

APPENDIX C

Group Activities

Sample Group Activities

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- In this section are a number of activities and discussion guides suitable for use in group treatment. Many of these activities may be familiar to individuals who run cooperative games in school settings, camps, and other group programs. For each activity, we reference specific treatment building block(s) that may be targeted, overarching purpose, instructions, and sample discussion questions. Some activities, as noted in the individual instructions, reference worksheets found in Appendix D. For other activities, sample prompts are provided following the activity instructions.

Feelings Toolkit Creation

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- This page provides sample instructions for use with an ongoing group project: the creation of a feelings “toolkit” across group sessions, along with examples of items that might be included in such a kit.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Technique

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- This page provides a sample script for leading a progressive muscle relaxation activity in a group or individual setting.

Icebreaker Prompts

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- Many groups use opening “icebreaker” questions as part of their routine. This page provides examples of prompts for different types of icebreaker questions, along with sample instructions for including these in opening/closing group circles.

Sample Group Session

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- Here we provide an example of a single session from a group developed using the ARC framework. Note the way in which routine and modulation skills are incorporated into the group’s structure, along with activities targeting specific skills.

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Sample Group Activities

ACTIVITY: GUESS WHO?

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression, Identity; Icebreaker activity**
- **Purpose:** Increase group members' awareness of/attunement to other members and awareness of ways in which they already know each other. Have fun.
- **Materials:** Preprinted slips of paper with questions (see examples).
- **Directions:** Each group member receives five slips with prompts on them (e.g., favorite movie, song). Each member writes answers to each prompt and puts folded slips in a hat. Members take turns picking a slip out of the hat and guessing whose answer it is. If they guess right, they get a point. If short on time, you can leave slips out of hat after all guesses, right and wrong, so the hat goes around five times, and then those that were guessed wrong can be claimed by those who wrote them. If you have more time, you can put wrong guesses back in hat and keep going around until all have been guessed.
- **Sample Prompts:** favorite type of pet, favorite food, favorite movie, favorite song, favorite actor or actress, favorite TV show, favorite color, favorite band or musical artist, place you'd like to travel to, favorite book

ACTIVITY: BODY DRAWING

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Identification**
- **Purpose:** To increase participant ability to tune in to ways that feelings are expressed in the body.
- **Materials:** Silhouette drawing of body (such as "Where Do I Feel . . ." Appendix D), crayons or colored pencils (preferable to markers)
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Provide participants with body drawing and six colored pencils or crayons.
 - ◆ Ask participants to create a key, selecting colors to represent the following feelings: happy, angry, sad, scared, excited, worried.
 - ◆ For each identified feeling, participants should use crayons/pencils to color . . . *Where in their body they feel* _____.
 - ◆ *Discussion:* Following completion of this activity, discuss with participants:
 - How easy/hard was this?
 - Were some feelings easier than others to locate in the body? Which feelings were the easiest? Which were the hardest?
 - Did any feelings overlap in location? Which ones?
 - Which feeling was the most distinct (i.e., the only one held in a particular part of the body)?

DISCUSSION: THE FUNCTION OF FEELINGS AND "MASKING" FEELINGS

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Identification, Modulation, Affect Expression**
- **Ask:** What function do feelings serve? Elicit ideas from the group.
 - ◆ If group members are not able to think of reasons, provide examples: Fear may tell us we need to run, and it helps us survive; anger may help us feel powerful in a difficult situation; and so on.
 - ◆ *General idea:* Feelings provide us with information (about external world and internal experience) and pull us toward specific actions or responses.

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- **Ask:** "Are feelings always accurate? In other words, is what we're *AWARE* that we're feeling always the true feeling we are having?"
 - ◆ **Teaching points:**
 - One feeling sometimes acts as a "mask" for another.
 - This can happen for many reasons:
 - ◇ To decrease feelings of vulnerability (e.g., anger substituting for sadness or fear).
 - ◇ Because past experience made it dangerous to exhibit or acknowledge a particular emotion (e.g., showing fear might increase vulnerability, or showing anger might increase abuse).
 - ◇ Cultural or family norms: How acceptable it is to show particular feelings, as well as different ways feelings are expressed.
- **Ask:** "Are there feelings that you don't like to show? Do you know why?"
- **Ask:** "How do you know when feelings are 'true feelings' versus 'mask feelings'?"
- **Ask:** "Is there any risk that comes with consistently masking feelings?"
 - ◆ **Teaching point:** Feelings that don't come out in one way will often come out in other ways (e.g., held in the body, interfering with sleep or eating, irritability, etc.)
- **Ask:** "Why might you want to shift your feelings?"
 - ◆ **Teaching point:** Feelings may be too intense, interfere with current activities, be inappropriate to the situation, lead to impulsive behavior, etc.
- **Ask:** "How do you shift to a different feeling?"
 - ◆ Review or discuss skills associated with managing feelings (e.g., relaxation, breathing, music).
- **Ask:** "What skills do you use?"

ACTIVITY: FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE GAME, PART 1: IDENTIFICATION OF DANGER RESPONSE

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Identification (Advanced), Trauma Experience Integration**
- **Purpose:** To facilitate application of the learned concept of the body's alarm system and the human danger response.
- **Materials:** Scenarios
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ The group facilitator reviews the body's alarm system and the trauma response. See teaching points below:
 - **The Body's Alarm System:** "Everyone has a built-in alarm system that signals when we might be in danger. One reason why human beings have been able to survive over time is because our brain recognizes signals around us that tell us that danger might be coming. This helps our bodies prepare to deal with danger when it comes."
 - **The Human Danger Response:** "When our brain recognizes danger, it prepares our body to deal with it. We can deal with something dangerous in three major ways: We can fight it, we can get away from it (flight), or we can freeze."
 - **Our Response May Be Different in Different Situations:** "What we pick to do sometimes depends on the kind of danger. So, for example, if a really small squirrel is attacking you, you might fight it, because you're bigger and stronger than it is. If a car comes speeding at you, and you're standing in the street, you'd probably run, because you can't really fight it, and if you stand still, you'll get hit. If you saw a big bear or some other animal nearby, you might freeze, because you can't really fight it, and you're probably not fast enough to run away."

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- **Our Body Gives Us the Fuel/Energy that We Need to Survive:** "When it's time for our body to fight, or run, or freeze, we need a lot of energy to do those things. So, once the brain recognizes danger, the "action" or "doing" part of our brain sends a signal to our body to release a bunch of chemicals, like fuel for a car. That gives us the energy we need to cope with the danger."
- ◆ Following review of the concepts, the group leader facilitates the "Fight, Flight, Freeze Game." Each member takes a turn listening to one of the scenarios below. The task is to identify whether the person in the scenario is actively engaged in the *fight*, *flight*, or *freeze* response. Group members can earn points for guessing the correct response (goal should be cooperative, rather than competitive).

FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE GAME, PART 1—SAMPLE SCENARIOS

1. Joey is crossing the street and all of a sudden a car comes racing toward him. Without thinking he runs to the other side of the road as fast as he can. (*flight*)
2. Bobby is taking a nature walk and all of a sudden he sees a bear standing 10 feet away looking at him. He has learned that bears react to sudden movement and noise. He stays as still as he possibly can until the bear finally moves away. (*freeze*)
3. Jennifer is in school and one of her peers calls her a name and starts to threaten her. She starts screaming and yelling as loud as she can "NO, NO, NO . . . you don't threaten me." (*fight*)
4. Holly just started a new program. One of her roommates is having a difficult time and starts slamming things around the room. Holly bolts out of her room and out of the front door of the building. (*flight*)
5. Gage is at the hospital waiting for news about a family member who is in surgery. He sees the doctor walking toward him and then everything feels as if it were in slow motion: He can't move, he can't talk, and time stands still. (*freeze*)
6. Nate is walking down the street and a small dog begins to attack his leg. Nate starts screaming at the dog and kicks his leg back and forth, over and over again, until the dog finally lets go of him. (*fight*)
7. Betty is walking down the street and a large, large dog starts to walk toward her. Without thinking she starts running toward the nearest building and is able to narrowly escape the dog. (*flight*)
8. Bobby just left the movie theater after watching a scary movie. Walking down a dark road, he hears a weird noise nearby. His heart starts beating, his body feels jumpy, his arms go up, and his fists are ready to strike. (*fight*)
9. A deer is crossing the road and a car starts coming toward it. The deer just stands there—"a deer caught in the headlights." (*freeze*)
10. Joey's dad comes home in a really angry mood and starts calling for him. Joey runs into his room and hides under the bed. (*flight*)
11. Lilly is sitting in class and one of her classmates starts to throw things at the teacher. Lilly gets up from her desk, grabs her classmate's arm to stop her, and puts a book in front of the object that is being thrown. (*fight*)
12. Johnny is tiptoeing out of his room, trying to sneak down the hallway to get some water even though he does not have permission. All of a sudden he hears a staff member calling his name. Johnny tries to stay as still and as quiet as possible because he is very scared of getting in trouble. (*freeze*)

(cont.)

ACTIVITY: FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE GAME, PART 2: RECOGNIZING TRIGGERS

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Identification (Advanced), Trauma Experience Integration**
- **Purpose:** To facilitate application of the learned concept of triggers, or “false alarms.”
- **Materials:** Scenarios
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ The group facilitator reviews the concept of triggers, or “false alarms,” using the teaching points outlined below:
 - ◆ **False Alarms:** *“False alarms can happen when we hear or see or feel something that reminds us of bad things that used to happen. Those reminders are called Triggers. Our brain has learned to recognize those reminders, because in the past when they were around, dangerous things happened, and we had to react pretty quickly. Different people have different reminders. So, if someone got yelled at a lot, hearing people yell might activate the alarm and make the ‘doing’ part of the brain turn on. If someone didn’t have enough attention paid to them when they were little, feeling all alone or scared might turn on the alarm.”*
 - ◆ **What Happens When the Alarm Goes Off?:** *“Once our alarm turns on, our brain preps our body for action. When that happens, our body fills with ‘fuel’ to prepare us for dealing with danger. This is really important if it’s real danger (like a bear, or a speeding car, or a really mean squirrel), but not so helpful if it’s a false alarm, and there isn’t really any danger around. Imagine if you were in math class, and something felt dangerous—suddenly, your body is filled with fuel.”*
 - ◆ **How Our “Danger Energy” Affects Us:** *“Remember that the fuel gives us the energy to fight, or get away, or freeze. When our body has all that energy, we have to do something. So—some kids suddenly feel really angry, or want to argue or fight with someone. Some kids just feel antsy or jumpy. Some kids want to hide in a corner or get as far away as they can—and sometimes they don’t even know why. Other kids suddenly feel really shut down, like someone flipped a switch and turned them off. All of these are ways your body is trying to deal with something it thinks is dangerous.”*
 - ◆ **The Problem with the False Alarm:** *“Sometimes, though, what sets off the alarm isn’t really dangerous—it’s just something that feels bad or reminds us of something bad that happens. When kids have a false alarm like that, it can be hard for other people to understand what just happened, and to help. Sometimes, kids even get into trouble.”*
 - ◆ **Recognizing Triggers:** *“It’s important to learn about what kinds of reminders might feel dangerous to you, and how your body reacts when those reminders are around. Everyone has different triggers and different ways to respond when the alarm goes off. If we know what sets off your alarm, and how you respond, we can get your thinking brain on board to help figure out when danger is real and when it’s a false alarm. **Triggers can be people, places, sounds, smells, touch, change, etc.**”*
 - ◆ Following review of these concepts, the group leader facilitates the “Recognizing Triggers Game.” Each member takes a turn listening to one of the scenarios written below. The task is to identify the current trigger that reminds the person in the scenario of past experiences. Group members can earn points for guessing the correct response (goal should be cooperative, rather than competitive).

(cont.)

RECOGNIZING TRIGGERS GAME—SAMPLE SCENARIOS

1. Lavert grew up in a neighborhood where there was a lot of violence. He often heard scary sounds outside of his window at night, including the sound of gunshots. One day Lavert was in school and someone dropped a book on the floor. He reacted quickly by yelling and then crying. (*sound of book dropping*)
2. Francisco's dad was really strict and often became very, very angry at home when Francisco broke a rule or made a mistake. Francisco learned to be very good at following rules, and he worked very hard to *never* make mistakes. He couldn't even have fun because he always had to think and plan to make everything in his life perfect. He would not do things that felt good if they broke one of his rules. (*mistakes*)
3. Tammy's mother used to hit her a lot when Tammy lived with her. Her mother's perfume smelled like oranges. At snack time Tammy started to peel an orange. All of a sudden she appeared frozen. She didn't say or do anything and couldn't answer staff's questions about whether or not she was okay. (*orange scent*)
4. When Debbie did something wrong at home, like broke the rules or didn't do her chores, she would get into trouble and her dad would hit her. One day at her school Debbie was told that she was in trouble for breaking a rule and was going to earn a consequence. Debbie stopped talking, did not move, and appeared frozen. (*being in trouble*)
5. When Jimmy was a little boy his mother always promised to do something special with him on Saturday afternoons. But, every Saturday afternoon Jimmy's mother would drink too much and break her promise. Jimmy would feel so disappointed and scared when his mom would drink. Yesterday, Jimmy's mom cancelled a visit. Jimmy started yelling at a female staff person, saying, "You are the worst staff person! You don't want me to see my mother! It's all your fault!" (*being let down/cancelled visit*)
6. Vivian had three younger sisters in her home growing up. Her mom wasn't around to take care of the younger kids, and they often took Vivian's things without asking. When Vivian complained, her mom always took her sisters' side. One day at the program, Vivian's roommate picked up one of Vivian's CDs and put it in the radio to play. Vivian ran over to her and punched her as hard as she could, screaming, "That's not yours!!!!!!!!!" (*taking CD*)
7. When Evan was 8 years old, he was taken suddenly from his parents home by DCF because his home was not a safe place for him. He didn't get any warning and was so, so scared, not knowing what was going to happen next. One day at the program he was living in, Evan learned that one of his favorite staff members had to leave the job suddenly for personal reasons. Evan found this out and went immediately to his room. He crawled under his bed and refused to come out. (*sudden departure/change*)
8. Gerald's dad used to hit him in the head with an open hand all the time. Gerald can't really remember why this happened—just that it did. One day one of his friends came walking up to him and started to move his arm and hand to give Gerald a side hug. Seeing the hand moving toward him, Gerald flinched and ducked his head. (*raised hand*)

(cont.)

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9. Briana loved making things for her grandmother, with whom she lived as a little girl. She would spend all day working on cards, drawings, and other nice things to give to her grandmother when she returned home from work. Most of the time her grandmother, returning from work, would glance at the art work that Briana gave her and say "What's this? I can't even tell what it is. Do you call this a drawing?" She would often throw it away. Briana usually won't even try to make things now that she is living with a foster family, but one day she did participate in an art project at school. She handed it to her foster mom when she got home, who started to ask a question about it. As soon as Briana heard the word *what*, she grabbed the paper back, ripped it up, and said "I suck at doing art." (*the word what*)
10. Benjamin's mother had a boyfriend who often hit his mother when angry. Benjamin was scared and angry watching his mother get hurt by someone so much bigger and stronger than she, and he would often try to help her/protect her. Now, in his program, Benjamin always makes sure that he pays attention to helping smaller animals or kids when they need it. Like at home, Benjamin feels that his job is to be the protector. One day one of the other kids was having a hard time and started threatening to hurt the program dog. Benjamin, without thinking, jumped in between the dog and the other student and started fighting back. (*threatened dog*)

ACTIVITY: TUNING INTO YOUR BODY/CHANGES IN PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL

- **ARC Target(s): Modulation**
- **Purpose:** To increase participants' awareness of their own level of physiological arousal, and ways that various activities might increase or decrease arousal level.
- **Materials:** Worksheet for measuring pulse rate. (*See worksheet, "Checking My Pulse," Appendix D*)
- **Teaching Points:**
 - ◆ "In order to regulate your body, you need to be able to tune in and know where you're at."
 - ◆ "Although your body responds automatically to different cues in the environment, and to internal and external experiences, there are things you can do to change your own arousal level."
 - ◆ "What kind of cues does your body give that you're in a comfortable or uncomfortable state of arousal?"
- **Measure Your Heartbeat:**
 - ◆ **Baseline pulse:** Teach participants how to take their own pulse by placing their index and middle fingers on the wrist or neck; be sure participants are not using their thumb. Have each participant measure his or her pulse for 20 seconds and multiply by 3 to get the baseline pulse rate. Write down the baseline pulse on the worksheet.
 - ◆ **Exercise pulse:** Have participants do 10–15 jumping jacks (and/or other brief strenuous activity—e.g., jogging in place for at least 20–30 seconds). Immediately after stopping, have participants remeasure their pulse and write down the results on the worksheet.
 - ◆ **Resting pulse:** Have each participant take five deep breaths while seated. Show participants how to breathe slowly in through the nose, out through the mouth. Immediately after completing the deep breaths, remeasure the participant's pulse and write down the result on the worksheet.
- **Discussion:** Ask participants: "How did your heart rate change across the three measurements? What other changes did you notice in your body? How effective was breathing in slowing down your heart rate? If not, why do you think this is? When else do you notice that your heart rate speeds up? Slows down?"
- **Note:** Other activities or exercises can be substituted or added at the discretion of the group leader; it is helpful to teach multiple exercises for each component (up-regulation, down-regulation).

(cont.)

ACTIVITY: BALL TOSS/GROUP JUGGLE

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression, Attunement**
- **Purpose:** To build awareness of key skills involved in effective communication.
- **Materials:** For every six participants, four to six small balls (ideally, round Nerf balls, beanbag balls, or similar)
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Participants should stand in a circle. The group leader explains: "We are going to make a pattern using this ball. I will throw to someone, saying the name first. That person should then throw the ball to someone else. Make sure that you throw the ball to someone who has not yet received it. The rules are simple: We are going to make a pattern with our throws. Everyone should get the ball once, and no one should get it more than once. The last person to get the ball should throw it back to me, completing the pattern. Every time you throw the ball, say the name of the person you are throwing to first. There are no winners or losers in this game. If you drop the ball, just pick it up and keep going."
 - ◆ The group leader should then start the pattern, making sure that all participants receive the ball once. When the group leader receives the ball back, practice the pattern several times to make sure all members remember from whom they receive the ball and to whom they throw the ball.
 - ◆ Once the group has become comfortable with the pattern, the group leader explains: "We are going to introduce more balls into our pattern, one by one. Our goal is to see how many balls we can throw at the same time, and keep the pattern going."
 - ◆ Make sure the group is comfortable with adding more balls, and then slowly add additional balls into the pattern. The group should be comfortable with two balls before a third is added, with three before a fourth is added, etc.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** Start open-ended: Ask group members what they noticed about the activity, whether they liked it or not, etc.
 - ◆ Specific questions:
 - "What did you notice about what made it easier or harder to be effective in this game? What helped keep the pattern moving smoothly?"
 - If not mentioned, tune in to the following ideas:
 - ◇ Making eye contact with the person who is throwing to you, and with the one who is receiving from you.
 - ◇ Saying the person's name [offering a cue that you are about to throw the ball].
 - ◇ Not throwing too hard or too soft.
 - ◇ Indicating with body language, eye contact, etc., that you are ready to throw/receive.
 - ◇ Tuning out distractions, concentrating only on the person who is throwing to you, and the person to whom you throw.
 - ◇ Lack of pressure: If you drop the ball, you can pick it up and continue the pattern.
 - Discuss with the group: "All of these skills were important in being successful at this activity. These skills are also all important in being effective at communicating." Ask: "How does each of these skills play into good communication?"

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ACTIVITY: CIRCLES OF TRUST

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression, Identity**
- **Purpose:** To build awareness of relationship resources; to build awareness of variations in intimacy across relationships.
- **Materials:** "Circles of Trust" worksheet (see Appendix D); pencils/pens
- **Directions:** Participants are given worksheets (concentric circles) and asked to consider the various relationships in their life. The center circle represents them; each participant is then asked to place names/initials of significant people in their life in the remaining circles, with distance from the center circle indicating strength/closeness of the relationship.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** Questions/discussion points may include: "Notice how many/few people are in your circles; notice where people tend to cluster. What does this tell you about your pattern of relationships? Do you tend to keep many people close? Most people at arm's length? Are you comfortable with the number of people in your life? Are there resources that you had forgotten about?"
- **Examine Specific Relationship Types**
 - ◆ **Have participants circle or mark in different colors, who in their circle are . . .**
 - People with whom they have fun?
 - People to whom they speak about important decisions?
 - People to whom they go to for emotional support?
 - People whom they consider family?
 - People who really know them?
 - ◆ **Using arrows, have participants indicate people to whom they would want to be closer, or from whom they would want more distance.**
 - ◆ **Discuss:** "Notice who in your life fills which functions. Are there any functions that are missing?"

DISCUSSION: "I" STATEMENTS

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression**
- **Purpose:** To teach participants about "I" statements and how these are linked to effective communication.
- **Materials:** None
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Provide participants with an example of two statements, such as:
 - "I can't believe you did that! You're such a jerk!"
 - versus
 - "I'm really angry about what you did. I need some space from you right now."
 - ◆ **Ask:** "What is different about these two statements? What kind of reaction might there be to the first one? To the second one?"
 - ◆ **Teach:** "I" statements are an effective way to communicate:
 - Rather than blaming, insulting, being aggressive, or putting someone on the defense, "I" statements focus on our own feelings and reactions.
 - Someone can challenge a "you" statement (the obvious answer to "You're such a jerk" is "No, I'm not, you are!"), but it's harder for someone to challenge an "I" statement (if I say I'm angry, it's hard for you to tell me I'm not!).
 - "I" statements express to someone how we feel and why we feel that way. They allow us to work on solutions and resolve conflicts. "You" statements often increase conflicts or negative situations.

(cont.)

ACTIVITY: CRAZY "I" STATEMENT TRANSLATION

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression**
- **Purpose:** To provide practice in using "I" statements rather than "you statements."
- **Materials:** Prompts for "I" statement translation; large Post-its and markers for Part 2 application/discussion.
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ **Part 1:** Demonstration: Crazy "I" Statements
 - ◆ Ask participants if they have ever seen movies in which words are translated from one language to another. Tell them: "In this activity you will act as the translators for people speaking in the foreign 'You' language'; your job is to translate each statement from *you* into *I*."
 - ◆ Group leaders demonstrate:
 - One leader reads a crazy "you" statement. For example: "You yellow-bellied, no-good rotten horse's pimple! You're a sniveling good-for-nothing who couldn't get something right if your life depended on it!"
 - The second leader offers a translation: "I'm very frustrated with how you did that."
 - *Note: Leaders should play up the humor/contrast between the two statements.*
 - ◆ Participants are then asked to translate further statements. Activity may consist of dialogue between the two group leaders or individual statements, with translations offered by two participants. (**See below for sample statements.**)
 - ◆ **Part 2:** Application: "You" versus "I" Statements
 - ◆ Ask participants to generate a list of "you" statements. These can be statements they've heard or ones they find themselves making. If participants have difficulty, offer examples (e.g., "You're such a jerk," "You make me so mad," "You ruin everything"). The goal is to generate a list of *realistic* "you" statements that are commonly experienced.
 - ◆ For each "you" statement generated, ask the group to offer translations: What kind of "I" statements might go with these? Write these next to the "you" statements.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** How did the statements change when they were *you* versus *I*? Which statements seemed more respectful? Which ones were likely to make the situation worse versus lead to solution? How would you rather be talked to?

"I" STATEMENTS TRANSLATION GAME—SAMPLE PROMPTS

"You" Statement:

"You yellow-bellied, no-good, rotten horse's pimple! You're a sniveling good-for-nothing who couldn't get something right if your life depended on it!"

Sample "I" statement:

"I'm very frustrated with how you did that."

"You" Statement:

"This school assignment is lame! It's only for stupid pea-brain donkeys! Your directions stink! And I already did this last year!"

Sample "I" Statements:

"I don't know how to do this assignment."/>"I don't like doing this type of work."

(cont.)

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"You" Statement:

"You must be a complete and utter moron, if you think I am so stupid/insensitive/dumb/worthless/inconsiderate/hopeless that I wouldn't know already that I shouldn't have done that!"

Sample "I" Statements:

"I already feel really bad about what happened."/ "I'm sorry."

"You" Statement:

"You're getting on my last, worn-out, overstretched nerve! You annoying, pestering, aggravating, irritating, bothersome turnip head! Cut it out!!!"

Sample "I" Statement:

"I want you to stop that."

"You" Statement:

"You brainless, dim-witted, moronic nincompoop! You make me absolutely, certifiably, completely insane! You big baboon! How does someone get to your age without a brain!?"

Sample "I" Statements:

"I'm really angry with you."/ "I'm feeling frustrated."

"You" statement:

"You're so pushy and annoying. Why are you always shoving into my business? You don't know what you're doing. You can't help me. You're always getting involved in stuff you don't know anything about."

Sample "I" Statements:

"I need some time alone."/ "I'd like some space."/ "I don't want to talk about that."

"You" Statement:

"Like your life is so big and important—you're just soooooo busy, and then you don't want to do anything, and here I am just twiddling my thumbs having nothing to do because you're just a stupid jerk!"

Sample "I" Statement:

"I want you to spend more time with me."

ACTIVITY: OWN YOUR ZONE

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression**
- **Purpose:** To recognize personal "comfort zones" with physical boundaries and to practice asserting personal preferences around boundaries.
- **Materials:** Strips of paper or masking tape, marker
- **Directions:** Participants can either be paired up, or paired one at a time with a group leader.
 - ◆ Participants should face their partner at a 10-foot difference (distance should be great enough that it is larger than most individuals' spatial needs).
 - ◆ One partner should begin to walk slowly toward the other. The person who is not moving should say "Stop" when the partner reaches a distance that feels comfortable.

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- ◆ Once stopped, the partner should be directed to “check in” with the other person, asking whether the distance is comfortable or whether he or she should move in/out. Once a comfortable distance is reached, the group leader should measure the distance with a strip of paper or piece of tape, and mark it with the participant’s name. This is his or her “physical comfort zone.”
- ◆ For each participant, introduce at least one novel variable (e.g., pretend that your partner is your . . . best friend, mother, therapist, school principal, kid you hate, etc., or you are in a . . . great mood, terrible mood, feeling sick, feeling jumpy, etc.). Redo the distance—how does this change the comfort zone?
- ◆ Each participant’s comfort zones (primary plus added variables) should be hung on the wall.
- **Postactivity Discussion:**
 - ◆ What are “physical spatial needs”? How do participants understand these?
 - ◆ What influences our spatial needs (if not named, introduce concepts such as relationship to other person, current mood state, family norms about space, cultural norms about space, current situation, etc.)?
 - ◆ How do you know if your spatial need is different from other people’s? Group leaders can demonstrate physical cues: What does it look like if you step into someone’s personal space? Pay attention to cues such as the other person stepping or leaning back, avoiding eye contact, looking pained.
 - ◆ How do you/should you handle different spatial needs? *Teaching point:* In interpersonal interactions, boundaries are generally determined by the person with the furthest/greatest boundary need.
 - ◆ Are you ever in situations where people inadvertently violate your boundaries—for example, in a crowded train? How can you deal with this?

ACTIVITY: EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression**
- **Purpose:** To explore personal “comfort zone” with emotional boundaries, and to illustrate differing boundary needs across interaction partners.
- **Materials:** List of interview questions (see sample questions, below) with increasingly intimate questions
- **Directions:** Participants are paired up and given the following instructions:
 - ◆ “Each of you is being given a list of interview questions to ask your partner. The questions start out as broad but become increasingly personal. Each of you gets to choose which of these questions you answer. The person being interviewed may answer whichever questions he or she is comfortable with; once you reach a question you do not feel comfortable answering, let your partner know you are ready to stop.”
 - ◆ Once the first partner has had an opportunity to act as interviewer, the roles should switch, and the second person should be interviewed.
- **Postactivity Discussion:**
 - ◆ How many questions were you willing to answer?
 - ◆ Were your boundaries the same as your partner’s, or different—that is, did you stop on the same question?
 - *Teaching Point:* Often, we reciprocate social intimacy—we go only as deep as our social partner.

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 12 of 19)

- ◆ What factors influenced how many questions you were willing to answer? Consider who your partner was, the setting, the mood you were in, etc. Is there anyone you can think of for whom you would have answered all of the questions? Any situations where you might answer none?
- ◆ General boundary discussion point: How do you know when something has intruded upon your boundaries? What internal cues do you have that your boundaries are being pushed?

SET YOUR BOUNDARIES: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite color?
2. Who is your favorite musical artist?
3. How many people are in your immediate family, or what you consider immediate family?
4. What book or books have influenced you?
5. Who is the person that you admire the most?
6. Who is the person that you feel closest to in your family?
7. What is the best experience you ever had in school?
8. What is a dream you have for your future?
9. If you could have three wishes, what would they be?
10. What is one of your earliest memories?
11. What is the worst experience you ever had in school?
12. What is something you don't like people to know about you?
13. Who is the person in your family you feel most disappointed by?
14. What is the scariest thing that ever happened to you?
15. What is something that you're ashamed of?

DISCUSSION: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- **ARC Target(s): Identity, Affect Expression, Trauma Experience Integration**
- **Purpose:** To distinguish healthy from unhealthy relationships.
- **Materials:** Large Post-its, markers
- **Discussion Points:**
 - ◆ What does it mean to have a "healthy" relationship? What qualities do you think are seen in healthy relationships? Write participant responses on Post-it sheets.
 - If not listed, include qualities such as *respect, not exploitive, appropriate to role*.
 - ◆ How do you know you are safe in a relationship? What does it mean to be "safe" in a relationship?

ACTIVITY: RELATIONSHIP CONTINUUM

- **ARC Target(s): Identity, Affect Expression, Trauma Experience Integration**
- **Purpose:** To distinguish healthy from unhealthy relationships.
- **Materials:** Sheets of paper or preprinted handouts with horizontal lines anchored at each end by "Healthy/Unhealthy" to create a continuum; relationship description prompts (see below); pencils; large Post-it with continuum line; marker

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 13 of 19)

- **Directions:** Read participants the following Relationship Description Sample Prompts one at a time (select four to six, depending on the group, or generate appropriate scenarios based on group composition). After reading each one, have participants mark whether they think the relationship is healthy or unhealthy by placing a vertical line on the continuum and marking it with the description number (i.e., 1–5).
- **Postactivity Discussion:**
 - ◆ After all prompts have been read, go back to each description and survey the group. Mark on a large sheet of paper how the group rated each scenario. Note differences in group ratings, and elicit why group members made the ratings they did.
 - ◆ Possible follow-up questions:
 - “How can you tell if a relationship is healthy or unhealthy? What struck you about these descriptions?”
 - “What do you think influences your perception of whether a relationship is healthy?” (Help participants to consider family norms, cultural norms, past experience in relationships, etc.)
 - “How can you make a relationship healthier? Do you always have control over this?”
 - “Is there ever a reason to stay in an unhealthy relationship? If yes, why? Are there things you can do to protect yourself in less healthy relationships?”

RELATIONSHIP DESCRIPTION SAMPLE PROMPTS FOR RELATIONSHIP CONTINUUM

1. Joshua and Tanya have been going out for 6 months; they are both 16. They started spending all their free time together right away. Josh gets really jealous if Tanya spends time away from him, whether with her girlfriends or even with her family. He wants her to prove that she loves him, and he suspects that she is cheating on him. Sometimes he accuses her of cheating and calls her names. Recently, he got so angry that he pushed her into the wall. Later, he apologized and said that he really loved her and didn't want to hurt her.
2. Kenny has always looked up to his father. His dad spends time with him, and has taught him how to do many things, like drive a car (when he was 13 years old) and fix things around the house. A lot of times, Kenny's dad is funny and fun to be around. However, at other times, Kenny's dad will get angry with him for little things. When Kenny doesn't understand how to do things right away, his father calls him “stupid” and an “idiot.” Kenny tries really hard to do things the right way so that he will stay on his father's good side.
3. Jamie and Maria have been friends since they were small; they grew up next door to each other. They like to do things together, such as go to the mall or just hang out. Sometimes they argue and get angry with each other, but usually they work it out pretty quickly. When Jamie is upset about things at home, she sometimes talks to Maria about it. Maria doesn't say much, but she knows Jamie very well, so she understands.
4. Larry is 15 and lives with his mother and younger sister, Amelia, who is 13. He works after school until 10 o'clock every night at the supermarket, bagging groceries. Half of this paycheck goes to his mother to help pay the rent, and he brings food home every night when he gets off work. Amelia has been getting into trouble at school and was suspended today for getting into a fight with another girl. When Larry came home and found out about Amelia's suspension, he became upset and began to yell at her and took away her cell phone as punishment.

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 14 of 19)

5. Joe and Mark have been friends forever. They both graduated high school and Mark went off to college 100 miles away. Joe works a steady job, owns a car, and lives at home with his mother and father. Every weekend, Joe drives over to Mark's school and hangs out with Mark and his friends, often staying over in Mark's dorm on Saturday nights. Sometimes Mark has schoolwork to do but is unable to get it done because Joe wants to hang out and party.
6. Jennifer and Tommy have been going out for a few months. Jennifer is 17 and graduating this year. Tommy is 18 and going to GED classes along with working. Jennifer loves sports and has joined a team each season and spends all her extra time studying or seeing Tommy. Tommy expects her to be home in the evenings when he calls to talk. Jennifer has had the opportunity to go out with the girls on her team after practice but doesn't do this because she doesn't want to miss Tommy's calls.
7. Johnny and Lindsey have been dating for about a month. It is the first time that Lindsey has had a boyfriend. She is excited that Johnny calls her a dozen times a day, both at home and at her after-school job. He says that he really loves her and is concerned about her, so he just wants to check to make sure she's okay. Recently he has wanted to spend a lot of time with her and asks her to cancel any plans that she has made with her friends. Lindsey's parents are concerned because she doesn't help out with her younger sister anymore.
8. Ryan lives with his mother, stepfather, and younger brother Joey. Ryan gets along with his family okay, but would rather spend time with his friends. He usually does the chores he is supposed to do at home. He has a curfew of 11 on weekdays and 12 on weekends, and he usually follows it, but sometimes he doesn't. When he comes home late, his mother and stepfather are angry and they ground him or take away his Game Boy or something else that he likes to do. He thinks he should have more freedom, since he is 16, so sometimes he gets angry at his parents, especially his stepfather, who, after all, isn't his "real" father. But he also knows that his parents are usually there for him when he needs them, and last year when he got in trouble in school for something he really didn't do, they went to bat for him.
9. Jordan is 13 years old; his next-door neighbor, Ray, is 17. Jordan has always looked up to Ray, but Ray has barely paid any attention to him. Lately, Ray has allowed Jordan to hang out with him and his friends, as long as Jordan does them favors, like go and get them cigarettes or beer out of Jordan's house when his parents aren't looking. Sometimes Ray pushes Jordan around and laughs with his friends about it, but Jordan knows it is all in fun. Recently, Ray suggested that Jordan might help him and his friends out with some other things; for example, Ray and his friends are planning to break in to a house where they know there is a lot of money, and Ray says Jordan might be able to help.
10. José and Marie have been hanging out together for about 9 months. José is 18 and Marie is 17. They spend a lot of time together, but also have other friends, too, so sometimes they might go several days or even a week without seeing each other. They each get along with each other's families as well, which is nice. They are having sex together but do use condoms, even though they trust each other, because they don't want Marie to get pregnant.
11. Jim is having trouble understanding his math homework. He has sat in the study hall for almost an hour without getting more than two problems done. Other people can see him getting more upset over not knowing how to do the math. Finally, Armand walks in and notices what is

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 15 of 19)

happening. Armand walks over to find out how Jim is doing. After seeing what Jim is working on, Armand shows Jim how to come up with the answer to the next problem, and later, Jim gives Armand a good idea for a story he has to write for English class.

12. Rihanna practiced for many months to get ready for volleyball tryouts. When the tryouts were over, she found out that she did not make the freshman team. Rihanna went home feeling very angry with the coaches and was disappointed in herself. When she walked in the house, her older sister Juleesa asked Rihanna if she made the team. When Rihanna said no, Juleesa laughed at her and said, "What can you expect from a klutz?"

ACTIVITY: GIVING COMPLIMENTS TO OTHERS

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression, Identity**
- **Note:** See worksheet, "Giving Others Compliments," Appendix D
- **Purpose:** To build group members' ability to tune in to and name positive qualities in others; to build understanding of how other people see them.
- **Materials:** "Giving Others Compliments" worksheet, crayons or markers
- **Directions:** (*Group leaders say:*) "Most of us like the feeling that we get when people say nice things to us or recognize what we do. Today we are really going to practice giving compliments to each other in order to celebrate things about each one of us that we really like or see as positive." Group participants should be invited to list one positive quality about each group member on their worksheet. Participants then share these compliments with other members. *Note:* Participants may need to have adults write their answers or may choose to verbalize answers without writing.

ACTIVITY: ALTERNATE VERSION—GIVING COMPLIMENTS TO OTHERS

- **ARC Target(s): Affect Expression, Identity**
- **Purpose:** To highlight competencies and positive aspects of self; to build group members' ability to tune in to and name positive qualities in others; to build understanding of how other people see them.
- **Materials:** Giant Post-it notes (one per group member, with member's name written on top); smaller Post-its on which members write comments; pens/markers
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Group members are handed a stack of smaller Post-its and a pen/marker.
 - ◆ Members are asked to write at least one positive comment about each member of the group. Comments *must* illustrate something positive about the other person. Comments can be anonymous, or group members may sign their names to the Post-it.
 - ◆ When all group members have written their comments, they should attach their Post-its to the giant Post-it sheets; all comments should be attached. Group leaders should ensure that all comments are appropriate/positive.
 - ◆ Group leaders then read aloud each member's list.
(*Alternative directions:* Group members may write directly on other members' giant Post-its, with a rule that no two comments should be the same.)
- **Postactivity Discussion:** Possible questions include: "Did anything surprise you in what other people wrote about you? What is it like to hear all of these positive things about yourself?"

(cont.)

ACTIVITY: POSITIVE SELF-RECOGNITION

- **ARC Target(s): Identity (Positive Self), Affect Expression**
- **Note:** Complete this activity in association with the worksheet, "Giving Myself Compliments", in Appendix D.
- **Purpose:** To highlight competencies/positive aspects of self.
- **Materials:** "Giving Myself Compliments" worksheet, crayons or markers
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Group leaders: "Sometimes it's hard to focus on what we like about ourselves, or what we're proud of. Today we want to practice giving ourselves compliments. This is important to do because it helps us to feel good about ourselves. We are going to hand out a worksheet for you to complete. The worksheet focuses on things that you think you do well in different areas of your life, such as school, activities, relationships, the residence, etc. After you complete the worksheet, you can choose whether or not to share your self-compliments with the group."
 - ◆ Distribute worksheets and writing materials to all group members. When all participants have completed their worksheets, invite members to share.
 - ◆ *Note:* Participants may need to have adults write their answers, or they may choose to verbalize answers without writing.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** Possible questions include: "What was it like to give yourself compliments? Were there some areas where it was easier to compliment yourself than others? Were there areas where it was harder? Is it comfortable to compliment yourself? Why, or why not?"

ACTIVITY: DESERT ISLAND

- **ARC Target(s): Executive Functions, Affect Expression**
- **Purpose:** To apply skills, including problem solving, negotiation, "I statements," conflict resolution, etc., to a group problem-solving task.
- **Materials:** Forty index cards listing array of objects, including essentials (e.g., food, matches, bedding), personal items (e.g., shampoo, toothpaste), and "luxury" items (i.e., iPod, radio, deck of cards).
- **Directions:**
 - ◆ Participants are told that they are members of a group that has been stranded on a desert island. As a group, they are able to select 10 objects out of the provided index cards; these will be the objects that have also been stranded with them. The group must negotiate which 10 objects to select, and must negotiate a process for making the selection.
 - ◆ After the initial selection, group leaders should generate a "challenge" scenario. For example: A big storm is coming that will last two days (meaning, participants can't leave shelter to gather food), and the temperature will drop (meaning, participants need to find a way to stay warm). Ask: "Based on the objects you have selected, how will you survive?" The group is given a 5-minute period to consider their items, to re-negotiate selected objects, and to exchange them for other items in the stack.
 - ◆ At the discretion of the group leaders, further challenge scenarios may be provided. After the first selection, group members are no longer allowed to exchange cards and must use problem-solving skills to describe how they will address the challenge using only the selected items.

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 17 of 19)

- Sample challenge scenarios:
 - ◇ "You are being attacked by a group of natives from another island."
 - ◇ "Wild monkeys steal all the food you have gathered."
 - ◇ "Half of your group develops a nonfatal but uncomfortable illness (e.g., serious poison ivy)."
- **Postactivity Discussion:** "How was the negotiation process? Did everyone feel able to express their opinion? Did it feel like someone 'won' and someone 'lost'? How well do you think, as a group, you did with selecting objects? What factors did you consider? Do you think you considered different alternatives, or did you impulsively select certain objects? Which of the skills we have learned in the group do you think you applied to this challenge?" (Group leaders should note any skills not mentioned by the group.)
- **Sample Items for Desert Island Game:** iPod, flashlight, Game Boy, batteries that are halfway rundown, six-pack of bottled water, sunflower seeds, vegetable seeds, 20 yards of rope, Swiss army knife, tarp, toothpaste, bar of chocolate, toilet paper, matches, bubble gum, balloon, machete, duct tape, potatoes, camera, five large pizzas, big bag of assorted Chinese food, dictionary, encyclopedia, compass, *Harry Potter* series (books), Boy Scout manual, binoculars, hammer and nails, magnifying glass, sunscreen, one set of extra clothes per person, deck of cards, waterproof blanket, one pillow, metal bucket, soap

ACTIVITY: INFLUENCES ON SELF

- **ARC Target(s): Identity**
- **Note:** Complete this activity in association with the worksheet "What Has Influenced My Identity?" in Appendix D.
- **Purpose:** To individually examine relative importance of influences on identity, and to concretely represent those influences.
- **Materials:** Small plastic bottles with cork stoppers; sand in different colors (at least six colors); small funnels; measuring cups/spoons in various sizes; paper and pencil
- **Alternative Version:** Modeling clay such as Sculpey can be used instead of sand. In this case, color of clay and relative amount will correspond to values. Prompt may be to make a specific item (e.g., an "identity stone") or leave the sculpture choice open-ended.
- **Directions:** Group members are asked to select up to six key factors that have influenced them; group leaders should give examples (e.g., family, religion, neighborhood, life experiences). Members should pick a color of sand to represent each of these values or beliefs. Using the measuring spoons, members should select amounts of sand to represent how strong/important these values are to them (e.g., the most important belief or value would correspond to the largest measuring cup). Members then use the funnels to fill their bottles with the different colored sand.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** "How well do these influences represent you? What's missing? Was it hard to select what to include? Do you see any commonalities across group members? Any differences?"

ACTIVITY: IDENTITY SHIELD

- **ARC Target(s): Identity**
- **Note:** Complete this activity in association with the worksheet "Identity Shields" in Appendix D.
- **Purpose:** To examine multiple aspects of self; to acknowledge that all people have facets of identity that change in different contexts.

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 18 of 19)

- **Materials:** Paper, colored pencils/markers/crayons
- **Directions:** Group members are provided with an outline drawing of a shield divided into four sections. Instruction is to complete sections of the shield using prompts such as the following (select four):
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are with your friends"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are with kids you don't know"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are with your family"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are when you are alone"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are in school"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes you as you are in this program"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes your hopes for yourself"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes an important part of you"
 - ◆ "Something that symbolizes your culture"
- **Postactivity Discussion:** What reactions do group members have to this activity? Were there sections of the shield that were easier to complete? Sections that were harder? What similarities and what differences were there across shield sections? How do each of these sections capture different aspects of group members' identity? Do any sections feel "truer" than others?

ACTIVITY: VALUE LINE (PHYSICAL)

- **ARC Target(s): Identity**
- **Purpose:** To examine one aspect of self that may differ across group members: that is, personal values.
- **Materials:** None
- **Directions:** Group leaders stand in opposite corners. One group leader represents "very important"; the second group leader represents "not at all important." Group leaders provide different prompt values (e.g., importance of education, importance of family, working hard, fairness, being tough, being strong, having friends). Group members are asked to place themselves on the invisible "line" between group leaders to represent how important that value is to them.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** Possible questions include: "Were there any surprises in yourself or in others? Did you find yourself closer to or farther from other group members than you thought? Was it hard/easy to rank values? Were some easier than others? Which ones? What might affect how you rank your values?"

ACTIVITY: VALUE LINE (DRAWN)

- **ARC Target(s): Identity**
- **Purpose:** To individually examine relative importance of personal values.
- **Materials:** Paper, pen or pencil
- **Directions:** Students are asked to draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Group leaders provide a list of values (e.g., importance of education, importance of family, working hard, fairness, being tough, being strong, having friends). Members are asked to place the words on the line in order of relative importance.

(cont.)

Sample Group Activities (page 19 of 19)

- **Postactivity Discussion:** Possible questions include: "Were any of these hard to rank? Do any feel like they're equally important? Do any feel completely unimportant? Completely important? Where do you think these came from? What kinds of things affect your values?"

ACTIVITY: QUALITY OF INFLUENCE

Note: Activity is based on a technique taught by Janina Fisher, PhD.

- **ARC Target(s): Identity**
- **Purpose:** To explore past influential relationships and to build awareness of important qualities for future relationships.
- **Materials:** Quality-of-Influence Pyramid worksheets (see Appendix D); pens or pencils
- **Directions:** Participants use the worksheets to identify past influential relationships and to identify qualities they want to develop or avoid in future relationships.
 - ◆ Using the worksheets, identify five people who have most influenced you in your life (either in a positive or a negative way). *Note:* If participants do not want to write actual names, they can use initials or some other "code" to identify the person.
 - ◆ In the space next to that person's box, write one quality that was important within that relationship, either as something you would want to experience in future relationships, or as something you would want to avoid.
- **Postactivity Discussion:** "How hard or easy was it to identify the people who have most influenced you? Did you find yourself purposely leaving out some people who were probably influential? How easy/hard was it to identify the key qualities? How many relationships do you have in your life right now that capture these qualities? What kind of relationships do you think you might want/need to build in the future?"

Feelings Toolkit Creation

ACTIVITY: FEELINGS TOOLKIT—INTRODUCTION

- **ARC Target(s): Modulation**
- **Purpose:** Ongoing project; goal is for each participant to build a “toolkit” for use in managing feelings and emotional experience over time.
- **Materials:** Cardboard boxes, markers/paint, other decorative materials
- **Directions:** Ongoing project is introduced. Participants are each given a cardboard box, which they can decorate in any way they like. One thing will be added to the toolkit at each subsequent session.

ONGOING INSTRUCTIONS:

- **Materials:** Toolkit objects
- **Directions:** At end of group sessions, provide a variety of materials within each category (e.g., several scents of lotion, several types of stress balls, several picture postcards). Each participant may choose one object for his or her toolkit.

FEELINGS TOOLKIT: SAMPLE ITEMS

- Biofeedback dots
- Cedar squares/balls
- ChapStick tube (flavored)
- Cloth swatches (fabric, felt, velvet, etc.)
- Feathers
- Hard candy
- Index cards (participants to write positive self-statements on cards)
- Mini bottles of lotion
- Mini bottles of bubbles
- Mini glitter wands
- Mini thought-for-the-day book
- Mini stuffed animal
- Picture postcards
- Plug-in lights (night-lights)
- River stones (or other small polished stones)
- Plastic Slinkys
- Scented sachets
- Stress balls/other textured balls (e.g., Koosh balls, stretch balls)
- Water snakes
- Wikki stix

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Progressive Muscle Relaxation Technique

Note: Wording as follows is directed toward participants who are lying on their backs. For participants who are seated, modify language accordingly.

"Get into a comfortable position and relax. Now begin by clenching your right fist, tighter and tighter, studying the tension as you do so. Keep it clenched and notice the tension in your fist, hand, and forearm. Now relax. Feel the looseness in your right hand and notice the contrast with the tension. Repeat this with your right fist again, always noticing, as you relax, that this is the opposite of tension—relax and feel the difference. Repeat this entire procedure with your left fist and then with both fists.

"Now bend your elbows and tense your biceps. Tense them as hard as you can and observe the feeling of tightness. Relax, straighten out your arms. Let the relaxation develop and feel that difference.

"Turning your attention to your head, wrinkle your forehead as tight as you can. Now relax and smooth it out. Let yourself imagine your entire forehead and scalp becoming smooth and at rest. Now frown and notice the strain spreading throughout your forehead. Let go. Allow your brow to become smooth again.

"Close your eyes now, squint them tighter. Look for the tension. Relax your eyes. Let them remain closed gently and comfortably.

"Now clench your jaw, bite hard, notice the tension throughout your jaw. When the jaw is relaxed, your lips will be slightly parted. Let yourself really appreciate the contrast between tension and relaxation.

"Now press your tongue against the roof of your mouth. Feel the ache in the back of your mouth. Relax. Press your lips now, purse them into an o. Relax your lips. Notice that your forehead, scalp, eyes, jaw, tongue and lips are all relaxed.

"Press your head back as far as it can comfortably go and observe the tension in your neck. Roll it to the right and feel the stress; roll it to the left. Straighten your head and bring it forward, pressing your chin against your chest. Feel the tension in your throat and the back of your neck. Relax, allowing your head to return to a comfortable position. Let the relaxation deepen.

"Now shrug your shoulders. Hold the tension as you hunch your head down between your shoulders. Relax your shoulders. Drop them back and feel the relaxation spreading through your neck, throat, and shoulders—pure relaxation, deeper and deeper.

"Give your entire body a chance to relax. Feel the comfort and the heaviness. Now breathe in and fill your lungs completely. Hold your breath. Notice the tension. Now exhale, letting your chest become loose, letting the air hiss out. Continue relaxing, letting your breath come freely and gently. Repeat this breathing pattern several times, noticing the tension draining from your body as you exhale. Next, tighten your stomach and hold. Note the tension, then relax. Now place your hand on your stomach. Breathe deeply into your stomach, and notice how your stomach pushes your hand up. Hold—then relax. Feel the contrast of relaxation as the air rushes out. Now arch your back, without straining. Keep the rest of your body as relaxed as possible. Focus on the tension in your lower back. Now relax, deeper and deeper.

(cont.)

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Progressive Muscle Relaxation Technique *(page 2 of 2)*

"Tighten your buttocks and thighs. Press down on your heels as hard as you can. Relax and feel the difference. Now curl your toes downward, making your calves tense. Study the tension. Relax. Now bend (flex) your toes toward your knees, creating tension in your shins. Relax again.

"Feel the heaviness throughout your lower body as the relaxation deepens. Relax your feet, ankles, calves, shins, knees, thighs, and buttocks. Now let the relaxation spread to your stomach, lower back, and chest. Let go more and more. Experience the relaxation deepening in your shoulders, arms, and hands. Deeper and deeper. Notice the feeling of looseness and relaxation in your jaw and all of your facial muscles.

"Let the tension dissolve away. . . ."

Icebreaker Prompts

Group Opening Activity

OPENING CIRCLE

- *Purpose:* Build group cohesion and attunement; share information; create a consistent routine/ritual.
- Ask each group member to respond to the icebreaker question of the day (e.g., "If you were any car, what kind would you be?").

CLOSING CIRCLE

- *Purpose:* Build group cohesion and attunement; create a consistent routine/ritual.
- Go around the circle and ask "Who can remember from the check-in what car _____ would be?" for each member.
- Ask: "What is one thing you learned about this person today in group?"

IDENTITY-FOCUSED ICEBREAKER SAMPLE PROMPTS

- "If you were any musical instrument, what kind would you be?"
- "If you were any car, what kind would you be?"
- "If you were any form of weather, what kind would you be?"
- "If you were any magazine/book title, what would you be?"
- "If you were any animal, what would you be?"
- "If you were any celebrity, who would you be?"
- "If you had any type of magical power, what kind would it be and why?"
- "If there was one activity you had to do every day, what would you want it to be?"
- "If you could be any age, what would you be?"
- "If you were guaranteed success at any job in the world, what would you do?"
- "If people could only use one word to describe you, what would you want that word to be?"

RELATIONAL-FOCUSED ICEBREAKER SAMPLE PROMPTS

Name . . .

- "One quality you are proud of that you bring to your friendships."
- "One quality that you would want in a friend."
- "One quality you have improved in yourself that is important to relationships."
- "One quality that you appreciate in authority figures."
- "Something that you like to do for fun with friends."
- "One quality you are proud of that you bring as a son/daughter [or in other family relationships]."
- "One quality that you would want to have as a father/mother."
- "One quality that you would look for in a spouse or intimate partner."
- "One quality that you want to work on in yourself that affects relationships."

(cont.)

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Icebreaker Prompts (page 2 of 2)

- "One quality that you would *not* want to have as a father/mother."
- "The number of friends you feel you need in your life."
- "Something you like to do with your family."
- "Something you would rather *not* do with your family."
- "One quality important to you in parents/program staff/teachers/therapists/adults."

AFFECT-FOCUSED ICEBREAKER SAMPLE PROMPTS

Name . . .

- "Something that you really love to do."
- "Something that relaxes you."
- "Something that you like to do when you're mellow."
- "Something that you like to do when you're really excited."
- "Someone you like to talk to when you're annoyed."
- "Something that makes you really frustrated."
- "Something that you're proud of."
- "Something that you think is scary."
- "Something that puts you in a good mood."
- "Something that puts you in a bad mood."
- "Something that you like to do when you want to think."
- "Something that you like to do when you don't want to think."
- "Something that brings your energy down."
- "Something that brings your energy up."
- "A way that other people could tell if you were really happy."
- "A way that other people could tell if you were really angry or upset."
- "A way that other people might know you wanted to be left alone."
- "A way that other people might know you wanted company."

Sample Group Session

Session 5: Learning about the Connection between Behavior, Feelings, and Energy

GOALS

1. To practice advanced affect identification skills: connecting behavior to affect and energy states
2. To continue practicing self-appraisal and affect modulation
3. To continue to work on self-development skills

MATERIALS

Paper "leaves"

Markers

Lunch bags

Different objects/materials for guessing game (one for each group member)

"Going on a Vacation" script

OVERVIEW

1. Review program rules and group expectations.
2. Opening modulation activity: "Guess what's in the bag using your sense of touch."
3. Process the opening check-in; invite each member to share his or her experience (energy check-in).
4. Group members fill out their identity leaf.
5. The group facilitators lead discussion and worksheet activity that focuses on the connections between affect and behavior and energy, building on previous group activities.
6. Closing mindfulness activity: Conduct relaxation exercise using imagery ("Going on a Vacation" script).
7. Process the closing check-in; invite each member to share his or her experience (energy check-in).

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Opening Circle: The facilitator leads the opening energy check-in by asking each group member to identify the level of arousal that he or she is currently experiencing: *high, medium, or low*. Group members are also asked to determine whether their energy is *comfortable* or *uncomfortable*.

Opening Modulation Activity: Following the initial energy check-in, the facilitator leads the opening modulation activity, "Guess what's in the bag":

"We are going to practice using our sense of touch today to figure out what the item is that's in each of these bags. You are each going to have your own bag. Reach into the bag, without looking in it, and try to figure out what the object is that is in your bag. When you feel like you have figured it out, give the bag back to _____ [facilitator]. There is going to be a

(cont.)

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time limit of 2 minutes. When finished, each of you is going to have a chance to share your guess with the group. The goal is to focus on the shape, texture, and weight of the object to determine what it is. Good luck."

The group facilitator repeats the opening energy check-in and observes and discusses any notable changes in energy following the modulation activity.

Competency Activity: The group facilitator leads this identity activity, Personal Leaves. (Leaves will be hung on the "All about Me Tree" in the group room.) The question for today's group is "Tell us about something that you are good at in school."

Self-Regulation Activity: The group facilitator leads a discussion about the connection between affect, energy, and behavior:

"Last week we talked about how feelings are very important because they help us learn many things about ourselves. We played a game to learn about how feelings are connected to the different kinds of behaviors that we all have. Today we are going to take it one step further. We have been teaching you about your energy since the very beginning of this group. The reason that we have been doing that is because our energy is connected to everything that we think or don't think about, say, feel, and do. Today we are going to go back to the behaviors that we talked about last week and we are going to connect those behaviors not only to feelings but also to the energy that we feel in our bodies."

Each group member is given a worksheet "Connections: Learning about Our Energy, Feelings, and Behavior." See the worksheet below.

Closing Circle: The group facilitator leads the closing mindfulness activity: relaxation using imagery (see "Going on a Vacation" script below), ending with a final energy check-in. Group facilitator observes and discusses any notable changes in energy.



The facilitator praises the members for their participation in the group and hands out the practice worksheet for homework.

(cont.)





Sample Group Session (page 3 of 6)

Connections: Learning about Our Energy, Feelings, and Behavior





1. Behavior: Staying alone in my room

   
↑ High → Medium ↓ Low
My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable





2. Behavior: Crying

   
↑ High → Medium ↓ Low
My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable





3. Behavior: Hurting myself

   
↑ High → Medium ↓ Low
My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

4. Behavior: Yelling at other people

   
↑ High → Medium ↓ Low
My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

5. Behavior: Giving up on doing a good job in school

   
↑ High → Medium ↓ Low
My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

(cont.)

Sample Group Session (page 4 of 6)

6. Behavior: Hitting or throwing things



↑ High



→ Medium



↓ Low

My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

7. Behavior: Not wanting to go to bed because I think something bad might happen



↑ High



→ Medium



↓ Low

My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

8. Behavior: Sharing with a peer



↑ High



→ Medium



↓ Low

My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

9. Behavior: Trying to run away



↑ High



→ Medium



↓ Low

My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

10. Behavior: Provoking other people so they get mad



↑ High



→ Medium



↓ Low

My energy feels: Comfortable Uncomfortable

(cont.)

"Going on a Vacation" Script

Close your eyes and make yourself comfortable. We are going on a vacation, and this will require you to use your imagination and your senses to try and experience the trip.

Imagine yourself at the beach. You are barefoot walking on the sand. Notice the feeling of the soft, hot sand on your feet. Are your soles sensitive? Does the sand tickle? Can you feel the sand between your toes?

Look around to find a perfect spot on which to lay your towel. You spread out your towel and notice the color of the stripes—red, blue, green, and black. Look out at the ocean. Can you see the horizon? What color is the water? Is the surf calm or choppy? Notice the ocean breeze on your skin and the smell of the tide? Do you taste the ocean air?

Take out your sunscreen and begin to rub it on your skin. How does it feel? How does it smell? Does the fragrance remind you of anything?

Lie down and get your body comfortable in the sand. How does the sand feel under your back? Notice your body relaxing. How does the sun feel beating on your skin?

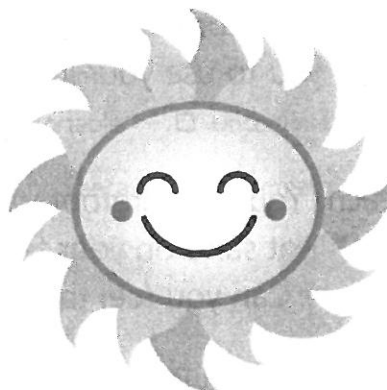
Listen to the surf hitting the shore and the sounds of nature around you.

Enjoy the peacefulness and quiet for a few minutes . . .

(cont.)

Sample Group Session (page 6 of 6)

ARC Practice Sheet: Tracking Positive Behaviors and Energy



Name: _____ Date: _____

1. I participated in a group activity.

(Staff check-off and initial)

2. I gave someone a compliment.

(Staff check-off and initial)

3. I gave myself a compliment.

(Staff check-off and initial)

4. I encouraged someone to do well.

(Staff check-off and initial)

5. I helped someone out with
chores or something else.

(Staff check-off and initial)