HEALTHY CHOICES

A CBT-Based Anger Management Group Curriculum for High School Students

Created By:

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Rationale

We created this anger coping group to address the need for anger management that we have seen in our field placements in our internships. The Jane Addams College of Social Work mission statement states that we will implement "services on behalf of the poor, the oppressed, racial and ethnic minorities, and other at-risk urban populations". According to Frey, Ruchkin, Martin, & Schwab-Stone (2009), "children living in violent neighborhoods have been found to express internalizing and externalizing symptoms, such as dissociation, post traumatic stress disorder, deviance, anger and aggression" (p. 2). Our curriculum is aligned with the Jane Addams mission statement because children living in urban communities often witness community violence and therefore they are prone to experiencing internalized or externalized symptoms of anger. We are addressing the need for coping with anger in our curriculum. By using a CBT approach, our curriculum will increase students' understanding of the relationship between events, thoughts, and feelings regarding their anger. The curriculum is designed to teach students how to employ relaxation techniques and to change their reactions to feelings of anger. The group curriculum will also help students to make positive decisions and avoid conflict.

Goals and Objectives

Students participating in our group will be working towards three Social Emotional Learning goals. Students will work on SEL goal *1A.4a: Analyze how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior.* Group members will achieve this goal by being educated on the A, B, C model of the relationship between events, thoughts, and feelings. Participants will also demonstrate their understanding of the A, B, C model as evidenced by completing an analysis of a time they engaged in aggressive behavior. Our group curriculum will address SEL goal *1A.3b: Apply strategies to manage stress and to motivate successful performance.* An objective for students working on this goal is that they learn relaxation techniques to manage stress, including deep breathing, counting backwards, and positive imagery. Students will also learn to understand their bodies' reactions to their anger triggers in order to know when to use relaxation techniques. The third SEL goal students will work towards is SEL goal *2D.3a: Evaluate strategies for preventing and resolving conflicts.* An objective for participants working towards this goal is that they will learn how to use assertiveness and positive decision making to stay out of conflicts. Students will also learn how to understand the feelings of others and how to deal with an accusation in a positive manner.

Literature Review

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) approaches emphasize the links between thoughts, feelings and behavior. Previous research has indicated that CBT approaches are effective in reducing disruptive behavior in adolescents and that CBT group approaches can offer both time-efficient and effective ways of working with adolescents who engage in disruptive behavior (Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012). Blake and Hamrin (2007) state that "Cognitive-behavioral techniques are the most widely studied and empirically validated treatments for anger and aggression in youth" (p. 218). While a meta-analysis by Sukhodolsky, Kassinove, and Gorman (2004) suggest that CBT is an effective treatment for anger-related problems in youth with effects comparable to those of psychotherapy with youth in general.

CBT anger management (AM) training is based on the hypothesis that aggressive behavior is drawn out by an aversive stimulus that is followed by both physiological responses and distorted cognitive responses resulting in the emotional experience of anger (Feindler & Engel, 2011). Deffenbacher (2011) defines anger as an internal experience comprised of emotional, physiological, and cognitive components that co-occur and interact with each other. Typically,

AM treatment focuses on physiological, cognitive and behavioral components of the anger experience and is designed to help participants develop self-control skills in each of these areas (Feindler & Engel, 2011).

In order to manage the physiological component, AM training should first direct the participants to identify the physical experience of anger and recognize the various intensities of the emotion (Feindler & Engel, 2011). In order to recognize physical warning signs of anger, the proposed curriculum will ask participants to identify these feelings, such as a flushed face or quickened heart rate. Participants are also asked to identify and track triggers of their anger using the Hassle Log, which is used to chart daily occurrences of anger and whether the situation was handled well or not. Feindler and Engle (2011) propose that charting these occurrences helps participants identify individual patterns of anger and control and forms an increased awareness of external triggers and internal physiological and cognitive reactions. Down, Willner, Watts and Griffiths (2011) state that CBT AM is informed by the idea that anger is associated with heightened emotional arousal and can be controlled through the use of behavioral coping skills such as relaxation (Down et al., 2011). Therefore, participants are taught arousal management skills such as deep breathing, imagery, and relaxation. These skills aim to reduce the physical tension and to increase the likelihood that participants will think through the event in a more calm and rational manner (Feindler & Engel, 2011).

CBT AM interventions also aim to teach participants adaptive information processing and coping skills; deficits and distortions in social information processes are thought to influence the form of expressed anger and aggression (Down et al., 2011). Cognitive restructuring strategies are used to help participants identify their distorted thinking styles and help them to develop alternative causal attributions and a nonaggressive perspective that will allow them to solve problems effectively (Feindler & Engel, 2011). These strategies are incorporated mainly through the ABCD model in the proposed curriculum. Feindler and Engel (2011) stress that while this type of cognitive work is difficult for adolescents with aggressive or impulsive behavior, altering these internal processes is essential to help youth better manage their anger experience, rethink their possible responses, and select a more prosocial behavioral response.

CBT AM interventions involve social skills and social problem solving training that can lead to improvements in adolescents' interpersonal communication and self-esteem (Down et al., 2011). Sukholdolsky et al. (2004) suggest that treatments in which youth are actually taught behaviors appear to be more effective than those only geared towards changing internal constructs related to targeted behaviors. These findings are consistent with previous results indicating that behavioral interventions tend to produce greater results compared to non-behavioral interventions (Sukholdolsky et al., 2004). The proposed curriculum will incorporate role plays with actual scenarios generated from the Hassle Logs in order to incorporate participant's actual experiences. Withdrawal patterns and verbal and nonverbal aggression are typical responses to conflicts and perceived provocation; therefore training in solving problems, being assertive, and learning to communicate to resolve conflict is needed (Feindler & Engel, 2011). Repeated practice of new acquired skills is also necessary in order to reinforce healthy responses and to help the adolescent make appropriate social judgments that will maximize a successful outcome (Feindler & Engel, 2011). The use of homework was also found to be significantly and positively related to therapy outcomes (Sukholdolsky et al., 2004). Each treatment session includes a homework assignment related to participant's Hassle Logs and the use of newly acquired skills

so that participants can practice these skills and generalize them to the natural environment (Feindler & Engel, 2011).

Outcomes

In the study conducted by Down et al. (2011) a comparison was made between both the effectiveness of and adolescents' preferences for a CBT or Personal Development (PD) AM group. The CBT group aimed to help adolescents develop skills to manage mainly reactive aggression while the PD group aimed to improve motivation to develop less aggressive identities with less use of proactive aggression. Relative to the control group, both treatment groups demonstrated significant improvements in anger coping and self-esteem. More specifically, CBT participants were mostly positive about assertiveness and walking away from conflict; the authors believed these to be the techniques most likely to be employed and therefore most effective for the adolescents. CBT group members were also positive about negotiation techniques, distracting themselves and challenging negative judgment arising from social interactions.

The authors also highlight the need to modify CBT approaches used within the group to match adolescents' social and emotional maturity (Down et al., 2011). Down et al. (2011) found that participants younger than 14 years of age did not appear to have sufficiently developed cognitive social skills to benefit from CBT approaches; these younger participants also tended to disrupt the group often. Similarly, Sukhodolsky et al. (2004) found through a meta-analysis that older adolescents tended to benefit more from CBT for AM than younger adolescents and studies with both male and female participants tended to produce greater effect sizes than studies with only male samples.

Black and Hamrin (2007) conducted a study in which youth in the treatment group were given CBT that focused on emotional education, relaxation training, cognitive skills training, and techniques for anger control. Compared to controls, participants of the treatment groups showed a significant reduction on teacher reports of aggressive and disruptive behavior as well as significant improvement on self-report of anger control (Blake & Hamrin, 2007). A study by Ruttledge and Petrides (2012) also found results which indicate that a CBT group approach is an effective form of intervention for adolescents with disruptive behavior with CBT group participants demonstrating improvements in areas including self-concept and prosocial behavior. Improvements in self and teacher ratings were also maintained at six-month follow-up according to teacher and self-report measures; this is consistent with previous studies, which have also found positive effects to be maintained in the long term (Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012).

In contrast to self and teacher ratings, parent ratings of behavior returned to pre-intervention levels (Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012). These results may be due to the fact that this specific intervention was only school-based and mainly focused on school-behavior (Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012). However, it is important to keep in mind that each student returns home to another context in which aggressive behavior may be demonstrate and reinforced; AM therapy will have the greatest impact if there is a parent education component as well (Feindler & Engel, 2011). Anger and its expression not only impact the individual, but also the family unit, therefore, family-based intervention may be helpful in reducing anger, especially if the family unit is the major source of conflict (Blake & Hamrin, 2007). In general, the involvement of parents or guardians enhances adolescents' behavior, attendance at school, and overall mental health (Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012). While the proposed curriculum does not offer a parent training component, mental health service providers implementing an AM curriculum may keep

in mind to keep communication open with parents, make outside referrals when necessary or investigate components that would be helpful in formulating a parent training curriculum they can implement.

In summary, Deffenbacher (2011) highlights the fact that there are promising meta-analysis and outcome reviews that support CBT approaches as an effective intervention for anger reduction; this literature also provides several conclusions relevant to CBT interventions. Adolescents receiving CBT fare better than their untreated counterparts with CBT interventions holding promise as an effective and meaningful intervention. Treatments effects are also maintained over the short and long term, suggesting sustained treatment effects. While effects are generally sustained, Deffenbacher (2011) suggests that those implementing a CBT AM curriculum consider maintenance enhancement interventions such as booster sessions; these would focus on continued efforts since some clients tend to stray back towards earlier patterns. The literature does not suggest a clear cut standard for CBT based AM therapy and instead indicates that different CBT interventions appear equally effective. Due to this finding or lack thereof, Deffenbacher (2011) also suggests that mental health service providers identify the characteristics of an individual's experience and anger expression in order to tailor and implement empirically supported interventions based on these characteristics and client needs.

Need that this intervention will address in your school community
Our group curriculum will address the need for students to cope with their anger in healthy ways. According to Csibi & Csibi (2011) "Aggression in school shows some increase at mid or late adolescence, explainable by norm-breaking and risk-taking behaviors being more common for this age group" (p.40). Since high school students show increased aggression compared to other age groups, it is important that these students have the tools they need to successfully cope with feelings of anger. High school students may take out their feelings of anger in aggressive ways towards other students or staff. Students who act aggressively are likely to receive discipline referrals in school. Emily Arcia (2006) stated that "students with office referrals and students with suspensions had lower grade point averages than did students without referrals or suspensions" (p.360). Getting in to trouble because of aggressive actions can cause a student to miss class because of being sent to the office or by missing school as a result of a suspension. Therefore, students who act out aggressively will have a more difficult time being successful academically than their non-aggressive peers. The students in our group will learn how to manage their aggression which will reflect in a decrease in discipline referrals and an increase in academic achievement. According to Beck and Mushkin (2007), "school behavior also can have significant implications for delinquent and criminal behavior, as well as other troublesome outcomes in adulthood" (p. 638). Students participating in our anger coping group will build the skills they need to control their reactions to feelings of anger. They will become more resilient adults who engage in less aggressive behavior. If these students build these skills now, they will be less likely to get into trouble as adults. Overall, our anger coping group curriculum will help high school students to successfully manage their anger and to make the decision to choose non-aggressive ways of handling conflict. By participating in the anger coping group the students will become more successful academically and they will learn to make positive decisions as they become adults.

Target Audience
The group is designed to be implemented with all students in grades 9-12 who have been referred due to demonstrating aggressive or disruptive behavior in the school setting. Students will be identified based on having more than one office discipline referral for verbal or physical aggression in the past year. Depending on the number of referrals for all grade levels there will most likely be two groups formed, one for upperclassmen and one for lower classman. According to Greenberg (2003) seniors in high school tend to feel superior to freshman and sophomores and may view them as young and immature (Greenberg, 2003). Greenberg (2003) argues that one grade difference within the group is still workable if it is not possible for all members to be in the same grade.

Screening and Selection Process
Identified youth and their parents will be contacted to determine interest in participating in the group. The student will then complete a screening interview with the social worker to determine appropriateness for participation in the anger management group.

Utilizing a group therapy setting to treat individuals struggling with anger is useful in schools for two reasons. First, it is more cost effective to treat students with anger issues in a group setting rather than on an individual basis. Additionally, therapeutic factors such as group support are more clinically significant than the therapeutic benefit of individual treatment in a school (Down et al., 2011). For older adolescents, such as the high schools population with whom we will be working, we will be looking for students who self identify as people who "easily get angry" and are interested in reducing angry outbursts in school (Down et al., 2011). Students with self-interest in reducing their anger are likely to be more motivated to change and take advantage of a group setting.

The group screening process would also question students' gender identity. If the staff numbers allow for it, students in our group will be screened and assigned to groups based on grade level and gender. The rationale for creating two age groups (9th and 10th grade and 11th and 12th grade) will be addressed later in this paper. Within the two age groups, each anger management group would be separated by gender. Students who participate in anger management groups purport greater feelings of self consciousness in mixed-gender groups. Girls in mixed-gender anger management groups demonstrate a hesitancy to explore intimate feelings and thoughts underlying anger when the group is mixed gender (Decker, 2010). The anger management groups would not be separated by race or ethnicity. Students who are uncomfortable talking about race and equity and/or how race affects anger and anger expression would likely to be excluded from the group and placed into individual school counseling. Facilitators will necessarily address the disparity with respect to presenting levels of anger and anger expression across racial groups (Reyes, Meininger, Liehr, Chan & Mueller, 2003). Additional screening questions about how students process information and learn, will not function to exclude students, but will dictate the style in which the group is facilitated. Students who have participated in major violent acts in school (as defined by the school disciplinary code), would be excluded from school anger management groups and would be referred to outpatient group services.

Group Format
The group will consist of eight, 40 minute sessions, which will meet once a week and rotate throughout the class periods. The group will consist of a maximum of seven members based on Greenberg's (2003) recommendation that secondary level groups have a maximum of seven

group members. In larger groups, all group members may not have the opportunity to speak, the potential for distraction is greater, the group leader may have less control and the possibility for group cohesiveness is reduced (Greenberg, 2003).

Session Outline

- ❖ Session 1 – Introduction
    - ➢ Overview of the purpose and goals of group
    - ➢ Review group rules, expectations, and confidentiality
    - ➢ Icebreaker Activity
    - ➢ Pre-Test
    - ➢ Anger Thermometer
    - ➢ Introduce Hassle Logs
- ❖ Session 2 – Triggers and Cues
    - ➢ Identifying Triggers (Anger Buttons worksheet from Strategies for Anger Management workbook)
    - ➢ Identifying Physical Cues (body signs) (Physical Cues to Anger worksheet from SAM workbook)
- ❖ Session 3 – Anger Reduction Techniques
    - ➢ Deep Breathing
    - ➢ Counting Backwards
    - ➢ Positive Imagery
- ❖ Session 4 – ABCDE Model
    - ➢ ABCDE of Anger Control
    - ➢ ABCDE Analysis of Student Examples
- ❖ Session 5 – Effective Communication
    - ➢ Assertiveness Training
    - ➢ Conflict Resolution
- ❖ Session 6 – Skill Building #1
    - ➢ Dealing with an Accusation
    - ➢ Keeping Out of Fights
- ❖ Session 7 – Skill Building #2
    - ➢ Dealing with Someone Else's Anger
    - ➢ Understanding the Feelings of Others
- ❖ Session 8 – Review and Closure
    - ➢ Review of Past Sessions
    - ➢ Completion Ceremony

Methods of Evaluation

At the conclusion of the group the students' office discipline referrals will be reviewed and the student will complete a post-test, the Violent Intentions-Teen Conflict Survey. The number of pre-intervention office referrals and the students' pre-test scores on the Violent Intentions Survey will be compared. The Violent Intentions-Teen Conflict Survey is an 8-item, self-report instrument that measures intentions to use nonviolent strategies to control anger and conflict.

Six weeks following the completion of the group, the students will again complete the Violent Intentions Survey and their office discipline referrals will also be reviewed.

Anticipated Outcomes
It is anticipated that the students who successfully complete the group will show a decrease in office discipline referrals and score lower on the Violent Intentions Survey both at the conclusion of the group and six weeks thereafter.

Screening Questionnaire

Healthy Choices Group Screening Interview

Script:

Hi my name is _____ and I'm a social worker here at _____. What I'd like to do today is give you some information about the Healthy Choices Group so that you know what the group is about and what to expect from attending.

We are running a psychoeducation group. This means we are going to be teaching skills and behaviors that you can use in your everyday life. This group is different from a counseling or therapy group. We will not be focusing on processing individual problems or emotional difficulties. Do you have any questions about that?

The goals of the group are:

1. Learn about anger and how to identify your physical signs
2. Identify negative thoughts and how to replace them with more positive thinking to solve problems
3. Identify and use new ways of coping with difficult feelings and situations
4. Learn how to communicate effectively and resolve conflicts in a healthy way

There will be 5 to 7 other student participants as well.

The Healthy Choices Group will meet on Fridays's, for one class period, for 8 weeks. We will be rotating the periods so that you will not be missing the same class each week. You can bring your lunch to group if the group is happening during your lunch hour. If you will be taking a test or have an important activity during the scheduled group session, we encourage you to remain in class for that week. Do you have any questions about that?

Problem Area Identification

How often do you feel angry or frustrated?

How do you express your anger? (i.e. fighting, yelling, sarcasm, isolating)

What frustrates you the most in terms of your relationship with your peers?

What frustrates you the most in terms of your relationship with your family members?

How do you express your anger at home? What does your family do when you get angry at home?

What frustrates you the most in terms of your experiences with school staff?

On a scale from 1 to 10, what are the chances that you will lose control of your anger and become aggressive in the future? _____ (1 = "it will never happen", 10 = "extremely likely")

Please explain why you chose that number:

Who has been understanding and supportive of you? What have they done to make you feel this way?

Goal identification and attainability

What would you like to get out of this group?

How would you like to be different at the end of this group?

What have you tried to do that has worked? What hasn't worked?

How would the group help you with this goal?

What things could you do in this group to help you with this goal?

General appropriateness for a group setting

How do you typically participate in groups?

Have you ever been in a psychoeducational or counseling group before? Was it helpful? Why or why not?

How comfortable are you talking about your feelings?

What strengths would you bring to this group?

What unique contribution would you make to this group?

How could you help others with similar concerns?

Where do you see yourself having the most trouble as we begin to talk about some of these issues?

Willingness to agree to rules of group

Now I'd like to go over some of the group rules and expectations.

- ☐ It is important that you attend all sessions on time. An exception will be made if you are getting your lunch from the cafeteria before coming to group. *Are you willing to attend all groups on time?*

- ☐ Another rule is that you keep what other people say in group confidential. Generally, we will not share what is said in group with anyone outside of the group. There are important exceptions to this rule. These relate to situations involving injury to self or others, abuse, or if there is a court order. In these situations, information can be shared. *Are you willing to keep things confidential?*

- ☐ As mentioned before, the purpose of this group is to teach new behaviors and skills. As a participant in the group, it will be expected that you try new or different behaviors inside and outside of the group sessions. *Are you willing to try new behaviors?*

- ☐ In order for the group to be effective, participants will be asked to share personal information. You will be able to choose what to disclose and will not be required to share information that you feel is private. *Are you willing to self-disclose in group?*

For Group Leaders Only

How well does this member fit into the group

Is the student's goal(s) realistic?

Does the goal(s) fit with group goal?

Do they perceive the problem as something they can change, or over which they can have control?

Are they willing to participate?

Do they typically participate in groups?

Are they willing to try and help others and also to be helped by others?

Are their Strong Kids Assessment Scores or problem areas similar to those of most group members?

      If not, what other information obtained could indicated that the student is still appropriate for this group?

      If not appropriate for this group, what other services can be provided to the student?

With whom could they connect?

For whom could they serve as a role model?

Script and questions were adapted from materials in:
Waack, J. L. (2006). *Leading psychoeducational groups for children and adolescents*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Pre/Post Test

L3. Violent Intentions—Teen Conflict Survey

These items measure intentions to use nonviolent strategies to control anger and conflict. Respondents are asked to indicate how likely they would be to adopt certain nonviolent behaviors the next time they get angry.

The next time you find yourself really angry at someone or something, how likely is it that you would …

	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely
1. Ignore the situation?	a	b	c	d
2. Ignore the situation and get the person later?	a	b	c	d
3. Try to talk it out?	a	b	c	d
4. Suggest peer mediation?	a	b	c	d
5. Channel your anger into something constructive?	a	b	c	d
6. Laugh it off?	a	b	c	d
7. Try to reduce your anger?	a	b	c	d
8. Try to see the other person's point of view?	a	b	c	d

Scoring and Analysis

Point values are assigned as follows:

Very likely	=	4
Likely	=	3
Unlikely	=	2
Very unlikely	=	1

Item 2 is reverse scored. Responses are summed, with a possible range of 8 to 32. High scores indicate a stronger intention to use non-violent strategies.

Source: Dahlberg LL, Toal SB, Swahn M, Behrens CB. *Measuring Violence-Related Attitudes, Behaviors, and Influences Among Youths: A Compendium of Assessment Tools*, 2nd ed., Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2005.

The Curriculum

Group Session 1

Introduction

Objective: Objective: In this session students will learn the purpose of the anger coping group and they will begin to build trust among one another. Participants will also begin to learn what anger is and how to assess their own anger with the hassle log and the anger thermometer.

Kolb Component: Reflective Observation

Materials
- Pretest
- Anger Thermometer Handout
- Hassle Log Handout
- Poster paper
- Markers
- Multi-colored candy

Process:
1. Overview of the purpose and goals of group.
2. Review group rules, expectations, and confidentiality. Have the students come up with their own group rules and write them on the poster paper with the markers.
3. Icebreaker Activity. Students will pick a candy out of a bag (such as a jolly rancher). Each color candy will correspond with a question that will help group members get to know one another. The student will respond to the question that corresponds with their color of candy. (Example of questions would be "what is your favorite genre of music?" or "What is your favorite sport?")
4. Facilitator will explain the pretest / self-assessment and have the students fill out the self-assessment.
5. Introduce anger as a normative reaction to a threat, frustration, or injustice. Explain that although anger is a normal feeling, in this group they will learn how to cope with their anger in healthy ways.
6. Pass out the Anger Thermometer. Explain the concept of the Anger Thermometer and have the students complete Anger Thermometer handout. (Reflective Observation)
7. Introduce Hassle logs (purpose, how they will be used, etc). Assign the hassle log for homework. (Reflective Observation)

Measuring Anger

Write down ten things and/or people and/or situations that make you angry. They do not have to be in any particular order.

1. .... 6. ....

2. .... 7 ....

3. .... 8. ....

4. .... 9. ....

5. .... 10. ....

Now put words or feelings that describe your anger in the thermometer; 10 being the word or feeling that describes you are least angry and 100 that which describes you when you are the angriest.

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10

Hassle Log

Name:_____   Date:_____

A. **When did this happen?**   ❑ Morning   ❑ Afternoon   ❑ Night

B. **Where were you:**
   ❑ School   ❑ Home   ❑ Friend's house
   ❑ At work   ❑ Mall   ❑ Restaurant
   ❑ Street   ❑ Another's house   ❑ Other:_____

C. **What Happened?**
   ❑ Somebody teased me   ❑ I did something wrong
   ❑ Somebody took something of mine   ❑ Somebody started a fight with me
   ❑ Somebody told me to do something   ❑ Somebody was bothering one of my friends
   ❑ Somebody was doing something I didn't like   ❑ Other: _____

D. **Who was that somebody**
   ❑ Friend/Associate   ❑ Parent   ❑Teacher
   ❑ An adult authority   ❑ Stranger   ❑Another youth
   ❑ Brother/Sister   ❑ Step-parent/Guardian ❑ Other: _____

E. **What did you do?**
   ❑ Hit back   ❑ Broke something   ❑ Told peer
   ❑ Ran away   ❑ I was restrained   ❑ Ignored other person
   ❑ Yelled   ❑ Told parent   ❑ Cried
   ❑ Used Profanity   ❑ Used sarcasm   ❑ Used Anger control
   ❑ Other:_____

F. **How did you handle yourself?**
   ❑ Poorly   ❑ Not well   ❑ Okay   ❑ Good   ❑ Great

G. **On a scale of 1-10 how angry were you?**

   Not mad   Super Mad

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Anger Control Concepts:

1. Trigger:_____   2. My body signs:_____

3. Anger reducer I used: ❑ Counting backwards   ❑ Deep breathing   ❑ Pleasant Imagery

            ❑ Other: _____

4. A,B,C,D Model

A (activating event)	B (my beliefs)	C (how I felt)	D (disputing beliefs)	E. New thoughts

Adapted from: Glick, B., & Gibbs, J. C. (2011). *Aggression replacement training: A comprehensive intervention for aggressive youth*. Champaign, Ill: Research Press.

Group Session 2

Triggers and Cues

Objective: In this session students will learn to identify their bodies' reactions to feelings of anger. The participants will also start to identify what their triggers for anger are. By understanding their body cues and anger triggers students will be prepared to begin learning how to change their response to anger in future sessions.

Kolb Component: Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization

Materials:

- Anger Buttons worksheet
- Physical Cues to Anger
- Hassle Log handout

Process:

1. Review last week's activities
2. Ask students how the first week of filling out the hassle logs went. Invite students to share what they wrote on their hassle logs. Facilitator will clarify any questions students have about filling out the hassle logs. (Reflective Observation)
3. Explain to the students what a trigger is. Have the students begin to identify what their triggers are by using the Anger Buttons worksheet (from Strategies for Anger Management workbook). Have the students share what some of the triggers they identified were. (Abstract Conceptualization and Reflective Observation)
4. Have the students complete the Physical Cues to Anger worksheet (Physical Cues to Anger worksheet from SAM workbook). Discuss with the students which physical cues they recognize in their own bodies when they are angry. (Reflective Observation)
5. Discuss importance of knowing what your triggers are and recognizing when you are getting angry.
6. Assign the hassle log for homework. (Reflective Observation)

Group Session 3

Anger Reducers

Objective: Students will be educated on anger reduction techniques and will demonstrate an understanding of how to use techniques through practicing them in session.

Kolb Components: Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, Concrete Experience, Active Experimentation

Materials:

- Anger Reducers Handout

Process:

1. Review any anger logs (Reflective Observation)
2. Briefly review last session
3. Introduce concept of using anger reducers to decrease level of anger (Abstract Conceptualization)
4. Review Anger Reducers Handout (Concrete Experience)
   a. Demonstrate and practice Counting Backwards Technique (Active Experimentation)
   b. Demonstrate and practice Deep Breathing Technique (Active Experimentation)
   c. Have students identify and share an identified place for Pleasant Imagery
5. Ask the students to identify a situation in which they could use an anger reducer (Reflective Observation)

Anger Reducers
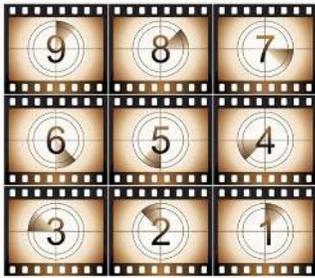
Counting Backwards from 10

To do this exercise correctly, you will count slowly backwards from twenty. You should think each number about one second apart. To make sure you count properly you can insert a long word such as Mississippi, Tallahassee, or alligator in between each number.
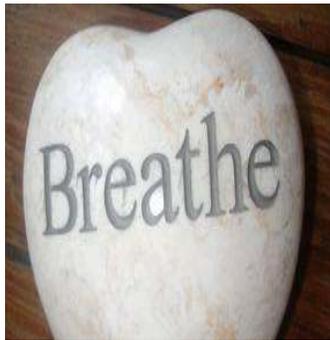
Deep Breathing

To do this exercise correctly you should start with your chest forward and shoulders back. Take three deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. To be sure you're breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. To be sure you're breathing in and breathing out is the same length slowly count up to three and back from three in your head as your breathe.

Pleasant Imagery

To do this exercise correctly, you should think of a peaceful place that is special to you. This place can be somewhere in nature, a grandparent's house, your room at home, or anywhere appropriate that would relax you and help lessen your feelings of anger.

Adapted from: Glick, B., & Gibbs, J. C. (2011). *Aggression replacement training: A comprehensive intervention for aggressive youth*. Champaign, Ill: Research Press.

Group Session 4

ABCDE's of Anger Control

Objective: Students will learn the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to identify, challenge, and replace unhealthy beliefs through completion of an ABCDE analysis on a situation in which they were angry

Kolb Component: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, Active Experimentation
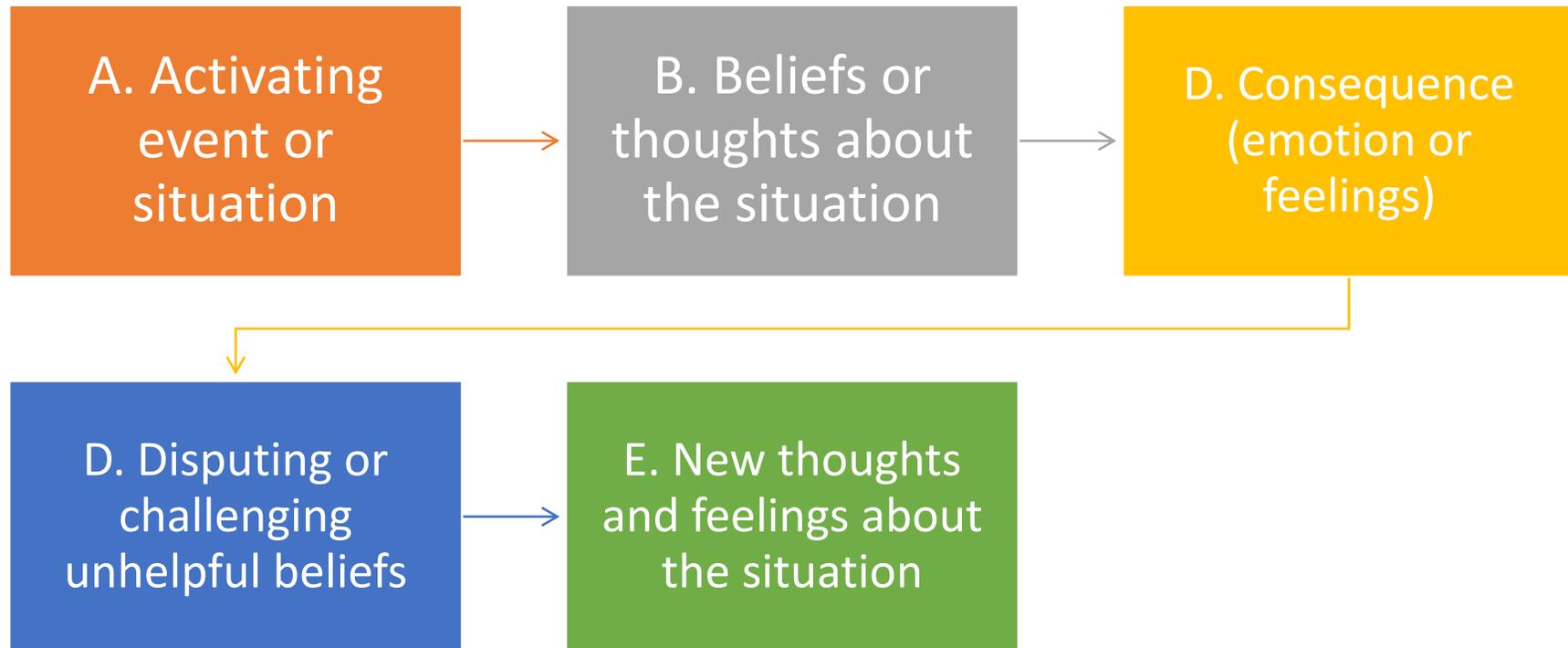
Materials:

- ABCDE's of Anger Control handout
- ABCDE's Worksheet handout (2 copies for each student)
- Whiteboard
- Whiteboard markers

Process:

1. Review any anger logs (Reflective Observation)
2. Briefly review last session's material
3. Review ABCDE's of Anger Control handout and discuss how thoughts impact emotions (Abstract Conceptualization)
4. Using whiteboard, demonstrate the steps of the ABCDE model using a hypothetical situation (Concrete Experience)
5. Have students complete ABCDE's Worksheet and process with the group (Reflective Observation)
6. Assign homework: Students to complete ABCDE's Worksheet on a situation before next session (Active Experimentation)

ABCDE'S of ANGER CONTROL

A. Activating event or situation	→	B. Beliefs or thoughts about the situation	→	D. Consequence (emotion or feelings)

D. Disputing or challenging unhelpful beliefs	→	E. New thoughts and feelings about the situation

ABCDE's WORKSHEET

A: (Situation)	B: (unhelpful thoughts)	C. (How I felt)	D. (disputing unhelpful thoughts) Is there any evidence that contradicts this thought? What would you say to a friend who had this thought? How will you feel about this 6 months from now? What are the costs and benefits of thinking this way: Benefits: Costs: Is that another way of looking at this situation?	E. (New thoughts) Can you think of a more balanced thoughts that would be more accurate or helpful?

Group Session 5

Effective Communication

Objective: Students will learn ways to express their feelings, thoughts and beliefs in an assertive manner by utilizing the Conflict Resolution Model. Students will practice the steps of the Conflict Resolution Model through role play; students may utilize situations they have previously recorded in their Hassle Logs.

Kolb Component: Concrete Experience, Abstract Conceptualization, Reflective Observation, Active Experimentation

Materials:
- Conflict Resolution Model handout
- White board
- White board marker

Process:
1. Review homework from previous session (Reflective Observation)
2. Teach group members about assertiveness vs. passivity (Abstract Conceptualization)
3. Review Hassle Logs and ask members if they handled the situation in an assertive or passive manner (Reflective Observation)
4. Using whiteboard, write the steps of the Conflict Resolution Model for students to see and go through steps using a hypothetical situation (Concrete Experience)
5. Ask students to identify a situation in which they could have and will be able to use this model as a means to assertively resolve conflict (Reflective Observation)
6. Have students role play situations that were brought up during discussion or from previous Hassle Logs (Concrete Experience)
7. Homework: Remind students to continue to fill out their Hassle Logs as a means to chart occurrences of anger; provide students with a handout including the steps in the Conflict Resolution Model and instruct them to practice using the Model (Reflective Observation and Active Experimentation)

Narrative:
Begin by reviewing ABCDE worksheet assigned as homework in the previous session and ask if students have any questions, this will provide students with reflective observations (CCASTD, n.d.). Introduce the topic of assertiveness and ask students if they know or are willing to share what they think assertiveness means. Remind the group that aggression involves expressing feelings, thoughts and beliefs in a harmful and disrespectful way. Share with the group that assertiveness involves standing up for your rights and expressing feelings, thoughts, and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways that do not violate the rights of others or show disrespect. Then share with the group that passivity or nonassertiveness involves failing to express feelings, thoughts, and beliefs or expressing them in an apologetic manner that others can easily take no notice of. Explain that today the students will practice ways in which they can handle situations in an assertive manner rather than in an aggressive or passive manner. By acting assertively, you can express your feelings, thoughts, and beliefs to the person who violated your rights without suffering the negative consequences associated with aggression or the devaluation of your feelings, which is associated with passivity of nonassertion. By teaching students about assertiveness and passivity and asking them to reflect throughout, the group leader will be

incorporating both abstract conceptualization and reflective observation (CCASTD, n.d.). Introduce the steps of the Conflict Resolution Model by writing them on the whiteboard. This model is an assertive device for resolving conflicts with others and consists of problem solving steps that minimize the potential for anger escalation. Go through the steps briefly with the group using a hypothetical situation that is relevant to students in the group. Ask students to identify a situation in which they could have and will be able to use this model as a means to assertively resolve conflict. Using an example situation to go through the steps on the model and having student reflect on their own experiences will provide them with both a concrete experience and reflective observation (CCASTD, n.d.). Next, have students role play in pairs using the Conflict Resolution Model; suggest that students use situations from any of their previous Hassle Logs. While students are role playing, the group leader should be observing and praising students as well as helping those who are having a difficult time. Bring the entire group back together and ask students to discuss and reflect on the role play with the group. Through the role play and discussion that will follow, group members will engage in both active experimentation and reflective observation (CCASTD, n.d.). Remind students to continue to fill out their Hassle Logs as a means to chart daily occurrences of anger. Provide them with a handout including the steps in the Conflict Resolution Model and instruct them to practice using the Model throughout the week, writing down at least one situation on the provided handout. The Hassle Logs will continue to provide students with reflective observations while the homework related to the Conflict Resolution Model will provide them with active experimentation (CCASTD, n.d.).

The Conflict Resolution Model

1. Identify the problem that is causing the conflict

2. Identify the feelings that are associated with the conflict

3. Identify the impact of the problem that is causing the conflict

4. Decide whether to resolve the conflict

5. Work for resolution of the conflict
   - How would you like the problem to be resolved?
   - Is a compromise needed?

Group Session 6

Skill Building #1

Objective: Students will learn how to respond to someone who is being accusatory in a calm and thoughtful manner. Additionally, students will discuss how to control unnecessary conflicts by controlling angry feelings. Both of these activities build on the initials lessons on thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and encourage students to think before acting.

Kolb Component: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization

Materials:

- Dealing with an Accusation handout (1 copy for each student)

- Keeping out of Fights handout (1 copy for each student)

- Whiteboard

- Whiteboard markers

Process:

1. Review any Hassle Logs (Reflective Observation)
2. Briefly review last session's material on assertiveness and conflict resolution.
3. Read and explain the "Dealing with an Accusation" Handout by delineating the specific steps a person should take in responding to an accusation appropriately (Abstract Conceptualization)
4. Have students complete "Dealing with an Accusation" role plays and process with the group (Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation)
5. Review tenets of "Keeping out of Fights" handout (Abstract Conceptualization) and use hypothetical example on whiteboard to explain how one would stay out of a fight. (Concrete Experience)
6. Remind students to use Hassle Logs between this session and next session (Reflective Observation)

DEALING WITH ACCUSATIONS

Preparing yourself to answer someone who is accusing you of something and responding in a calm and factual manner.

Steps

⬇
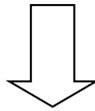
1. Think about what the other person has accused you of. (Think)

⬇

2. Think about why the person might have accused you. (Think)

⬇

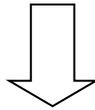3. Think about ways to answer the person's accusation. (Think)

⬇

4. Choose the best way to do it (Think & Act)

KEEPING OUT OF FIGHTS

Avoiding unnecessary conflicts (verbal or physical) by controlling angry feeling.

Steps

⬇

1. Stop and think about what triggered you to want to fight. (Think)

⬇

2. Decide what you want to happen in your future. (Think)

⬇

3. Think about ways to handle the situation besides fighting. (Think)

⬇

4. Decide on the best way to handle the situation and do it (Think & Act)

Group Session 7

Skill Building #2

Objective: Students will learn how to cope with the anger of others. In addition to learning about empathy, students will begin to practice expressing empathy.

Kolb Components: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization
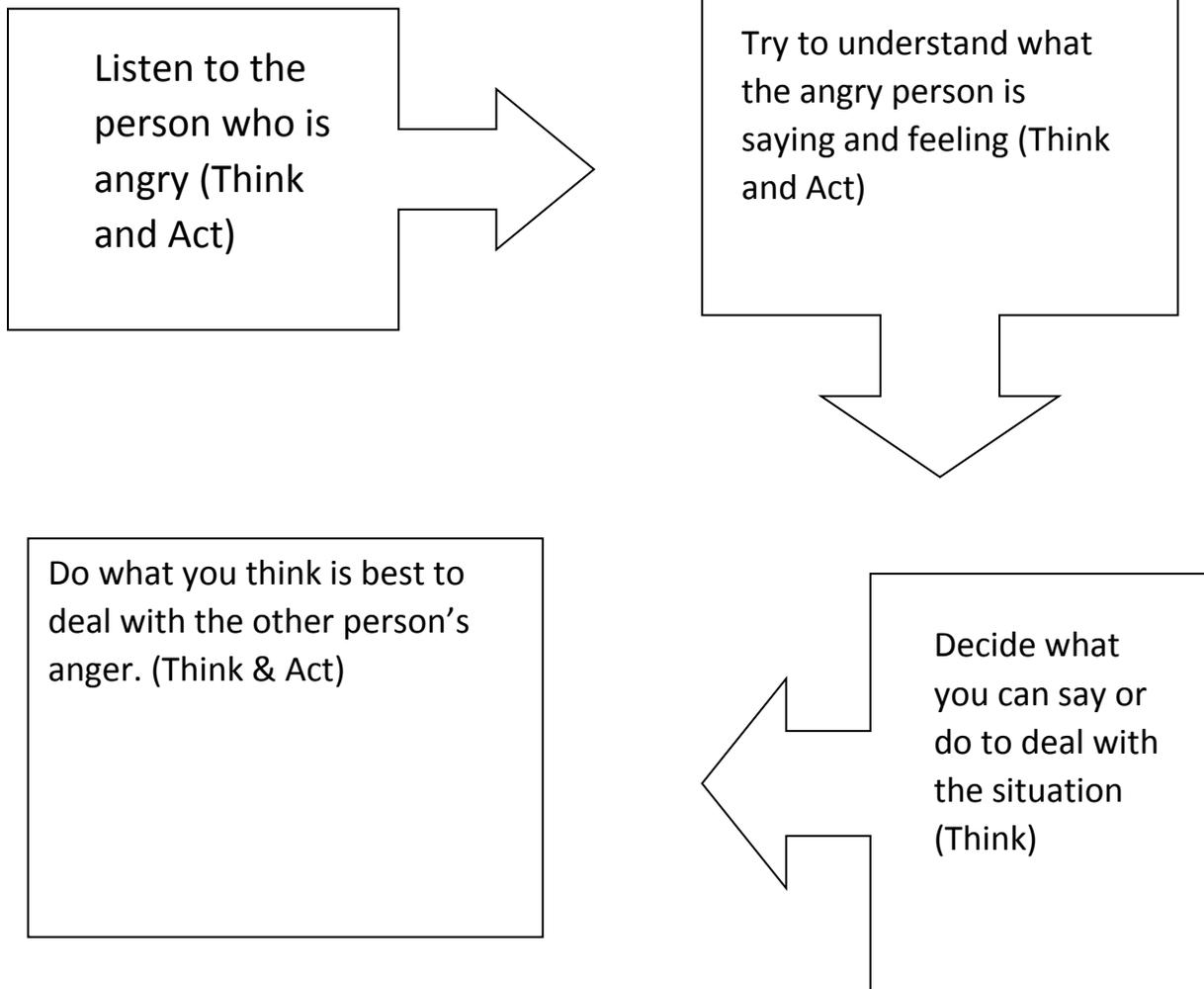
Materials:

- Dealing with someone else's anger worksheet (1 copy for each student)

- Understanding the feelings of others handout (1 copy for each student)

- Whiteboard

- Whiteboard markers

Process:

1. Review Hassle Logs from the previous week (Reflective Observation)
2. Briefly review material on dealing with accusations and keeping out of fights (Reflective Observation)
3. Explain "dealing with someone else's anger" handout and discuss steps to respond appropriately when someone else is angry (Abstract Conceptualization)
4. Have students complete "dealing with someone else's anger" role plays based on information found in previous Hassle Logs. Process with the group (Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation)
5. Discuss "understanding the feelings of others" handout (abstract conceptualization)
6. Create hypothetical situations on whiteboad that allow the participant to show another person that they understand what that person is feeling (Concrete Experience)
7. Remember to use anger log between this session and next session (Reflective Observation)

DEALING WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S ANGER

Listen to the person who is angry (Think and Act)

Try to understand what the angry person is saying and feeling (Think and Act)

Decide what you can say or do to deal with the situation (Think)

Do what you think is best to deal with the other person's anger. (Think & Act)

UNDERSTANDING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS

- Watch the other person and listen to what they are saying. (Think and Act)

- Figure out what the person might be feeling. (Think)

- Think about ways to show you understand what he/she is feeling (Think)

- Decide on the best way to do it. (Think & Act)

Group Session 8

Review and Completion Ceremony

Objective: Students will review and reflect on what they have learned throughout the group process. Group leader will congratulate students on their completion of the group training and provide them with an award certificate.

Kolb Component: Reflective Observation

Materials:

- Reflection questions handout
- Post test

Process:

1. Review any Hassle Logs (Reflective Observation)
2. Have students answer the reflection questions on the handout; once students have completed the questions, depending on time, have them discuss their answers with the group. Collect the completed handout to use during the booster session (Reflective Observation)
3. Explain to students that they will meet again in three weeks for a booster session in which they will discuss progress and review anything that students may be struggling with
4. Have students complete the post test (Reflective Observation)
5. Hand students a certificate of completion and congratulate them on completing the group

Begin by reviewing any Hassle Logs. Remind students that this is the last session and time will mostly be taken to reflect on what they have learned and celebrate their completion of group. Explain to students that they will meet again in three weeks to check in on group members' progress and to review any skills or concepts students may be struggling with. Pass out the handout with the reflection questions asking students to answer the questions and turn them into the group leader when they are completed. The handout with the reflection questions will be handed back to students to use as a guide during the booster session. Once students have completed the reflection questions, have them complete the post test and share any reflections with the group if there is remaining time. Finally, hand students a certificate of completion, congratulate them for completing the group and remind them that the group will come together once more in three weeks. By reviewing Hassle Logs, having students complete thought questions through the reflective questions handout and post test and possible group discussion, students will engage in reflective observation throughout all activities in this final session (CCASTD, n.d.).

Group Reflection Questions

1. What have you learned about anger management?

2. What are your triggers and how can you tell what you are becoming angry?

3. List any strategies that have helped in effectively managing your anger. How can you use these strategies to better manage your anger?

4. In what ways can you continue to improve your anger management skills? Are there specific areas that need improvement?

5. Who can offer you future support?

Booster Session (3 weeks later)

1. Hand students the paper in which they wrote down answers to the questions they answered in session #8
2. Through discussion, check on students' progress since group has ended (Reflective Observations)
3. Review any skills or concepts students may be struggling with (Abstract Conceptualization)

First, ask students if they have any questions since group has ended. Hand back student's reflective questions handout from the last session that they can use as a guide during the discussion. Have students share how they have been doing in utilizing skills and concepts that were taught throughout the group process. Through this discussion, students will engage in reflective observations (CCASTD, n.d.). Depending on students' questions, answers and reflections, provide a brief review on different skills or concepts that students appear to be struggling with. Remind students to utilize the supports they have identified on their reflection handouts. By having students learn by thinking and logically analyze ideas on how to effectively manage their anger, they will be engaging in abstract conceptualization (CCASTD, n.d.).

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