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## **Empowerment Workshop: Helping End the Cycle of Domestic Violence**

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Empowerment Workshop: Helping End the Cycle of Domestic Violence

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**Abstract:**

The YWCA of Monterey County services victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Currently too many victims of Domestic Violence cannot leave the cycle of abuse. While there are many reasons for this problem, this project focused on the fact that domestic violence victims cannot escape being controlled because they lack the power to become independent. The capstone project consisted of the development and implementation of a series of empowerment workshops to help clients break the cycle of domestic violence. Surveys collected at the end of each workshop were used to assess if participants had a change in self-esteem. The results revealed that self-esteem actually decreased throughout the program. I believe this counterintuitive results may be influenced by the short time-frame of the evaluation. The agency should continue to give this workshop every week and reevaluate the program in about a year.

*Keywords: domestic violence, workshop, empowerment*

**Agency and Communities Served:**

The mission statement for the YWCA of Monterey County states: “The YWCA Monterey County is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.” (YWCA, 2018). The YWCA of Monterey County focuses on domestic violence and human trafficking. Throughout California there are about 5,700 people served at domestic violence programs each year (Rastegar, 2017). California alone has reported approximately 40 percent of all women who live or have lived in California as experiencing domestic violence at some point in their lives (Rastegar, 2017).

The YWCA of Monterey County helps women from all different backgrounds. Currently there are safe houses available for women escaping domestic violence or human trafficking situations. There are also legal services available at the office located in Salinas. In addition, the YWCA of Monterey County provides a counseling service.

There are no attorneys employed within the legal department of the YWCA, but there are people knowledgeable on legal affairs that advise clients. They are responsible for making CPS reports, filing legal documents, and making court appearances if necessary. The legal documents that the YWCA are able to provide include restraining orders, divorce papers, child custody, and civil harassment orders. The only thing that the YWCA can do is advise people on what they should do, they cannot give them legal advice. Women do not need to be receiving shelter services in order to receive their legal services. Based on their current income the staff at the YWCA will decide how much certain services will cost them.

The counseling services provided at the YWCA are located in Salinas. The services are available to both women and their children after suffering from domestic violence or human trafficking. If they are part of one of the safe houses programs the services are completely free.

However, if they are not part of the safe house programs YWCA staff will look at their current income to find a price that they can afford. That means that each case is different in order to help their individual needs.

The Human Trafficking Safe House, which lasts 12 months, is the longest program that the YWCA offers. Residents are allowed to leave whenever they would like but have to wait a certain length of time before they can return. There is an advocate at this house 24 hours a day to assist the residents when needed. There are enough rooms to house up to 6 residents at a time. This is the newest program that is being offered through the YWCA and have successfully had one-person graduate from the program.

The Domestic Violence Safe House is located at an undisclosed location within Monterey County. Currently the Domestic Violence Safe House can hold up to 5 families at a time and provides shelter for women and their children up to the age of 18 years old. This is a short-term program that lasts 8 weeks to help women get back on their feet. The YWCA provides three daily meals for all of the residents along with clothing, toiletries, or other essentials for their use. There is a case manager on site five days week to help the women make plans for their time at the house. The women have the opportunity to gain housing referrals along with school or child care referrals. There are also resources to give them resume help and employment referrals. They can also get transportation to appointments and a bus pass if they do not have reliable transportation. There are advocates on site seven days a week between 7 AM and 11:45 PM. The advocates are there to help the residents in any way they can. It could be that a resident just wants to talk, or it could be helping them find stuff they might need in the donations. Currently, the advocates host a weekly game night for the kids if there are children in residence that are old

enough to play.

### **Project Description and Justification**

**Project Title:** Empowerment Workshop: Helping End the Cycle of Domestic Violence

#### **Project Description:**

The project consisted of the development and implementation of a ten-week curriculum that included information on various life skills. The development stage of the curriculum required picking the topics and researching information on the chosen topics. The topics chosen were budgeting, organization, healthy relationships, anxiety, personal boundaries, communication skills, social media safety, coping mechanisms, self-care, and conflict resolution. The agency was responsible for approving all the material required for the curriculum. They also were responsible for getting the requested materials before the start of each weekly session.

#### **Project Justification:**

The YWCAMC did not have a set schedule but there were future plans for the weekly group sessions that they wanted to hold at the Domestic Violence Safe House. The formula in place for conducting the weekly sessions at the Domestic Violence Safe House had the advocate on duty google a topic and find a worksheet to go over. Due to lack of planning, the advocate on duty was more likely not as knowledgeable on the subject matter as needed. By not being as knowledgeable on the subject matter they wouldn't be able to answer as many questions that stem from the worksheet that they are going over with the residents.

The YWCA was expecting to have a new rotating schedule that would allow the residents to get almost all the topics during their stay at the safe house. Extending the curriculum to 10-weeks instead of eight would allow the few residents that are granted an extension two extra weeks of continuing education. Having a set curriculum allows the advocates to pull the

information whenever they find that they need it. Having the curriculum information on a google drive account would allow the staff to update this information when the need arises.

This project addressed a variety of different needs the residents have due to their history of domestic violence. The main focus was on teaching these women different life skills while also empowering them to be independent after they leave the program. Coming from domestic violence the abuser in the relationship is usually very controlling. Due to the controlling nature of their abusers the victims lose their independence and have to learn how to be strong independent women again. The goal of this project was to use multiple methods during each weekly session that allowed the variety of learners to benefit from this knowledge.

### **Benefits:**

There were multiple different benefits within this program. The set curriculum allowed the YWCA advocates to have easy access to materials needed in order to conduct the weekly sessions. This program allowed the advocates to take time to learn the material and be more knowledgeable on the subjects which in turn benefited the residents. The project format will allow the YWCA to update it when they think it is necessary. The different sections within the curriculum will allow the advocates to use whatever tools will benefit the group of women currently in residence. The more experience that the advocate conducting the group has will give them more confidence conducting the session in the future. The women that will participate in the safe house program will ultimately get the greatest benefits from this project. They will have the opportunity to participate each week during these different sessions.

### **Project Implementation**

#### **Implementation Method:**

The curriculum was written before the project could be implemented. Time and effort went into researching each of the ten topics in order to develop meaningful content during the four months dedicated to writing the curriculum. Pre-made worksheets that were found on the internet were used for the reading portion of the curriculum. Videos that can be found on YouTube were being used for the video portion of the curriculum. Personalized questions were developed to make the end of each section interactive for the residents. This gave them the opportunity to go into detail on why this specific topic was chosen for the weekly session.

**Participants:**

There were a select couple of staff members from the YWCA that participated in this project. The staff members include the Shelter Services Manager who was in charge of approving all of the curriculums and materials needed for the weekly sessions. However, she was not in attendance for the weekly sessions. The advocate on duty was the one in charge of observing the weekly session.

Researching and writing the curriculum was the most time-consuming part of this project. The final materials had to be sent over to the Shelter Services Manager in order to get approval before the weekly sessions could take place. After everything was finally approved working with the shelter services manager in order to get the required materials was the most important task in order for the sessions to start in a timely manner. Once the sessions start, time was set aside for set up, running of the session, and clean up after. The pre and post surveys was handed out throughout the ten-week curriculum. After the surveys are completed the data had to be analyzed.

**Resources:**

There were multiple different resources used throughout this project. However, each week of the curriculum required a different resource that was needed in order for the session to be successful. There were general resources that are used during every session that was continually reused. Each week there was the need to have access to a television and an HDMI cord in order to play the video for that week's specific topic. The YWCA also had to print out copies of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale in order for the advocate that ran the session to hand it out to the residents (Rosenberg, 1965).

Due to already having an established location and funding this is not an issue we had to address for this project. However, the YWCA had to set aside at least an hour and a half of time for the advocate on duty to set up the session, run it, and clean up afterwards. That could take less time or even more, but by setting aside an hour and a half they gave the advocate plenty of time to complete their tasks.

### **Potential Challenges:**

There were many challenges that had to be faced when implementing this project. During the Fall 2018 semester the YWCA wasn't focused on trying to get the clients to participate in the weekly session. This allowed for the time needed to write the new curriculum. However, when the residents at the domestic violence safe house didn't want to participate during the weekly sessions it made it difficult to evaluate if the program was successful or not. With the lack of participating in the evaluation, the YWCA will be unable to decide if they want to continue using the curriculum.

Since all the different programs offered through the safe house program are voluntary there wasn't a good way to make sure that everyone participated. The waves of residents that they could get needs to be taken into consideration after evaluating the program. Sometimes

there would be no one in residence while other times there was a full house. The curriculum needed to be designed in a way that it can work for a small or large group.

### Scope of Work and Timeline

<b>Title: Empowerment Workshop: Helping End the Cycle of Domestic Violence</b>		
<b>Brief project description:</b> Research and write curriculum for the agency to have 10 weeks worth of topics to use during the weekly group therapy sessions.		
<b>Goal:</b> Have a curriculum written for advocates to use for future sessions.		
<b>Primary objective of the project:</b> Develop a curriculum that will teach the women in the house a set of basic life skills.		
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Timeline/d eadlines</b>
1. Discuss capstone project ideas with mentor	1. Final capstone project idea approved	1. Sept - Oct 2018
2. Submit curriculum topics to mentor	2. Final approved curriculum topics	2. Sept - October 2018
3. Submit Personal Boundaries finished curriculum to mentor	3. Personal Boundaries approved finished curriculum	3. Oct 2018
4. Submit Self-Care finished Curriculum to mentor	4. Self-Care approved finished curriculum	4. Oct 2018
5. Submit Communication Skills finished curriculum to mentor	5. Communication Skills approved finished curriculum	5. Nov 2018
6. Submit Organization finished curriculum to mentor	6. Organization approved finished curriculum	6. Jan 2019

7. Submit Anxiety finished curriculum to mentor	7. Anxiety approved finished curriculum	7. Nov 2018
8. Submit Coping Mechanisms finished curriculum to mentor	8. Coping Mechanisms approved finished curriculum	8. Nov 2018
9. Submit Healthy Relationships finished curriculum to mentor	9. Healthy Relationships approved finished curriculum	9. Nov 2018
10. Submit Budgeting finished curriculum to mentor	10. Budgeting approved finished curriculum	10. Jan 2019
11. Submit Conflict Resolution finished curriculum to mentor	11. Conflict Resolution approved finished curriculum	11. Dec 2018
12. Submit Social Media Safety finished curriculum to mentor	12. Social Media Safety approved finished curriculum	12. Dec 2018
13. Submit Approved Materials List	13. Final approved materials	13. Dec 2018
14. Have all materials available at the safehouse.	14. Approved materials available	14. Jan 2019
15. Deliver 10 1-hour sessions	15. Agenda, number of participants and session materials	15. Feb 1 – Mar 22, 2019
16. Implement Post - Tests and compile data	16. Preliminary results submitted to mentor for approval	16. Feb 1 - Mar 25, 2019
17. Compile and analyze data; complete draft report on findings	17. Findings report completed/submitted to mentor for approval	17. April 15, 2019
18. Complete reporting requirements	18. Final agency and capstone reports	18. May 3, 2019

19. Prepare capstone presentation in selected format	19. Instructor approval & Dress Rehearsal of final capstone presentation format (posters submitted for printing)	19. May 8-10, 2019
20. Final preparation for Capstone Festival	20. Final presentation at Capstone Festival	20. May 17, 2019

### **Problem Description**

Currently too many victims of Domestic Violence cannot leave the cycle of abuse. That can be due to the fact that domestic violence victims cannot escape being controlled and therefore are lacking common life skills needed to live independently. Because during their abusive relationship residents were controlled by another person for a long time many depended on someone to tell them what to do. They tend to rely on the staff at the YWCA to tell them exactly what they need to do in order to succeed in the program. For this reason, it is imperative that they are learning independence skills during their time in the program. As a result, when they leave the program, they need to be equipped with the skills they need in order to succeed in escaping the cycle of abuse.

### **Risk Factors:**

There are many risk factors that can indicate potential domestic violence victims. However, that doesn't mean that the individual being abused is ever at fault. Some of the individual risk factors include low self-esteem, low income, and depression (CDC, 2018, B). Those factors can cause the victims to be more willing to stay with an abusive spouse. It makes them more dependent on other people and feel like they are unable to survive on their own. The next few individual risk factors are believing in strict gender roles, being a previous victim of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and unplanned pregnancy (CDC, 2018, B). Strict gender

roles cause both the victim and the abuser to have a general idea on how the roles in the relationship are supposed to work. That can cause hyper-masculinity and the belief that a woman has to do exactly what her husband or significant other says. Unplanned pregnancies usually make the victims want to stay with their significant other in order to make sure the child has both parents.

There are also risk factors in relationships. The main factor is having a jealous or possessive significant other (CDC, 2018, B). Jealousy or possessiveness can cause people to act out of character and hurt the person they care about. The next factor would be economic stress or lack of social support (CDC, 2018, B). Added stress due to lack of support or money can cause people to act out against the people they care about. Without knowing the healthiest way to deal with these kinds of emotions are the greatest risk factor anyone can have to hurting their significant others.

### **Consequences:**

The consequences for domestic violence victims have a wide range, it all depends on the type of person the victim is and who was involved. Victims can develop anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder after experiencing domestic violence (CDC, 2018, A). These disorders can cause them to develop suicidal or antisocial behavior while they are figuring out how to deal with these new emotions (CDC, 2018, A). The last consequences would be fear of intimacy and emotional detachment (CDC, 2018, A).

In addition, victims of domestic violence often chose to engage in negative health behaviors in order to deal with their trauma. The first behavior would be high-risk sexual engagement (CDC, 2018, A). Some examples would include, multiple sexual partners, exchanging sexual acts for food, money, or shelter, and engaging in unprotected sex (CDC,

2018, A). The next behavior is the use of harmful substances (CDC, 2018, A). Some examples would include, vaping, smoking cigarettes, consuming unhealthy amounts of alcohol on a regular basis, and illegal drug use (CDC, 2018, A). The last behavior would include an unhealthy diet (CDC, 2018, A). Some examples would include fasting, overuse of diet pills, overeating's, and forcing themselves to vomit regularly after meals (CDC, 2018, A).

The cost to society for domestic violence is extreme, the average economic cost of domestic violence victims for women in a lifetime is \$103,767 and for men is \$23,414 (CDC, 2018, A). Within the entire United States, the economic cost for a victim's lifetime is approximately \$3.6 trillion (CDC, 2018, A). To simplify that number approximately 59% which is \$2.1 trillion goes towards medical costs, 37% which is approximately \$1.3 trillion comes from lost work time between both victims and offenders, 2% which is approximately \$73 billion goes towards criminal justice costs, and the last 2% which is \$62 billion goes towards miscellaneous costs (CDC, 2018, A). When you break that down that money it includes almost 32 million women and 12 million men (CDC, 2018, A).

**Problem Model:**

<b>Project Title: Empowerment Workshop: Helping End the Cycle of Domestic Violence</b>		
<b>Too many victims of Domestic Violence cannot leave the cycle of domestic violence.</b>		
<b>CAUSES/RISK FACTORS TO BROADER HEALTH PROBLEM</b>	<b>AGENCY-SPECIFIC "MICRO-LEVEL" PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY PROJECT</b>	<b>CONSEQUENCES TO SOCIETY</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strict Gender Roles</li> <li>• History of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse</li> <li>• Unplanned pregnancy</li> <li>• Jealous of possessive partner</li> <li>• Economic stress</li> <li>• Lack of social support</li> </ul>	<p>Too many victims of Domestic Violence cannot leave the cycle of domestic violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic burden to society</li> <li>• Development of mental health disorders</li> <li>• Suicidal tendencies</li> <li>• Fear of intimacy</li> <li>• Emotional detachment</li> <li>• Negative health behaviors</li> </ul>
<p><b>CAUSES TO AGENCY PROBLEM</b></p>	<p><b>BROADER “MACRO-LEVEL” HEALTH/SOCIAL PROBLEM</b></p>	<p><b>CONSEQUENCES TO AGENCY</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of planning</li> <li>• Lack of resident participation</li> <li>• Timing requires the residents to get their young children to bed before group starts.</li> </ul>	<p>Currently the Safe House program doesn’t have an empowerment program.</p>	<p>Residents are relying on staff to figure out what they are supposed to do after they leave the program.</p>

**Assessment Plan**

**Expected Outcomes:**

This curriculum was written to help improve the client’s self-esteem and teach them life skills. However, the life skills that the clients will learn during the weekly sessions will be something they will improve upon over time. Therefore, it is not something that could be expected over the course of the ten weeks while the clients are in the program.

With the understanding that changes in self-esteem can take longer than 10 weeks, the capstone evaluation still focused on participants self-esteem throughout the program. Changes in self-esteem would indicate if a client is becoming more confident and stops blaming themselves for mistakes that were made in the past. The guilt that some carry from the abuse can be more of an issue regarding their self-confidence than the actual abuse. When they start talking about their

past and how they are feeling about what happened it can help alleviate their feelings about the event. Hearing that another person experienced a similar event can help the guilt that they feel about putting themselves in that kind of situation. Therefore, if their self-esteem increases it can be assumed that they are learning the life skills being taught throughout the curriculum.

**Assessment Plan:**

To measure short-term changes in self-esteem clients were asked to fill out the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale Evaluation (Rosenberg, 1965) every week. Each week after we finished the session for the evening, they would take a few moments to answer the ten questions found in the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Evaluation. The questions are a combination of positive and negative traits that reflect on a person's self-esteem. When grading the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Evaluation each question has the possibility to get one to four points. However, half of the questions give a positive score while the other half give a negative score. The highest possible score that someone could get after completing the evaluation is a positive 15. While the lowest score possible is a negative 15.

The completed questionnaires were divided up by the number of weeks the clients attended the curriculum, but no names were collected in the questionnaires to ensure that all responses remained anonymous.

**Findings and Results of Assessment Process**

After implementing the workshops for a certain number of weeks the scores from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were analyzed. Unfortunately, the average from the different weeks of participants showed a decrease in self-esteem. I believe that was caused by not having enough participation in the last couple of weeks of the workshop. There was more participation during the first few weeks and only one or two people that made it to the last couple of weeks.

That made it so there was an unequal number of participants each week which could have changed the results.

Even though the data did not show an increase in average self-esteem there were still many gains from the implementation of this program. The main strength was the design of the curriculum. Under each topic there was a worksheet, a video, and an activity which addressed every style of learning. That allowed every person to gain the information no matter how they learned the best. The next strength was how small the group was which allowed the facilitator to get to know each client personally. The largest group that took place during this time had 5 clients while the smallest had 2 clients. The small group size also allowed the clients to get comfortable with each other and the facilitator and made them more willing to open up and talk about their experiences.

With all the strengths this program had there were also challenges faced. There were many weeks that the clients didn't show up for the workshop even though it was mandatory. If they were already in bed, there was no way to force them to wake up in order to participate. The other challenge was the weeks where we had a majority of only Spanish speakers in residence. The curriculum and resources are in English so it wouldn't be effective to translate everything to Spanish. The last major problem that the program faced was the struggle to gain the clients trust. Since it is a short program most of the clients would spend the first two to three weeks simply trying to get to know the intern and by the time, they actually trusted the information that was being given they were about to exit the program. It is difficult to say what the intern could've done differently to gain the clients trust faster, but that is something that could continue to be worked on in the future.

### **Reflect on your Learning**

This project resulted in professional growth in many different areas. The process of developing the curriculum on unknown topics helped me become stronger and more confident in my research skills (Statistics and Research Methods MLO in the Collaborative Health and Human Services major). Next, while I lead the group every week, my leadership and professional communication skills are gained by making sure the group stayed on track. While I have been leading the group each week along with the advocate on duty, I also worked on my collaboration skills. The clients that are at the safehouse almost always come from dangerous backgrounds and are suffering some form of trauma. Leading the group has taught me professional ethics along with how you would approach clients that are currently dealing with a difficult situation. Since I was unable to meet in person with the shelter services manager, the communication was mainly done via email and text messages which has strengthened my knowledge of the Professional Communication and Professional Development.

### **Recommendations**

There are many things that this project can be used for in the future. I believe the YWCA Domestic Violence Safe House could benefit from continuing this program. Even though the average showed a decrease in self-esteem I believe that was caused due to not having enough results in the later weeks. There was more participation during the first few weeks and only one or two people that made it to the last couple of weeks. Overall, I feel like this workshop benefits the clients of the safe house program and could be extended to their other safe house program for human trafficking as well. However, I feel like the safe house could benefit from having a separate group meeting every week in addition to this one to focus solely on how they are feeling. There were many times that the group got off topic simply because the clients needed to rant about their day or something that has happened to them recently. I feel like if the house

offered an optional time for them to show up simply to get their feelings off their chest it would benefit the clients in the long run. Lastly, it would be beneficial to write curriculum for a shorter program for Spanish speakers in order for them to be able to participate in group.

For the colleague that takes over this project please be aware that it will take time for them to trust you. They will not immediately feel like this information will benefit them in anyway and try and get through the sessions as fast as possible. After a few weeks they will start to open up to you and begin to slowly trust you. As much as possible try and start the group at the same time every week as it starts to get the women into a routine. Sometimes they might not quite be ready, but if they see you are set up for group, they will start to hurry up on whatever they are doing to make it to group on time. Also, make sure you do not take what they say personally. When the clients are being difficult, they will try and find any sort of emotional button to make you crack but you cannot let them. Just keep calm and breath and you can get through anything. Most importantly, keep an open mind for everything the clients say. They might have personal experience on certain topics and what they talk about could benefit the other women as well.

### **Conclusion.**

There are many things I gained from having a year-long project of this magnitude. The best thing I learned was to ask for help. It is better to ask for help when you first start to struggle rather than to do it incorrectly and have to go back and correct everything. In the professional world you are supposed to be independent, but that does not mean you shouldn't ask for help. My mentor was more willing to explain things more in depth when I was first starting a project rather than telling me how I did everything wrong at the end. Next, I learned that not everything will go according to your plan. No matter how much preparation you do ahead of time when you

are working with people there is always something that could go wrong. When things do start to go wrong, I learned to just go with the flow and guide it back on track rather than stopping the entire project in order to get to where I was supposed to be.

During this experience the place I learned the most was facilitating the groups each week. That was the role that challenged me the most while also taught me the most. There were so many clients that would challenge me simply because of my age. I would have to continue to find different ways to prove to them that I had plenty of knowledge on the subject of the week in order for them to actually participate. That was probably the most stressful thing that I had to face throughout my time at the YWCA Domestic Violence Safe House and something I will remember for a long time.

There are many things that I wish I knew before starting my capstone project. The main thing would be to advocate for yourself. Your mentors only job isn't to be guiding you they also have a lot of responsibilities at the agency. Make sure you let them know what you expect or want from them at the very beginning. But you should also understand that sometimes things happen and maybe instead of meeting in person they can only have a phone meeting with you. Especially if your mentor is working at multiple different locations be flexible with them as well as long as you are still getting the help you need. The next piece of advice would be to get help from the people around you at the agency. You might not be working with your mentor all the time but will be assigned to another staff member. Take advantage of the knowledge they have in the field and make sure to go to them for help as well. If you are doing a similar project be aware that people will question your age and the skills, you have that make you qualified to run this type of program. Don't let those people get under your skin. Just take a deep breath and ahead of time figure out what you are going to say if your age or skills get questioned. Lastly, enjoy the

time you have at your agency. You might be staying local or moving away when you are finished so take advantage of the time you have there.

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## **Appendix**

### **Pre/Post Survey:**

Number of sessions attended at the YWCA:

Instructions

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

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

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

Strongly Agree                      Agree                      Disagree                      Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Strongly Agree                      Agree                      Disagree                      Strongly Disagree

Scoring: Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give “Strongly Disagree” 1 point, “Disagree” 2 points, “Agree” 3 points, and “Strongly Agree” 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

### **Evaluating A Relationship**

*Answer each question by circling yes or no.*

1. Do you feel that the other person in this relationship does not understand you? **YES / NO**
  
2. Are you able to speak freely to him or her about things that bother you? **YES / NO**
  
3. Do you take a genuine interest in each other’s lives? **YES / NO**
  
4. Do both of you pursue individual interests? **YES / NO**
  
5. Is this relationship the only important relationship in your life? **YES / NO**
  
6. Do you believe that you are a worthwhile person outside of this relationship? **YES / NO**

7. Do you expect this person to meet all of your emotional or physical needs? **YES / NO**
8. Is your relationship often threatened by others? **YES / NO**
9. Can you be yourself in this relationship? **YES / NO**
10. Are you uncomfortable sharing your feelings with this person? **YES / NO**
11. Do you both work to improve the relationship? **YES / NO**
12. Do you feel good about yourself? **YES / NO**
13. Do you feel you have become a better person because of this relationship? **YES / NO**
14. Can you both accept changes in roles and feelings within the relationship? **YES / NO**

The strengths of this relationship are:

The weaknesses of this relationship are:

I am most proud of the way we have:

We could improve our relationship by:

## Challenging Anxious Thoughts

Anxiety can be a healthy emotion—it forces us to focus on our problems, and work hard to solve them. But sometimes, anxiety grows out of control, and does just the opposite. It *cripples* our ability to solve problems. When this happens, **irrational thoughts** often play a role.

In this exercise, we will practice catching our irrational thoughts, and replacing them with rational alternatives. With enough practice, this will become a natural process that can help you manage anxiety.

### Describe a common situation that triggers your anxiety:

example: "giving a speech in front of a crowd" or "driving in rush hour traffic"


Anxiety distorts our thinking by causing us to **overestimate the likelihood of something going wrong**, and **imagine the potential consequences as worse than they really are**. Sometimes, just taking a moment to think about these facts can help us recognize our irrational thoughts.

### Imagine you are faced with the anxiety-producing situation from above. Describe the...

Worst outcome:
Best outcome:
Likely outcome:

### Imagine the worst outcome comes true. Would it still matter...

1 week from now:
1 month from now:
1 year from now:

Usually, anxious thoughts focus on the worst possible outcomes, even when they aren't likely. For example, a person who is nervous about giving a speech might think: "*I am going to forget everything and embarrass myself, and I'll never live it down*".

As an outside observer, we know that an alternate, more rational thought might be: "*My speech might only be OK, but if I do mess up, everyone will forget about it soon enough*".

### Using your own "worst outcome" and "likely outcome" from above, describe your...

Irrational thought:
Rational thought:

## Grounding Techniques

After a trauma, it's normal to experience flashbacks, anxiety, and other uncomfortable symptoms. **Grounding techniques** help control these symptoms by turning attention away from thoughts, memories, or worries, and refocusing on the present moment.

### 5-4-3-2-1 Technique

Using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds, or the texture of an ordinary object.



**What are 5 things you can see?** Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.



**What are 4 things you can feel?** Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture, and other physical qualities.



**What are 3 things you can hear?** Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.



**What are 2 things you can smell?** Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.



**What is 1 thing you can taste?** Carry gum, candy, or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.

### Categories

Choose at least three of the categories below and name as many items as you can in each one. Spend a few minutes on each category to come up with as many items as possible.

Movies	Countries	Books	Cereals
Sports Teams	Colors	Cars	Fruits & Vegetables
Animals	Cities	TV Shows	Famous People

*For a variation on this activity, try naming items in a category alphabetically. For example, for the fruits & vegetables category, say "apple, banana, carrot," and so on.*

## Grounding Techniques

### Body Awareness

The body awareness technique will bring you into the here-and-now by directing your focus to sensations in the body. Pay special attention to the physical sensations created by each step.

1. Take 5 long, deep breaths through your nose, and exhale through puckered lips.
2. Place both feet flat on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl your toes several times. Spend a moment noticing the sensations in your feet.
3. Stomp your feet on the ground several times. Pay attention to the sensations in your feet and legs as you make contact with the ground.
4. Clench your hands into fists, then release the tension. Repeat this 10 times.
5. Press your palms together. Press them harder and hold this pose for 15 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of tension in your hands and arms.
6. Rub your palms together briskly. Notice and sound and the feeling of warmth.
7. Reach your hands over your head like you're trying to reach the sky. Stretch like this for 5 seconds. Bring your arms down and let them relax at your sides.
8. Take 5 more deep breaths and notice the feeling of calm in your body.

### Mental Exercises

Use mental exercises to take your mind off uncomfortable thoughts and feelings. They are discreet and easy to use at nearly any time or place. Experiment to see which work best for you.

- Name all the objects you see.
- Describe the steps in performing an activity you know how to do well. For example, how to shoot a basketball, prepare your favorite meal, or tie a knot.
- Count backwards from 100 by 7.
- Pick up an object and describe it in detail. Describe its color, texture, size, weight, scent, and any other qualities you notice.
- Spell your full name, and the names of three other people, backwards.
- Name all your family members, their ages, and one of their favorite activities.
- Read something backwards, letter-by-letter. Practice for at least a few minutes.
- Think of an object and "draw" it in your mind, or in the air with your finger. Try drawing your home, a vehicle, or an animal.

## "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>	

## Relationship Conflict Resolution

### **Focus on the problem, not the person.**

When a disagreement turns to personal insults, raised voices, or mocking tones, the conversation is no longer productive. Be careful to focus on the problem without placing blame on your partner. If a disagreement becomes personal, you should pause the conversation.

### **Use reflective listening.**

Oftentimes during arguments we focus on getting our own point across rather than listening to our partner. Before responding to your partner, restate what they have said to you in your own words. Continue this process until your partner agrees that you understand. Next, share your side. Your partner should reflect back your ideas in their own words until they too understand. Using this technique will help both individuals feel listened to and understood, even if you disagree.

### **Use "I" statements.**

When sharing a concern, begin your sentence with "I". For example: "I feel hurt when you don't tell me you'll be late". With this sentence format we show that we are taking responsibility for our own emotion rather than blaming our partner. The alternative sentence—"You never tell me when you're going to be late"—will often cause a partner to become defensive.

### **Know when to take a time-out.**

When you and your partner are becoming argumentative, insulting, or aggressive, it's a good idea to take a time-out. Have a plan in place so you or your partner can call for a break when needed. Spend some time doing something alone that you find relaxing. When you've both calmed down, you and your partner can return to solving the problem. Be sure that you do return—it isn't a good idea to leave these issues unaddressed.

### **Work toward a resolution.**

Disagreement is a normal part of a relationship. If it becomes clear that you and your partner will not agree, focus on a resolution instead. Try to find a compromise that benefits both individuals. Ask yourself if this disagreement really matters to your relationship, and let yourself move on if not.



**Bradley Davidson, MS, SPHR**  
*Your Personal and Professional Life Coach*

## ***Drawing Effective Personal Boundaries***

Clear and healthy boundaries are critical to living your vision and creating a fulfilling life. Both in your personal and professional life, a lack of boundaries will pull you away from being your best. This quick guide will help you identify key boundaries that may need your attention and will provide some practical tools to get you started thinking about setting and maintaining the boundaries.

### **What are Boundaries?**

Personal Boundaries are designed to protect and honor important parts of our lives. They are created to clarify what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviors from others. Just as a fence protects and preserves our real property, so should personal boundaries protect our personal selves.

### **Key Areas to Protect Using Boundaries**

Just as we have property we preserve and protect with physical boundaries, there are several key areas of our lives that should be protected by personal boundaries:

- ❖ **Your Time** – In today’s world, time is an important and valuable asset. We often feel we never have enough time to focus on what’s really important in our lives yet time is often what we least protect through effective boundaries. Do you have friends who drop by unexpectedly? Do you have co-workers or employees who demand your time in unreasonable ways? Do you have tasks that could just as easily be completed by someone else? These are examples of violators of our time boundaries.
- ❖ **Your Emotions** – Your emotions are where your love and caring come from. This should be well-protected. Often, people in our lives may say or do hurtful things (often unintentional) that can damage our emotions and our hearts. Has someone in your life made hurtful remarks or comments? Been thoughtless? These are examples of violations of our emotional boundaries.
- ❖ **Your Energy** – Your energy is the well-spring from which you function. This energy can come from many sources; your “alone time”, your inner peace, activities that invigorate you, etc. When others do or say things that rob you of this energy (such as invade your privacy, create turmoil, make unreasonable demands, keep you from prayer, meditation, etc.), you are less likely to function effectively.
- ❖ **Your Personal Values or Other Areas of Importance to You** – Anything in your life that is important to you (such as your personal values, needs, family, etc.) can be areas that can benefit from effective boundaries. What other areas of your life need boundaries?

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## Ways to Create Your Personal Boundaries

There are a number of ways to create and honor boundaries that are important to you. Here are just a few examples:

- Be clear about the boundary to both yourself and others – Make sure you have been thoughtful about the boundary issue and have defined for yourself and others what is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Once a boundary is crossed, remind the individual of your boundary and ask for his/her help in maintaining that boundary.
- If the individual continues to violate the boundary, ask firmly and politely for the behavior to stop. If the behavior continues, consider what further action is appropriate to stop the behavior. Remember that while you may be firm, you should also remain respectful of the other individual.
- Identify ways to position yourself in a time and place that minimizes the opportunity for your boundaries to be crossed.
- Thank those people around you who honor your boundaries and thank those who have honored your requests to start observing your boundaries.
- Always seek to understand and honor the boundaries of others.

## Understanding and Creating Your Personal Boundaries

In the space provided, list at least 5 boundaries (either from the key areas above or other areas in your life) that need strengthening. In the space next to the boundary, identify a potential solution to that boundary issue. The solution could be anything from having a conversation with the offender to removing yourself from the situation. You may review the "Ways to Create Your Personal Boundaries" above for ideas. I'll "prime the pump" by providing you with a couple of examples:

The boundary being crossed is...	The action I will take is...
<i>Example: A classmate has made a habit of telling me jokes that are racially or sexually degrading. These comments are at odds with my values and beliefs and are causing me to dread being around him.</i>	<i>I plan to discuss the jokes and comments with my classmate and let him know how they make me feel. I will let him know that I would prefer not to hear those types of jokes in the future.</i>
<i>Example: I need to complete a weekly report at work each Friday morning but am continually interrupted by traffic in our office. This has caused me to miss a couple of deadlines.</i>	<i>I plan to try to negotiate an arrangement with my manager that will enable me to work from home two hours each Friday morning so that I can complete the report without distractions.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

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*The content of this worksheet should not take the place of sound judgment or the advice of other qualified professionals and is provided for informational and learning purposes only.*

### ***Self-Care Assessment Worksheet***

This assessment tool provides an overview of effective strategies to maintain self-care. After completing the full assessment, choose one item from each area that you will actively work to improve.

Using the scale below, rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

- 5 = Frequently
- 4 = Occasionally
- 3 = Rarely
- 2 = Never
- 1 = It never occurred to me

#### **Physical Self-Care**

- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun
- Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes you like
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from telephones
- Other:

#### **Psychological Self-Care**

- Make time for self-reflection
- Have your own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- Decrease stress in your life

- \_\_\_ Let others know different aspects of you
- \_\_\_ Notice your inner experience—listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- \_\_\_ Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- \_\_\_ Practice receiving from others
- \_\_\_ Be curious
- \_\_\_ Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes
- \_\_\_ Other:

### **Emotional Self-Care**

- \_\_\_ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- \_\_\_ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- \_\_\_ Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- \_\_\_ Love yourself
- \_\_\_ Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- \_\_\_ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- \_\_\_ Allow yourself to cry
- \_\_\_ Find things that make you laugh
- \_\_\_ Express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- \_\_\_ Play with children
- \_\_\_ Other:

### **Spiritual Self-Care**

- \_\_\_ Make time for reflection
- \_\_\_ Spend time with nature
- \_\_\_ Find a spiritual connection or community
- \_\_\_ Be open to inspiration
- \_\_\_ Cherish your optimism and hope
- \_\_\_ Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- \_\_\_ Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- \_\_\_ Be open to not knowing

- \_\_\_ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- \_\_\_ Meditate
- \_\_\_ Pray
- \_\_\_ Sing
- \_\_\_ Spend time with children
- \_\_\_ Have experiences of awe
- \_\_\_ Contribute to causes in which you believe
- \_\_\_ Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Other:

**Workplace or Professional Self-Care**

- \_\_\_ Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- \_\_\_ Take time to chat with co-workers
- \_\_\_ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- \_\_\_ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- \_\_\_ Set limits with your clients and colleagues
- \_\_\_ Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- \_\_\_ Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- \_\_\_ Get regular supervision or consultation
- \_\_\_ Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- \_\_\_ Have a peer support group
- \_\_\_ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- \_\_\_ Other:

**Balance**

- \_\_\_ Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- \_\_\_ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest

**REPLENISH THE WELL:  
AN EXPERIENCE IN SELF-CARE**

**SELF-CARE WORKSHEET**

Neglecting self-care can have negative effects on body, mind, and spirit, leaving us depleted and out of balance. For this reason, it is important to have self-care strategies that address each of these parts of ourselves. Organizations also need to support self-care for staff and volunteers. On the chart below, list as many self-care strategies as you can. (An example is given in each area to get you started). After you have listed strategies, place a check-mark (✓) to any that you do regularly, and put a star (★) next to any you might like to consider adding to add to your life.

PHYSICAL	MENTAL (INCLUDES EMOTIONAL)	SPIRITUAL	ORGANIZATIONAL
<i>Aerobic exercise</i>	<i>Sharing upset feelings with a friend</i>	<i>Meditation</i>	<i>Regularly scheduled peer supervision group</i>

Exercise developed by Catherine D. Nugent, for *Replenish the Well: An Experience in Self-Care*, workshop presented at *Peer Services: A Life in the Community for Everyone*, Fifth Annual Conference of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment's Recovery Community Services Program, Washington, DC, July 13, 2004.

Have your family, friends and community follow these tips to safely enjoy social media.

- Privacy and security settings exist for a reason: Learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks. They are there to help you control who sees what you post and manage your online experience in a positive way.
- Once posted, always posted: Protect your reputation on social networks. What you post online stays online. Think twice before posting pictures you wouldn't want your parents or future employers to see. Recent research found that 70 percent of job recruiters rejected candidates based on information they found online.
- Your online reputation can be a good thing: Recent research also found that recruiters respond to a strong, positive personal brand online. So show your smarts, thoughtfulness and mastery of the environment.
- Keep personal info personal: Be cautious about how much personal information you provide on social networking sites. The more information you post, the easier it may be for a hacker or someone else to use that information to steal your identity, access your data or commit other crimes such as stalking.
- Know and manage your friends: Social networks can be used for a variety of purposes. Some of the fun is creating a large pool of friends from many aspects of your life. That doesn't mean all friends are created equal. Use tools to manage the information you share with friends in different groups or even have multiple online pages. If you're trying to create a public persona as a blogger or expert, create an open profile or a "fan" page that encourages broad participation and limits personal information. Use your personal profile to keep your real friends (the ones you know and trust) up to date with your daily life.

- Be honest if you're uncomfortable: If a friend posts something about you that makes you uncomfortable or seems inappropriate, let them know. Likewise, stay open minded if a friend approaches you because something you've posted makes him or her uncomfortable. People have different tolerances for how much the world knows about them respect those differences.
- Know what action to take: If someone is harassing or threatening you, remove them from your friends list, block them and report them to the site administrator.

Protect yourself with these STOP. THINK. CONNECT.™ tips:

- Keep security software current: Having the latest security software, web browser and operating system is the best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats.
- Own your online presence: When applicable, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's OK to limit how and with whom you share information.
- Make your password a sentence: A strong password is a sentence that is at least 12 characters long. Focus on positive sentences or phrases that you like to think about and are easy to remember (for example, "I love country music."). On many sites, you can even use spaces!
- Unique account, unique password: Having separate passwords for every account helps to thwart cybercriminals. At a minimum, separate your work and personal accounts and make sure that your critical accounts have the strongest passwords.

- When in doubt, throw it out: Links in email, tweets, posts and online advertising are often how cybercriminals try to steal your personal information. Even if you know the source, if something looks suspicious, delete it.
- Post only about others as you have them post about you. The Golden Rule applies online as well.

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# Coping Skills

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Below are some options for general coping. Remember to incorporate other coping skills that you have used or have previously found to be helpful.

## Self Soothing

### Breathing:

Take deep breaths from the diaphragm or stomach. Breathe in then, when you breathe out; very slowly release your breath out.

### Exercise:

Change your focus, get your body moving

### Music:

Use a relaxing or lively tune or music that inspires you. Consider dancing.

### Relax your body:

Progressive muscle relaxation. Download guided relaxation. Take a bath or shower. Do yoga.

### Comfort Item:

Hold onto or wrap yourself in something comforting – a blanket, jacket, scarf, stuffed animal – anything that helps you feel more comfortable.

### Imagery:

Look at and direct your attention towards picture or photograph of a beautiful and calming scene (i.e., beach, mountains).

### Visualization:

Visualize a place you love, either that you have been at, or that you enjoy imagining yourself to be there. Describe it paying attention to using all five senses (e.g., the beach: what it looks like, how the sand feels, what it sounds like: wind and waves, salt water smell).

## Do Something Positive

### Do One Positive Thing.

Do something positive for yourself or for someone else. Every day is an opportunity to do something to move you towards your goals or towards being more positive.

### Socialize:

Call someone and talk about something pleasant, encourage them to talk about something pleasant, plan to do something pleasant,...

Call someone and vent about what is bothering you – but keep it time-limited.

### Entertain yourself:

Computer game, crossword, cards, jigsaw, cook, read books, magazines, etc, do crafts, sudoku.....

### List your achievements

What have you done that was challenging for you, what have you put effort into, what have people said you do well....

### Prayer

Use whatever prayers, rituals, spiritually inspiring readings, music or activities that get you in touch with something bigger than yourself.

### Problem Solving

Is there something you can do towards solving the problem?

## Dealing with your thoughts and assumptions

### Self-statements/Cognitive Coping:

What can you say to yourself to help you feel better?

Examples include, "I'm safe now; he's not here; It's not my fault. I can get through this."

You already survived your past.

Use your skills to identify the thoughts bothering you and see if you can identify an alternative true way to think about what is happening.

### Redirect Unhelpful Thoughts:

Notice if you have a lot of self-critical or otherwise discouraging thoughts. Push these away and identify something positive you can do.

### What would your mentor say?

Whom do you admire? What do you imagine they would say to encourage you?

### Reality Check:

Is there something I need to do about this right now?

Is there something I could do about this right now?

Is there another way to think about this?

Radical Acceptance

Lifeline - is there someone else I can talk to about my options?

## Distracting

### Focus on your Senses Right now

Identify something you see, something you hear, something you smell, something you touch. While doing this stay mindfully focused on just your senses in the moment. Describe what you are sensing. Look at something specific. Smell something strong (scented lotion, candle, oil, spices). Touch different textures – not just with your hands – use your face, your feet, etc. Taste something minty or strong flavored, and/or brush your teeth.

### Mindful Eating:

Examine food (e.g., 1 raisin), watch hand move towards your mouth, take a moment to smell it, how body reacting to smell (e.g., mouth watering), how is food positioned in mouth? Begin chewing slowly, what tastes experiencing? When you swallow, feel muscles contract as you push food to your stomach, be aware of sensations (Can eat with non-dominant hand to increase awkwardness and increase likelihood you'll have to pay attention).

### Mindful Walking:

Walk slowly and carefully feeling your feet connect at each point on the floor. Without controlling breath too much, you can try pairing walking and breathing so that 1 foot touches the ground at each *in* and *out* breath. See how many steps seem natural to take during each inhalation and exhalation. Direct all attention towards the sensations of walking: your feet and lower legs. Which part touches the ground first? Pay attention to how your weight shifts from one foot to the other. What are the feelings in your knees as they bend? What is the texture of the ground (hard, soft, cracks, stones)? What are differences in walking on different surfaces?

### Your Ideas:

Document what you did and how you responded:

Date/Time	Mood Initially	What I did to cope	Mood afterwards	Reflection/Thought

# Viewing My Problems in a New Light



List a concern or situation that you have been having troubles with lately. Think about how you felt, what you thought, actions you took and what happened.

\* Situation #1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEP #1

\* My body's reaction \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEP #2

### THOUGHTS

Anxious Thoughts \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Coping Thoughts \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEP #3

Actions and attitudes that can help

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEP #4

Results and rewards

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Resource: *The Coping Cat Notebook*.  
Harborview CBT+ 07

## Module 2: Appendix

### Personal Budget Form

<b>A</b>	Monthly Income (checks or cash):	
	Monthly Fixed Expenses:	
1	Rent/mortgage (principal, tax, insurance)	
2	Life insurance	
3	Medical/health insurance	
4	Vehicle insurance	
5	Disability insurance	
6	Household insurance	
7	Car payments	
8	Other loan payments	
9	Savings	
10	Emergency savings	
11	Other (list)	
<b>B</b>	<b>Total</b> (add items 1-11)	
	Monthly Flexible Expenses:	
12	Utilities (electric, gas, water, phone, fuel oil, etc. )	
13	Credit card payments	
14	Auto upkeep (gasoline, oil, maintenance)	
15	Food (at home and away from home)	
16	Clothing	
17	Household supplies	
18	Medical/dental costs	
19	Recreation/entertainment	
20	Church donation/other charities	
21	Childcare	
22	Education	
23	Personal allowances	
24	Other (list)	
<b>C</b>	<b>Total</b> (add lines 12-24)	
<b>D</b>	<b>Total Monthly Income</b> (line <b>A</b> )	
<b>E</b>	<b>Total Monthly Expenses</b> (add lines <b>B</b> and <b>C</b> )	
<b>F</b>	<b>Monthly Balance</b> (subtract line <b>E</b> from line <b>D</b> )*	
	<b>Add or Subtract Balance from Previous Month:**</b>	

\* If line E is bigger than line D, subtract line D from line E. Write your answer as a negative number, for example, -\$45

\*\* If you have money left over from the previous month, add it. If you ran short on the previous month, subtract it.

If you end up with a negative number, you'll need to deal with it. Either cut that amount from your budget (lines 1-24), or find additional income to cover it.

## 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:**

# 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?

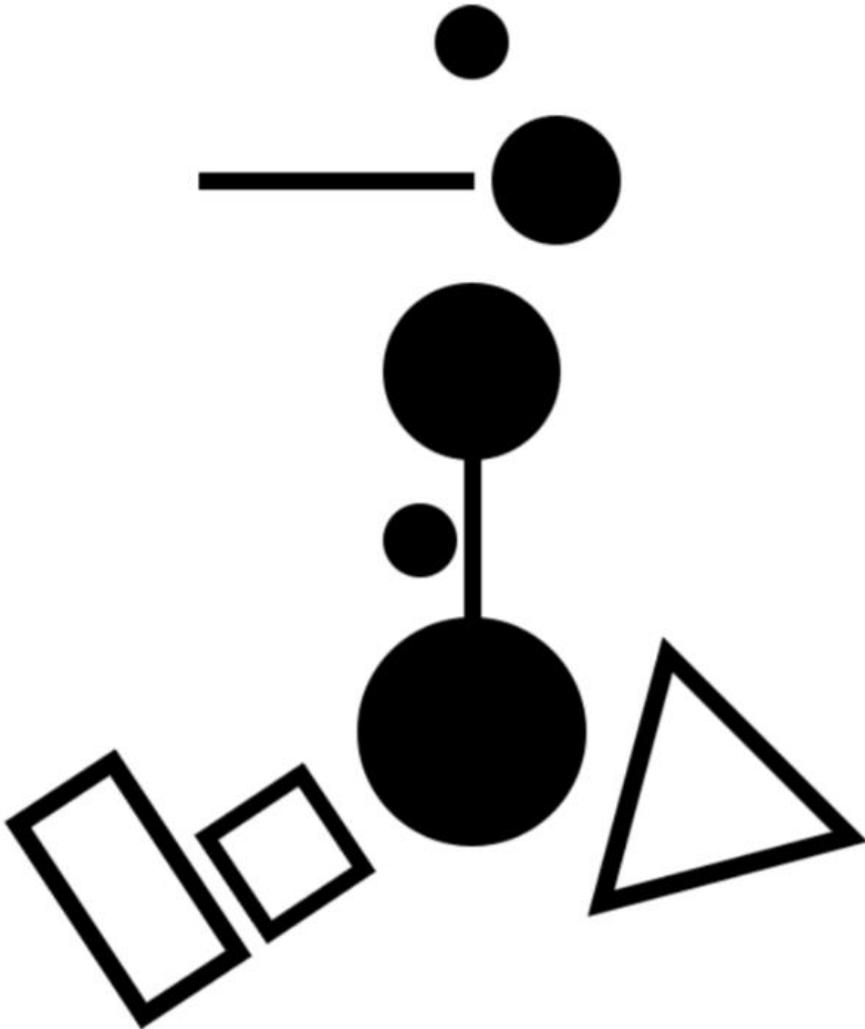
#### Listener

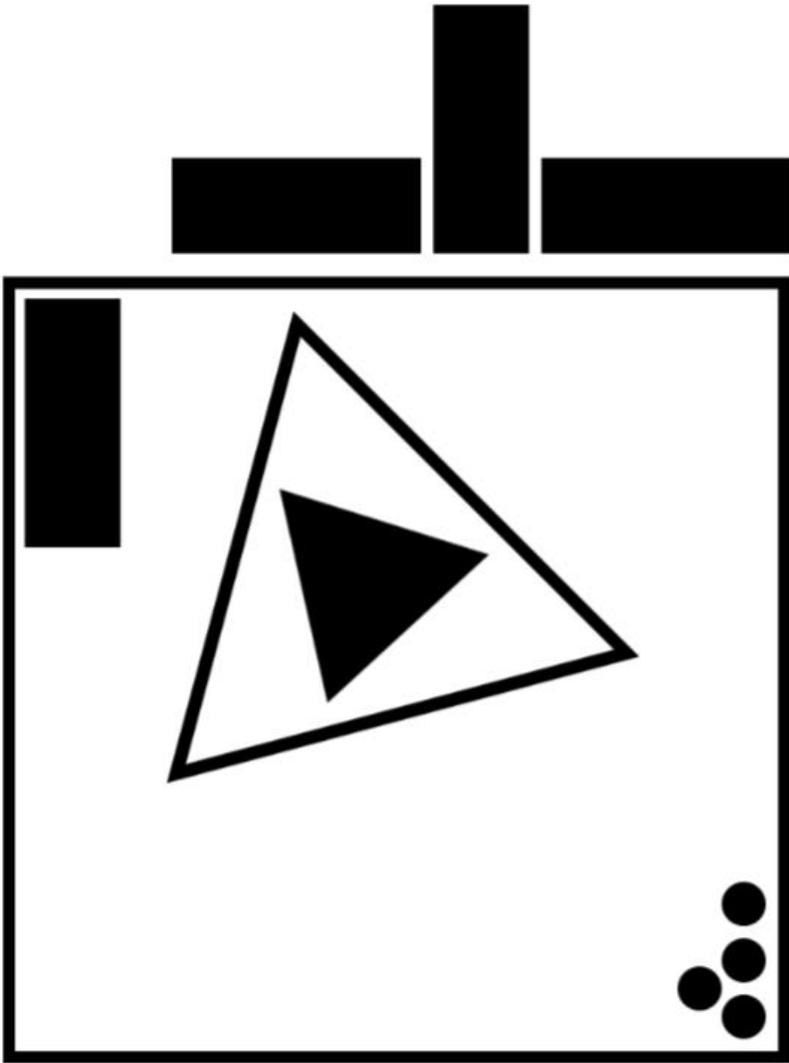
What did you like about the speaker's instructions?

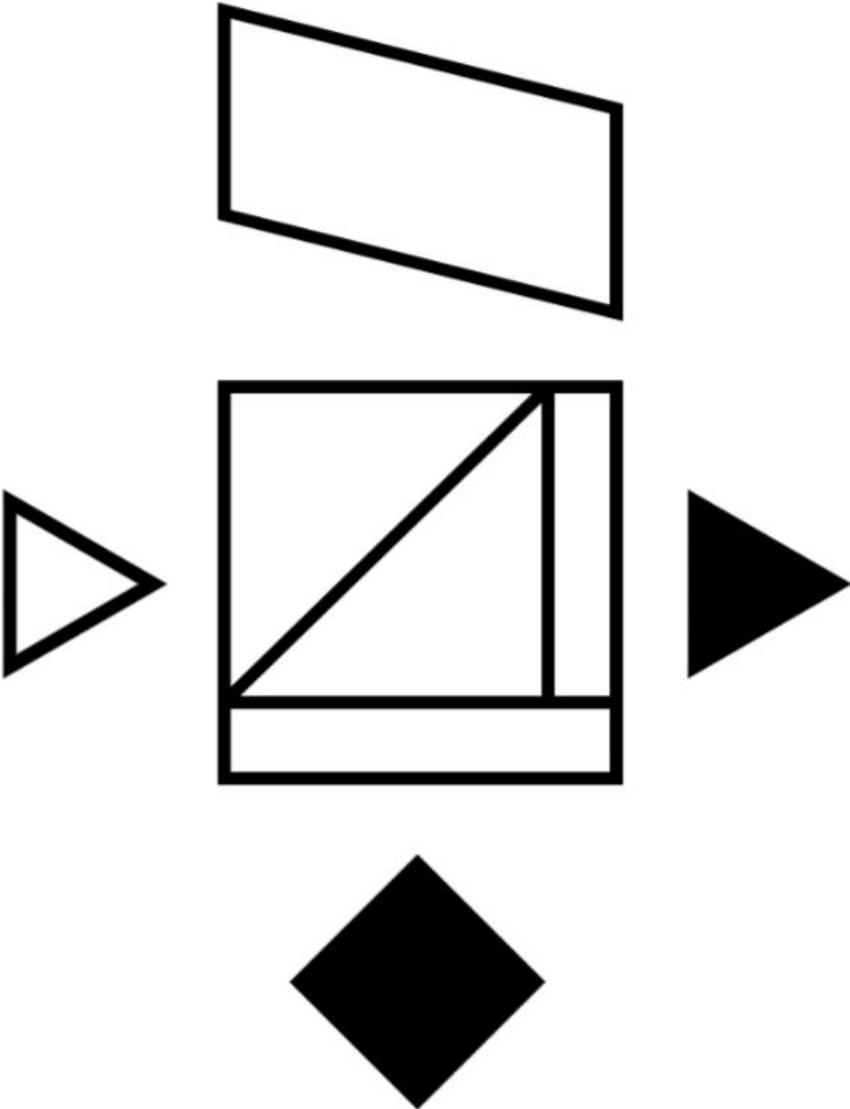
Did you find that any of the speaker's instructions were ambiguous, or difficult to follow?

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?







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**[Month] [Day], [Year] - [Month] [Day], [Year]**

<b>Monday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Tuesday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Wednesday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Thursday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Friday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Saturday, [Day]</b>	
<b>Sunday, [Day]</b>	

## Discussion Topic: Anxiety

### **Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to deal with anxiety. Some residents might have some tips to offer to help the fellow residents. They should be leaving be able to identify the signs and symptoms of anxiety. They should be able to gain tips on how to deal with anxiety that they face in their lives.

### **Handouts / Materials:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCgm1xQa06c>
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access
- Timer
- Challenging Anxious Thoughts Worksheet
- Grounding Techniques Worksheet

### **Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

### **Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I will set a timer for one minute for each person. You can choose to talk about how you are feeling or nothing at all.

**Topic Introduction:**

Anxiety is usually the feeling someone gets when having a fight or flight response. Unlike popular belief almost everyone experiences anxiety at some point in their lives. However, most of the time they don't even realize they are experiencing anxiety. It can be something you experience when you have to make a hard decision. However, it is easy to misunderstand the symptoms that you might experience and let it control you.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- Can you think of any time you experienced anxiety?
- Do you understand what anxiety is?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCgm1xQa06c>

**Video Questions:**

- What do you think the most important message was in this video?
- Is there anything that didn't make sense to you?
- Do you find yourself relating to anything she said in this video?

**Handout: Grounding Techniques****Topic Questions:**

- Which is the most useful grounding technique that use can use?

- How can you use these tools in your daily life?
- Which mental exercise do you think will be the most beneficial?

**Activity: Challenging Anxious Thoughts****Activity Question:**

- Does anyone want to share the situation that you chose?
- How do you feel about looking at the situation a year from now?
- How does it feel after writing down both your irrational and rational thoughts?

**Closing:**

Anxiety is something that comes into everyone's lives at some point. It can either mentally consume you or you can find a way to control it. You can either manage it on your own or find a way to ask for help. Either way you are in control on how you handle your irrational or rational thoughts.

**Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help manage any anxiety in your lives?
- How are you feeling now?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Coping Mechanisms

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section

- 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

### YWCA Safe House Support Group

#### Discussion Topic: Budgeting

#### **Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to use a monthly budget. They should leave being able to make their own budget based on their current monthly income.

#### **Handouts / Materials:**

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_hYJk-UunYY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hYJk-UunYY)
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access
- <https://www.purplepurse.com/resources/purplepurse/attachments/nnedv-allstate-personal-budget-form.pdf>

#### **Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

#### **Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I will set a timer for one minute for each person. You can choose to talk about how you are feeling or nothing at all. After the 1 minute: How did you do meeting the goal you set last week?

**Topic Introduction:**

When you find out how much income you make a month it is essential to figure out your monthly budget. By making a monthly budget you are able to figure out how much you can spend on food, housing, and even child care. Making a monthly budget will help you not live paycheck to paycheck and start putting money into a savings account.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- How do you usually plan your monthly budget?
- How much time do you usually put into your monthly budget?
- What tools do you usually use when planning your budget?

**Video:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_hYJk-UunYY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hYJk-UunYY)

**Video Questions:**

- What was the most important message in this video?
- What don't you understand?
- How do you think you can use this in your daily life?

**Handout:** <https://www.purplepurse.com/resources/purplepurse/attachments/nnedv-allstate-personal-budget-form.pdf>

**Topic Questions:**

- Is there anything you don't understand?
- Does anyone want to share?
- What was difficult about this worksheet?

**Closing:**

Hopefully the skills you learned tonight will help you maintain a monthly budget. It is good to always reevaluate your monthly budget to see if you can save more money somewhere or can afford to spend more money in another aspect of your budget.

**Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help ensure you have a good budget in your life?
- How are you feeling?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Conflict Resolution

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

- If there is an odd number of residents be prepared to partner up with one of them in order to complete the activity.

### YWCA Safe House Support Group

#### Discussion Topic: Communication Skills

#### **Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how have healthy communication skills in their lives. They will leave being able to identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy communication skills. They should be able to gain tips on how to create more healthy communication skills in their lives.

#### **Handouts / Materials:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6n3iNh4XLI>
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access
- Timer
- Assertive Communication Worksheet
- Back-To-Back Drawing Communication Exercise

#### **Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that

throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed. This session should last between 45 minutes to an hour.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I will set a timer for one minute for each person. You can choose to talk about how you are feeling or nothing at all. After the 1 minute: How did you do meeting the goal you set last week?

**Topic Introduction:**

Communication skills are used in everyone's daily life. It has become common for people to only communicate via text nowadays. However, it is very easy to misunderstand what people are trying to tell you when it is simply words on a screen. I'm not saying that you should never communicate via text message or email because that is simply unrealistic. But if you have the chance it is better to try and have important conversation face to face. Sometime there are barriers to that rule. If you ever think that having a face to face conversation would make you or someone you care about unsafe. In those cases you can always call them on the phone instead. At least if you call them you are talking instead of typing messages to each other.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- Do you currently have any rules that you follow in regards to communicating with others?
- Starting out do you have any questions regarding healthy communication?

- When do you think it would be okay to end a conversation?

### **Handout: Assertive Communication Worksheet**

#### **Topic Questions:**

- What do you think will be the hardest skill to try?
- Is there anything you don't understand?
- Does anyone want to share one of your responses to the practice examples?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6n3iNh4XLI>

#### **Video Questions:**

- What do you think the most important message was in this video?
- How do you think you can apply these tips to your daily conversation?
- Is there anything that didn't make sense to you?

### **Activity: Back-to-Back Drawing Communication Exercise**

#### **Activity Questions:**

- How did you feel about the exercise?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult?

#### **Closing:**

Healthy communication skills are essential to having any type of healthy relationship in your life. It minimizes the possibility of miscommunication during a conversation. It allows you to get straight to the point and avoid any misunderstandings.

#### **Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help ensure you have healthy communication in your life?
- How are you feelings?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Organizational Skills

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.
- If there is an odd number of residents be prepared to partner up with one of them in order to complete the activity.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Conflict Resolution

**Purpose of Session:**

The purpose of this session is to teach residents how to deal with conflict in their lives. Some residents might have some tips to offer to help the fellow residents. They should be leaving with the ability to identify healthy and unhealthy ways of dealing with conflict.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access
- Relationship Conflict Resolution Worksheet
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY5TWVz5ZDU>
- "I" Statement Worksheet

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today.

**Topic Introduction:**

Conflict is something that everyone experiences. You will never agree or get along with every single person you meet. However, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to deal with conflict. It is easier to deal with conflict in a unhealthy way then it is to deal with it in a healthy way.

**Education and Discussion**

**Topic Questions:**

- How do you usually handle conflict in your life?
- What do you currently do to prepare to handle conflict in your life?

**Handout: Relationship Conflict Resolution****Topic Questions:**

- Which type of conflict resolution do you feel like you do now?
- Is there one on this list that you feel would be beneficial for you?
- Is there anything you don't understand?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY5TWVz5ZDU>

**Video Questions:**

- Is there anything you don't understand?
- How do you feel after watching this?
- What was the most important message in this video?

**Activity: "I" Statements****Activity Question:**

- What was difficult about this worksheet?
- How can you incorporate this into your daily life?
- Was there anything easy about this worksheet?

**Closing:**

It will take time for you to break bad habits regarding how you deal with conflict. Only you can decide what type of conflict resolution works best for you. Some types of conflict resolution works for some people but it won't work for other people.

**Closing Question:**

- How are you feeling now?
- Is there anything you don't understand?
- How can you use this knowledge to benefit yourself?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Social Media Safety

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Coping Mechanisms

**Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to have healthy coping mechanisms in their lives. They will leave being able to identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy coping mechanisms. They should be able to gain tips on how to create more healthy coping mechanisms in their lives.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access
- Timer
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ibfCSZ8bX0>
- Viewing My Problems in a New Light Worksheet
- Coping Skills Worksheet

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I will set a timer for one minute for each person. You can choose to talk about how you are feeling or nothing at all.

**Topic Introduction:**

People use coping mechanisms during times of pain and loss. It could be something as simple as going to a quiet room and crying or taking the time to bake something. Everyone has different

ways of coping with difficult situations. However, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to deal with difficult situations. For example, an unhealthy coping mechanism is eating an abundance of junk food or not eating at all.

### **Education and Discussion**

#### **Topic Questions:**

- Starting out do you have any questions regarding healthy coping mechanisms?
- What do you currently use to cope with difficult situations?

#### **Handout: Coping skills Worksheet**

#### **Handout Questions:**

- What would you use under the do something positive category?
- What would you use under the distracting category?
- Does anyone want to share the example they gave on the last page of the worksheet?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ibfCSZ8bX0>

#### **Video Questions:**

- What do you think is the most important message in this video?
- Is there anything that didn't make sense to you?
- How do you think you can apply this to your daily life?

#### **Activity: Viewing My Problems in a New Life**

#### **Activity Questions:**

- Is there anything you don't understand?
- Does anyone want to share what they wrote?
- What was the most difficult part of this worksheet?

**Closing:**

Coping mechanisms are used at some point in everyone's life. It might be that you learn what coping mechanisms work for you in the time of crisis or some people might know what works for them before they reach a time of crisis. It is important to learn healthy ways of dealing with difficult situations in order to lead a healthy life.

**Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help ensure you have healthy coping mechanisms in your life?
- How are you feeling?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Healthy Relationships

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Healthy Personal Boundaries

**Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to set up healthy boundaries in their lives. They will leave being able to identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy boundaries. They should gain tips on how to create more healthy boundaries in their lives.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhW4g9urdXQ>
- What are Personal Boundaries Worksheet
- Drawing Effective Personal Boundaries Worksheet
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed. This session should last around 45 minutes.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? How do you feel participating in this today?

**Topic Introduction:**

Personal boundaries are used in everyone's daily life. Through experience you can learn what a healthy and unhealthy boundaries is. It is important to try and always keep healthy boundaries in your life. Unhealthy boundaries cause unnecessary stress in everyone's lives. Personal boundaries is the ability to tell someone you can't do something or that they can't do something to you. You've probably heard about the cycle of domestic violence before. Personal boundaries fall under that cycle as well. At first people will respect your personal boundaries, but people will keep pushing your boundaries until they continuously break your boundaries. Eventually you stop trying to put up your boundaries to protect yourself from physically or mentally torment.

### **Education and Discussion**

#### **Handout #1: What are Personal Boundaries**

##### **Handout Questions:**

- What do you think personal boundaries are?
- How can you create healthy personal boundaries?
- What is the most difficult thing about keeping healthy personal boundaries?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhW4g9urdXQ>

##### **Video Questions:**

- Which step do you think you might try first?
- Have you tried any of these steps before?
- Can you relate to any of the examples given?

#### **Handout #2: Drawing Effective Personal Boundaries**

##### **Topic Questions:**

- Does anyone want to share other boundary areas that are important to you?
- Does anyone have an example of a boundary that was crossed that they want to share?
- Does anyone have any questions?

**Closing:**

Healthy personal boundaries are essential to having a healthy relationship with anyone that can enter your life. They allow the people in your life to realize what you can do for them and what you need for them to do.

**Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help create healthy boundaries in your life?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?
- How are you feeling?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Self-Care

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Organizational Skills

**Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to set up an organizational system in their lives. They will leave being able to identify different ways to stay organized. They should gain different skills in regards to staying organized with their different appointments and also keeping important documents within reach.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Highlighters (Different Colors if Possible)
- Timer
- Tissues
- Computer with connection to the internet
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k61nbvtlvGc>
- Binder
- Dividers
- Weekly Planner

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed. This session should last around an hour.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I'm going to set a timer for one minute. Feel free to share as much as you would like in that time. If you don't want to share that is perfectly fine as well.

**Topic Introduction:**

It is important to keep your daily lives and important documents organized. In order to reduce stress and make sure you don't overplan your schedule it is helpful to write out your weekly schedule. You can either write out your schedule in a paper weekly calendar or on an electronic calendar. That way you will never forget about pre-planned meetings and make too many promises to different people. Hopefully the things you learn tonight will help you stay organized in all aspects of your life.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- How are you currently organizing important documents and appointments?
- Are there ways to stay organized that you have heard of but haven't tried yet?
- Are you more likely to use an electronic calendar or a paper calendar?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k61nbvtlvGc>

**Video Questions:**

- What is the one tip you might try?
- Is there anything that you didn't understand?
- What was the most important message in this video?

**Activity:**

Put together organization binder and weekly planner.

**Activity Question:**

- Is there anything that you don't understand?
- Do you think you can keep this type of organization going?
- What was difficult about this activity?

**Closing:**

Staying organized can help avoid unnecessary stress in your life. Some of these tools will help you stay organized while others may not. It is important to realize what tools work for you in order to stay organized.

**Closing Question:**

- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?
- Are you feeling more confident in your organizational skills?
- How are you feeling?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Anxiety

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section

- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

### YWCA Safe House Support Group

#### Discussion Topic: Self – Care

#### **Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach the residents how to create a healthy self-care routine in their lives. They will be able to identify healthy and unhealthy self-care techniques. They should gain some more ideas on things to try in regards to self-care.

#### **Handouts / Materials:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUJ-Oxb-oZQ>
- Self-Care Assessment Worksheet
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Timer
- Tissues
- Computer with connection to the internet
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQKt\\_C93HEU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQKt_C93HEU)

#### **Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that

throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed. This session should last around 45 minutes.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I'm going to set a timer for one minute. Feel free to share as much as you would like in that time. If you don't want to share that is perfectly fine as well.

**Topic Introduction:**

Self-care is something that people use in order to take care of your emotional, physical, and mental health. Through experience you can learn what healthy and unhealthy self-care techniques are. Most people think that self-care is only used when you are sick, emotional, or mentally drained. However, that is not the case. By creating a self-care routine you can avoid being mentally or emotionally drained. It won't prevent you from hitting your lows but it can help you know how to lift yourself back up. If you have ever seen the television show Parks and Recreation the characters Tom and Donna always talk about "Treating yourself". You don't have to spend loads of money like they did on the show in order to utilize self care, but you can develop a routine to normalize self-care.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- What do you think the purpose of self-care is?
- Is there anything you currently use for self-care?

**Handout:** Self-Care Assessment Worksheet**Topic Questions:**

- How do you feel like you did on the evaluation?
- Are there any areas of self-care that you don't understand?
- Does anyone want to share their examples of self-care?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUJ-Oxb-oZQ>

**Video Questions:**

- What is an attainable goal that you can set for this week?
- What is something creative you can do this week?
- Is there a single trick that was talked about in the video that you want to try?

**Activity: Meditation:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQKt\\_C93HEU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQKt_C93HEU)

Use the Youtube link for the guided meditation. The activity will last 5 minutes and there will be a discussion afterwards.

**Activity Question:**

- How do you feel?
- Is this something you might continue to try in the future?
- What was difficult about this activity?

**Closing:**

Self-care is essential to having a balanced life. You need to be able to take care of yourself before you can focus on taking care of another person.

**Closing Question:**

- How do you think you will change your self-care techniques?

- Is there still anything you don't understand about self-care?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Communication Skills

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Social Media Safety

**Purpose of Session:**

This session is meant to teach residents how to safely use social media. Some residents might have some experience with this and will have tips for fellow residents. They should be able to leave identifying the signs of unsafe social media practices.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access

- Timer
- Social Media Handout: <https://staysafeonline.org/stay-safe-online/securing-key-accounts-devices/social-media/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W726-whX33c>

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today? I will set a timer for one minute for each person. You can choose to talk about how you are feeling or nothing at all.

**Topic Introduction:**

Nowadays social media is used on a daily basis. It could be used to keep up with friends or stay in touch with family that have moved away. However, it can become dangerous very fast.

People can make fake accounts and become friends with you that way or impersonate someone you know. The safest way to use social media is to only add people as your friends that you know and talk to them beforehand to see if they even made an account.

**Education and Discussion**

**Topic Questions:**

- Do you use social media on a daily basis?
- What platforms do you usually use?
- How do you make sure your social media account is secure?

**Handout: Social Media****Topic Questions:**

- What is one thing that was mentioned that you never thought about before?
- Is there anything you didn't understand?
- Do you know how to update your privacy settings?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W726-whX33c>

**Video Questions:**

- How can you change your social media habit to be safer?
- Is there anything you don't understand?
- How do you feel after watching this?

**Closing:**

Social media has become a part of most people's daily routine. It's a useful way to keep in touch with friends and family that don't live close anymore. However, you should always make sure to stay safe when using any form of social media.

**Closing Question:**

- How are you feeling now?
- Is there anything you do not understand?
- How can you use this knowledge to help stay safe on social media?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Personal Boundaries

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.

YWCA Safe House Support Group

Discussion Topic: Healthy Relationships

**Purpose of Session:**

The session is meant to teach the residents how to have healthy relationships. They should be leaving be able to identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. They should be able to gain tips on how to have a healthy relationship.

**Handouts / Materials:**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFIDWciH5fQ>
- HDMI Cord
- Pens
- Tissues
- Computer with Internet Access

- Timer
- Evaluating a Relationship Worksheet
- White Board w/ pen
- What you want in a relationship?

**Introduction Statement:**

Welcome to the YWCA support group. We are here to provide a safe space for survivors of domestic violence to help gain life skills and heal during your road to recovery. We hope that throughout these sessions you will gain knowledge and tools that you can use in your daily lives to help you heal and succeed.

**Guidelines:**

Week 1 create our own set of guidelines to be used throughout the 10 weeks.

**Check In Question:**

Please share your name and a few sentences about how you are feeling today?

**Topic Introduction:**

Without even realizing it you have different relationships in your daily lives. You have a relationship with your children, your parents, or your coworkers. Those can be healthy or unhealthy relationships. Usually you can tell when you have an unhealthy relationship but it is difficult to figure out how to make an unhealthy relationship turn into a healthy relationship. Sometimes it isn't possible to change a relationship but that does not mean you shouldn't try.

**Education and Discussion****Topic Questions:**

- What do you define as a healthy relationship?

- How can you realize if you have a healthy relationship or not?
- Have you ever tried to change a unhealthy relationship to a healthy relationship? If so, how did that go?

**Activity: What you want in a relationship.**

Take the whiteboard and divide it in half. At the top of one side write What we want in a relationship. On the other side write What we don't want in a relationship. Then have the residents brainstorm for ideas on each side. Give suggestions if they are stuck.

**Topic Questions:**

- How do you feel after seeing this list?
- How can you start to change the relationships in your life to reflect the relationships that you want?
- Is there anything that doesn't make sense in this list?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFIDWciH5fQ>

**Video Questions:**

- What is the most useful message you found in this video?
- Is there anything that didn't make sense to you?
- How do you think you can apply this to your daily life?

**Handout: Evaluating A Relationship**

The purpose of this activity is to continue to heighten awareness of what constitutes a good relationship and to help students learn to evaluate their own relationships.

- Give each student a copy of the "Evaluating Your Relationship" worksheet.

- Explain that it can be used to evaluate any type of relationship including a romantic relationship, friendship, or family relationship.
- Ask them to think of a relationship, past or present, that is important to them and use the worksheet to evaluate that relationship. Give them 10-15 minutes to fill out the sheet.
- After they have had time to complete the worksheet, ask students to score their answers by giving one point for “yes” response to questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14. Also give one point for each “no” response to questions 1, 5, 7, 8 and 10.
- Tell them what the scores mean:
  - 1-3: There are few constructive elements in this relationship. You may want to think about your reasons for continuing the relationship, or work toward improving it.
  - 4-6: This relationship has problems that might be resolved by working on honesty and communication.
  - 7-10: There is the basis for a good relationship. Focus on the positive elements and work on improving the destructive ones.
  - 10-14: You're doing well and have what it takes to build a successful and satisfying relationship.

**Activity Question:**

- Do you think it is possible for a bad relationship to improve?
- What does it take to make a relationship better?
- Is there anything you don't understand?

**Closing:**

You experience different relationships in your everyday life. It could be with your coworkers, family, romantic partner, or your child's teacher. However, there is a difference between having a healthy and unhealthy relationship. It is up to you to decide what is a healthy relationship and how you will enforce that kind of relationship in your life.

**Closing Question:**

- How can you use this knowledge to help ensure you have healthy relationships in your file?
- How are you feeling?
- Is there anything you don't understand from the information you were given tonight?

**Next Week's Topic:**

Budgeting

**Notes for Facilitators:**

- Depending on the size of the group ask less questions
  - 2 People ask 1 question per section
  - 3-4 people ask 2 questions per section
  - 5 people ask all the questions given in each section
- Bring tissues to each session. Have them in the middle of the space in order to allow the residents to grab one if they need it.