
SESSION 2

Objectives:

- To experience once again the power of thoughts.
- To recognize what a goal is and the steps to set and move toward goals.
- To recognize that movement toward goals is not always even and that a change in direction is sometimes called for.
- To recognize the range of feelings we all have and the importance of communicating those feelings.

Session Outline:

- Centering Activity
- Goal-setting
- Feelings

Opening Exercise

Let's begin by reviewing everyone's name.

This time I want you to say your name and one word about yourself, and then we'll go around. I'll start.

Example: "I am cheerful (*use own name*)"

When it comes to your turn, say your name, preceded by an adjective (a word that describes something about you), and repeat all the names as far as we've gone around the circle until everyone has had a turn.

Does anyone have anything they would like to share that happened since our last meeting?

Facilitator's responses should show interest without evaluation or analysis. This is an opportunity to begin to focus on "feelings" — which are the subject of this session — with questions like, "How did that feel?" The facilitator may want to express a personal feeling reaction, such as "I feel really happy (or whatever is appropriate) hearing you tell about that."

This is our second meeting and we will be talking about goals. But first we're going to do another activity which will remind us about the power we have to shape our own lives.

Centering Exercise

What do you think "centering" is?

Centering is when you let go of all the things outside of you and bring your focus to yourself.

We're going to do a centering exercise that will show you how your mind and body can work together to help you reach your goals.

Who can help me?

Have the volunteer stand casually in the center of the area.

When we feel balanced, we are less likely to fall down, to be pushed over or to feel nervous or uncertain.

Gently push the volunteer off balance. This should be very easy.

Now try really hard not to let me push you off balance?

The rigidity of trying hard increases the loss of flexibility. The harder the volunteer tries the easier s/he is to push over.

This is how most of us go through life, sort of off-balance, easily swayed or pushed around, or trying really hard to stay in control. But we can use our minds, and our imaginations, to help us feel more centered, more in control, more balanced.

To participant say slowly:

"Close your eyes, stand with your feet as far apart as your shoulders, arms loosely at your side."

"Now, imagine that you are like an old, old tree. In your mind, see how strong the trunk of your body is. Your

This activity may be repeated with all participants working in pairs and then switching so everyone has an opportunity to experience the exercise. Once again, do not do this in pairs if the group has poor impulse control or if there are behavioral or control problems in the group.

arms are filled with big, strong branches that move easily and sway with the wind; and under you, you have a very large network of roots that hold you firmly and steadily."

"Imagine the roots going from the bottoms of your legs and feet, deep into the ground, spreading out to the edges of a large circle, making a steady base for you."

"Now, keeping that as part of who you are, see what happens when I push you."

Try to push the participant off balance again. S/he should be significantly more steady. If not, acknowledge that this kind of visualization can take some practice and ask the volunteer if s/he feels more calm and steady.

What did it feel like when you were centered and strong?

This is called "visualization" because you can picture or "visualize" in your mind strengthening your body and the way you feel about yourself. This kind of visualization, using your mind to help make you secure and strong, is more powerful than trying hard.

Okay, now lets talk about our goals for this week.

Goals

Who can tell me what a "goal" is?

We can think of a goal as a destination we want to reach.

If you think about it, if you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there?

Life is like going on a trip. We need to know where we are, where we want to go and how we're going to get there. Then we need to begin to recognize that it probably won't be a straight trip without problems, delays and many choices to be made.

So we can think of goals as destinations in the trip of life. They provide direction.

Reaching a goal is a combination of:

knowing where you are,

discovering where you want to go,

figuring out the best way to get started, and then

dealing with various roadblocks and impediments along the way.

All along the way there are choices that affect the outcome — that is, getting where you want to go.

The goals for this session are:

Learn more about the feelings we all have

Learn more about setting goals

Learn more about relaxation

Goals are not loose ideas. They are specific and measurable, meaning you can tell when you've reached them.

The first thing you have to do is to decide on something you want to reach or get.

Let's use something from your life as an example and we'll go through the steps of goal-setting together to see how it works.

Work through the following steps with a volunteer's example so group members clearly see how the steps apply to decision-making and goal-setting.

Flip chart 6

GOAL SETTING

- ✓ 1. Set a reachable goal.
 - ✓ 2. Write out steps for reaching that goal.
 - ✓ 3. Keep going until you reach your goal.
 - ✓ 4. Give yourself a reasonable time limit.
 - ✓ 5. Evaluate — check your progress.
 - ✓ 6. Compliment yourself.
-

The first step just asks you to be reasonable and pick possible goals. If you picked the goal to be the richest person in the world, would that be realistic?

The second step is to write out the steps needed to reach that goal.

Another way to talk about this is to refer to it as "chunking down." That means to break the goal up into smaller, manageable parts. If you try to learn hundreds

of facts at one time, you would become discouraged by the magnitude of the job. But if you start one fact at a time, you could do it.

The third step is to keep going until you reach your goal.

Be sure to give yourself a reasonable time limit. It's not fair to tell yourself you have only one day, when 2 weeks would be more realistic.

Check your progress. This can be pretty hard sometimes, because it requires you to be perfectly honest with yourself. Sometimes you even have to look at the things you're doing that get in the way of reaching your goals, like watching too much TV.

Even if you try all of the steps we're talking about, will you always reach your goals?

Who can give me an example that we could use to go through the steps?

Breakdowns

If you aren't reaching your goals, then something is breaking down.

Ask yourself:

Do I really want to reach this goal or do I just think I should?

Do I need to chunk down again?

Do I need to get support from other people? (tell others, ask for help.)

Am I sabotaging my own efforts, or ruining my own chances of reaching this goal? If so, how?

After you ask yourself these questions, rethink and restate your goal.

For example, if you promise yourself that you'll do better in school and then you watch television or do something other than your homework, are you committed to doing well in your studies? Are you ruining your own chances of reaching a goal? Are you sabotaging yourself?

On the other hand, don't forget to compliment yourself! Often we get discouraged because we fail to give ourselves credit for little accomplishments along the way. You need to learn to become your own cheering section.

This week and every week, use your notebook to help you assess what you are contributing to getting what you want, how you can further support your goals and whether you need to reassess and recommit to your goals.

Feelings

What are feelings?

Why are they important?

How do you express what you feel?

Are some feelings easier to express than others?

Feelings aren't good or bad. They are just your feelings. What is important is knowing what you feel. This sounds easy, but often isn't, especially when you are afraid that you won't be able to handle feelings or that no one cares about your feelings.

What are some feelings you have?

Make a list on a flip chart. Don't uncover flip chart list until the group has it's own list going. As you go over the list, they might also give value judgments to those feelings they consider to be "negative" or "positive."

Flip chart 7

Feelings list:

sad	glad
angry	depressed
calm	excited
nervous	tired
confused	bored
shy	happy
weak	strong
eager	reluctant
frustrated	antsy
guilty	ashamed
numb	afraid
loving	hateful

Flip chart 8

Feelings can let you know:

- ✓ what is important to you,
 - ✓ what you need or want, and
 - ✓ when you need to take care of yourself.
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Many people aren't very good at having the feelings they have.

Have any of you ever felt guilty or embarrassed or angry with your feelings?

This is very common but also a bit silly when you think about it. If your arm itches, do you get mad at it? Of course not. If you get something in your eye and it begins to get all teary, do you get mad at your eyes or your tears. No, because that's just what eyes do.

Well, feelings are like that too. They are always with us and being upset with them doesn't make very much difference.

On the other hand, if you learn to recognize, understand and accept the feelings you have, you can be more like the tree, you can feel more in control of what comes and goes around you.

EXERCISE:

Now think of a strong feeling you had this week. Jot down a word or two that reminds you of another time you had that feeling.

Did you share that feeling with anyone? What happened?

Are there any rules you made with yourself as a result of what happened?

An example might be: "What if you loaned a really important or valued possession to a friend and that person never returned it. You might feel hurt and distrustful of your friend, but you also might make a rule to never trust anyone else either."

What happens to feelings when you don't share them or communicate them?

Lots of people try to hold feelings in, to stuff them down inside themselves, to pretend they're not there. It even seems like it works sometimes, but feelings are like toothpaste. If they can't come out one way, they'll come out another.

Often feelings will start to come out in the form of pain or discomfort, like headaches, stomachaches, feeling tired all the time, feeling angry, out of control, crying.

Another thing that sometimes happens to people who refuse to experience their feelings for a very long time is that they seem to stop feeling anything. It isn't really true that the feelings have disappeared, but these people begin to feel numb, like when you go to the dentist and get novocain. It feels like your jaw goes to sleep; you can't feel anything because your jaw is numb. That can happen for people who pretend that they don't have any feelings for a very long time. But the worst part is that they feel numb not only about all the difficult and painful feelings, but all the joyous ones too, so they don't get to feel happy, or loved or joyful either.

The way to keep this from happening to you is to let yourself have the feelings you have, if you learn to express those feelings in some way and make friends with them — it's really making friends with yourself.

Saying you need to learn to express your feelings does not mean you have complete freedom to go around hurting others as an expression of how you feel. Just because you feel angry does not mean you get to hit the person who triggered the anger. There are more appropriate ways to release anger. When

you do release it, there is always a deeper emotion below the anger that you were not acknowledging. Anger is just a cover-up to some other emotion or feeling.

Knowing how we *should* feel is also different from how we might *really* feel.

Have you ever felt nervous before a spelling test even though you knew how to spell all the words? You might know it's silly but that doesn't stop you from feeling nervous.

You might know that your parents love you, but when things aren't going well, you might not feel that love.

About the nicest feeling is that of being yourself. It comes and goes for everyone, but when you feel it, take time to notice how warm and confident and comfortable it feels just to be you. This is where true happiness comes from.

It isn't easy or simple to do, especially when you're young, because everyone wants you to be a certain way, but keep reminding yourself that you are special and unique — there's only one of you — and give yourself permission as often as you can to be true to who you are.

Session 2 — Self-work Activities

1. Be aware of the range of feelings you have through the week and name them. Stop a few times each day and ask yourself "What am I feeling right now?" Notice, too, if you are upset

with yourself for having that particular feeling and want to deny it or make it go away.

2. Continue to make notations of nice or special things that happen to you every day in your notebook.
3. Look at your answers to the seventeen questions from last session. What goals do you want to set for yourself? Write them down. What specific steps will you take this week toward reaching those goals. Write them down.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Session 2 of The CHALLENGE Program!

This week we talked about goals and feelings. Learning to set goals is an important part of getting what you want out of life. Goals are not loose ideas. They are specific and measurable.

Planning for goals includes the following specific steps:

1. Set a reachable goal.
2. Write out steps for reaching that goal.
3. Keep going until you reach your goal.
4. Give yourself a reasonable time limit.
5. Evaluate — check your progress.
6. Compliment yourself.

One of our goals is recognizing and identifying feelings without attaching “good” and “bad” value judgments to them. Feelings are a part of who we are. They let us know:

- what is important to us;
- what we need or want; and
- when we need to take care of ourselves.

Though we are encouraging your child to identify, experience and communicate feelings, we do not encourage acting indiscriminately upon those feelings. (Just because a child feels angry does not mean s/he gets to hit someone as an expression of the angry feeling).

You can continue the work of this Program at home by recognizing the feelings of family members and looking at the communication patterns of your family.

Sincerely,

Goal Setting

- ✓ Set a reachable goal.
- ✓ Write out steps for reaching that goal.
- ✓ Keep going until you reach your goal.
- ✓ Give yourself a reasonable time limit.
- ✓ Evaluate—check your progress.
- ✓ Compliment yourself.

Feelings List:

sad

angry

calm

nervous

confused

shy

weak

eager

frustrated

guilty

numb

loving

glad

depressed

excited

tired

bored

happy

strong

reluctant

antsy

ashamed

afraid

hateful

Feelings Can Let You Know:

- ✓ what is important to you,
- ✓ what you need or want, and
- ✓ when you need to take care of yourself.