share your name and two words and/or body movements if you would like:

Adapted from A Window Between Worlds

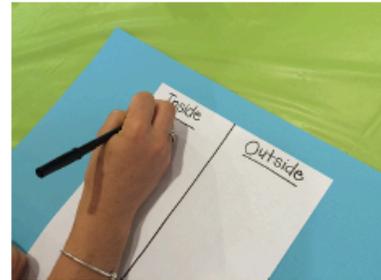
- The first thing is a word and/or body movement that describes/shows how you feel on the inside.
- The second is a word and/or body movement that describes/shows how your feel on the outside. I will give you a moment to think about what you would like to share or if you would like to share at all.

Again, this is your window of time and everything is voluntary. As long as you are honoring your needs, you are just fine."

### Warm Up

"To help jog our thinking and get us ready to create, we are going to do a quick journaling exercise. You can choose a piece of copy paper and fold it in half, long ways, dividing it into two columns.

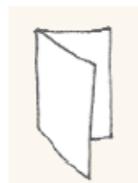
On one side, you can write 'Inside' and on the other side, you can write 'Outside.' You can choose to write on either side of the paper, the top and bottom, in a circle and around it, or whatever way you choose to represent "inside" and "outside."



- **Inside:** On the "inside" part of the paper, you can write words or phrases that describe how you feel and look like on the inside. How would you describe or tell about the you that you or only a few people may know about?
- **Outside:** On the "outside" part of the paper, you can write words or phrases that describe how you feel and look like on the outside. How would you describe or tell about the you that you show to the world?

### Creation

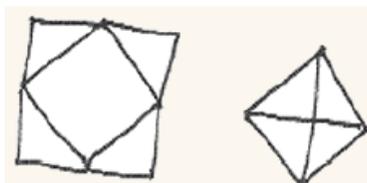
"Next, I invite you to choose a piece of construction paper and fold it so it has an inside and an outside. You can also feel free to get creative with your folds and show your expression through unique folds (refer to the different folding options below). I will demonstrate some different folds that you can try out on your creations to represent the inner and outer you.



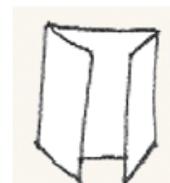
*Door Fold*



*Triangle Fold*



*Diamond Fold (open and closed)*



*Double Door Fold*

"Think about the outside you, and when you are ready, you can start with the outside of your paper. On the outside are you bright or dark? Are you sharp or soft? Are you foggy or clear? Think about the words that you wrote down on your journaling page. What colors come to mind when you think of those words? Can you add any shapes or symbols that go along with those words?

"With the Cray-Pas, use shapes and colors to draw how you are on the outside. When you are ready, you can move to the inside. Open up your paper and think about how you are on the inside. Are you bright or dark? Are you one color

Adapted from A Window Between Worlds

or many colors? Are you soft or rough? Use Cray-Pas to draw shapes and colors that show the inside 'you' on the inside of your paper. When you are finished, you can write any words that go with your creation."

*Note: Welcome participants to start on any part of their creation as desired. Some participants might find it easier to start on a specific part of their creation first. As you notice participants finishing up, encourage them to think about how they might want to take care of themselves, inside and outside. What are some of the things they can do?*



"Outside" with symbols and images



"Inside" with words and images



"Outside" with words and images



"Inside" with words and images

### Closing

Give each participant an opportunity to share their creation and how it felt to create it. You can also ask how they plan to take care of themselves, inside and outside.

Validate their courage for opening themselves up to their own creativity and respecting whatever came out.

Adapted from A Window Between Worlds

## APPENDIX Q: SELF-COMPASSION QUESTIONNAIRE

### How would you treat a friend?

Please take out a sheet of paper and answer the following questions:

1. First, think about times when a close friend feels really bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation (especially when you're at your best)? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you typically talk to your friends.
2. Now think about times when you feel bad about yourself or are struggling. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you talk to yourself.
3. Did you notice a difference? If so, ask yourself why. What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others so differently?
4. Please write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend when you're suffering.
5. Why not try treating yourself like a good friend and see what happens?

Adapted from Self-Compassion by Kristen Neff

## APPENDIX R: SELF-ESTEEM JOURNAL

### Self-Esteem Journal

<b>MON.</b>	Something I did well today...	
	Today I had fun when...	
	I felt proud when...	
<b>TUE.</b>	Today I accomplished...	
	I had a positive experience with...	
	Something I did for someone...	
<b>WED.</b>	I felt good about myself when...	
	I was proud of someone else...	
	Today was interesting because...	
<b>THUR.</b>	I felt proud when...	
	A positive thing I witnessed...	
	Today I accomplished...	
<b>FRI.</b>	Something I did well today...	
	I had a positive experience with (a person, place, or thing)...	
	I was proud of someone when...	
<b>SAT.</b>	Today I had fun when...	
	Something I did for someone...	
	I felt good about myself when...	
<b>SUN.</b>	A positive thing I witnessed...	
	Today was interesting because...	
	I felt proud when...	

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