

LEADER'S MANUAL FOR PARENT GROUPS

ADOLESCENT COPING WITH DEPRESSION COURSE

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DEDICATION

To the adolescents, families, and colleagues who have helped us over the years to develop this treatment program for depression.

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Many talented people have contributed to the development of the Adolescent Coping with Depression Course. Foremost among these was Ms. Bonnie Grossen, whose many valuable suggestions have made the course more "teachable." The manuals also reflect the efforts of the therapists who helped to pilot and critique the preliminary and current versions of the course: Paul Rohde, Michael Horn, Jackie Bianconi, Carolyn Alexander, Patricia DeGroot, Kathryn Frye, Gail Getz, Kathleen Hennig, Richard Langford, Karen Lloyd, Pat Neil-Carlton, Margie Myska, Mary Pederson, Evelyn Schenk, Ned Duncan, Julie Williams, Julie Redner, Beth Blackshaw, Karen Poulin, Kathy Vannatta, Johannes Rothlind, Galyn Forster, Nancy Winters, Scott Fisher, Renee Marcy, Susan Taylor, and Shirley Hanson.

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PREFACE

This book provides a detailed description of a course that can be offered to parents in conjunction with the Adolescent Coping with Depression Course. The course is designed to give parents the information and training they need to play an active role in helping their adolescents overcome depression.

The meetings for parents are held once each week, on one of the same nights as the adolescent group meetings. During the nine 2-hour sessions, parents review the skills taught in the adolescent course and learn communication, problem-solving, and negotiation skills. The groups for parents and adolescents meet separately, except for two joint sessions in which they work on family issues together.

The course sessions and the procedures outlined in this book reflect more than five years of research and clinical work that has been conducted by our research team at the Oregon Research Institute, the Oregon Health Sciences University, and the University of Oregon.

INTRODUCTION

There are several objectives for this introduction. The first goal is to describe our version of the social learning model of depression. Group leaders should thoroughly understand the implications of this model for the treatment of depression before attempting to offer this course to parents of depressed adolescents. A few of the more salient points will be considered in this introduction, and references are provided for further study. At various points throughout the course, we will also delineate the relevance of this approach to the specific skills being taught in both the adolescent and parent groups. The second goal is to familiarize course leaders with the literature regarding adolescent depression. Our third goal is to share some of the practical knowledge we have gained from conducting the course.

It is assumed that leaders who are preparing to conduct groups for parents are familiar with the introductory material presented in the *Leader's Manual for Adolescent Groups* (Clarke, Lewinsohn, and Hops, 1990), which discusses many important aspects of leading this type of course. That material will not be covered again in this introduction. The social learning model of depression is reviewed in more detail in Lewinsohn, Muñoz, Youngren, and Zeiss (1986) and Lewinsohn, Antonuccio, Steinmetz-Breckenridge, and Teri (1984).

An Overview of Adolescent Depression

Compared to our knowledge of depression in adults, relatively little is known about adolescent depression. However, the findings from recent studies indicate that the clinical manifestations of adult and adolescent depression are very similar (e.g. Friedman, Hurt, Clarkin, Corn, and Arnoff, 1983; Puig-Antich, 1982; Strober, Green, and Carlson, 1981). Depressed adolescents demonstrate many of the psychosocial deficits associated with depression in adults such as low self-esteem, negative and irrational cognitive distortions, high levels of stressful life events, social withdrawal, and impaired social abilities (e.g., Hops, Lewinsohn, Andrews, and Roberts, in press). These deficits make it difficult for depressed teenagers to cope with the developmental challenges posed by peers in social, academic, and interpersonal spheres. In contrast to the common belief that depression among adolescents is rare, recent studies indicate point prevalence rates among adolescents of approximately 3% to 4% and lifetime rates of approximately 20% (Kashani et al., 1987; Lewinsohn, Hops, Roberts, and Seeley, 1989).

In addition to the concomitants of depression just mentioned, the onset of a depressive episode early in life may have long-lasting consequences. For example, studies indicate that people of all ages who have had an episode of depression are at substantially greater risk for the recurrence of depression and for the development of other psychological difficulties (Kandel and Davies, 1986; Kovacs et al., 1984a,

1984b; Lewinsohn, Hoberman, and Rosenbaum, 1988; Rohde, Lewinsohn, and Seeley, in press). It is possible that individuals who become depressed early in life may experience a more severe form of the disorder.

Another important consideration is that many depressed adolescents are undetected and untreated. Our research (Rohde, Lewinsohn, and Seeley, in press) indicates that 45% of adolescents who were both depressed and had a second disorder (e.g., conduct disorder, substance abuse) received some form of psychological treatment. In contrast, less than 25% of "pure" depressed adolescents received professional help. There are several possible explanations for this discrepancy. Typically, depressed teenagers are withdrawn and quiet and do not exhibit the kinds of behaviors that would bring them to the attention of health professionals in the school system. In addition, parents tend to view adolescent depression as "normal" teenage moodiness that does not warrant professional attention. Thus, despite the evidence that depression may actually be more prevalent among young people (e.g., Klerman and Weissman, 1989) and that the suicide rate in this age group has increased substantially during the last twenty years (e.g., Gebbie and Carney, 1986; Shaffer and Fisher, 1981), most depressed teenagers do not receive treatment.

Treatments for Adolescent Unipolar Depression

Although certain medications have been shown to be effective in the treatment of unipolar depression in adults, the results from double-blind placebo-controlled drug trials that have investigated the use of these medications with depressed children and teenagers have been mixed (Preskorn, Weller, and Weller, 1982; Ryan et al., 1985; Puig-Antich et al., 1987). In addition, it appears that effective dosages of these medications for adolescents are often close to levels at which detrimental side effects occur. This lack of empirical support for the pharmacotherapy of adolescent depression suggests that other treatment approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral interventions, should be considered.

Over the past two decades, cognitive-behavioral treatments for depressed adults have become established as effective interventions (see reviews by Beckham, 1990; Hoberman and Lewinsohn, 1989; Rehm, in press). It has been demonstrated that these approaches are superior to appropriate control conditions, and it has been shown that they are as effective as antidepressant medications (e.g., Beck, Hollon, Young, Bedrosian, and Budenz, 1985; McLean and Hakstian, 1979; Murphy, Simons, Wetzell, and Lustman, 1984).

The Coping with Depression Course

The Coping with Depression Course for adults (Lewinsohn, Antonuccio, Steinmetz-Breckenridge, and Teri, 1984) was developed in the late 1970s. The

course consists of twelve 2-hour sessions conducted over eight weeks. Based on the social learning model of depression, the sessions focus on the following topics: self-change skills (Mahoney and Thoresen, 1974), relaxation techniques (Jacobson, 1929; Benson, 1975), increasing pleasant activities (Lewinsohn, Biglan, and Zeiss, 1976), controlling negative or irrational thinking (Beck, Rush, Shaw, and Emery, 1979; Ellis and Harper, 1973), improving social skills and increasing pleasant social interactions (Alberti and Emmons, 1982), and maintaining treatment gains. Several treatment outcome studies (Brown and Lewinsohn, 1984; Hoberman, Lewinsohn, and Tilson, 1988; Steinmetz, Lewinsohn, and Antonuccio, 1983; Teri and Lewinsohn, 1985) have shown that the course is an effective treatment for adults with unipolar depression.

The Coping with Depression Course was modified in the early 1980s for use with depressed adolescents (Clarke and Lewinsohn, 1986) and subsequently has been substantially revised (Clarke, Lewinsohn, and Hops, 1990). The current Adolescent Coping with Depression Course consists of sixteen 2-hour sessions conducted over an eight-week period. During the first two sessions, the group rules are reviewed, the social learning model of depression is presented, and the adolescents begin to learn basic self-change skills. The skills that are discussed and practiced throughout the course include relaxation techniques, increasing pleasant activities, improving social skills, reducing irrational and negative thinking, and effective strategies for communication and problem solving. The last two sessions focus on maintaining gains and preventing relapse. The components in the adolescent course are very similar to those presented in the adult course. The communication and problem-solving skills that were added to the adolescent course are based on materials developed by Arthur Robin (Robin, 1979; Robin and Foster, 1989; Robin, Kent, O'Leary, Foster, and Prinz, 1977), John Gottman (Gottman, Notarius, Gonso, and Markman, 1976), and Marion Forgatch (Forgatch and Patterson, 1989). A comprehensive *Leader's Manual for Adolescent Groups* and *Student Workbook* are available (Clarke, Lewinsohn, and Hops, 1990).

The details of the two treatment outcome studies that have evaluated the effectiveness of the course with depressed adolescents (Clarke, 1985; Lewinsohn, Clarke, Hops, Andrews, and Williams, 1990) are described in the *Leader's Manual for Adolescent Groups* (Clarke, Lewinsohn, and Hops, 1990). The results of these studies indicate that the cognitive-behavioral techniques that were originally developed for use with depressed adults can be successfully employed with adolescents.

The adolescent course has a number of positive characteristics. Because the treatment is presented and conducted as a class rather than a therapy session, it is nonstigmatizing. As a result, the course provides an important vehicle for reaching depressed adolescents and their parents who often resist seeking professional help. The course is a relatively inexpensive treatment, which means it can be offered to depressed teenagers who might not otherwise make use of the services available through clinics, mental health centers, and therapists in private practice. Although it is intended for use with groups, the course

can be easily modified for use on an individual basis.

The Role of Parents in the Treatment of Adolescent Depression

There is a widely held belief among child clinicians that it is important, and perhaps essential, to include parents in the treatment of children and adolescents (e.g., Haley, 1976; Jackson, 1965; Minuchin, 1974; Patterson, 1982). This assumption has considerable empirical support (e.g., Tolan, Ryan, and Jaffe, 1988). Because children and adolescents are still dependent upon their parents, they have less control over their environment than adults. Therefore, therapeutic change in teenagers may require some change in the parents or in the entire family. From the very beginning of our work with depressed adolescents, we have felt that it is important to find a way to involve parents in the treatment process (Lewinsohn and Clarke, 1984).

Although there is a general consensus about the importance of including family members in the treatment of adolescents, the nature of this involvement varies according to the theoretical orientation of the therapist. Because we subscribe to the social learning perspective, our focus is on person-environment interactions. Clearly, parents are a significant part of a young person's environment. Although it is particularly important to work with parents who are directly involved in the teenager's environment, even "absent" parents may be significant to the extent that they have some ongoing interaction with their adolescents.

These premises suggest two specific goals for working with parents of depressed adolescents. The first goal is to encourage parents to reinforce and support the changes their teenagers make as the course progresses. To achieve this goal, the parents need to become familiar with the skills taught in the adolescent course, and they must realize that they can help their adolescents by reinforcing these new behaviors. Consequently, the first half of each session for parents is used to summarize and review the material covered in the adolescent course during the previous week. We also emphasize the importance of supporting the new behaviors and skills that their adolescents will be trying out.

The second goal is to reduce the negative interactions between parents and teenagers. Recent surveys of depressed adolescents suggest that conflicts with parents are viewed as the most significant antecedent for episodes of depression. Reynolds (personal communication, 1987) and Asarnow, Lewis, Doane, Goldstein, and Rodnick (1982) showed that parent-adolescent conflict predicted adjustment difficulties five years later. In addition, a considerable body of literature, subsumed by the term "Expressed Emotionality," strongly suggests that adult patients whose family environment is hostile, critical, Introduction nonsupportive, and intrusive find it much more difficult to maintain positive treatment gains once treatment has been completed (Billings and Moos, 1983; Brown and Harris, 1978; Leff and Vaughn, 1985; Vaughn and Leff, 1976). We assume that ongoing conflicts between

adolescents and parents are a major source of tension and an obstacle to creating a positive home environment. To achieve this second goal, the last half of each session is used to teach parents specific communication and problem-solving skills that they can use to reduce the overall level of conflict at home.

The parents typically meet once each week (twice during the joint sessions) in a separate room on one of the same nights as the adolescents. Consequently, there are different group leaders for the parents and the adolescents. The course for parents is also conducted like a class or seminar, and the sessions are highly structured. During the first six sessions, the parents review the skills being taught in the adolescent course and learn communication and problem-solving skills. Sessions 7 and 8 are joint meetings in which the parents and adolescents get together to practice using their communication and problem-solving skills to work on family issues. The joint sessions are reviewed in Session 9, and plans are developed for continuing to use the skills learned in the course.

Most of the sessions follow a similar format. The leader begins by previewing the session agenda that is written on the blackboard, and the parents are asked to discuss their successes and failures in completing their homework assignment from the previous session. Then the leader summarizes the material discussed in the adolescent course. A ten-minute break is scheduled approximately halfway through each session for informal chatting, visits to the rest room, and refreshments. We usually provide coffee and tea, and sometimes the parents bring other snacks. The break is an opportunity for group members to socialize and get to know one another, and it gives parents a chance to speak with the leader privately or to obtain remedial consultation. The leader should remain available to parents during the break and not leave or attend to other business. After the break, parents discuss and practice new communication and problem-solving skills and are given a homework assignment.

Suggestions for Conducting the Parent Course

It is important to schedule a separate meeting with the parent(s) of each adolescent before the first group meeting (if possible, have both parents attend). During the meeting, the leader can explain the purpose of the course and how it is structured. The meeting also provides an opportunity for parents to ask questions and discuss any concerns they might have about their adolescents. A related objective for this meeting is to have parents make a commitment to participate in the course and to come to a consensus about mutual expectations. At the end of the meeting, the leader should give each parent a workbook and ask them to fill out the Issues Checklist in the Appendix before they come to the first course session. It is also helpful to give the parents a schedule of class sessions.

The parent sessions are similar to the sessions for adolescents, but the focus is on describing the various skills the adolescents are learning rather than on teaching parents these skills (with the exception of communication and

problem-solving skills, which parents do learn and practice). Although it is usually easier to describe a skill than to teach it, it is a challenge to review these skills for parents without losing their interest, because the material is not personally relevant to them. Thus, it is essential to emphasize to parents the relevance of this material to their adolescent's depression. Our experience suggests that parents find it helpful to understand the underlying rationale for each aspect of the adolescent course. The parent course also differs from the adolescent course in that more time is allowed for questions and discussion.

The *Leader's Manual for Parent Groups* is a guide for conducting the course. Group leaders are encouraged to elaborate on the material outlined in the manual and to involve the parents in the discussions and various exercises as much as possible. The two hours of class time allow the leader to thoroughly cover the material for each session.

Group leaders need to track whether parents are monitoring and supporting their adolescent's attempts to change specific behaviors outside of the course. Parents are routinely informed of the adolescents' weekly assignments and the skills they are currently practicing, and the leader should actively probe to find out how parents are facilitating what the adolescents are doing.

Parents have weekly homework assignments that are reviewed at the beginning of each session. The group leader should monitor each parent's performance in completing the homework assignments and provide constructive feedback. Parents who are doing well on the homework should be reinforced, and those who are having difficulty should receive assistance from the group leader and from other parents. Remind the parents that using these skills outside of the sessions is essential if they want to integrate the skills into their everyday lives.

Attendance may be a problem for a few of the parents. Some parents may believe that it isn't necessary for them to be involved because their adolescent's depression is outside their control; one approach that can be used with these parents is to tell them to come to the meetings so they can support their son or daughter in dealing with these issues. Other parents may have previous commitments or childcare demands. Parents should be encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible, even if they are not able to come to all of them. If both parents cannot attend the sessions, they can take turns. As with adolescents who miss a session, parents who have been absent should be contacted by the group leader to let them know their absence was noticed and that they were missed. Briefly review the material that was discussed in class and ask them to work on the current homework assignment.

Group leaders must be prepared to intervene when parents dominate group discussions by talking excessively about their teenager and his or her problems. This type of participation is not constructive and makes it difficult for the group to focus on the task at hand. It is important to cover the material for each session and to let all group members contribute to class discussions.

The group leader is not required to have all the answers, but parents should feel that they have been heard and understood. When group leaders respond to

questions, they should model the active-listening skills taught in the course. Also, encourage parents to draw on each other for support and advice.

Questions Commonly Asked by Parents

We have found that there are certain questions parents often ask about the course. This section reviews a few of these questions and provides some possible answers. Undoubtedly, other questions will also be asked. Keep in mind that acknowledging a parent's concerns is often as important as giving the "correct" answer. Although situations may arise in which information must be withheld to protect the adolescent's confidentiality, never lie to a parent or give potentially misleading information.

1. What is the cause of depression?

Possible answer: "It's clear that depression can be caused by more than one factor or situation. Stressful events can have a negative impact on mood, and genetics may also play a role. However, it seems most useful to think about depression in this way: We all have specific skills we use to cope with various problems or hassles in our daily lives. Teenagers, like all of us, may become depressed when their coping skills are insufficient or ineffective for the kinds of problems they are experiencing."

2. Does being in this group mean that my child is mentally ill?

Possible answer: "No, we don't consider unipolar depression to be a disease or an illness; we see it as a problem in living that involves not being able to deal with feelings of sadness or failing to learn adequate coping strategies. Adolescents may become depressed when they are not able to cope with the stress and problems they are experiencing in their everyday lives."

3. Am I to blame for my teenager's being depressed?

This is a tough question, and the answer will vary considerably depending on the specific situation. An active-listening approach might be most helpful. For example, "It sounds as if you feel that you may have contributed to your adolescent's depression," etc. Focus on the nature of the parent's interactions with the adolescent. Also, point out that the course is designed to give parents the information and training they need to become actively involved in helping their adolescents overcome depression; without this training, it would be difficult for parents to know what to do.

4. My teenager didn't tell me that he or she was depressed.

Again, an active-listening response might be the most appropriate here. For example, "You may be somewhat surprised that your son or daughter is in a group for depression. We have found that depressed teenagers may describe

many symptoms of depression when they are asked directly, but they don't necessarily offer this information voluntarily. Adolescents are reluctant to talk to adults, and this includes parents. We hope that working on communication skills in this course will help you find out more about how your teenager is feeling."

5. How does this group treatment compare to antidepressant medications?

Possible answer: "Relatively little is known about adolescent depression, but the research that has been conducted so far indicates that there isn't any one treatment for depression that is 100% effective for everyone. Studies suggest that most of the depressed adolescents who complete this course show significant improvement. The philosophy of this course is also very different from the passive patient role that is often associated with treatments involving medications. Our approach is to teach the adolescent to play an active role in controlling his or her mood."

6. What's the purpose of the parent group?

Summarize the rationale for the parent group discussed earlier in this introduction: "The purpose is to encourage parents to reinforce and support the changes their teenagers make, and to reduce the level of conflict between parents and teenagers by teaching effective communication and problem-solving skills."

7. What are your qualifications as a therapist?

This is a legitimate question that deserves a careful answer. Review your training and any experience you have had in the treatment of depression or working with adolescents and families. Often, parents ask about the therapist's qualifications because they are skeptical about whether the treatment will be effective, not because they don't think the therapist is qualified. Encourage them to gather some information about the group by attending at least two or three sessions before deciding whether the group seems useful. After coming to a few meetings, most parents are satisfied that the course is worthwhile.

8. Are the adolescents told that the group leader has more authority over their actions than their parents do?

Possible answer: "We treat adolescents as young adults, but we don't tell them to defy the authority of their parents. The communication and problem-solving skills that we teach are intended to improve the relationship you have with your adolescent and perhaps make it more democratic, if you are willing to accept that; but it is clear that parents are still in control."

9. How do you know my son or daughter will benefit from this treatment?

What can we do if this group doesn't help?

Possible answer: "Currently, we aren't able to predict which adolescents are most likely to benefit from the course, but research indicates that most of the adolescents who complete the course show significant improvement. After the course ends, we will check in with you and your adolescent to find out how things are going. If your teenager's problems are continuing, or seem to be getting worse, we will refer you to someone who may be able to help."

10. Will the course interfere with my teenager's schoolwork?

Possible answer: "The course shouldn't interfere with your teenager's regular schoolwork. Although we do expect your teenager to practice specific skills throughout the course, it will take only five to ten minutes each day to complete the homework assignments. Participating in the course may actually improve your adolescent's performance at school, because depression has been shown to be associated with poor academic achievement."

11. I want to make sure that my son/daughter takes care of certain responsibilities, but I don't want to add any unnecessary stress. How much should I push my teenager to do things that I think would be good for him/her?

Possible answer: "Our goal is to help you be as supportive as possible. Sometimes that may mean enforcing responsibilities for your teenager; at other times, it may mean reducing the teenager's responsibilities. Every situation is different, and this group is a good place to discuss your specific circumstances. The other members of the group are excellent resources for feedback and advice."

12. Should both parents come to the meetings?

Possible answer: "We think it's important for both parents to attend all sessions, if that's possible. If both parents are familiar with the material, they can support one another, and both of them can play active and positive roles in helping the teenager change behaviors."

13. Are there any good books I can read about teenage depression, or depression in general?

Unfortunately, there are very few good books about teenage depression. Here are some titles that may be useful:

McCoy, K. *Coping with Teenage Depression CA Parent's Guide*. New York: New American Library, 1982.

Lee, E., and Wortman, R. *Down Is Not Out: Teenagers and Depression*. New York:

J. Messner, 1986.

Lewinsohn, P., Muñoz, R., Youngren, M., and Zeiss, A. *Control Your Depression*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1986. (Note: The focus of this book is on adult depression, but the concepts are very similar to those taught in the adolescent course.)

COURSE SESSION FORMAT

The course sessions are highly structured and follow a rigorous agenda. It is essential for group leaders to become familiar with the format, content, and pace of the course before attempting to conduct the sessions. The first step is to read through all of the sessions to develop a grasp of the various content areas and the progression of the material.

Several different methods of instruction are employed in the course to help the parents learn new material: lectures by the group leader, discussions, demonstration activities, group activities, team activities, role-playing exercise and homework assignments. The following format conventions indicate the method of presentation:

The text that is meant to be read out loud as a lecture is indented and appears in bold type. Of course, leaders are welcome to change the lectures at their own discretion as they become more comfortable with the various content areas.

Leader: This tag is used to identify directions for the group leader. The text set in regular type.

Group Activity

Large headings mark the beginning of the various activities.



This is a signal that parents need to turn to a specific page in their workbooks.

This box appears at the beginning of each session as a reminder to bring materials:

Materials needed for this session:

Text for the group leader to write on the blackboard is highlighted in this manner:

BLACKBOARD



The group leader should always arrive 10 minutes early to set up the room and write the agenda on the blackboard. If there is sufficient time, the leader should begin the session with a brief oral review of the agenda. It may be necessary to skip this review for some of the sessions in which there is an inordinate amount of material to cover and time is short.

SESSION 1

Introduction and Communication, Part 1

Materials needed for this session:

1. Workbooks for all parents.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break.

Leader: Write the Agenda on the blackboard at the beginning of every class. Start the session with a brief review of the Agenda.

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. ORIENTATION (25 min.)
- II. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)
 - A. The Mood Questionnaire
 - B. Guidelines for the Adolescent Group
 - C. Our View of Depression
 - D. Friendly Skills
 - E. The Mood Diary
 - F. Adolescents- Homework Assignment
- III. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- IV. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION SKILLS (10 min.)
- V. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO LISTENING (25 min.)
- VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. ORIENTATION (25 min.)

Objectives

1. To welcome parents to the group.
2. To explain the general format and goals for the group meetings.
3. To help everyone get acquainted.

Welcome to the Group

Leader: It is important to put some feeling into your welcoming statement since it sets the stage for parent cooperation and involvement.

I would like to welcome all of you to the group. The fact that you are here is an indication that you CARE about your adolescents and WANT TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN HELPING THEM. We're excited about the skills your teenagers are going to learn and practice in their group meetings, and we're glad that you're here to support the process.

Leader: Introduce yourself and discuss your qualifications and related experience. Add some personal information to make yourself more "real" to the parents; be as self-disclosing as you can without feeling uncomfortable. Encourage parents to ask questions.

We'll be covering a lot of material today, so we'll have to stay on task and keep the discussion moving along. I will provide as many opportunities as I can for you to ask questions and express any concerns you may have. There will also be some time later in the session just for questions.

Leader: Hand out the workbooks.

This is a workbook for parents that contains the handouts and exercises for each session. It's similar to the workbook used by the teenagers, but it's not as extensive.

Session Goals and General Format

Now I would like to give you a little background information about these groups for parents. Basically, there are two

important tasks for each session. I will list them on the blackboard.

BLACKBOARD

1. Review the current adolescent sessions.
2. Learn and practice communication and negotiation skills.

For each of these tasks, there is a related *GOAL*.

The first goal is to help you *SUPPORT THE CHANGES YOUR TEENAGERS ARE MAKING*. We think you will be more successful at supporting their effort if you *UNDERSTAND* what the adolescents are doing in their sessions. This is the reason for reviewing the current adolescent sessions in our meetings.

The second goal is to help you create a more *POSITIVE HOME ENVIRONMENT* by reducing the disagreements and conflicts between you and your teenager. In most families there are occasional conflicts between teenagers and parents, but we have found that this may occur more often when the teenagers are depressed. Our approach to reducing conflict is to teach parents and teenagers communication, negotiation, and problem-solving skills. Using these skills will make the home environment less stressful, more supportive, and happier. These changes may have the added benefit of helping your teenagers to maintain the gains they make in the course.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 1.1 in their workbooks.

There is a *GENERAL FORMAT* that we will follow during each session. This is listed at the top of page 1.1 in your workbook. At the beginning of each meeting, I will describe the agenda for the session. Then we will review our last session and go over your homework assignment; like the teenagers, you will be given some things to do each week. Next, we will review what the teenagers are learning and answer any questions you might have. About halfway through the session, we will take a short break. After the break, we will learn and practice various

communication and problem-solving skills. At the end of the session, you will be given a short assignment to complete before our next meeting.

Are there any questions?

It's important for you to make every effort to **ATTEND ALL OF THE MEETINGS**. Each session builds on the previous sessions, and we must cover a lot of material since we only meet half as often as the adolescents. We realize that things may come up and not everyone will be able to attend all of the sessions. However, we ask that you limit the number of times you can't make it to one or two at the most. If you're going to be absent, please **CALL US AT THIS NUMBER**.

Leader: Write the telephone number on the blackboard.

Does anyone anticipate any problems making it to these sessions?

Get-Acquainted Exercise

Team Activity

I would like everyone to participate in a brief warm-up exercise. This will help us get to know one another a little better. We're going to form teams by having you pair up with someone you don't already know. Then, I want you to get to know your teammate well enough to introduce that person to the rest of the group. Find out about your teammate's job, favorite activities or hobbies, number of children, pets, where he or she is living or has lived, etc. You will have *5 or 10 minutes* to do this. Let's get started.

Leader: If there is an odd number of parents, pair up with one of the parents or form a group of three. The time for this exercise is *5 to 10 minutes*.

Now let's get back together in a group and introduce one another. Who would like to start?

Leader: Give everyone a chance to participate, and reinforce their involvement.

II. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss the guidelines for the adolescent group.
2. To present the social learning model of depression.
3. To give parents an overview of the skills taught in the adolescent sessions.
4. To review the friendly skills, the Mood Diary, and the adolescents' homework assignment.

Now we will briefly review what the adolescents are learning and practicing this week.

The Mood Questionnaire

We asked the adolescents to fill out a self-report measure of depression called the Mood Questionnaire. This questionnaire identifies the symptoms they are experiencing *NOW*. We'll ask them to fill out this questionnaire *AGAIN AT THE END OF THE COURSE* to see whether there has been any *CHANGE*.

Do you have any questions about this?

Guidelines for the Adolescent Group

The adolescent sessions are not an encounter group where they sit in a circle and say whatever comes to mind or confront other group members. The sessions are highly structured and focus on teaching a wide range of skills that have been shown to be useful for overcoming depression. The sessions can be thought of as a class or a workshop.

Some general rules and guidelines have been established for conducting the adolescent sessions. These guidelines are necessary to keep the sessions running smoothly, and to make sure that the meetings will be productive and enjoyable. It's important for the teenagers to follow these rules, and the group leader will remind them about the rules if necessary. *THESE GUIDELINES MIGHT BE GOOD FOR US TO FOLLOW AS WELL*. They will help us stay focused and constructive. These rules are listed on page 1.1 of your workbook.

1. *AVOID DEPRESSIVE TALK.* This helps the group stay focused on positive events and changes that are supported by other members.
2. *ALLOW EACH PERSON TO HAVE EQUAL TIME.* The group leader will encourage each adolescent to share ideas, ask questions, and discuss any difficulties he or she is having with using the techniques presented in the course. Equal participation is very important to the functioning of the group.
3. *OBSERVE THE CONFIDENTIALITY RULE.* The personal things the adolescents talk about in their group are not to be shared outside of the group, not even with their parents. If you want to know what is going on in their group meetings, the adolescents can only give you general information. They are not allowed to discuss any specific details about each other.
4. *OFFER SUPPORT.* We try to teach the teenagers not to be critical of each other and to focus on the positive aspects of what others are doing or saying. They are supposed to show the other members of their group that they care by being thoughtful and respectful, and they should avoid forcing others to do something that they don't want to do.

Does anyone have any questions about these guidelines? Are there any objections to using these same rules in our group?

Leader: Come to a consensus about using these same guidelines for the parent group meetings.

Our View of Depression

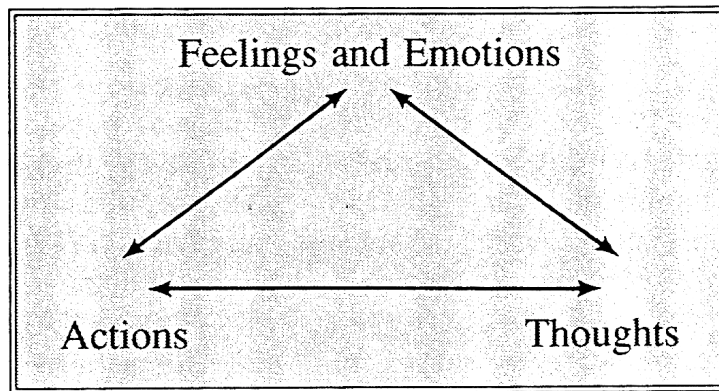
There are at least two different types of depression. One, which used to be called manic depression, is not called *BIPOLAR* because it has two poles or extremes. People with bipolar depression have *EXTREME UPS AND DOWNS*. This type of depression is *VERY RARE* and seems to have a genetic basis. Currently, medications are the best treatment for bipolar depression.

The second type of depression, which is much more common, is called *UNIPOLAR* depression because it has one pole or extreme. Unipolar depression has many causes and there are also many treatments for it. During the intake interview with each teenager, we decide which approach we think would work best for that individual. We want to make sure that the Coping with Depression Course addresses the kinds

of problems teenagers are experiencing before we enroll them in the course. The research that has been carried out so far indicates that it is an effective treatment for the majority of the teenagers who complete it.

We consider depression to be a *PROBLEM IN LIVING*, not a medical disease. We believe that adolescents can learn new skills to help them gain control over their moods and cope with stress. The course provides supervised instruction in the use of these skills, and the teenagers are asked to practice these new techniques at home, at school, and in other places as well. You will probably notice your teenagers trying out some of these skills as their group progresses. We are going to review these techniques for you so that you can support their efforts and help them learn.

BLACKBOARD



We think of your personality as a *THREE-PART SYSTEM* that is made up of feelings, thoughts, and actions. The triangle on the blackboard also appears at the bottom of workbook page 1.1. All three parts of your personality are *INTERACTIVE*; that is, each part affects the others. Which part do you think is easiest to control or change?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond.

Most people try to change their emotions, since that is the area in which they are having problems. For example, they try to feel better first, but *EMOTIONS ARE THE HARDEST TO CHANGE*. It's much easier to change your thoughts and actions, and this, in turn, will change how you feel. The adolescents will learn a variety of skills in their group to help them gain control over their thoughts and actions.

When people are depressed, they *FEEL* down and sad, but they also

experience changes in their *THOUGHTS* and *ACTIONS*. How do you think people's *THOUGHTS CHANGE* when they are depressed?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond.

When people are depressed, their thoughts become more pessimistic, they have doubts about their ability to do the things they enjoy, and they tend to view others and the world in general more negatively.

How do you think people's *ACTIONS CHANGE* when they are depressed?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond.

They stop doing things they once enjoyed, they become quiet and withdrawn, they avoid social situations, and they tend to be passive and easily irritated.

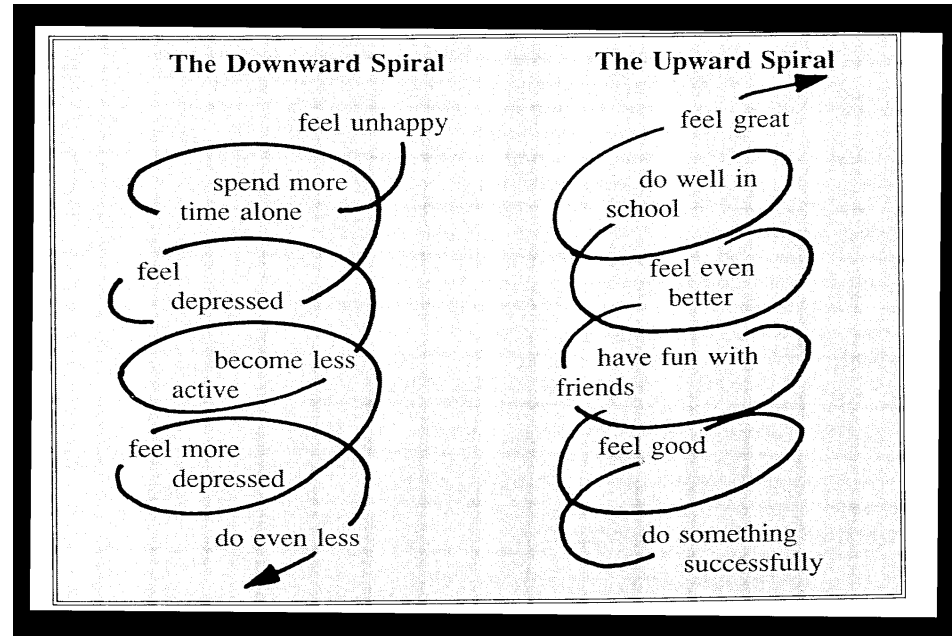


Ask parents to turn to page 1.2.

As we mentioned earlier, each of the three parts of your personality affects the other two. When we feel down, we're less likely to do the things we enjoy and we begin to have doubts about our ability to be successful doing those things (for example, making new friends). This leads to a *NEGATIVE DOWNWARD SPIRAL*. This spiral is shown on page 1.2 in the workbook.

On the other hand, when we are successful at something we feel good and we gain self-confidence. When we think that we can do something well, we feel good and we are more likely to do more things in the future. These events are mutually dependent. This is called a *POSITIVE UPWARD SPIRAL*.

BLACKBOARD



You can think of either of these as a spiral that can *MOVE IN ONE DIRECTION OR THE OTHER*. How you feel affects how you behave, which then affects how you think and how you feel, and so on.

These are some of the things that can start a spiral *DOWNWARD* into depression:

1. Participating in few fun or positive activities.
2. Feeling depressed.
3. Doing less.
4. Thinking negative thoughts ("Why bother trying?" "No one likes me.").
5. Feeling even worse, then doing less, etc.

These are some of the things that can start a spiral *UPWARD*, or get you "on a roll." A positive spiral can break the negative cycle and reverse it.

1. Being successful at something.
2. Feeling confident.
3. Doing more fun things.
4. Having friends.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to case 1.3.

The best approach is to try to *PREVENT OR INTERRUPT NEGATIVE SPIRALS* before they become serious. The purpose of the adolescent course is to teach them skills that will help them *CHANGE THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL TO AN UPWARD ONE*. Page 1.3 in your workbook provides an overview of the skills taught in the sixteen adolescent sessions. Most of the skills focus on changing thoughts and actions. We know from past experience that changing thoughts and actions will bring about changes in feelings as well. As you can see from the timeline on page 1.3, a variety of skills are gradually introduced at different points in the course. As the course progresses, the adolescents have more tools to help them gain control over their moods.

Leader: Write the following skill clusters on the blackboard and briefly discuss them. Ha' parents follow alone on workbook page 1.3.

BLACKBOARD

<p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pleasant Activities2. Friendly Skills3. Communication4. Negotiation and Problem Solving <p>Thoughts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mood Monitoring2. Constructive Thinking (changing negative and irrational thinking, increasing positive thoughts) <p>Feelings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Relaxation2. Changing Thoughts3. Changing Actions

Now we'll discuss several of the skill areas and activities that the teenagers will be involved in during the first week. They will be learning and practicing what we call "friendly" or social skills, recording their moods every day, and doing a brief homework assignment that is related to these skill areas.

Friendly Skills

Friendly skills are essential for *SOCIAL FUNCTIONING*. This is one of the first skill areas discussed in the adolescent group. These skills are important for several reasons:

1. Poor social skills can lead to troubled relationships which, in turn, can lead to isolation, loneliness, and possible depression.
2. When people are depressed, their social skills are impaired and they become more withdrawn, less active, and less fun to be with.
3. Social skills, like any other skill, can be improved through specific training and practice. All of us have something we need to work on. Nobody is perfect.

The teenagers will focus on improving their social skills, since liking other people and being liked plays an important role in feeling good about yourself. They will learn *BEHAVIORS THAT MAKE AN INTERACTION WITH SOMEONE POSITIVE*. These behaviors include making eye contact, smiling at least once during a conversation, saying something positive about the other person, and telling about yourself. They will also focus on *CONVERSATION SKILLS*. These skills include learning how to tell whether it's a good time to start a conversation with someone, and how to use good conversation-starting questions. *PRACTICE* is an important part of the adolescent sessions and they will try out these skills with one another in role-playing exercises.

Who can tell me why friendly skills are important?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond.

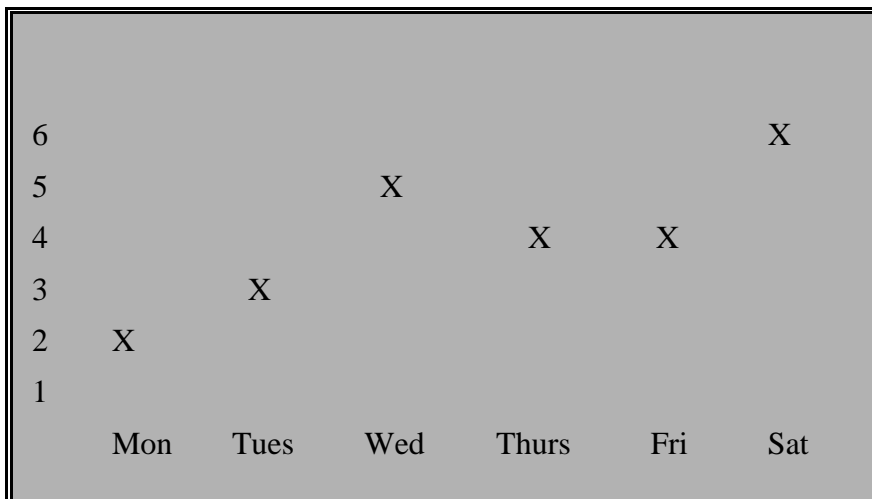
Friendly skills are important for getting to know people and building good relationships, which helps to prevent depression.

The Mood Diary

Your teenagers are going to use a Mood Diary to *MONITOR HOW THEY FEEL ON A DAILY BASIS* while they are enrolled in the course. The Mood Diary will help them see how their moods are affected by the number of positive and negative activities they do. The Mood Diary uses a *7-POINT SCALE* to measure the average mood for that day. At about the same time every day, usually in the evening, each adolescent will give his or her mood a rating. A rating of "7" means it was a great day, and a rating of "1" means it was a really bad day. The data points from the Mood Diary will eventually be used to create a graph of their moods.

I'll show you how this works with an example.

BLACKBOARD



In this example, the teenager had a pretty bad Monday. Tuesday was a little better, and Wednesday was a good day C maybe he or she got a good grade on a test that day. Thursday and Friday were OK, and Saturday was a good day C perhaps he or she went to a party and met some new friends. Keeping track of their moods shows teenagers that they still have some good days among the "down" days. It also helps them identify the events and activities that are connected with changes in their moods so they can learn how to control them.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. We believe that it's very important for the adolescents to practice the new skills they are learning **OUTSIDE** of the group sessions. This additional practice strengthens the learning process and helps them integrate the techniques into their daily lives.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 1.5.

The teenagers' homework assignments for this week are listed on the bottom of page 1.5 in your workbook. As we mentioned earlier, they will keep track of their moods every day, and they will be practicing the friendly skills we discussed earlier. They will also start tracking how many pleasant activities they are doing. We'll discuss the importance of pleasant activities next week.

III. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify any misunderstandings about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions that parents might have.

Now that we have reviewed the skills your adolescents will be learning and practicing this week, do you have any reactions or questions about the techniques? Do you have any questions about the format of the sessions? Do you think this course addresses the problems your adolescent is having?

What do you think **YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE CHANGES** your son or daughter will be making in the upcoming weeks?

Are there any other general questions?

Break (5 - 15 min., depending on the schedule)

Let's take a short break.

IV. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION SKILLS (10 min)

Objectives

1. To discuss the importance of communication.
2. To introduce and begin to use specific terms and concepts.

In all of our sessions, we're going to be working on communication and negotiation skills. WE THINK THAT COMMUNICATION SKILLS PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR EFFORTS TO HELP YOUR ADOLESCENTS. Communication is the foundation for all human interactions and relationships. Good communication makes us feel understood, in control, cared for, and it builds good relationships. Poor communication makes us feel misunderstood, isolated, powerless, and it disrupts relationships. The lack of communication can be very disturbing. The bottom line is that communication is vital to our sense of well-being.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 1.4

Several basic points about communication are listed on page 1.4.

1. **Good communication is a *SKILL* that can be learned like any other skill. You can improve your communication skills by understanding how the process works and by practicing specific techniques.**
2. **Communication involves a "*SENDER*" (or speaker) and a "*RECEIVER*" (or listener). The sender has a message he or she wants the receiver to understand. This seems simple, but there are many ways that the process can go astray. We'll start working on communication techniques by practicing receiving or listening skills; then we'll move on to sending skills. During a conversation, people typically switch back and forth between the roles of sender and receiver as they take turns talking and listening to one another.**
3. **All communication takes place in a *SOCIAL CONTEXT* that involves other people. There are many different social contexts, and each one has its own "*RULES*." Consider the rules for talking to your boss. Now consider the rules for talking to your adolescent. What's different about your style of communication in these two contexts?**

Leader: Allow enough time for one or two parents to respond.

That's right. *YOUR STYLE OF INTERACTION CHANGES* in terms of etiquette, equality, and openness depending on the type of relationship you have with the person who is involved in the conversation.

- 4. In many cases, *THE RULES FOR COMMUNICATION IN A SPECIFIC CONTEXT AREN'T WELL DEFINED AND PROBLEMS MAY ARISE WHEN THE RULES AREN'T CLEAR.* Each person might have a different opinion about what the rules are, or the rules may be changing because the relationship between the two people is changing—which is one of the things that happen when your children become adolescents. You might have had a good set of rules for talking with your children when they were younger, but now the rules are changing and there are problems. How do you think the rules have changed?**

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond.

Children expect to be treated more as equals as they grow older, and *YOUR TEENAGERS MAY NOT BE AS OPEN TO YOUR SUGGESTIONS AS THEY USED TO BE.* Parents who are accustomed to operating on a parent-child level may find it difficult to make the transition to an adult-adult level with their teenagers.

- 5. Communication usually involves words, but there are other ways of sending information that don't involve words. We call this *NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION.***

Nonverbal communication involves *FACIAL EXPRESSION.*

Leader: Illustrate this, for example, by frowning and saying, "It's very nice to meet you."

***TONE OF VOICE* is also important.**

Leader: Provide an example, such as saying in a monotone voice, "I had a really good time at the party."

And *BODY LANGUAGE* contributes to the message as well.

Leader: Illustrate this, for example, by sitting slumped in a chair and saying, "I feel

fine."

6. **Sending and receiving information is a *DELICATE PROCESS*.** Sometimes, the person who is listening receives a message that isn't what the speaker meant to communicate. This is called a ***COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN***. For example, a father might say, "I can't afford to buy you that car/shirt/record/whatever," and the teenager hears, "Dad doesn't care about me. He could buy it for me if he really wanted to."

Can you think of some other examples of communication breakdowns?

Leader: Solicit a few examples from parents to make sure they understand the concept.

V. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO LISTENING (25 min.)

Objectives

1. To demonstrate three ways to respond to what someone else is saying: the irrelevant response, partial listening, and active listening.
2. To practice active listening.

LISTENING ISN'T A PASSIVE ACTIVITY C it takes time and energy. Listening carefully to what someone else is saying can be hard work.

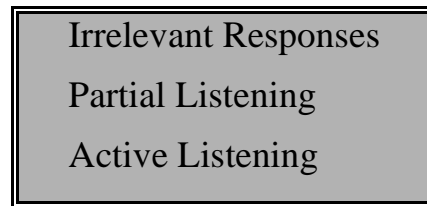
Our approach to communication is influenced by the experiences we've had with "senders" and "receivers" in the past. When we're talking to someone we know, our style of interaction reflects the exchanges we've had with that person. We often make assumptions based on *PAST EXPERIENCES*.

For example, you may be reluctant to offer suggestions to your current boss because a former boss blew up at you after you suggested making a change. Or maybe you've given up trying to listen to your youngest child because it didn't seem to work with the older children in the family.

Listening is also affected by *HOW WE FEEL*. When we're happy, we're more likely to interpret an ambiguous or unclear message as positive. When we're angry or depressed, we're more likely to interpret an ambiguous message as negative.

There are ways to listen that generally work well, and there are other ways that don't work at all. We're going to discuss and practice three different ways to respond to what someone else is saying: *IRRELEVANT RESPONSES, PARTIAL LISTENING, and ACTIVE LISTENING.*

BLACKBOARD



Irrelevant Responses

When you are talking about something and the other person responds by talking about an **UNRELATED TOPIC**, this is called an irrelevant response. In other words, the other person acts as though he or she didn't hear what you were saying, or that what you were saying isn't important. For example, a husband comes home after work and his wife says, "Well, I finally got that report mailed off today!" The husband says, "Boy, am I hungry. What's for dinner?" Or a teenager says to her mother, "Can I talk to you about this incredible new dress I saw at the store?" and her mother says, "Have you cleaned up your room yet? I don't want to talk about anything until you have taken care of that mess!"

Team Activity

Now I want you to get together with one other person to form a discussion team so that we can experience this type of listening. Then choose a topic and have a conversation about it. Your responses should be *UNRELATED* to what your teammate has said. This may feel awkward or rude, even though it may be happening at home quite frequently. Act as though you do not hear what your teammate has said, and pay attention to how this style of communication feels.

Leader: Model how this is done. Ask a parent to make a statement and then respond by saying something that is totally unrelated. The time limit for this exercise is 2 minutes.

1. **How did it feel to make a statement and have your partner act as though he or she didn't hear you?**
2. **How did it feel to ignore the statements made by your partner?**

Partial Listening

Now we're going to demonstrate another type of response called partial listening. Continue your discussion. Listen to what the other person is saying, but only for the purpose of **CHANGING THE TOPIC** to something more interesting to you. In other words, in partial listening you pay slight attention to the person who is speaking, then use the information to politely introduce your own ideas into the conversation. You use **A SMALL PART** of what the other person is saying, but you take off in a different direction. For example, a teenager says, "I had a rotten day at school today," and her mother says, "I had a tough day, too. I dropped the car off to get the oil changed, I paid the bills, and now I have to fix dinner. Can you help set the table?" Or a father says, "I got a raise today at work!" and his son says, "That's great, how about giving me more allowance?"

Team Activity

Stay with the same teammate and practice partial listening for about 2 *minutes*.

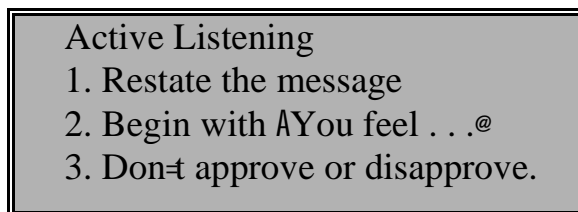
1. **How did it feel to have your partner change the subject right after you made a statement?**
2. **How did it feel to change the subject after your partner made a statement?**

Leader: This may be a comfortable or routine style of responding for some parents. Therefore, some parents may not see anything wrong with it.

Active Listening

Now let's try a third type of response called active listening. With this type of listening, *THE SENDER'S MESSAGE IS THE FOCUS OF THE CONVERSATION*. Active listening helps you understand the other person's position. The three rules for active listening are listed on page 1.4. I'm going to write the rules on the blackboard.

BLACKBOARD



Leader: Give a more detailed explanation as you write the short version of these rules on the blackboard.

1. **Restate the sender's message in your own words.**
2. **Begin your restatements with phrases like "You feel . . .," or "It sounds as if you think . . .," or "Let's see if I understand what you're saying . . ."**
3. **Don't show approval or disapproval of the sender's message. Let's consider an example to illustrate the difference between partial listening and active listening. The sender's message is "I'm really concerned about my daughter. I think she is going to flunk out of school and I don't know why she's doing so poorly."**

A partial listening response would be something like this: "Oh, don't worry. I'm sure it'll work out. I know that Susan is a really bright kid."

What would be an example of active listening?

Leader: Solicit some examples from the parents. The following is one possible answer: "It sounds as though you're worried about Susan because she should be getting better grades, and you can't figure out what's going on with her."

Active listening isn't easy, but it's a very important skill. With time and practice, it can really help you improve a relationship.

Team Activity

Now we're going to form teams again and practice *ACTIVE LISTENING*. This time, one person is going to make *THREE STATEMENTS* while the other person uses the active listening approach to respond. The discussions you have this time should be quite different from the ones you had during the two previous team activities. Instead of completely ignoring what the other person has said, or shifting the topic, the receiver restates the message without introducing any new information. *THE PERSON WHO IS LISTENING SIMPLY FOCUSES ON THE MEANING OF THE SENDER'S MESSAGE.*

1. The sender begins by making a somewhat personal statement that relates to family life, such as "I'm upset about my daughter's going to bed so late every night."
2. The receiver restates the message in his or her own words. The restatement should start with something like "You feel . . .," or "It sounds as if you're saying . . ."
3. The sender confirms whether the message has been received correctly. If there has been a misunderstanding or the message isn't clear to the receiver, the sender will rephrase the message and try again. When the sender's message has been accurately received, the sender will acknowledge this and then make another statement. After the sender has made three statements, change roles.

Leader: Model how this is done by asking one of the parents to make a statement and then respond using the active-listening approach described above.

OK, let's get started. Find a teammate, preferably someone you haven't worked with before. Decide which of you will go first, and begin. You will have 5 minutes for this exercise.

1. How did it feel to make a statement and have your teammate restate it?
2. How did it feel to repeat the statement made by your teammate in your own words?
3. When you were the one who was listening, did you find that you had difficulty understanding the message?

MANY DISAGREEMENTS AND CONFLICTS COULD BE AVOIDED BY USING ACTIVE-LISTENING SKILLS to make sure that you really understand the sender's message. The message may not have been clearly stated or you may not have heard it correctly. With active listening, you have a chance to correct any communication breakdowns. By restating the message instead of reacting to it, you can clear up misunderstandings before they create conflict.

One of the rules for good listening that we discussed in the adolescent group is: **YOU CAN SPEAK UP FOR YOURSELF ONLY AFTER YOU HAVE RESTATED THE SENDER'S MESSAGE TO HIS OR HER SATISFACTION.** This rule is a helpful reminder of what active listening is all about.

That covers the communication material for today's session. Are there any questions?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to ask questions.

VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 1.5.

It takes practice to learn new skills. And we want **YOU**, like the adolescents, to try using the skills that we talk about, and practice them in your everyday life. Since we discussed **COMMUNICATION SKILLS** today, this will be the focus of your homework assignment for the coming week. We also want to get you ready for the problem-solving sessions later in the course. Your homework assignment for this week is listed at the top of page 1.5. The assignment for the adolescents is listed at the bottom of the page.

1. The first part of your assignment is to **PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING AT LEAST ONCE EVERY DAY.** All you have to do is to restate the sender's message in your own words, without adding any new information. Keep a record of what happens using the Active Listening form on page 1.6. Record the name of the sender, your restatement of the sender's message, and what happens. You can practice doing this with anyone, but try to do it at least two or three times with your teenager.

- 2. The second part of your assignment is to *START RECORDING SOME COMMON PROBLEM SITUATIONS* or conflicts between you and your adolescent. Pick one to three problems that you would like to change. For each problem, fill out a Problem Situation form on pages 1.7 through 1.9. List what happens, who is involved, how you and the adolescent feel, and how it turns out. This will help you identify some issues to work on during the problem-solving sessions later in the course.**

Leader: Review the Problem Situation form with the parents to make sure they know how to fill it out.

Are there any questions about your assignment? Does everyone understand how to use each of the forms? Will you be able to complete your assignment before our next meeting?

I'm very happy that all of you were able to come tonight, and I'm looking forward to seeing you at the next session!

SESSION 2

Adolescent Lessons and Communication, Part 2

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 1 (10 min.)
- II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)
- III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)
 - A. Tension and Depression
 - B. Relaxation
 - C. Developing a Plan for Change
 - D. Adolescents' Homework Assignment
- IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (5 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- V. ACTIVE LISTENING: JUDGMENTAL vs. UNDERSTANDING RESPONSES (5 min.)
- VI. STATING POSITIVE FEELINGS (35 min.)
- VII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

1. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 1 (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To review the material discussed during the last session.
2. To clear up any confusion or misunderstandings.

Leader: Try to actively involve the parents as you go over the concepts presented during the last session. One suggestion is to call on parents by name and ask them what they remember about a given topic. Praise and support the parents' efforts to participate, and gently correct any misunderstandings. The goal is to make this part of the class as interactive as possible.

Last session, we discussed why the parent meetings are so important. What are some of the reasons for the parent sessions?

(Answer: The purpose of the parent meetings is to help parents understand what the adolescents are learning so they can support the changes their sons or daughters will be making, and to practice communication and problem-solving skills to make the home environment more positive.)

We reviewed some of the activities the adolescents were involved in during their First session. Specifically, we talked about the Mood Questionnaire. Can someone describe the Mood Questionnaire?

(Answer: The Mood Questionnaire is a brief self-report measure of depression.)

We discussed the general guidelines for the adolescent sessions and considered the idea of using them in our sessions. What were some of the guidelines?

(Answer: Avoid depressive talk, allow each person to have equal time, the personal things talked about in class are not to be discussed outside the group, and offer support.)

We discussed our way of thinking about depression. What were some of the main points (hint: remember the triangle and the spirals)?

Leader: Be sure to cover the triangle of thoughts, feelings, and actions, and the negative and positive spirals.

We also talked about friendly (social) skills, the daily mood ratings, and the value of practicing skills at home. Then, we discussed the importance of communication. Why is good communication so important?

(Answer: Communication reduces conflict, it makes us feel understood and cared for, and it builds good relationships.)

We discussed three types of listening. What were they?

(Answer: Irrelevant listening, partial listening, and active listening.)

Can someone describe each of them?

(Answer: IRRELEVANT LISTENING responses are unrelated to the sender's message; PARTIAL LISTENING responses are related to the sender's message, but they change the focus of the conversation to the listener; and ACTIVE LISTENING involves restating the sender's message in your own words in a nonjudgmental way. In active listening, the receiver focuses on understanding the sender's message and encourages the sender to keep talking.)

Active listening is extremely important, but it takes practice to do it well. Let's consider an example. Can someone think of a statement that a teenager might make so that I can demonstrate good and bad approaches to listening?

Leader: Model irrelevant listening, partial listening, and active listening using one or two statements.

Group Activity

Now let's practice using ACTIVE LISTENING. Think of some statements to use

as examples. The statements should relate to something personal, but it should be something you are willing to share with the group. I'll have one of you make a statement, and then I'll call on someone else to use active-listening skills to respond.

Leader: Call on several parents to make statements and have other parents restate the messages. Do this as a group. Provide reinforcement and constructive feedback to the parents who participate in the activity. Time limit: *3 minutes*.

II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)

Objectives

1. To review each parent's experience in completing the homework assignment.
2. To reinforce the parents who completed the assignment, and brainstorm solutions for those who had trouble with it.

Let's briefly review the homework assignment from last week.



Ask parents to turn to page 1.6.

The First part of your assignment was to *PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING* every day and record it on the Active Listening form on page 1.6. How many of you did this?

Leader: As you ask the following questions, allow some time for parents to respond. The goal is to have the group share their experiences, solicit feedback from the other parents, and praise and support all attempts to use active-listening skills.

What were some of the situations?

What happened?

Were there any problems?



Ask parents to turn to page 1.7.

The second part of your assignment was to *RECORD SOME POTENTIAL PROBLEMS* occurring at home. Did everyone Fill out the Problem Situation forms?

Is someone willing to share a problem with us? I'll use active listening to respond, so pay attention to the problem statements and think about my responses. The rest of you can join in and practice active listening also, so don't be shy.

Leader: Use every opportunity to model active listening in reviewing the problem situations. You may want to collect the forms so that you can look them over during the break, or return them next session.

III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE

(30 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss the relationship between tension and depression.
2. To briefly review the Jacobson and Benson relaxation procedures.
3. To describe the steps involved in developing a plan for change.

Now we're going to cover three topics that the adolescents will be learning in their group. I'll write them on the blackboard.

BLACKBOARD

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tension and depression.2. Using relaxation techniques to reduce tension.3. Developing a plan for change. |
|---|

Tension and Depression

There is *A STRONG RELATIONSHIP* between tension and depression. It has been shown that depressed people are often very tense and anxious. When we're tense and anxious, our ability to function in social situations is impaired. Also, tension makes it difficult to enjoy the activities that otherwise would make us feel good. Both of these factors are likely to contribute to feeling depressed.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES such as being in groups, starting a conversation, or meeting new people can sometimes *MAKE PEOPLE TENSE AND NERVOUS*. Last week, we discussed the idea that having good social skills improves your relationships with others. Good social skills can also help to reduce tension. In addition, there are some specific techniques that can be used to reduce tension. Do you think your adolescent has a problem with tension?

Relaxation

Relaxation techniques are an effective way to reduce tension. Relaxation is a *SKILL* that can be learned. Some people are able to learn these techniques more quickly than others, but everyone can do it with a little practice. The relaxation procedures we use are not

hypnosis; they are proven methods that require conscious work.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 2.1.

We teach the adolescents two methods of relaxation. These are listed on page 2.1.

The *JACOBSON PROGRESSIVE DEEP MUSCLE RELAXATION TECHNIQUE* is one method. This technique involves tensing and relaxing major muscle groups, combined with deep breathing. The adolescents learn this method first.

The other method is the *BENSON TECHNIQUE*. This technique involves sitting quietly, breathing deeply, and repeating a word or phrase such as "one," "relax," or "om." The adolescents will learn this method later in the course.

There are **ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES** to each method. The Jacobson deep muscle relaxation procedure is easier for most people to learn, and it usually results in a deeper state of relaxation. It also requires a lot of work and concentration. While the Benson relaxation procedure usually takes more practice to learn, it's less conspicuous and easier to use; a variation of this procedure, called the "quick" Benson, can be used almost any time and in a variety of everyday situations (for example, in school, at home, and in public).

Are there any questions about these two relaxation techniques?

Developing a Plan for Change

The purpose of this course is to help your teenagers change the way they feel. *LEARNING TO CHANGE IS DIFFERENT FROM WILLPOWER*. Learning to change is a *SKILL* you can improve with practice. It's not a question of willpower. Now we're going to cover the steps involved in developing a plan for change. We'll cover this in detail because it's a systematic way to change any behavior, and it relates to the problem-solving skills that we'll soon be learning in this group.

There are three critical ingredients in any plan for change:

1. *RECOGNIZING THAT YOU CAN LEARN HOW TO CHANGE*. We

have already discussed this.

2. **BELIEVING THAT YOU CAN CHANGE.** It's important to have confidence in your ability to change.
3. **DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR CHANGE.** A little planning can dramatically increase the likelihood that you will succeed.

The first two ingredients on this list are attitudes about change. Admittedly, it can be difficult to replace old attitudes with new ones, but it's clear that the way we think about changing our current situation is critical. The third ingredient, **KNOWING HOW TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR CHANGE**, can help us recognize and believe that we can change.

The **EIGHT STEPS** for developing a plan for change are listed on page 2.1.

Leader: Write each step on the blackboard as you describe it.

1. **PINPOINT OR SPECIFY THE PROBLEM.** The first step is to identify a specific behavior or thought that you want to change. The focus is on behaviors and thoughts rather than on feelings, because it's difficult to change feelings directly.

The behavior or thought must be specific and **OBSERVABLE**. A good way to check whether a behavior is specific enough is to see if you can count it. For example, "I want to be more sociable" is not countable, while "I want to start one .conversation with each of my co-workers every day" is countable and is, therefore, a more specific behavior.

The pinpointed behavior or thought must be something you really want to increase or decrease.

I'm going to offer some examples, and I want you to tell me whether they meet the criteria for pinpointing a problem.

"I want to play golf more often."

(Answer: It focuses on a behavior, but it isn't countable. More often than what?)

"I want to develop a better personality."

(Answer: This is too vague. What specific behaviors do you want to change?)

Can someone think of an example of a problem (behavior or thought)

that meets the criteria for being specific and observable?

Leader: Solicit one or two responses and give praise accordingly. Have the group select a problem and use it to illustrate the various steps. Some possibilities are: a parent feels overwhelmed by a demanding schedule, or a parent wants to lose weight. Write the example you select on the blackboard.

- 2. *OBSERVE YOURSELF AND TAKE A BASELINE COUNT.* Before you try to change the behavior or thought, you need to know how often it's occurring now. Baseline involves carefully observing yourself and counting how often the problem occurs. This will help you set a *REASONABLE GOAL* for change. It also makes it possible to *FIND OUT WHETHER YOU ARE MAKING PROGRESS.***

How would you take a baseline count on the behavior we pinpointed earlier?

Leader: Allow enough time for one or two responses.

- 3. *LOOK FOR ANTECEDENTS.* Antecedents are *WHAT HAPPENS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE YOU DO THE PINPOINTED BEHAVIOR.***

Psychologists have learned that it's important to identify what could trigger or set off the problem behavior.

Antecedents can be *THOUGHTS OR FEELINGS*; for example, Steve eats junk food only when he's bored and lonely. Sometimes, the *BEHAVIOR OF OTHERS* are the antecedents; for example, Tim only swears when his friends swear. Antecedents can also be the *SITUATION THE PERSON IS IN*; for example, Ann only smokes when she is with her friends at parties.

Once you have identified the antecedents, you can try to *CHANGE OR CONTROL* them which, in turn, will change the behavior. While the adolescents are collecting baseline data on their behavior, they are also looking for antecedents.

Are there any questions about antecedents?

Can anyone think of some possible antecedents for the behavior we have been using as an example?

- 4. *LOOK FOR CONSEQUENCES.* Consequences are *WHAT***

HAPPENS AFTER THE BEHAVIOR. Knowing about consequences is also very important for understanding our behavior. In general, if the consequences are positive or rewarding, the behavior is more likely to happen again in the future. On the other hand, if the consequences are negative or punishing, the behavior is less likely to be repeated.

For instance, Ann found that when she smoked at parties, she had something to do when no one was talking to her, and she felt less awkward. This was a positive consequence, and it increased the likelihood that she would continue to smoke at parties. Tim found that when he swore with his friends, they thought it was funny, and it made him feel liked and accepted. Again, since the consequence was positive, the behavior is likely to continue.

It's important to remember that *OUR OWN REACTIONS* (the way we feel or think) and the *REACTIONS OF OTHERS* (how they respond to us) can also be consequences that reduce, maintain, or increase behaviors.

What could some of the consequences be for our example?

5. **SET A REASONABLE GOAL.** The baseline count establishes how often the pinpointed behavior is occurring, and this information is used to set a reasonable goal for change. Goals must be realistic, modest, and attainable. There is one basic rule regarding goals: **NO GOAL IS TOO SMALL.** It's much better to set a small goal and reach it, than it is to set a goal that's too big and fail. Not being able to reach a goal is discouraging and may teach us to stop trying.

What would be a good goal to set in our example?

6. **WRITE A CONTRACT.** A contract is a written agreement that you make with yourself to give yourself a reward for accomplishing your goals. Contracts should be **SPECIFIC** so they are easy to follow. Writing a contract seems to be important for some people, while others can change their behavior without it. In general, we think **IT'S UP TO THE INDIVIDUAL.**

When we learn more about problem solving and negotiation later in the course, the topic of writing a contract will come up again. When the plan for change involves **TWO OR MORE PEOPLE** and not just yourself, **IT'S NECESSARY TO WRITE A CONTRACT** to avoid disagreements about what was said.

What would be a reasonable contract for our example?

7. **REWARD YOURSELF.** As you can see, developing and completing a plan for change is **HARD WORK**. We think it's essential to reward yourself for this work to provide some incentive for doing it, and to increase the likelihood that you will do it again. In other words, to ensure that there is a positive consequence for making changes.

The teenagers should choose their own rewards for following their contracts. The reward should be something that is **REASONABLE, ACCESSIBLE, AND POWERFUL ENOUGH** to match the work required to meet the goal (use large rewards for big, demanding goals and small rewards for relatively easy goals).

Can each of you think of some possible rewards for your adolescent? Remember that it has to be something your teenager really enjoys. You may be surprised at the things your teenager chooses for rewards.

Are you willing to help your teenager achieve these rewards?

What would be some possible rewards for you?

8. **EVALUATE THE CONTRACT.** The contract should spell out **HOW LONG IT WILL BE IN EFFECT BEFORE IT'S EVALUATED** (a week, a month, etc.). This is important because the contract may need to be changed. At the end of the trial period, the contract is evaluated to see if any modifications are necessary to make it work better. Perhaps the goal you selected was too big, or the reward wasn't readily available. At the end of the trial period, the working parts of the contract can be adjusted.

As a general rule, if the contract isn't working, it's not the person's fault; it means the terms of the contract need to be evaluated and changed.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment



Ask parents to turn to page 2.3

Let's review the homework assignment for the adolescents that is listed at the bottom of page 2.3.

1. Continue to Fill out the Mood Diary.
2. Continue to work on friendly skills.
3. Practice the Jacobson Progressive Deep Muscle Relaxation Technique (they will learn the Benson method in two weeks).
4. Record pleasant activities.
5. Write a contract to increase the level of pleasant activities.

IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (5 min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify misunderstandings about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions that parents may have.

We have reviewed what your adolescents will be learning and practicing this week. Are there any questions about this, or any questions in general?

How did the past week go with your teenager?

Break (10 min.)

Let's take a 10-minute break.

V. ACTIVE LISTENING: JUDGMENTAL vs. UNDERSTANDING RESPONSES (5 min.)

Objective

1. To explain the differences between judgmental responses and understanding responses.

We have learned that one way to avoid communication breakdowns is for the listener to tell the sender what he or she thinks the message is. This is called an *UNDERSTANDING RESPONSE*. This type of response lets the sender know that you've *HEARD THE MESSAGE*, and it encourages him or her to tell more.

Unfortunately, people often respond to the sender's message with a *JUDGMENTAL RESPONSE*. In this case, the receiver tells the sender what he or she thinks of the message by approving or disapproving, agreeing or disagreeing, etc. This type of response tends to make people

talk less about how they feel.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to distinguish between a judgmental response and an understanding response. For instance, is the statement "I feel sorry for you" a judgmental response or an understanding response?

Leader: Allow enough time for one or two answers.

(Answer: It's a judgmental response, because you're telling the sender what YOU think about what was said.)

It's important to realize that positive responses can also be judgmental. Do you have any questions? Is this distinction clear?

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 2.2.

These two types of responses are listed at the top of page 2.2. An *UNDERSTANDING RESPONSE* lets the sender know that the message has been accurately received, and it encourages the sender to expand on the message.

A *JUDGMENTAL RESPONSE* tends to make the sender defensive, and it can lead to arguments.

Leader: Solicit a personal statement from one of the parents. Have the other parents reply with both judgmental and understanding responses.

VI. STATING POSITIVE FEELINGS (35 min.)

Objectives

1. To present the rules for stating feelings.
2. To practice stating positive feelings.

We have discussed the importance of active listening, which focuses on *RECEIVING SKILLS*. Now we'll discuss *SENDING SKILLS*, and we'll begin with how to state positive feelings. Stating positive feelings promotes communication, and it makes other people less defensive. Stating our feelings makes us feel understood, and it plays a significant role in resolving conflicts. Even though *SELF-DISCLOSURE* is involved in making positive-feeling statements, it isn't necessary to

reveal your innermost feelings.

Rules for Self-Disclosure

It's important to disclose your feelings in a way that makes it easy for the listener to receive your message. There are *EIGHT RULES* for doing this effectively. Note that most of these guidelines apply to both positive and negative feelings. Let's review the rules listed on page 2.2.

RULE #1. Self-disclosure involves honestly telling how you feel about a situation or about another person.

RULE #2. Self-disclosure does not mean revealing every intimate detail of your thoughts and feelings.

RULE #3. A relationship is strengthened by disclosing your reaction to events that both of you experience or to what the other person says or does.

RULE #4. Hiding your reactions (positive or negative) to another person's behavior does not improve your relationship with that person.

RULE #5. Self-disclosure involves some risk taking.

RULE #6. If a person's behavior upsets you, you should tell the person how you feel about his or her behavior.

RULE #7. When you are disclosing your feelings, the relationship you have with the other person and the situation you're in should be taken into account.

RULE #8. Self-disclosure is a two-way street—both people in a relationship should participate in the process.

A good statement of feelings has *TWO PARTS*. First you describe *HOW YOU REACTED* (your feeling), and then you recount *WHAT HAPPENED* (the specific behavior or event). In this session, we'll work on stating positive feelings. During our next meeting, we'll focus on stating negative feelings.

Positive Feelings

When you're disclosing positive feelings, it's helpful to *DESCRIBE THE FEELING* and then *EXPLAIN WHY YOU FEEL THAT WAY*.

Describing feelings may seem awkward at first. The best way to do this is to *USE "FEELING" WORDS* like sad, happy, scared, angry, confused, irritated, upset, and pleased.

When we make statements about our feelings, we describe the consequence ("I feel . . .") and then the reason ("when you . . ."). For example, a simple feeling statement might be something like "You make me happy." It's OK to say that to someone, but the statement will be more effective if you make it *SPECIFIC* by saying something like, "I feel warm and happy when you smile." A specific statement is better because it tells the other person what he or she did to make you feel that way.

How could you make the statement "You understand me" more specific?

(Possible answer: "I feel that you understand me because you take the time to listen to me.")

Instead of saying, "Everyone thinks you're a nice guy," it's better to make your positive-feeling statements *PERSONAL* by saying something like "I feel fortunate to have you as a friend, because you're one of the nicest guys I know." Making the statement specific tells the other person what he or she is doing that makes you happy.

Are there any questions?

Group Activity

I'm going to read several statements, and I want you to tell me whether they're good positive-feeling statements.

- a. "You're always so supportive that I feel comfortable, and I can be myself when I'm around you."

(Answer: This is a good positive-feeling statement. It's a clear description of how the speaker feels when he or she is with the other person. The statement also identifies what the other person does [being supportive] that makes the speaker feel that way.)

- b. "We all feel that you're really great."

(Answer: This is not a good personal statement of positive feelings. First,

the sender doesn't speak for him- or herself but hides behind the phrase "WE feel." Also, the statement "You're really great" is a value judgment and doesn't describe a personal feeling.)

c. "I feel comfortable in my group."

(Answer: This positive-feeling statement is a little vague. The speaker begins with the phrase "I feel comfortable," which is the consequence. The reason for feeling this way is implied, but it's not clearly specified. What does "in my group" really mean? The speaker is implying that there is something about belonging to a group that makes him or her feel comfortable. We can assume that the speaker's positive feeling comes from the acceptance, positive regard, support, and caring that is provided by members of the group.)

d. "I feel everyone cares that I'm part of this group."

(Answer: This is not a good positive-feeling statement. In essence, the speaker is saying, "I believe," instead of "I feel." The statement describes what the speaker believes other people feel about him or her instead of communicating a personal feeling. The statement could be expanded to make it into a good positive-feeling statement (for example, "I feel accepted and comfortable in this group because everyone seems to care that I'm part of it.")

Let's take a minute or two to do some practice. I want each of you to write an example of a good positive-feeling statement in the margin of your workbook. Then we'll have some of you read your examples out loud, and the rest of the group will practice responding with active listening.

Leader: Wait until almost everyone has had a chance to write down an example. Then ask for a positive-feeling statement from a group member and model how to reply with an understanding response. Next, ask one of the parents to read a positive-feeling statement and have a second parent try active listening. Provide ample encouragement and support, since this activity requires a relatively high order of skill.

We have covered a lot of new material today on communication skills. We discussed active listening, the difference between judgmental and understanding responses, and how to state positive feelings.

Are there any questions?

VII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 2.2

Your homework assignment for the next week is summarized on page 2.3.

- 1. The first part of your homework assignment is to *STATE ONE POSITIVE FEELING EACH DAY*. Record the statements and who you said them to on the Staling Positive Feelings form on page 2.4. Note how this felt to you, and describe the other person's reaction to the positive-feeling statement.**
- 2. Also, complete *TWO MORE PROBLEM SITUATION FORMS*, on pages 2.5 and 2.6.**

Leader: Review the forms and ask if there are any questions.

I am looking forward to seeing you next week!

SESSION 3

Adolescent Lessons and Communication, Part 3

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break.

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 2 (10 min.)
- II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)
- III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (35 min.)
 - A. Pleasant Activities
 - B. Controlling Thoughts
 - C. Tracking Thoughts
 - D. Positive Counterthoughts
 - E. Adolescents' Homework Assignment
- IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- V. STATING NEGATIVE FEELINGS (30 min.)
- VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 2 (10 min.)

Last session, we talked about the relationship between depression, tension, and relaxation. We also discussed the two relaxation techniques that the adolescent will be learning. Does anyone remember what they are?

(Answer: 1. The Jacobson Progressive Deep Muscle Relaxation Technique, which involves tensing and relaxing major muscle groups; and 2. the Benson procedure, which involves sitting quietly, breathing deeply, and repeating a word or phrase such as "relax" or "one.")

We also discussed the steps involved in developing a plan for change. Can someone tell us what the various steps are?

(Answer: 1. PINPOINT or specify the problem (focus on behaviors or thoughts, not feelings); 2. take a BASELINE count to find out how often the thought or behavior is occurring now [this information is used to set a reasonable goal]; 3. look for ANTECEDENTS [what happens before the problem behavior or thought]; 4. look for CONSEQUENCES [what happens after the problem behavior or thought]; 5. set a GOAL for change [remember, no goal is too small]; 6. write a CONTRACT; 7. REWARD yourself; and 8. EVALUATE your contract.)

In addition to reviewing what the adolescents were learning, we continued our discussion about communication. We practiced expressing positive feelings, which involves self-disclosure. There are eight rules for self-disclosure. Does anyone remember what some of these rules are?

(Accept any of the following answers: 1. Self-disclosure means honestly telling how you feel; 2. it isn't necessary to reveal every intimate detail; 3. a relationship is strengthened by disclosing your reactions to experiences you have shared with someone; 4. hiding your reactions does not improve a relationship; 5. self-disclosure involves risk taking; 6. it's helpful to tell others how you feel about their behavior; 7. statements about how you feel should take into account the situation you're in and the relationship you have with the other person; 8. self-disclosure is a two-way street.)

II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)

Let's review the homework assignment for last week. The first part of the assignment was to EXPRESS A POSITIVE FEELING to someone each day. How did that go? Is anyone willing to share an example? How did it feel to you, and how did the other person respond? Did anyone's

reaction surprise you? If you weren't able to express positive feelings, what happened?

Leader: You may want to collect the forms for stating positive feelings to review and return later. Remember to reinforce any attempts to complete the homework assignment.

The second part of the assignment was to *COMPLETE ONE OR TWO PROBLEM SITUATION* forms. Would anyone be willing to share an example? What did you learn from completing these forms? Are the problems something you could work on in the negotiation sessions we'll be conducting later in the course?

Leader: Reinforce attempts to fill out the forms and brainstorm solutions for those who had trouble with the assignment. You may want to collect the forms to review and return later.

III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (35 min.)

Objectives

1. To describe the importance of pleasant activities.
2. To discuss techniques for controlling negative thoughts.

Pleasant Activities

Research has shown that how many pleasant activities we do is *HIGHLY RELATED TO OUR MOODS*. If we don't do enough enjoyable activities we feel down, and doing a lot of enjoyable activities makes us feel good. It may seem like a simple idea, but increasing pleasant activities is an effective way for your teenagers to improve the way they feel.

When we feel depressed, we are less motivated to do the activities we enjoy. And doing less tends to make us feel even worse. This is an example of the *NEGATIVE SPIRAL* mentioned earlier. These negative factors feed off each other, forming a vicious cycle.

The adolescents have been keeping track of their levels of pleasant activities and moods each day to see if there is a connection between pleasant activities and the way they feel.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 3.1.

On page 3.1, there is a *GRAPH* showing mood and activity level for a young woman named Susan. The dashed line represents her mood ratings and the solid line represents the number of pleasant activities she did. As you can see, there's a close correspondence between Susan's mood and her activity level. When she does more activities, she tends to feel better and vice versa. Even though the connection between mood and activity level may not be this strong for your teenager, it's usually a significant factor. The adolescents are often surprised when they graph their activity levels and moods and see that there is a relationship between them.

Do you have any questions about this graph, or about the importance of pleasant activities?

Each person enjoys different activities. However, there are some activities that seem to be significant for depression. These are called *MOOD-RELATED ACTIVITIES*. There are two types of mood-related activities listed on page 3.1 that are particularly important for overcoming depression.

1. *PLEASANT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES*. Time spent with other people (friends, family) that is positive, pleasurable, and fun.
2. *SUCCESS ACTIVITIES*. Experiences that make us feel skillful or competent (the way we feel when we have done a good job on something).

Having a good time with others or succeeding at something are two types of activities that make almost everyone feel a little better.

As we said before, each person enjoys different types of pleasant activities. Activities that parents enjoy may not be fun for adolescents, and vice versa. Before the course started, each adolescent went through a *LIST OF PLEASANT ACTIVITIES* and indicated how much he or she would enjoy those activities and how frequently the adolescent did them. Their responses were entered into a computer, and it generated a list of activities for each adolescent to focus on.

In addition to identifying which activities they enjoy, strategies were discussed for developing a *PLAN* for increasing their level of pleasant activities; for example, setting aside a block of time for doing the things they enjoy. Even though we are teaching them to focus on pleasant

activities, they are still expected to do the things that are required of them such as school, homework, and chores. What we are doing is helping them develop a plan to include a certain amount of pleasant activities in their everyday schedule.

Once they had taken a baseline count on their pleasant activities, the adolescents wrote a *CONTRACT* to increase the number of pleasant things they do and to reward themselves for reaching their goal. They were instructed to select a goal that was small and reasonable. We want them to *SUCCEED IN REACHING THEIR GOALS*. Let's say, for example, that one of the adolescents was doing an average of five pleasant activities every day. What do you think a reasonable goal would be for increasing pleasant activities?

(Answer: About six to eight pleasant activities every day, or to make sure they always do at least five every day. . Explain that the best approach is to set a goal that is at or just above their baseline levels so that success is almost certain.)

Are there any questions?

Controlling Thoughts

Remember the triangle of thoughts, feelings, and actions? People who have a lot of negative thoughts and very few positive thoughts tend to feel depressed. Depression changes the way we think, and thoughts can have a significant impact on our mood and our actions. For example, if I *THINK* that I can't do something, then I won't try (an *ACTION*) and I may *FEEL* bad about myself.

We believe that it's possible for people to control their thoughts. Since we usually don't pay much attention to the types of thoughts we have throughout the day, the first step for controlling thoughts is to become *AWARE* of them. In particular, we need to know *HOW OFTEN* we have negative thoughts.

When people are depressed, they tend to have more negative thoughts and fewer positive thoughts. They often have negative thoughts about *THEMSELVES* ("I'm a terrible person," "I'm worthless," "I'm stupid," etc.), their *SITUATIONS* ("I don't have any friends," "My family hates me," etc.), and their *I* ("I'll never feel any better," "What's the use of even trying?" etc.). These negative thoughts contribute to the downward spiral of depression. One way for the adolescents to turn the

downward spiral into an upward one is to gain control over their negative thoughts.

Tracking Thoughts

Last session, we discussed the eight steps for changing a behavior or thought. Does anyone remember what the first two steps are?

(Answer: *PINPOINT* the specific problem and take a *BASELINE* count.)

Before your teenagers can control their thoughts, they must become aware of what they are telling themselves. They have to identify which negative thoughts they have most often. Everyone has negative thoughts sometimes, and there are legitimate reasons to have them every now and then. But ***NEGATIVE THOUGHTS CAN BECOME A PROBLEM IF THEY OCCUR TOO FREQUENTLY*** because they make us feel sad or down. Positive thoughts provide a balance, so they are also important.

As part of their homework assignment, the adolescents are taking a baseline count on both negative and positive thoughts. We have asked them to identify the negative and positive thoughts that occur most frequently for them. Their goal is to have at least ***TWICE AS MANY*** positive thoughts as negative thoughts. Can you think of some ***EXAMPLES OF THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS*** you have heard from your teenager, or that a depressed teenager might have?

Leader: Try to elicit examples from different group members. Some common negative thoughts are "I'm ugly," "Life is unfair," "It's all my fault," or "I can't do it."

Can you think of ***SOME EXAMPLES OF THE POSITIVE THOUGHTS*** you have heard from your teenager, or that a teenager might have?

Leader: Call on several parents. Some typical positive thoughts are "I'm doing all right," "There are some things I can do well," or "Life is great."

Positive Counterthoughts

Just as negative thoughts can make us feel depressed and unhappy, positive thoughts can make us feel "up" and cheerful. One of the techniques the adolescents learn for controlling their thinking is to replace negative thoughts with positive counterthoughts.

Definition: A positive counterthought relates to the same topic as the negative thought, but it's *MORE REALISTIC* and *MORE POSITIVE*. This definition is listed on page 3.1. Negative thoughts and positive counterthoughts have the same relationship between them as "Good News" and "Bad News" stories.

Let's try to come up with some positive counterthoughts for the following negative thoughts:

- 1. "I really made a mess of things. I can't do anything right."**
(Possible counterthought: "I may not be good at this particular task, but there are other things that I do very well.")
- 2. "I'm never going to be able to change."**
(Possible counterthought: "It may be hard to change, but I can do it a little at a time.")
- 3. "My son/daughter is going to get into serious trouble."**
(Possible counterthought: "I'm really concerned about my son/daughter, but I doubt that anything really serious will happen; he/she is fairly level-headed. Maybe there is something I can do right now to improve the situation.")

This brief overview should give you a general understanding of the material your adolescents are covering in their group. The focus is on increasing pleasant activities and controlling thoughts, which represent the two parts of the thoughts, actions, and feelings triangle that are easiest to change.

Are there any questions?

Adolescents' Homework Assignment



Ask parents to turn to page 3.2.

The adolescents' homework assignment is listed at the bottom of page 3.2. Let's quickly review it.

- 1. Continue to fill out the Mood Diary.**
- 2. Increase the level of pleasant activities by following the terms of the**

- contract.
3. Try to replace negative thoughts with positive counterthoughts.
 4. Practice the Jacobson Relaxation Technique.

IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify any misunderstandings about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions that parents may have.

Do you have any reactions to the idea of your adolescents increasing their level of pleasant activities? Is there anything you can do to help?

Do you think it's possible for them to change their thinking patterns?

How has the past week gone for you and your adolescent?

Are you being supportive? How?

Do you have any general questions?

Break (10 min.)

Let's take a 10-minute break, and then we'll learn more about communication skills.

V. STATING NEGATIVE FEELINGS (30 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss the importance of expressing negative feelings.
2. To have parents practice expressing negative feelings.

Last session, we discussed how to express positive feelings. Now we're going to practice stating negative feelings. People often unintentionally do things that upset us. If we tell other people about our negative feelings *IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY*, they are usually willing to listen and perhaps try to change the situation. The best way to do this is very similar to the approach we discussed earlier for stating our positive feelings.

Can anyone think of some other reasons why it's important to express

negative feelings?

Leader: Discuss the responses of the group and encourage participation.

It's helpful to express our negative feelings to the *PEOPLE WE CARE ABOUT*. If you don't care about the other person, or if you have no desire to foster a relationship, then you may want to *AVOID THE SITUATION*. For example, if you encounter an irritable store clerk it's probably not worth the effort to give that person feedback about his or her behavior because you may never see that person again. Expressing negative feelings in order to make someone feel bad or to get even is not the type of behavior we are encouraging.

We have already learned how to use *FEELING STATEMENTS* to disclose our positive reactions. Feeling statements also can be used to express our negative reactions and complaints about what other people are doing. It's usually much harder to state negative feelings than it is to express positive feelings, but this is an important skill for building healthy relationships.

Guidelines for Stating Negative Feelings

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 3.1.

Three guidelines for expressing negative feelings effectively and constructively are listed on page 3.1. Let's review them one at a time.

Leader: Write the three guidelines on the blackboard as you discuss them.

1. ***BE SPECIFIC***. It's important to be precise when you describe your negative feeling and the other person's behavior that caused it. Otherwise, the listener may not understand what he or she has done that upsets you. For example, the statement "I'm mad at you" tells the listener very little; it would be much better to say something like "I'm mad at you because you didn't call me last night as you said you would."
2. ***DESCRIBE BEHAVIORS***. The best approach is to recount what happened *WITHOUT MAKING A JUDGMENT*. If judgments are part of your message, the other person will become defensive and will stop listening to what you are saying. Remember, the goal is to

have the other person understand what you have to say. Name-calling is even worse; it might make you feel better temporarily, but it will damage your relationship with the other person.

Let's consider some examples that illustrate the right way and wrong way to do this.

GOOD EXAMPLE. "I let you borrow five dollars two weeks ago, and you haven't paid me back yet." This statement is specific and nonjudgmental.

BAD EXAMPLE. "You're a thief! You never intended to pay back the five dollars you borrowed two weeks ago." This statement doesn't describe specific behaviors, it makes judgments and inferences about the person.

Can anyone think of some other good examples?

Leader: Review the examples offered by parents; provide constructive feedback and praise

3. **EXPRESS YOUR NEGATIVE FEELINGS WITH WORDS.** If you don't state your negative feelings with words, the message is often communicated nonverbally through body language. Body language lets the other person know that you're upset, but it doesn't describe why. It's important to express feelings openly with words, especially when you are communicating negative feelings. It's surprising how often we forget to do this. Feeling words include angry, irritated, concerned, worried, glad, sad, pleased, proud, and surprised.

GOOD EXAMPLE. "I was *disappointed* when you didn't take out the garbage this morning, after you promised that you would."

Can anyone think of some good examples of describing negative feelings with words?

Leader: Review the examples offered by parents; provide constructive feedback and praise.

In a few weeks, we will conduct two sessions in which we will get together with the adolescent group to work on problem solving. The goal is for you to try to negotiate some of the issues that create conflict at home. During the discussions with your teenager, you will probably

be expressing negative feelings to one another. When a problem has been around for a long time there are usually deep-seated feelings about it, and it's harder to express negative feelings constructively. We're going to practice this skill so that you can do it effectively when the time comes. Your teenagers also will be practicing this skill in their group.

Group Activity

I'm going to read some examples of negative statements made by parents, and I would like you to say what is right or wrong with them and how you would change the statement.

1. "You're just lazy."

(Answer: This statement makes a judgment about the person, it doesn't describe a specific behavior, and the sender's feelings are not stated.)

2. "You're always talking on the telephone."

(Answer: This statement is not specific enough, and the sender's feelings are not expressed.)

3. "You're mean to your younger brothers and sisters."

(Answer: This statement is not specific, the focus is on the person instead of the behavior, and the sender's feelings are not stated.)

4. "It makes me angry when you swear at me in front of my friends."

(Answer: This statement is specific, it describes the behavior, and the sender's feelings are clearly expressed.)

Leader: If there is enough time, ask parents to offer some personal examples.

VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 3.2.

The homework assignment for this week is listed on page 3.2.

1. Your assignment is to **DISCLOSE YOUR NEGATIVE FEELINGS AT LEAST TWICE** during the week. You should try do this at least once with your son or daughter. There are some forms on pages 3.3.

and 3.4 for recording your attempts to disclose negative feelings. Describe the negative feeling, the person involved, and the outcome. Write down each of your experiences so that we can go over them next week and discuss your successes and problems.

Are there any questions about this form or your assignment?

Are there any general questions or comments?

Thanks for coming to this session, and I look forward to seeing all of you at our next session.

SESSION 4

Adolescent Lessons and Problem Solving, Part 1

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break.

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 3 (10 min.)
- II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (10 min.)
- III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)
 - A. Identifying Irrational Thoughts@
 - B. The C-A-B Method
 - C. Adolescents- Homework Assignment
- IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- V. RATIONALE FOR PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (10 min.)
- VI. DEFINING THE PROBLEM (30 min.)
- VII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 3 (10 min.)

Last session, we discussed pleasant activities and the impact they have on your teenager's mood. Doing more enjoyable activities will help them feel better. First, the teenagers kept track of their activity levels, and then they wrote a contract with themselves to gradually increase the number of enjoyable things they do. We discussed two types of pleasant activities that are the most powerful in terms of making us feel good. What are they?

(Answer: The activities the adolescents should pay particular attention to are pleasant social activities and success activities.)

The second skill area the teenagers worked on last week involved negative and positive thoughts. Why is it important to focus on thoughts?

(Answer: Controlling negative thoughts or replacing them with positive thoughts can help break the downward spiral of depression.)

After taking a baseline count on their negative and positive thoughts, the adolescents discussed and practiced using positive counterthoughts. What are positive counterthoughts?

(Answer: Positive counterthoughts are related to the same topic as the original negative thought but they are more realistic and more positive.)

Last session, we also practiced staling negative feelings. What are the three rules for expressing negative feelings?

(Answer: Be specific, describe behaviors, and express your feelings with words.)

II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (10 min.)

Let's review your homework from our last session. Your assignment was to *EXPRESS NEGATIVE FEELINGS AT LEAST TWICE* during the week, and you were asked to do this at least once with your son or daughter. How did that go? Is anyone willing to share what he or she said and how it worked?

Leader: Review each parent's homework. Reinforce all attempts to complete the assignment and make suggestions. Encourage parents to help each other if there were difficulties.

III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss three types of irrational thoughts and the use of counterthoughts and challenges.
2. To demonstrate how to analyze negative feelings using the C-A-B method.

Now let's review what the teenagers are learning in their group.

Identifying "Irrational Thoughts"

We are helping the teenagers become aware of their automatic, nonproductive thinking. Depression is often accompanied by thoughts that are *IRRATIONAL* in the sense that they are based on an unrealistic and biased view of the world.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 4.1

Once your teenagers learn to recognize irrational thoughts, they can work on changing them. This is another skill that will help them overcome their depressed moods. Basically, there are three types of irrational thoughts. These are listed on page 4.1. They are: Overreactions, Exaggerations, and Unreasonable Expectations.

BLACKBOARD

Overreactions
Exaggerations
Unreasonable Expectations

Overreactions

Overreactions involve *JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS OR BLOWING THINGS OUT OF PROPORTION*. They involve making more out of a situation than is justified. Let's consider an example.

EXAMPLE #1. Two different girls, Linda and Julie, both ask their friends to go out on Friday night. Both girls' friends say they can't make it because they have too much work to do.

Linda feels rejected and thinks, "Because my friend won't go out with me tonight, she doesn't like me and she will never want to go out with me again." Linda feels angry and hurt.

On the other hand, Julie thinks, "Well, my friend is busy tonight, but we can go out some other night. She's still my best friend." Julie is disappointed, but she watches a movie at home and gets together with her best friend on Saturday.

The same situation happened to both girls, but their reactions were very different. *IT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED BUT WHAT THEY TOLD THEMSELVES ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN HOW THEY FELT.* One girl's thoughts were irrational, and the other girl's thoughts were more positive and more realistic.

This example also demonstrates how to discover irrational thoughts. The basic approach is to *ARGUE WITH YOUR OWN THOUGHTS.* Instead of assuming that all of your thoughts are valid, you can challenge or argue just *HOW TRUE* your thoughts really are. If they aren't realistic, they may be irrational. Let's see how this works by considering another example.

EXAMPLE #2. A teenager has recently moved to a new city with his family. He is finding it difficult to fit in at his new school, and he thinks, "Everyone at this new high school is gross. I'll never find any friends like my old friends."

Is this thought irrational? How could the teenager challenge the thought to discover whether it's rational or irrational?

(Possible answer: The teenager could challenge this by thinking, "I can't really say that everyone here is gross. I don't know everyone yet, and I have met a few kids who seem OK.")

Can you think of other examples of irrational thoughts that are overreactions, and some possible challenges?

Leader: Discuss any examples the parents suggest, pointing out why the thought is irrational.

Exaggerations

Exaggerations occur when someone notices that one thing is wrong and then believes that *EVERYTHING IS WRONG* with themselves or with some other situation. Let's consider some examples.

EXAMPLE #1

Thought. "This was a terrible day. My whole life stinks." Possible challenge. "Is this really true? Can I really say that just because I had one bad day that my entire life won't get any better? Was the whole day that bad?"

EXAMPLE #2

Thought. "I must be the fattest and ugliest girl in this high school." Possible challenge. "Just last week, Jane said she loved my new perm and that I looked good. Maybe I am ten pounds overweight, but lots of people have at least that much weight to lose, and they don't seem to care about it. Now that I'm exercising more, I'm really not in bad shape, and I'm working on getting my weight down."

Unreasonable Expectations

A third type of irrational belief involves having unreasonable expectations of yourself or someone else. For example, would you agree that a teenager who is upset because his parents don't drive a Mercedes has an unreasonable expectation? Let's consider some other examples.

EXAMPLE #1

Thought. "My parents are awful because they won't buy me a car." Possible challenge. "Is it really fair to expect my parents to buy me a car? We're not as rich as some of my friends. And besides, they let me drive the cars we do have fairly often."

EXAMPLE #2

Thought. "I have to be liked by everyone." Possible challenge. "Is this really true? I can be perfectly happy with the group of friends I already have—they're fun to be with and they care about me."

Leader: Solicit some additional examples from parents. Have the group come up with some possible challenges.

The C-A-B Method

The technique we use to change irrational beliefs and the impact they have on our moods is called the C-A-B method. This method involves having the adolescents *ARGUE WITH OR CHALLENGE THEIR IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS*. At first, it's difficult to control irrational thoughts because they occur almost automatically when you are depressed. People don't pay much attention to their thoughts in general, and depressed individuals tend to have negative thoughts so often that they don't notice them. The First step, then, is to teach the adolescents to pay attention to their thoughts and help them identify the ones that are irrational. The next step is to encourage the adolescents to challenge *HOW TRUE OR REALISTIC* these thoughts really are, instead of just accepting them. To look at their negative thoughts more rationally and realistically, the teenagers need to ask themselves, "What's the evidence that this thought is true?"

The C-A-B method is a powerful technique for neutralizing or changing irrational beliefs. It's a systematic approach that the teenagers can use to analyze how they think and feel about the things that happen to them. I'm going to write the three parts of the C-A-B method on the blackboard, and then we'll examine each of them in more detail. The three parts are also listed on page 4.1 in the workbook.

BLACKBOARD

A = the Activating Event

B = the Belief

C = the Consequence (how you feel)

"A" stands for the *ACTIVATING EVENT*, which is the situation or event that triggered the negative feeling. "B" stands for the *BELIEF*, which is the thought that was provoked by the activating event. And "C" stands for the *CONSEQUENCE*, which is the emotional reaction to the activating event.

Let's consider an example. Bill and Steve live across the street from each other. It's October, and it's raining again. They both notice that the rain affects how they feel. Steve is happy, and Bill is depressed. Here is how we would use the C-A-B method to discover how Bill's thoughts about the activating event led to the emotional consequence

(that is, feeling depressed).

The activating event is the rain. Bill thinks to himself, "This is awful! Summer is over and now it's going to rain nonstop for six months. I can't stand the clouds and the cold weather. I won't be able to do anything until spring!" This makes Bill feel depressed and bored.

This example illustrates an important point: the way we feel (the Consequence, or **C**) is directly related to what we tell ourselves (the Belief, or **B**) about the Activating Event (**A**). Most people think that they feel bad because something happened to them (the activating event, or **A**). The C-A-B method suggests, however, that the situations or events that happen to us are not as important in determining how we feel as *WHAT WE TELL OURSELVES ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS*.

In the previous example, Steve is happy about the rain. When Steve looks outside, he thinks to himself, "It must be snowing in the mountains. That's great! I'll be skiing again, soon." Steve's beliefs about the activating event lead to an entirely different emotional consequence. Notice also that Steve's beliefs are more rational than Bill's. Is it really true that Bill won't be able to do *anything* until spring?

The C-A-B method works best when we're experiencing a negative feeling (or consequence), because it shows us how to work backwards to identify the activating event and belief that led to the feeling. We teach the adolescents to use the C-A-B method when they are feeling sad, angry, or afraid. There are *FOUR STEPS* for using the C-A-B method; these steps are listed at the bottom of page 4.1.

Leader: Write the four steps on the blackboard as you discuss them.

1. **IDENTIFY THE CONSEQUENCE.** The feeling or consequence (**C**) is the reason for analyzing the situation. For example, your adolescent is upset and wants to understand why he or she feels that way in order to change the feeling. The consequence is the emotional result of some thought or belief.
2. **IDENTIFY THE ACTIVATING EVENT.** Next, the adolescent tries to pinpoint the situation or event (**A**) that activated the feeling. This can be difficult to figure out. The activating event is what happened in the environment. It's what an outsider would see if he or she were watching.

3. **IDENTIFY THE BELIEF.** The third step is for the adolescent to discover the thoughts or beliefs (B) that occurred after the activating event. The belief is what led to the consequence or feeling. This takes some practice. The adolescent needs to ask him- or herself, "What was I thinking or telling myself when I started feeling upset?"
4. **CHALLENGE THE BELIEF.** After the adolescent has identified the three parts of the C-A-B sequence by working backwards from the feeling, he or she must decide whether the thought that's involved is irrational. The best way to do this is for the adolescent to ask him- or herself, "Are there other ways to look at the situation?" "What evidence do I have that this thought is true?" "Am I jumping to conclusions or blowing this out of proportion?"

Leader: Generate an example using suggestions from the parents.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 4.3.

The adolescents' homework assignment for this week is listed on page 4.3.

1. Continue to record daily mood.
2. Continue to practice the Benson Relaxation Technique.
3. Try to maintain a good level of pleasant activities.
4. Use the C-A-B method to challenge a nonproductive thought approximately once a day.

IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify any misunderstanding about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions parents may have.

Leader: Use the following questions to prompt parents to express their concerns and ask questions about the adolescent sessions.

Do you have any thoughts or reactions regarding the techniques we are

teaching the adolescents for changing their thinking?

Do you think these techniques would be helpful for your adolescent?

Do you have any questions about the adolescents' homework assignment?

How are things going at home with your teenager?

Do you have any general questions?

Break (10 min.)

Let's take a 10-minute break before we discuss communication and negotiation skills.

V. RATIONALE FOR PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss the importance of effective problem solving.
2. To provide a general overview of the five steps involved in problem solving.

During our first three sessions, we discussed and practiced several communication skills including *ACTIVE LISTENING* and how to *EXPRESS POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEELINGS*. These skills are important because they can help us strengthen and improve our relationships with the people we care about (our children, spouses, friends, co-workers, relatives, etc.).

However, conflicts and disagreements are bound to come up, even with family members and friends that you love. This is a normal part of all relationships. Conflicts between teenagers and parents often involve the following issues: school, chores, curfew, the teenager's friends, Fighting with brothers and sisters clothes and appearance, money, dating, sex, alcohol and drugs, lying, and so on. These are quite a few potential problem areas. Therefore, it's important to learn how to settle the disagreements that you have with your children. If minor disagreements can't be settled, they are likely to become major disagreements that are much more difficult to resolve.

Basic Rules for Settling Disagreements

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 4.2.

The techniques we're going to discuss and practice are called ***PROBLEM- SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION SKILLS***. Before we discuss them, there are two basic rules for settling disagreements that you should try to remember. These rules are listed on page 4.2.

In all conflicts and disagreements, there is someone who has a ***COMPLAINT*** about someone else. In your family this may be you, your spouse or partner, or your children.

Rule #1. THE PERSON WITH A COMPLAINT HAS THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD AND THE RIGHT TO ASK FOR CHANGE, regardless of how realistic or unrealistic the request may seem.

Rule #2. LISTENING TO SOMEONE'S COMPLAINT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE, it simply indicates that you're trying to understand what changes the person wants. You can disagree later. ***THE FIRST STEP IS TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE POINT OR COMPLAINT.***

Are there any questions about these two rules?

Five Steps for Problem Solving and Negotiation

Now we're ready to discuss the ***FIVE STEPS*** for problem solving and negotiation. The steps are listed on page 4.2, but I'll also write them on the blackboard.

BLACKBOARD

1. Define the problem.
2. Brainstorm solutions.
3. Evaluate each solution.
4. Pick a solution.
5. Write a contract.

Today, we'll discuss and practice using the rules for the first step, which is to define the problem. We'll review the other four steps in detail in later sessions.

VI. DEFINING THE PROBLEM (30min.)

Objective

1. To discuss and practice using the eight rules for defining a problem.

Before a conflict can be resolved, both parties must agree on what the conflict is about. This is called *DEFINING THE PROBLEM*. The way you define or describe a problem sets the stage for the rest of the discussion. If it's done poorly, you may turn others off or make them defensive. A good problem definition states *CLEARLY AND SPECIFICALLY* what the other person is doing or saying that creates a problem for you. The definition should describe *WHY* it's a problem for you. The goal is to state your complaint in such a way that the other person can listen to your message without getting angry.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 4.4.

The eight rules for defining a problems are listed on page 4.4. Let's go over them one at a time.

Leader: Write the key words for each rule on the blackboard as you discuss them.

Rules for Defining a Problem

1. *BEGIN WITH SOMETHING POSITIVE*. This is important because it encourages cooperation and sets the stage for success. You can always find something positive in what the other person is doing. For example, you could say, "I'm really glad that you take your homework seriously and do it every night, but I need to talk to you about doing chores around the house"
2. *BE SPECIFIC*. A little earlier in the session, we discussed why it's important to be specific when you are stating feelings. The same considerations also apply when you are defining problems. The goal is to let the other person know exactly what the problem is. For example, the statement "Your room is a mess" is too general. It

would be much better to outline exactly what needs to be done by saying, "I want you to make your bed in the morning and put your dirty clothes in the hamper."

3. **DESCRIBE WHAT THE OTHER PERSON IS DOING OR SAYING** that's creating a problem for you. Tell the other person what needs to be changed by focusing on his or her actions. For instance, the statement "You're rude!" focuses on the person, while saying, "Swearing at your sisters is inappropriate," focuses on the problem behavior.
4. **NO NAME-CALLING.** Don't describe the problem in terms of "flaws" in the other person. This is related to rule #3. The other person will become defensive and stop listening if you say, "You're lazy," "You're selfish," or "You're manipulative." Remember, the goal is to make sure the other person understands what the problem is.
5. **EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS** as a reaction to what the other person is doing or saying. This is very important. Don't assume the other person knows how you feel about this problem. Use feeling words such as angry, concerned, hurt, and worried as part of your definition.
6. **ADMIT YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROBLEM.** In some way, you are at least partly responsible for the problem. Maybe you haven't been consistent, or you haven't provided a good example. Perhaps you haven't told your son or daughter just how upset you are. If you look at the problem objectively, you're likely to discover that you have played an active role in some aspect of the conflict.
7. **DON'T ACCUSE** or blame others. This is likely to make the other person angry or defensive. Also, it means that you're judging the person rather than describing the behavior.
8. **BE BRIEF.** Try to be as concise as possible. If you give too much information, the person will miss the main point or become overwhelmed. It may be useful to rehearse your statement of the problem to make sure it's brief and to the point.

Leader: Leave the eight rules on the blackboard for the discussion and group activity that follows.

After someone has defined the problem using the rules we just

discussed, the other person should use active-listening skills to respond. This lets the "sender" know whether the message was received correctly. Both people have to agree on exactly what the problem is before it can be resolved.

BAD EXAMPLE. "My problem is that you are irresponsible when it comes to taking care of your room."

What's wrong with this definition? Check the list on the blackboard.

Leader: Allow enough time for several responses.

GOOD EXAMPLE. "I'm upset about the dust on the floor, the dirty clothes on the bed, and the messy papers on the desk in your room. It embarrasses me when my friends come to visit and they see your room. I know it's partly my fault, because I promised to get you a clothes hamper and I didn't follow through. Still, I think your messy room is a problem."

What's good about this definition? Check the list on the blackboard.

Leader: Allow enough time for several responses.

Group Activity

How would you define the following hypothetical problems?

- 1. You find out that your adolescent has been drinking beer at a party.**
- 2. Your adolescent is getting poor grades at school.**
- 3. Your adolescent is going to bed at midnight on school nights.**

Leader: Work through each example as a group and develop a good definition of the problem. Then have one of the parents state the problem and have someone else use active-listening skills to respond. If there is sufficient time, ask parents to offer some personal examples.

VII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 4.3.

The homework assignment for this week is listed at the top of page 4.3.

1. The first part of your assignment is to ***REVIEW THE EIGHT RULES*** for defining a problem on page 4.4. Think about how you can use these rules to define some of the problem situations you have been encountering at home.
2. Write down two ***PROBLEM DEFINITIONS*** to discuss next week. Use the form provided on page 4.5.

Leader: Review the form and ask if there are any questions. If there is enough time encourage parents to write down one example before they leave.

**Are there any questions before we end today's session?
Thanks for coming, and I'll see you at our next session.**

SESSION 5

Adolescent Lessons and Problem solving, Part 2

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens.
3. Refreshments for the break.

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 4 (10 min.)
- II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)
- III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (10 min.)
 - A. Techniques for Stopping Negative Thoughts
 - B. Communication
 - C. Adolescents' Homework Assignment
- IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- V. BRAINSTORMING (20 min.)
- VI. CHOOSING A SOLUTION (15 min.)
- VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTRACTING (20 min.)
- VIII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 4 (10 min.)

Last session, we talked about irrational thoughts and how to deal with them. Can anyone name the three different types of irrational thoughts?

(Answer: Overreactions, exaggerations, and unreasonable expectations.)

The C-A-B method was introduced as a way to analyze and change irrational beliefs. What do the "C," "A," and "B" stand for, and how does this method work?

(Answer: "C" stands for the consequence, which is the emotional reaction; "A" stands for the activating event, which is the event that triggered the negative feeling; and "B" stands for the belief, which is the thought provoked by the activating event. The FOUR STEPS are: 1. Identify the consequence, 2. identify the activating event, 3. identify the belief, and 4. if the belief is irrational, challenge it.)

We reviewed two basic rules for settling disagreements. Can anyone tell me what they are?

(Answer: 1. The person with a complaint has the right to be heard and the right to ask for change, and 2. listening to someone's complaint doesn't mean that you agree or disagree.)

We discussed the five steps involved in problem solving and negotiation. The first step is "Defining the problem." What are the other four steps?

(Answer: Brainstorming, evaluating solutions, choosing a solution, and writing a contract.)

We also talked about the eight rules for defining a problem. What are some of these rules?

Leader: Don't expect parents to remember all of the rules; accept any of the following.

(Answer: 1. Begin with something positive, 2. be specific, 3. describe what the other person is doing or saying, 4. no name-calling, 5. express your feelings, 6. admit your contribution, 7. don't accuse, and 8. be brief.)

What would be a good definition of the problem in the following examples?

1. A mother is worried about her daughter's appearance.

2. A teenage boy wants to stay out later on weekends.
3. A teenage girl wants to have a telephone in her bedroom.

Leader: Have the group develop a good problem definition for each example. Note that the problems in the last two examples should be defined from the teenager's perspective.

II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15min.)

The first part of your assignment for last week was to review the *EIGHT RULES FOR DEFINING A PROBLEM*. Did everyone do that? Are there any questions or comments about these rules?

The second part of the assignment was to write a good definition for two different problems. Did everyone complete this part of the assignment? Is anyone willing to share a problem definition?

Leader: Try to solicit one example from each parent, and discuss the definitions as a .group. Prompt parents to give constructive feedback to each other.

III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss three techniques for stopping or controlling negative thoughts.
2. To review the communication skills the adolescents are learning in their group.

This week, the adolescents finished working on methods to change or control their thinking. They also started learning about and practicing the communication skills that we've been working on.

Techniques for Stopping Negative Thoughts

Because negative thoughts are so strongly associated with depression, the adolescents will be learning several ways to deal with them. We discussed one technique last session, the C-A-B method.

The adolescents will also learn the *THREE WAYS* to stop or control their negative thoughts listed on page 5.1. I'll write them on the

blackboard and then we'll review them one at a time.

BLACKBOARD

1. Thought stopping.
2. Rubber band technique.
3. Set aside some "worrying time."

Thought Stopping

One of the techniques the adolescents can use to interrupt negative thoughts is to yell "Stop!" out loud, and then say, "I'm not going to think that anymore." The adolescents are only supposed to use this approach when they are alone so that other people won't misinterpret what they are doing. Gradually, they learn to change from yelling out loud to thinking "Stop!" to themselves. Then they can use the technique anywhere, and in any situation.

Rubber Band Technique

Another method for stopping negative thoughts is to wear a rubber band around your wrist. When the adolescents catch themselves thinking negatively, they snap the rubber band to remind themselves to think more positively.

Worrying Time

A third approach is to schedule a *SPECIFIC TIME* to think about negative things. Basically, the adolescents make an appointment with themselves for worrying. The recommended procedure is to set aside Fifteen minutes, once each week (or more often, if necessary). At the scheduled time, there should be no talking, eating, working, watching TV, or playing. Only worrying. They are instructed to save any negative thoughts or worries that they have during the rest of the week for their worrying time.

Are there any questions about these techniques?

How do these three techniques for controlling negative thoughts differ from the C-A-B method? You may have noticed that the C-A-B method

is used to **CHANGE IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS** to make them more realistic. The three techniques we just discussed focus on interrupting negative thoughts so that the adolescents **STOP RUMINATING** about them. The idea is to keep them from thinking the same negative thoughts over and over again. When used together, the C-A-B method and these other techniques offer a very powerful means for diffusing or neutralizing the negative thoughts that contribute to the downward spiral of depression.

Communication

The adolescents are starting to practice the communication skills that we have been working on since our first meeting. They have been introduced to the **SENDER** and **RECEIVER** concept, and they are learning about the importance of **VERBAL** and **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**. They have examined the difference between the three types of listening: **IRRELEVANT LISTENING**, **PARTIAL LISTENING**, and **ACTIVE LISTENING**. Does anyone remember the definition for each of these types of listening?

(Answer: An irrelevant listening response is unrelated to the sender's message, a partial listening response moves the focus from the sender to the receiver, and an active-listening response is an attempt to understand the sender's message without making judgments.)

The teenagers are also learning how to state both positive and negative feelings. During the joint sessions later in the course, you and your adolescent will get together to practice using these skills with one another.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 5.4.

The adolescents have a lot to work on this week, as you will see at the bottom of page 5.4. Their assignment is to do the following.

1. Continue to fill out the Mood Diary.
2. Continue to practice the relaxation techniques.
3. Try to maintain a good level of pleasant activities.

4. Practice active listening.
5. State at least one positive feeling every day.
6. Disclose at least two negative feelings this week.

IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify any misunderstandings about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions that parents might have.

Leader: Use the following questions to prompt parents to express their concerns and ask questions about the adolescent sessions.

Do you have any questions about the communication skills the adolescents are learning this week?

Is everyone making an effort to support the changes his or her adolescent is making? Is anyone willing to offer an example of this?

Do you have any questions about the adolescents' homework assignment?

How are things going at home?

Do you have any general questions?

Break (10 min.)

Let's take a short break before we learn more about problem solving and negotiation.

V. BRAINSTORMING (20 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss the rules and rationale for brainstorming.
2. To practice brainstorming by having parents generate solutions to some typical parent-adolescent problems.

We have already discussed the first step for problem solving and

negotiation, which is to define the problem. We have also talked about how to listen when someone defines a problem by using active-listening skills. Does anyone remember the other four steps for problem solving and negotiation?

Leader: Give parents a chance to respond, then fill in any steps that were omitted as you write all five steps on the blackboard.

BLACKBOARD

Steps for Problem Solving and Negotiation:
1. Define the problem.
2. Brainstorm solutions.
3. Evaluate each solution.
4. Pick a solution.
5. Write a contract.

Brainstorming

After the problem has been adequately defined so that everyone understands what it is, the next step is come up with a variety of *DIFFERENT SOLUTION*. At this stage, it's important to be creative and nonjudgmental. Don't be too hasty. Remember, you haven't been able to find a solution to the problem so far. The more ideas you can generate, the better. We call this stage brainstorming. While there are no hard and fast rules for brainstorming, *COMPROMISE* solutions usually have the best chance of being selected by everyone. Each person must be willing to give a little to get a little.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to case 5.1.

The four rules for brainstorming are listed on page 5.1. Let's review them one at a time.

Leader: Write the key words for each rule on the blackboard as you review them.

1. *LIST AS MANY SOLUTIONS AS YOU CAN.* The more ideas you generate, the more likely it is that you will find one that works. Try to come up with at least seven possible solutions (it's better to have

more).

2. ***DON'T BE CRITICAL; ALL IDEAS ARE ALLOWED.*** Being critical or judgmental makes people reluctant to offer suggestions. You will have plenty of time to evaluate the solutions later.
3. ***BE IMAGINATIVE.*** Suggest some outlandish solutions. You never know, these solutions may have some merit, or they may help you look at the problem from a new perspective. Remember, the reason there is a conflict is because what you are doing now is not working.
4. ***BEGIN BY OFFERING TO CHANGE ONE OF YOUR OWN BEHAVIORS.*** You may think that the other person is the only one who should change, but compromise solutions have the best chance of success.

Group Activity

Let's practice brainstorming solutions by working on some typical parent-teenager problems. Can anyone think of some examples? You can use the problem definitions from your homework assignment last week.

Leader: Write the problems offered by parents on the blackboard. Then select one of the problems from the list, and have the parents generate as many solutions as possible. Remind them to come up with some solutions that teenagers would also find acceptable. Go through several problems with the group, and list the solutions under them on the blackboard (make sure there are some solutions that would appeal to teenagers). *Highlight* the solutions that are compromises. Leave the problems and solutions on the blackboard for a later exercise.

VI. CHOOSING A SOLUTION (15 min.)

Objectives

1. To present a systematic method for narrowing down the list of ideas that are generated during the brainstorming stage.
2. To practice evaluating solutions.

Evaluating Solutions

Now we're going to learn how to choose one solution from the list of

ideas that have been generated during the brainstorming stage. This can be difficult because *EVERYONE HAS TO AGREE* on the solution to the problem, or it won't work. Remember that *COMPROMISE SOLUTIONS* usually have the best chance of being selected.



Ask parents to turn to page 5.2.

We're going to use the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 5.2 to help us evaluate each of the possible solutions. This worksheet has been designed for parents and teenagers, although it could be used by anyone. The solutions suggested during the brainstorming stage are written down on the form, and each one is given either a PLUS or a MINUS by each person. This is a quick way to find out which ideas are acceptable to everyone.

At this stage, each person must state WHY he or she thinks a particular solution is good or bad. When you do this, it's important to be *POSITIVE* and *OPEN-MINDED*. Don't just turn down an idea because you don't like it. The goal is to find a solution that will resolve the problem.

Let's consider an example.

THE PROBLEM

Mom "It bothers me when you leave your clothes all over your room. I'm embarrassed to invite my friends into the house because they might see the mess in there. I think we need to work on this problem. Let's begin by brainstorming some possible solutions and then we'll choose one to try out. I'll write them down. Let's take turns. You go first."

BRAINSTORMING

Teenager (*Solution #1*) "We could hire a maid to clean up my room."

Mom (*Solution #2*) "I could withhold your allowance until you cleaned your room."

Teenager (*Solution #3*) "We could just shut the door to my room"

when we have company."

Mom (Solution #4) "I could pay you an extra five dollars if you cleaned your room by Sunday night.

"OK, I think we have enough ideas. I'll read them one at a time and we'll take turns giving each of the possible solutions a plus or a minus."

EVALUATION

Mom AThe first solution is to hire a maid.⓪

Teenager "That sounds good to meCthen I wouldn't have to clean up my room! I give that idea a plus."

Mom "Hiring a maid would be great if I could afford it, but I really can't. I'm afraid I have to give that idea a minus unless we win the state lottery.⓪

"The second solution is to withhold your allowance until your room is clean."

Teenager AThat doesn't seem fair. If I forget to clean my room, I don't get any money at all. I'm going to give that idea a minus."

Mom "I think withholding your allowance would motivate you to keep your room clean, and you would still have a choice about whether or not you wanted to do it. I give that idea a plus.

"The third solution is to keep the door to your room closed."

Teenager "Shutting the door seems like a great idea. It's my room and I should get to do what I want in there. If I keep the door closed, the mess wouldn't bother you or your friends. I give that idea a plus."

Mom "Closing the door would keep other people from seeing what a mess your room is, but it wouldn't help you learn to be responsible for keeping your room clean. I give that idea a minus.

"The last solution is to pay you five dollars for cleaning your room by Sunday night."

Teenager "I like that idea. That way, I could earn some extra money, and you wouldn't have to nag me about my room anymore. I'm giving that solution a plus."

Mom "Paying you some extra money for cleaning your room seems like a good idea to me, too. You would learn to take care of your room, and it would be clean by Sunday night. That would be worth five dollars a week to me! I give that idea a plus."

"Since we both agree on this one, let's give it a try! Thanks for helping me work on the problem."

Team Activity

Now we're going to form teams by getting together in pairs as we've done before. The first step for this exercise is for each of you to copy this parent-teenager problem [go to the blackboard and indicate which one] and the proposed solutions onto page 5.2. Then one team member will play the part of the parent, and the other team member will play the part of the teenager as you *EVALUATE EACH OF THE SOLUTIONS*. Use page 5.2 as your worksheet for this exercise. As you evaluate the solutions, keep in mind that each person must state why a particular solution is good or bad. After about 4 minutes, I'll give the signal for you to *SWITCH ROLES* so you can experience the problem from both points of view. You will have a total of about 8 minutes to complete this exercise. Are there any questions?

OK, let's get started.

Leader: Go around the room and monitor the progress of each team. Let them know when 4 minutes have passed. At the end of the activity, ask parents to discuss their reactions and any potential problems they might have in doing this with their teenagers.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTRACTING (20min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss how to write a contract that spells out the details of a solution.
2. To practice writing a contract as a group in specific, behavioral terms.

Reasons for Using Contracts

The final step in problem solving and negotiation is to write a contract that spells out the details of the agreement. It's very important to have a formal record of the terms and conditions you have negotiated in case there are any questions or disputes about what was said. The contract should describe *WHAT EACH PERSON HAS AGREED TO DO* in terms of actions and behaviors that can be observed. It's also a good idea to describe *WHAT WILL HAPPEN* (the consequence) *IF EITHER PARTY FAILS TO UPHOLD THE AGREEMENT*. Even though people may have good intentions, they often fail to follow through on their promises. You can provide some additional incentive to honor the agreement by including a consequence.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 5.1.

Four suggestions for writing a contract are provided on page 5.1. Let's briefly review each of them.

Leader: Write the key words for each suggestion on the blackboard as you discuss it.

1. ***BE SPECIFIC*** when you write the contract so it's easy to determine whether each person is upholding his or her part of the agreement. Make sure the focus is on specific behaviors that each person will change rather than on personality characteristics.
2. ***SPELL OUT THE PERIOD OF TIME*** the contract is good for. This is necessary because you may find that you want to change the agreement. However, you should stick to the agreement for the entire period of time specified in the contract. It takes time to find out whether the contract is going to work, so give it a try for ***AT LEAST A WEEK***. At the end of this trial period, review the agreement and consider each person's suggestions regarding

changes that would make the agreement work better.

3. **INCLUDE REMINDERS** to help you remember to make the changes that have been agreed upon. People often forget what they are supposed to do, so it's a good idea to use cues or reminders.

Leader: Offer some examples of appropriate cues: (a) put the agreement on the refrigerator or in some other public place, and (b) post a note on the mirror in the bedroom or in some other place where it will be seen frequently. Brainstorm some other ideas with parents.

4. **RECORD THE AGREEMENT IN WRITING.** Even though this is not a legal document, it's a good idea to write down the terms of your agreement and have everyone who is involved sign it.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 5.3.

Let's take a look at the Agreement Contract provided on page 5.3. Notice that it covers the points we have just discussed. The contract asks you to describe what each person has agreed to do, when they will do it, and how long the contract is good for. The consequence included on the form is to cancel the contract if either party fails to uphold the terms of the agreement, but you can add other consequences as well.

Group Activity

Let's practice writing a contract. In our last exercise, we evaluated the solutions to this parent-teenager problem [point to the problem on the blackboard]. Let's select one of the proposed solutions and write a contract for it.

Leader: Choose one of the solutions (or come up with a compromise solution) that would make an interesting example, and lead the group through the process of writing a contract. Refer to the Agreement Contract on page 5.3 as you go through the example. Provide sufficient guidance so the group learns how to write the terms of the agreement in specific language. Encourage and reinforce participation.

VIII. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 5.4.

1. Your assignment for this week is to ***COMPLETE THE HOME PRACTICE: BRAINSTORMING AND EVALUATION WORKSHEETS*** on pages 5.5 and 5.6. This practice exercise involves brainstorming ten possible solutions to a hypothetical situation, rating each solution with a plus or a minus, and evaluating the first two solutions on the list from both the parent's and teenager's points of view. Now I want you to review the worksheets and let me know if you have any questions.

Leader: Give parents a few minutes to look over the worksheets, and answer any questions they may have about the assignment.

We've covered a lot of material in this session. Don't worry too much about remembering everything—we'll practice problem solving and negotiation again at our next meeting. Thanks for coming, and I'll see you next week.

SESSION 6

Adolescent Lessons and Problem Solving, Part 3

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 5 (10 min.)
- II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15 min.)
- III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)
 - A. Using Assertive Imagery
 - B. Problem Solving and Negotiation
 - C. Adolescents' Homework Assignment
- IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- V. PRACTICING PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (40 min.)
- VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. REVIEW OF PARENT SESSION 5 (5min.)

Last session, we discussed three techniques for controlling or stopping negative thoughts. These are thought stopping, the rubber band technique, and setting aside some worrying time. What is thought stopping?

(Answer: When you catch yourself thinking a negative thought, say [or think], "Stop! I'm not going to think that way anymore." This interrupts the negative thought.)

What is the rubber band technique?

(Answer: Wear a rubber band on your wrist, and snap it when you are thinking negative thoughts. This keeps you from thinking the same negative thoughts over and over again.)

What is the worrying time approach?

(Answer: Schedule a specific time to think about negative things. Set aside fifteen minutes, once each week (or more often, if necessary). Save the negative thoughts and worries that you have during the week for this time.)

We also reviewed the first step for problem solving and negotiation, which is to define the problem. Then we discussed the four remaining steps, which are brainstorming, evaluating solutions, picking a solution, and writing a contract. We will go over these steps again later in this session.

II. HOMEWORK REVIEW (15min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to pages 5.5 and 5.6.

Your assignment for last week was to complete the Home Practice: Brainstorming and Evaluation worksheets on pages 5.5 and 5.6. Did everyone complete the assignment? If not, what happened?

Leader: Reinforce all attempts to complete the assignment, and give special attention to the parents who offer good solutions.

What solutions did you come up with to deal with the teenager making long distance calls?

Did you think of some solutions that the adolescent might suggest? What were they?

What was your most creative solution?

The second part of your assignment was to evaluate the first two solutions from both the parent's and teenager's point of view. Would anyone be willing to share his or her answers on this part of the assignment?

III. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (30 min.)

Objectives

1. To discuss how to use assertive imagery.
2. To review the five steps for problem solving and negotiation.

Now let's review what's going on in the adolescent course this week. The main topic the adolescents focused on this week is problem solving and negotiation, but they also learned a technique called assertive imagery.

Using Assertive Imagery

Last week, the adolescents talked about expressing both positive and negative feelings. Even with practice, however, it can be difficult to state your feelings in real life situations. Often, we're afraid of how the other person will respond. One way to overcome this fear is to do some imaginary practice. Assertive imagery involves imagining yourself expressing a thought or feeling and anticipating the other person's reaction.

Leader: Write the heading "Assertive Imagery" on the blackboard, and list the key words for each step as you discuss it.

There are four steps in assertive imagery. Let's go over them one at a time.

- 1. *MAKE A MENTAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SITUATION* in which you want to express a thought or feeling.**
- 2. *CONVERT THE PHOTOGRAPH INTO A MOVIE*. In other words, imagine the sequence of events that might occur.**
- 3. Include in the movie the moment when *YOU STATE YOUR FEELINGS*. When and where do you say it? What do you say? How do you say it?**
- 4. *IMAGINE THE OTHER PERSON'S REACTION* to your feeling statement the way you would like it to be. What will the person say and do?**

Assertive imagery practice can give the adolescents the *CONFIDENCE* to express their thoughts and feelings in everyday situations. It also allows them to refine the approach so that the message will be well received by the other person.

Are there any questions regarding assertive imagery?

Problem Solving and Negotiation

As I mentioned earlier, the focus of the adolescents' sessions for this week has been on problem-solving and negotiation skills. Let's review the steps for problem solving and negotiation before we take a break. After the break, we'll go through the entire sequence from start to finish.

Does anyone remember the *FIVE STEPS* for problem solving and negotiation?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to respond. Write the steps that parents remember correctly on the blackboard, and then fill in any missing steps.

BLACKBOARD

1. Define the problem.
2. Brainstorm.
3. Evaluate the solution.
4. Pick a solution (compromise).
5. Write a contract.

Let's talk about each step.

1. **DEFINE THE PROBLEM.** Remember, *HOW* you define or describe the problem sets the stage for the rest of the problem-solving and negotiation process. If it's done poorly, it can be a disaster. A good problem definition states *CLEARLY* and *SPECIFICALLY* what the other person is doing or saying that creates a problem for you.



Ask parents to turn to page 6.1.

Do you remember the *EIGHT RULES* for defining a problem? If you have forgotten any of them, they are listed at the top of page 6.1. Notice that this page provides guidelines for the other steps in problem solving and negotiation as well.

Leader: Write the key words on the blackboard as you review each of the rules for defining a problem. Leave these rules on the blackboard for the practice session after the break.

1. ***BEGIN WITH SOMETHING POSITIVE.***
2. ***BE SPECIFIC.***
3. ***DESCRIBE WHAT THE OTHER PERSON IS DOING OR SAYING.***
4. ***NO NAME-CALLING.***
5. ***EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS*** as a reaction to what the other person is doing or saying.
6. ***ADMIT YOUR CONTRIBUTION*** to the problem.

7. **DON'T ACCUSE** or blame others.
8. **BE BRIEF.**

Can someone think of a parent-adolescent problem that we could work on as a group?

Leader: Once a problem has been suggested, have the group define it.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 6.2.

As we work through this example, I want you to fill out the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 6.2. While I write the problem definition on the blackboard, you should write it in the appropriate place at the top of the page.

2. **BRAINSTORMING.** The second step is to brainstorm solutions to the problem. How would you define brainstorming?

(Answer: Brainstorming involves coming up with a variety of different solutions to the problem.)

At this stage, it's important to be open to new ideas and to encourage input from everyone involved. Some suggestions for brainstorming are listed on page 6.1; they include the following:

1. **LIST AS MANY SOLUTIONS AS YOU CAN.**
2. **DON'T BE CRITICAL; ALL IDEAS ARE ALLOWED** at this stage.
3. **BE IMAGINATIVE** and creative.
4. **Begin by offering to CHANGE ONE OF YOUR OWN BEHAVIORS.**

Let's brainstorm eight to ten possible solutions to the problem we have defined here on the blackboard.

Leader: Write the solutions on the blackboard. Have the parents fill out the Problem-Solving Worksheet while you do this.

3. **EVALUATE THE SOLUTIONS.** Once you have generated a list of possible solutions, the next step is to evaluate each of them. The parents and the teenager take turns going through the list. Each person describes why he or she thinks a particular solution is good or bad and gives it a plus or a minus.

Let's evaluate each of the solutions we listed on the blackboard. To make this exercise more realistic, let's say half of you are "parents" and the other half are "teenagers."

Leader: Divide the group in half. Designate one group as "parents" and the other as "teenagers."

Now let's take turns having a "parent" and "teenager" evaluate each solution. Who would like to start?

Leader: Give everyone a chance to participate in the exercise. Record the pluses and minuses next to each solution, and have the parents fill out the corresponding part of the Problem- Solving Worksheet.

4. PICK A SOLUTION. This step can be the most difficult of all, because everyone has to agree on which solution to try. Sometimes, all that's required is to add up the pluses and minuses, and one solution will clearly have the most support. At other times, it takes some serious negotiation to come up with a solution that everyone is willing to try. Remember, the best way to avoid a stalemate is to **COMPROMISE**. Be willing to combine the best parts of two or more solutions to create a new approach to the problem.

Looking at the pluses and minuses that have been given to each of the solutions on the blackboard, which solution should we pick? Do we need to negotiate a compromise solution?

Leader: Allow some time for parents to pick a solution.

5. WRITE A CONTRACT. The problem-solving and negotiation session isn't finished until a written contract has been developed. The contract establishes the **EXACT WORDING** of the agreement so there is no doubt about what was said. It should include who is involved in the contract, what each person has agreed to do, when they will do it, and what will happen if the contract isn't followed.

What are two suggestions for writing a contract?

(Answer: Be specific and include reminders.)

Let's go over these two points in more detail.

BE SPECIFIC. It's very important to spell out the agreement in clear, descriptive, **BEHAVIORAL** terms. Don't try to describe how the person should feel or what the person should think. Instead, spell out what each person should do or say.

It's helpful to *INCLUDE REMINDERS*. Cues are important, since people often forget what they have agreed to do. The teenagers may reject the idea of using reminders because they may feel they're adults now and don't need to be reminded or "nagged." If this issue comes up, point out that we all need reminders because old habits are difficult to change. What are some possible cues?

(Answer: Posting the contract on the refrigerator door or some other public place; putting small notes on the mirror in the bedroom, on the front or back door, or in other places where they will be seen frequently.)

It can be fun to brainstorm ideas with your teenagers about how to use reminders to help both of you stick to the terms of the contract.

Let's try to write a contract for the problem we have listed here on the blackboard.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 6.3.

An Agreement Contract is provided on page 6.3. I want you to Fill it out while we discuss how to write down the terms of our agreement.

Leader: Have the parents discuss how to write the contract. Make sure all of the necessary elements are included.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 6.4.

The adolescents are preparing for the joint problem-solving and negotiation sessions. They have a lot to do this week, as you will see at the bottom of page 6.4. Their assignment is to do the following.

- 1. Continue to fill out the Mood Diary.**

2. Continue to practice relaxation.
3. Try to practice active listening.
4. Practice defining problems.
5. Complete the Home Practice: Brainstorming and Evaluation worksheets (you filled these out last week).
6. Fill out the Issues Checklist (this is also part of your assignment).

IV. REACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (10 min.)

Objectives

1. To clarify any misunderstandings about the adolescent sessions.
2. To answer any general questions that parents may have.

Do you have any questions about the joint problem-solving and negotiation sessions that are coming up next week?

How are you feeling about the upcoming sessions?

Are there any general questions?

Break (10 min.)

Let's take a short break before we practice problem solving and negotiation in teams.

V. PRACTICING PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (40 min.)

Objective

1. To help parents "put it all together" by having them work on a problem using all of the steps for problem solving and negotiation with minimal assistance from the group leader.

Team Activity

Leader: The goal here is to give all parents an opportunity to work through an entire problem-solving sequence before they attempt to do this with their teenagers. Tell the parents to use the five steps discussed earlier (make sure the steps are listed on

the blackboard). Each parent should play the role of "parent" and "teenager." While parents are doing the following activity, spend some time with the various teams and give parents constructive feedback.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to pages 6.5 and 6.6.

We will use the next 40 minutes to make sure that everybody has a chance to role play the part of the "parent" and the "teenager" while practicing the steps for problem solving and negotiation.

Leader:

1. Ask parents to form "families" by having them pair up or get together in groups of three.
2. Have each "family" choose a parent-teenager problem to work on. If they need some suggestions, have them look at the Issues Checklist in the workbook.
3. Start out by having one of the "families" role play a problem-solving interaction (using the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 6.5) while the other "families" watch.
4. After 5 to 7 minutes (depending on the number of "families"), have the "family members" change roles so that everyone has a chance to play the part of the adolescent. (This is important for developing an appreciation of the adolescent's perspective.)
5. Provide ongoing feedback to all "family members" regarding their communication and problem-solving performances. (Those playing the role of adolescents should also receive feedback.) Let the "family" operate as independently as possible, and intervene only when necessary.
6. When only a few minutes remain of the allotted time, ask role-playing and observing parents to provide constructive feedback to all "family members" regarding what they did effectively and what could be improved.
7. If sufficient progress has been made, have the "family members" write a contract (page 6.6) while the next "family" gets started.
8. Have another "family" role play a problem-solving interaction.
9. Continue until each "family" has participated in the exercise. All parents

should have had an opportunity to role play the part of the adolescent and the parent.

VI. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 6.4.

1. The first part of your assignment is to ***PRACTICE WRITING A CONTRACT*** using the Agreement Contract form on page 6.6. You will either need to pick a solution to a problem by going through the whole sequence (that is, define the problem, brainstorm, evaluate solutions etc.), or you can use a solution that has been developed as part of your work in class (for example, in the role-playing exercise at the end of this session). The important part of this assignment is to ***BE SPECIFIC*** about what each person has agreed to do, when they will do it, and the period of time the contract is good for. When you are writing the contract, pretend that you will be using it with your adolescent.

2. The second part of your assignment is to ***COMPLETE THE ISSUES CHECKLIST*** which starts on page 6.7. Since you filled out the checklist during your intake interview, it should seem familiar. It contains a list of problems that often come up between parents and teenagers. This time, your responses on the checklist should reflect the discussions you have had with your adolescent about each of the various topics ***DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS***. If you had a discussion about a particular topic, rate how "hot" it was. Your adolescent will also be asked to complete this checklist so we can select an appropriate issue to work on during the joint problem-solving sessions. For the first session, we want you to choose an issue of mild intensity to make it relatively easy to keep things under control. If you and your teenager can agree on an issue to work on before the next session, that would save some time.

Do you have any questions about your assignment?

Remember, ***THERE WILL BE TWO MEETINGS NEXT WEEK*** in which you and your adolescent will work on family issues together. We have had a lot of practice with problem solving and negotiation so you should be well prepared for this. I will be at the meeting with the leader

for the adolescent group to help you if you have any difficulties.

I am looking forward to seeing you next week. Keep up the good work!

SESSION 7
Joint Parent-Adolescent
Problem-solving session, Part 1

Materials Needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Copies of page 7.2.
3. Extra pens and pencils.
4. Refreshments for the break.
5. A kitchen timer.
6. Some blank audiotapes.
7. Extra copies of the Issues Checklist.

Leader: Write the steps for problem solving on the blackboard (see page 7.1 in the *Parent Workbook*).

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. HOMEWORK REVIEW (10 min.)
- II. GUIDED PROBLEM SOLVING AND
NEGOTIATION (90 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

I. HOMEWORK REVIEW (10 min.)



Ask parents to turn to page 6.6.

Parent Group Leader: Review the written contract that parents completed on *Parent Workbook* page 6.6.

Student Group Leader: Briefly review the answers for pages 12.9 and 12.10, eliciting answers from adolescents and parents. Make sure that both adolescents and parents are given an opportunity to respond.

II. GUIDED PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (90 min.)

Objective

1. To have parents and adolescents jointly participate in a problem-solving and negotiation session of mild to moderate intensity.

Leader: It will take *90 minutes* to complete this section: *10 minutes* to explain the process, and *80 minutes* for role playing. Use the following chart to determine how to divide up the *80 minutes* of role-playing time according to the number of families participating in the activity.

Number of Families _____ Each Family is Allocated

1	80 minutes
2	40 minutes
3	26 minutes
4	20 minutes
5	16 minutes
6	13 minutes
7	11 minutes
8	10 minutes

Leader: Stop for a *10-minute break* about halfway through this activity. The exact timing of the break will depend on the duration of the role playsCdon't interrupt a family in the middle of a problem-solving interaction to take the break.

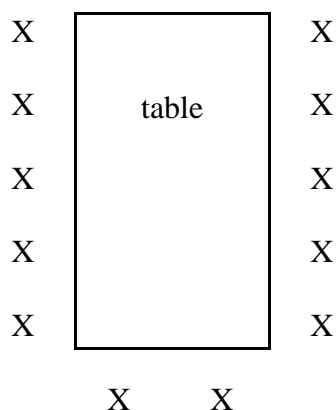
Family Activity

Leader: The goal for this activity is to have parents and adolescents practice problem solving and negotiation as a family. Each family will take turns participating in the exercise while the other families watch.

During the exercise, both the Student Group Leader and the Parent Group Leader should sit near their respective trainees so they can guide the problem-solving interaction and provide prompts and praise. The following is the recommended seating arrangement:

(Student Group Leader) → SGL PGL ← (Parent Group Leader)

(adolescent) → A P ← (parents)



Leader: Briefly explain the following instructions for this exercise to the entire group.

Now that you have learned the steps involved in problem solving and negotiation, we're going to have each family practice them.

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to pages 6.7 through 6.11. Ask students to turn to pages 12.11 through 12.15.

The first thing you need to do is to go over the topics on the Issues Checklist, which is the questionnaire you filled out as part of your homework assignment last week. Each family will need to *PICK ONE TOPIC* that the parents and the adolescent agree is still a problem, but only a low-level or *MILD PROBLEM*. We will work up to dealing with the "hot" or troublesome topics later on.

Then, each family will take turns working on the problem they have selected from the checklist, using the steps for problem solving. To make things a little easier, we will use the Problem-Solving Worksheet that you have used before as a guide for the discussion; a copy of this is provided on page 7.2 in the workbook. We used this worksheet last week in class, so it should be very familiar to you.

Leader: Write the steps for problem solving on the blackboard, if you haven't done this already. It will save time if you do this before the beginning of the session. Mention that these steps are also provided on page 7.1 in the Parent Workbook. Briefly discuss each step (allow no more than *1 minute* each).

BLACKBOARD

Define the Problem

1. One person states the problem by describing what the other person is doing or saying that creates the problem.
2. The other person uses active listening (restates the problem).
3. The first person verifies the accuracy of the restatement of the problem.

Brainstorm

1. List all possible solutions.
2. Be creative.
3. Don't be critical.
4. Compromise.
5. Think about changing your own behavior.

Choose a solution

1. Each person evaluates the solutions and explains why each one is a *A plus* or a *A minus*.
2. Fill out the Problem-Solving Worksheet.
3. Compromise.

Write a Contract

1. Describe what each person will do, and what will happen if he or she fails to do it.
2. State how long the contract is good for.
3. Include reminders.
4. Sign the contract.

We want to make this practice session as easy as possible for you. Your group leaders will sit next to you while you go through the steps for problem solving, so they will be there to offer assistance if you need it. Try to relax and have fun with this exercise, and don't worry about doing it perfectly the first time. Your approach will improve with practice—that's what this session is all about.

The goal for each family is to work through as much of one problem as possible in the time available. We will use this timer [hold it up] to keep track of how much time each family has.

The first step is to come up with a good *DEFINITION* of the problem so that your discussion gets off to a good start. Then, you will spend some time *BRAINSTORMING* possible solutions, and *EVALUATING* at least some of them.

The problem-solving steps that are not completed here will become your homework assignment. You should finish working through the remaining steps before the next session.

[If there are only a few families, add the following statement.] **"If there is enough time, each family can write and sign a contract that describes the details of the agreement that has been negotiated."**

At the end of the exercise, the group leaders will give each family some *FEEDBACK* about the problem-solving discussion. They will point out the things you did well, and they will also suggest areas that could use some improvement.

We will begin this exercise by asking one family to volunteer to go first while the other families watch. Then we will ask another family to volunteer. We will repeat this process until every family has had an opportunity to practice problem solving and has received some feedback.

Leader: The general instructions for the guided practice are as follows:

1. Ask one family to volunteer to go first. It would be best to begin with a family that will provide a good role model for the other families to follow.
2. Have the family *SELECT AN ISSUE THAT IS ONLY MILDLY DISTRESSING* for the parents and the adolescent. If the Issues Checklist is used, have them pick a topic with an intensity rating of 1 or 2, but no higher. If the Issues Checklist has not been completed by the parents and/or the

adolescent, have them scan the list and select an issue that is of mild intensity. Tell them not to spend a lot of time trying to pick the "ideal" issue to solve; the goal for this session is not to solve a major problem, but to *PRACTICE* the necessary skills.

<p>WORKBOOK</p>

Ask parents to turn to page 7.2.

3. Ask one family member to be the *SECRETARY*. Explain that it's the secretary's job to record all of the solutions and evaluations suggested by family members on the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 7.2 (the worksheet is also provided on page 13.2 in the *Student Workbook*). Consider asking the family member who seems to be the least cooperative to be the secretary so that person will be actively involved in the process. Have all of the families who are watching also write down the solutions that are generated on a Problem-Solving Worksheet (pass out some extra copies); this will encourage them to pay attention to what is going on (which can sometimes be a problem for the families who are watching).
4. Have one family member *DEFINE* the problem using the rules discussed earlier. (The eight rules are: 1. Start with something positive; 2. be specific; 3. describe what the other person is doing; 4. no name-calling; 5. express your feelings; 6. admit your contribution; 7. don't accuse; and 8. be brief.) Make sure the definition is specific and behaviorally descriptive.
5. Ask the other members of the family to respond to the problem statement with *ACTIVE LISTENING* (paraphrase, use feeling statements, etc.). Make sure each person does this correctly. If necessary, acknowledge that this may feel awkward or artificial, but ask them to continue.
6. Have the person who stated the problem *VERIFY* whether the active-listening statements accurately reflect what he or she has said. If not, ask the family to repeat the process of defining the problem and responding with active listening.
7. Next, have the family go through the *PROBLEM-SOLVING STEPS* listed on the blackboard.
8. During the discussion, the Student Group Leader and the Parent Group Leader should *PROVIDE ONGOING FEEDBACK*. Make sure the group leaders label and praise good performances out loud. If a family member moves too quickly, is critical, evaluates solutions during brainstorming, etc., the group leaders should give immediate feedback by gently reminding that

person about the relevant rule.

9. When approximately 5 minutes of the allocated time remain (depending on the number of families), stop the discussion, and have the group leaders *PROVIDE MORE DETAILED FEEDBACK* to their respective trainees. Also include feedback from the families that were observing.
10. Select another family (or ask for volunteers), and repeat the process.
11. Continue until all families have had an opportunity to role play a problem-solving discussion.
12. If there is enough time, have the families *WRITE A CONTRACT* by filling out the form on page 7.3 (the form is also provided on page 13.3 in the *Student Workbook*). Another option is to ask some of the families who were having difficulties to *DO SOME ADDITIONAL PRACTICE*.

III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (10 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 7.4.
Adolescents should turn to page 13.6 in their workbooks

1. ***CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION YOU HAVE STARTED IN THIS SESSION UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL OF THE STEPS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION LISTED ON THE BLACKBOARD.*** These steps are also provided on page 7.1 in the workbook. Use the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 7.2 to take notes. Before you leave, each family should try to come to a consensus about when to continue the discussion. If you can find a time that is convenient for everyone involved, write it down on page 7.4. Each person also needs to make a verbal commitment to participate in the problem-solving session. The goal is to agree on a solution and *WRITE A CONTRACT* using the form on page 7.3.
2. Once you have an agreement in writing, ***PUT IT INTO PRACTICE.***
3. If any of you haven't filled out the Issues Checklist yet, please do so before the next session. Some extra copies of the checklist are available if you need them.

4. If problems develop or tempers flare during the discussion at home, it may be a good idea to take a *TIME OUT*. A time out is a 10- to 15-minute break that allows everyone to calm down. Make sure that the discussion continues after the break is over.

5. Another useful technique for practicing problem solving and negotiation at home is to *AUDIOTAPE* the discussion so that a group leader can give you some feedback and suggestions. If you are interested in doing this, there are some blank audiotapes available. Only the group leaders will listen to the tapes *they will not be shared with the group*.

Are there any questions?

Next session, we'll practice the steps for problem solving and negotiation again. This time, however, you will be asked to pick a topic that is a little more distressing than the one you worked on during this session. *IT'S IMPORTANT TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK SO THAT YOU CAN GET THE MOST OUT OF THE NEXT SESSION.*

Leader: Have all family members agree to come to the next session.

SESSION 8
Joint Parent-Adolescent
Problem-Solving Session, Part 2

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Copies of page 8.1.
3. Extra pens and pencils.
4. Refreshments for the break.
5. A kitchen timer.

Leader: Write the steps for problem solving on the blackboard (see page 7.1 in the *Parent Workbook*).

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. HOMEWORK REVIEW (10 min.)
- II. MORE PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (65 min.)
Break (10 min.)
- III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (5 min.)

I. HOMEWORK REVIEW (40 min.)

Group Leaders: The goal for this section is to review the homework assignment, provide praise and constructive feedback, and problem solve any difficulties each family may have had during the practice session at home.



Ask parents to turn to pages 7.2 and 7.3.

Leader: Ask each family whether they held a meeting to continue the discussion they started during the last session. Have them briefly describe their problem-solving interactions, their agreements, and the contracts they prepared (page 7.3). Ask them whether they put the agreement into practice and how it seems to be working. Make sure that the parents and the adolescent contribute to the discussion. If the family found it difficult to problem solve onto put the agreement into practice, the other families can help by brainstorming solutions.

COLLECT THE AUDIOTAPES of the home practice sessions and, if possible, *MAKE PHOTOCOPIES* of the Problem-Solving Worksheet (page 7.2) and the Agreement Contract (page 7.3) generated by each family.

II. MORE PROBLEM SOLVING AND NEGOTIATION (65 min.)

Objective

1. To have parents and adolescents jointly participate in a family problem-solving and negotiation session of moderate intensity.

Leader: Use the following chart to divide up the 65 minutes of role-playing time.

Number of Families	Each Family Is Allocated
1	65 minutes
2	32 minutes
3	21 minutes
4	16 minutes
5	13 minutes
6	10 minutes
7	9 minutes
8	8 minutes

Leader: Stop for a *10-minute break* about halfway through this activity. The exact timing of the break will depend on the duration of the role plays. Don't interrupt a family in the middle of a problem-solving interaction to take the break.

Family Activity

Leader: The goal for this activity is to give families additional practice using the steps for problem solving and negotiation. Families who completed the homework assignment from the last session can select a new problem from their Issues Checklist that is slightly more stressful than the one they worked on before. Begin with these families first. The families who didn't complete the homework assignment will use the time in this activity to finish the previous discussion and write a contract. Remind the families to use the problem-solving steps listed on the blackboard and on page 7.1. Then, briefly describe the exercise.

This activity is very similar to the one you participated in last time. If you finished your homework assignment from the last session, you will be asked to pick another topic from the Issues Checklist to work on. This time, the issue can be one that's slightly more distressing than the one you selected last time. Try to find a topic with an intensity rating of 3 to 5, but no higher. Those of you who didn't finish your homework assignment will use your time in the activity to come to an agreement and write a contract.

Leader: The general instructions for the guided practice are as follows.

1. Ask one family to volunteer to go first. Make sure it is a family who has completed the homework assignment from the last session.
2. Have them *SELECT AN ISSUE THAT IS SLIGHTLY MORE DISTRESSING* than the one they worked on last time. If the Issues Checklist is used, have them pick a topic with an intensity rating of 3 to 5, but no higher.



Ask parents to turn to page 8.1.

3. Ask one family member to be the *SECRETARY* (select someone other than the person who was secretary last session). Have that person list all of the solutions and evaluations suggested by the family on the Problem-Solving Worksheet on page 8.1. Pass out some extra copies of page 8.1, and have the families who are watching also write down the solutions and evaluations.
4. Ask one family member to *DEFINE* the problem using the established rules. Make sure the definition is specific and behaviorally descriptive. If the adolescent defined the problem last time, have the parents define the problem this time, and vice versa.
5. Have the other members of the family respond to the problem statement with *ACTIVE LISTENING* (paraphrase, use feeling statements, etc.). Make sure each person does this correctly.
6. Have the person who stated the problem *VERIFY* whether the active-listening statements accurately reflect what he or she has said.
7. Next, ask the family to go through as many of the *PROBLEM-SOLVING STEPS* as possible.
8. During the discussion, the Student Group Leader and the Parent Group Leader should *PROVIDE ONGOING FEEDBACK*. Make sure the group leaders label and praise good performances out loud. If a family member moves too quickly, is critical, evaluates solutions during brainstorming, etc., the group leaders should give immediate feedback by gently reminding that person about the relevant rule.
9. When approximately 5 minutes remain of the allocated time (depending on the number of families), stop the discussion and have the group leaders *PROVIDE MORE DETAILED FEEDBACK* to their respective trainees.
10. Select another family (or ask for volunteers), and repeat the process.
11. Continue until all families have had an opportunity to role play a problem-solving discussion.
12. If there is enough time, ask the families to *WRITE A CONTRACT* using page 8.2. Another option is to have the parents and adolescents *REVERSE ROLES* and repeat the process.

III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (5 min.)

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to the homework assignment on page 8.3. Ask students to turn to the homework assignment on page 14.4.

- 1. Try to stick with the agreement you have written down in your contract until the renegotiation date you have specified. On the renegotiation date, each family should meet again and decide whether to continue the current agreement or change it. Each of you will be asked to report on how the agreement is working out at the next session.**

Are there any questions?

I would like to thank everyone for coming to these family problem-solving sessions. I'm very impressed with your progress, and I hope that all of you will continue to use this approach at home to work on family issues.

SESSION 9

Adolescent Lessons and Conclusion

Materials needed for this session:

1. Extra workbooks.
2. Extra pens and pencils.
3. Refreshments for the break.

BLACKBOARD

AGENDA

- I. REVIEW OF JOINT PARENT-ADOLESCENT SESSIONS (20 min.)
- II. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (40 min.)
 - A. Maintaining Gains
 1. Using the Skills Taught in the Course
 2. Planning for the Future
 3. Developing a Life Plan
 - B. Dealing with Daily Hassles and Major Life Events
 - C. Recognizing and Preventing Depression
 - D. Adolescents= Homework Assignment

Break (15 min.)
- III. REVIEW OF THE GROUP AND CLOSING REMARKS (45 min.)

I. REVIEW OF JOINT PARENT-ADOLESCENT SESSIONS (20 min.)

Objective

1. To solicit feedback from each parent about the joint problem-solving sessions.

Before we start reviewing what the adolescents are doing in their last two sessions, I'd like to hear your *REACTIONS TO THE TWO JOINT SESSIONS* that we had with your adolescents.

What did you find useful about the sessions?

What was not useful about the sessions? What could have been done differently?

How do you plan to continue working on communication and problem-solving skills at home?

Leader: Encourage each parent to express his or her reaction to the joint sessions. Ask parents whether they finished the problem-solving and negotiation meeting at home as a follow up to their work in the group. Recognize and reinforce ALL efforts to work on problem solving at home, regardless of outcome.

We strongly recommend that you set up a *REGULAR TIME* each week to meet with your adolescent. This meeting time can be used to resolve issues, work on communication skills, or even to plan activities together such as family vacations. This is your unofficial, never-ending assignment, and it is listed on page 9.2. Setting aside a regular meeting time makes it possible to defuse problems while they are still small, and it ensures that you will continue to use the communication and problem-solving skills that you have learned in this course. I should mention that some extra copies of the Problem-Solving Worksheet and Agreement Contract are provided at the end of the Appendix in your workbook.

Are you committed to the idea of scheduling a weekly meeting? You may want to get together as a family and negotiate *WHEN* would be a good time to do this.

Leader: Review each parent's response to setting a weekly meeting. Develop a

specific plan with each parent to maintain and improve his or her problem-solving skills, and have each parent record his or her plan on page 9.2.

II. CONCEPTS PRESENTED IN ADOLESCENT COURSE (40 min.)

Objectives

1. To briefly review the skills covered in the entire course.
2. To discuss the strategies for helping the adolescents maintain their gains: planning for the future, the Life Plan, dealing with daily hassles and major life events, and recognizing and preventing depression.

Maintaining Gains

During their last two sessions, the adolescents are evaluating which skills taught in the course are the most important for them; and they are planning for the future, writing a life plan, preparing to deal with everyday hassles and major life events, and learning to recognize and prevent depression.

Using the Skills Taught in the Course

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 1.3.

We have tried to give the adolescents the skills they need to cope with the challenges they are likely to encounter in the future. At the end of the course, each adolescent is encouraged to decide which skills he or she found to be the most effective for overcoming depression. It's crucial for the adolescents to *CONTINUE USING THESE SKILLS* after the course has ended. The homework assignments are designed to foster this, but you can also play an active role as parents. There is a summary of the various skills the adolescents have learned on page 1.3. Let's review them one at a time.

1. **The adolescents *MONITORED THEIR MOODS* throughout the course. Why is this important?**
(Answer: It allows them to see the changes in their moods and recognize the connection between doing pleasant activities and how they feel.)

A few of the adolescents may not have noticed any improvement in how they feel. This happens sometimes. It may be reassuring to know that some adolescents experience a DELAYED REACTION to the course, and they may begin feeling better several weeks or even months after the group has ended.

- 2. They learned and practiced specific SOCIAL SKILLS to help them be less isolated and improve the quality of the interactions they have with others. These skills include using greetings, starting a conversation, joining and leaving a group, and staling positive feelings. Why are social skills important?**

(Answer: When people are depressed, their social skills are impaired, and this can lead to loneliness and further depression. Social skills can be learned and improved.)

- 3. They learned about the impact PLEASANT ACTIVITIES can have on their moods. What are the two types of pleasant activities that have the most impact on the way we feel?**

(Answer: Positive social activities and success activities.)

- 4. They were introduced to two different RELAXATION methods: the Jacobson Progressive Deep Muscle Relaxation Technique and the Benson procedure. Do you remember the advantages of each one?**

(Answer: The Jacobson is easier to learn and usually results in a deeper state of relaxation; the Benson is easier to use, more portable, and less conspicuous.)

- 5. They spent a lot of time working on NEGATIVE THINKING. Three techniques were presented for stopping or controlling negative thoughts: THOUGHT STOPPING, the RUBBER BAND TECHNIQUE, and WORRYING TIME. They also learned how to use the C-A-B METHOD to challenge irrational thoughts. Briefly, what are the four steps for using the C-A-B method?**

(Answer: 1. Identify the Consequence or feeling; 2. identify the Activating Event; 3. identify the Belief or thought; and 4. if the belief is irrational, challenge it.)

- 6. They practiced the same techniques we learned in this group for effective COMMUNICATION, such as active listening. How would you describe active listening?**

(Answer: Restate the sender's message in your own words without

making judgments. Focus on the sender.)

7. As you know, we have also practiced **NEGOTIATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING** in both groups.

Planning for the Future

It's normal to have fears and concerns about the future. The problem is that these concerns can prevent the adolescents from using the skills they have learned in the course. A list of the most common fears would include:

1. Fear of **CHANGE**. It's easy to become comfortable with the way things are. Even if the current situation isn't the greatest, the adolescents may be afraid that things could get worse. The course has encouraged the adolescents to make changes to improve their lives, and it is our hope that they will continue to make positive changes in the future.
2. Fear of the **UNKNOWN**. Uncertainty about what will happen in the future can be upsetting. For example, the adolescents may worry about the kind of job they will have, where they will live, and whether they will go to college. They may become so worried about doing the right thing that they won't do anything at all.
3. Fear of **FAILURE**. Adolescents are often concerned about things like flunking out of college, losing their boyfriends or girlfriends, or living up to their parents' expectations. These thoughts can keep the adolescents from trying to reach their goals.
4. Fear of **DYING**. This may include worrying about the possibility of nuclear war or just getting old. The adolescents may conclude that it's pointless to try to do anything since we're all going to die anyway.
5. Fear of **CONFLICT** with parents or friends. Differences may arise over goals and expectations that create distance between the adolescents and significant others. For example, you might want them to go to college so they can get a good job, but they want to travel in Europe for six months. Or they may want to do better in school, but their friends may criticize them for studying all the time.

It will be hard for the adolescents to plan for the future without getting support from their friends and family.

These fears are perfectly normal, and they are experienced to some degree by virtually everyone. However, if the adolescents can't control these fears, it will *HOLD THEM BACK* from making changes and reaching important life goals. For example, fear of the unknown may prevent them from applying to out-of-state colleges, or discourage them from trying out for sports.

One of the best ways for the adolescents to deal with their fears is to *PLAN FOR THE FUTURE*.

Leader: Write "Plan for the Future" on the blackboard.

To plan for the future, the adolescents must establish long-term goals, identify the *OBSTACLES* they may encounter in reaching these goals, and determine some ways to *OVERCOME* them. These are the steps for generating what we call a "Life Plan."

Developing a Life Plan

The Life Plan is one of the ways we help the adolescents integrate the skills they have learned into their everyday lives and plan for the future.

Leader: Write "Life Plan" on the blackboard.

Briefly, a Life Plan involves having each adolescent establish some realistic short-term and long-term goals. During the course, the adolescents have been working primarily on *SHORT-TERM GOALS* that describe the things they need to do on a *DAILY OR WEEKLY* basis. *LONG-TERM GOALS* are also important because they provide a sense of *DIRECTION*. Long-term goals describe what the adolescents are striving for, or the type of person they *EVENTUALLY* want to be. There is a practical connection between these two types of goals. Short-term goals help us reach long-term goals by pointing out the *SMALL STEPS* that are required to get there. Making a commitment to long-term goals, on the other hand, helps us choose appropriate short-term goals.

For example, if your long-term goal is to have a better relationship with your teenager, what would be some reasonable short-term goals?

(Possible answers: 1. Do some fun things together, 2. have family meetings once each week, 3. express at least one positive feeling to your adolescent every day, and 4. use active-listening skills.)

The adolescents have been asked to work on various short-term goals throughout the course. During the last two sessions, they are going to make some decisions about their long-term goals. Long-term goals, like short-term goals, must be *SPECIFIC* and *REALISTIC*. Sometimes, however, it's difficult to know whether long-term goals are realistic. Because long-term goals focus on what you want things to be like in the future, the tendency is to assume that there will be a lot of improvement and change. Long-term goals can become *UNREALISTIC* when you expect changes that are *TOO BIG*.

To help the teenagers clarify their goals, we ask them to write specific long-term goals for the following areas: home and family, education/school, job plans, recreation, friends, romantic relationships, and spiritual/religious issues. Then they write down the *POTENTIAL OBSTACLES* that might get in the way of achieving each of their long-term goals, and they develop a plan for overcoming these obstacles. We also have them participate in a team activity in which they give one another feedback about their life plans.

Working on long-term goals is difficult, and there is a limit to how much the adolescents can accomplish in the last two sessions. One of the ways you can be *SUPPORTIVE* as a parent is to help your adolescent become aware of his or her long-term goals. How do you think you can do this?

Leader: Spend a few minutes having parents discuss what they can do to help their adolescents identify realistic long-term goals.

Are there any questions about the importance of short-term and long-term goals?

Dealing with Daily Hassles and Major Life Events

We all experience everyday hassles or problems that create *STRESS* in our lives. The stress from these hassles makes it difficult to stay in a

good mood and do the things we enjoy. One type of everyday hassle would be a communication breakdown. What are some other hassles that an adolescent might encounter?

(Possible answers include: Going to school, taking tests, doing home-work, being teased at school, having fights with parents, and looking for a job.)

Hassles are a normal part of living. However, if the adolescents don't deal with them, the resulting stress may overwhelm them and trigger an episode of depression. It is therefore important for the adolescents to work on *RESOLVING* everyday issues instead of ignoring them. As parents, you can also help to minimize the impact of hassles on your adolescent. If you notice that your adolescent seems to be upset, use active listening to show that you care, offer support, and brainstorm some ways to resolve the issue if you can. Remember, don't violate their trust by divulging details of their lives that are told to you in confidence.

In addition to everyday hassles, *MAJOR LIFE EVENTS* or *LIFE CHANGES* can lead to depression. For example, friends moving away, sickness or injury, too much work, financial problems, or being transferred to a new school can affect your adolescent's mood. It's important to realize that *POSITIVE CHANGES* can also cause distress and/or depression. For example, graduating from high school, getting married, or finding a new job can be exciting and yet still be quite stressful. Learning to deal with such events may also minimize their potential impact.

Some major events are *PREDICTABLE* (for example, graduating from high school), but many others may occur without warning (for example, someone stealing your car). We asked the adolescents to anticipate major events that might be triggers for depression. Then they developed a *PREVENTION PLAN* for each of the major events they listed. It's much easier to cope with events or change them if you plan for them in advance.

Recognizing and Preventing Depression

WORKBOOK

Ask parents to turn to page 9.1.

In spite of the work the adolescents have done in this course, they are still *AT RISK* for depression. I think everyone would agree that preventing depression is easier and less painful than it is to treat it after it has become more severe. The first step in preventing depression is for the adolescents to learn how to recognize the early warning signs. Clinical depression has *SYMPTOMS* just like a common cold or the flu. We have discussed the early warning signs with the adolescents so they can recognize when they are becoming depressed. It's also important for you, as parents, to be sensitive to how your adolescent is feeling. Let's review the symptoms of depression that are listed on page 9.1 so that you will know what to look for.

Leader: Write the key words for each symptom on the blackboard as you discuss them.

1. Being in *A DEPRESSED OR IRRITABLE MOOD* most of the day, nearly every day. Feeling sad, blue, down in the dumps, bored, empty inside, or hopeless all of the time.
2. *LACK OF INTEREST* in pleasant activities, and not being able to enjoy most or all pleasant activities.
3. *SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN WEIGHT* that are not due to dieting, or a dramatic increase/decrease in appetite.
4. *SLEEPING PROBLEMS*, such as insomnia or sleeping too much nearly every day.
5. *EXTREME FIDGETING OR MOVING SLOWLY*.
6. Fatigue or *LOSS OF ENERGY* nearly every day.
7. *FEELING WORTHLESS* or excessively *GUILTY*.
8. Having *TROUBLE THINKING*, concentrating, or making decisions.
9. Recurring *THOUGHTS OF DEATH* or suicide.

If your adolescent has *FIVE OR MORE OF THESE SYMPTOMS FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS*, then he or she may be clinically depressed. We all have days when we feel down, and we may show evidence of one or two of these warning signs for a short period of time. However, if

several of these symptoms are present for a long time, then it may be an indication that something more serious is going on. For your adolescent, it means that he or she should start actively practicing the skills learned in this course or consider getting some professional help. The important point is ***DON'T WAIT FOR THE DEPRESSION TO GO AWAY ON ITS OWN***. Sometimes this happens, but it's much better to take ***ACTIVE STEPS*** to make it go away faster.

There are two ways the adolescents can monitor their moods after the course has ended: 1. Continue to fill out the Mood Diary every day (there should be space left on the second copy of the form in their workbook, or they can make a couple of extra copies), and 2. if they think something is going on, they can complete the Mood Questionnaire to find out whether they are depressed.

What can you do to help them monitor their moods?

Leader: Review with each parent how to be more aware of his or her adolescent's depression level and praise all active responses.

Adolescents' Homework Assignment



Ask parents to turn to page 9.2.

The adolescents' last homework assignment is listed on page 9.2. It includes the following:

1. Continue to fill out the Mood Diary every day.
2. Practice relaxation, especially in stressful situations.
3. Remember to maintain a good level of pleasant activities.

Break (10 to 20 minutes, depending on the schedule)

Let's take a short break before we discuss what this course has meant to each of us.

III. REVIEW OF THE GROUP AND CLOSING REMARKS (45 min.)

Objective

1. To have parents think about their experience in the group and to ask for their feedback.

Because this is our last meeting together, it's an important session. Beginnings and endings are significant and sometimes difficult times. Among other things, these transitions are an opportunity to reflect on the past and plan for the future. I would like to use the remaining time to review our progress and think about the future.

There are several topics we should discuss today. One way to do this would be for me to write a few questions on the blackboard and then go around the table and ask each of you to talk about your experiences and expectations. How does that sound?

Leader: Follow this format unless most of the parents are strongly opposed. If there is strong opposition, you can conduct a discussion that is less structured using the following questions. In either case, everyone should be encouraged to contribute to the discussion.

Think back to our first meeting. What was happening with you and your son or daughter? What kind of relationship did you have with your teenager? How were you communicating with each other?

Now think about your current approach to communication and problem solving. Even though you may not be perfect, I'm sure that you have made some significant progress. The first question I want you to ask yourself is "What have I accomplished in this course?"

Leader: Write "1. Accomplishments" on the blackboard.

The second question is about our group. We have formed a cohesive, supportive, and hard-working group. Each of us has come to rely on the group and its regular meetings in some way. What have you enjoyed about our group meetings? How could the meetings be improved? What are your reactions to the adolescents' group? What are your thoughts about our meetings coming to an end?

Leader: Write "2. Reactions to parent and adolescent groups" on the blackboard.

Third, how can you maintain the gains you have made in the areas of communication and negotiation? You can improve your chances of success by developing a specific plan for the future. Use the spaces provided under question #1 on page 9.2 to write down how you will maintain your gains.

Leader: Write "3. Maintain gains" on the blackboard. Allow some time for parents to fill in their responses to question #1.

The last question focuses on your hopes and concerns for the future. Sometimes people are a little let-down or worried when the group ends. What are your feelings about this?

Leader: Write "4. Feelings about group ending and the future" on the blackboard. Encourage each parent to respond to these questions, monitoring the time so that everyone has a chance to talk. Save your remarks for last; close with comments about having enjoyed the group, being proud of the effort that parents put into the group, the progress everyone has made, etc. If time permits, give each parent some positive feedback about the things you appreciated or felt he or she did particularly well.

I also want to let you know that someone from this project will be calling you and your teenager in the next few days to schedule what is called a post-group interview. We want to find out how well your teenager is doing.

If you have any questions about your adolescent's depression level, I want to encourage you to either ask me now or call our project.

Leader: Give them the appropriate telephone number.

I enjoyed getting to know all of you, and I hope that you will keep up the good work!

Leader: Allow some time for general socializing. Try to make personal contact with each parent.

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