



Charting a New Course



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Introduction & Facilitator Instructions

Charting a New Course is designed for use with youth or adults in any group or classroom setting. The lesson plans are created with the busy facilitator in mind offering brief, start to finish instructions for each of the cognitive behavioral group exercises. The lesson plans are easy to follow so that someone with no previous exposure to Truthought can implement this curriculum with ease.

Ideally, groups using this curriculum will be open-ended allowing new members to join at any time. But the curriculum is flexible to allow for groups with set beginning and end dates as well.

Thinking Assessment

Establishing a baseline among your group will give you a running start. The Truthought Thinking Assessment, which is available for free from Truthought.com, will help you pinpoint the best starting mark and focus for your group.

Each learner's score indicates their dominant Thinking Barriers from the highest to the lowest. Compare the top 2 or 3 scores across the spectrum of learners' results and the most common thinking patterns emerge as the target for addressing risk, needs and intervention within the group context. The correlating number of Responsible Thinking (1-9) represents the focus for directed skill practice.

Please note that when you are targeting any of the thinking barriers you are truly touching on all

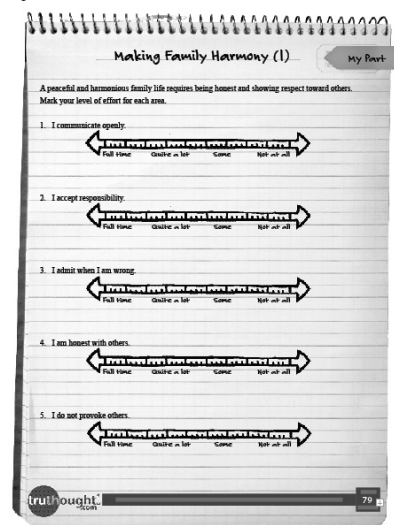
of them, so there is no need to rigidly adhere to a particular section. Best practice is to use *your best judgment* as to what exercises will be most suitable and effective for your group.

Charting a New Course Layout

At the beginning of each tabbed section is a brief overview of the Tactic or Thinking Barrier that is the topic of that section followed by ten or more group-tested, evidence-based, cognitive behavioral exercises with lesson plans designed to develop cognitive processes for responsible decision-making and promote pro-social, responsible lifestyles.

Reproducible Exercises

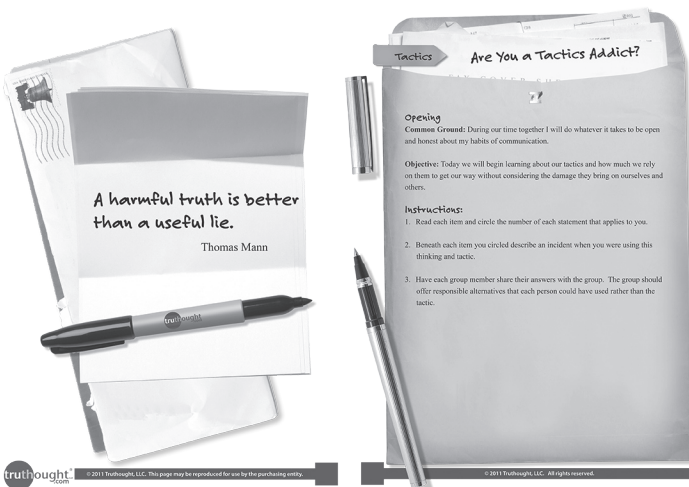
Facilitators will want to choose exercises that are particularly suited to their group. Truthought's free *Thinking Assessment* at Truthought.com will help the savvy facilitator make wise exercise choices that target the thinking habits of their group. The exercises are flexible enough to be administered in any order. The exercise pages may be photocopied as handout material for use by the purchasing agency or individual. Exercises may not be reproduced for use outside of the purchasing entity.



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Lesson Discussion Plans

Each exercise is preceded by a lesson discussion plan for facilitators as shown on a large manila envelope. Many exercises cover more than one page. Look for the envelope to signal the beginning and end of exercise pages. Quotes interspersed throughout the material are included to stimulate your thinking as a facilitator and you may find them useful to share with your learners.

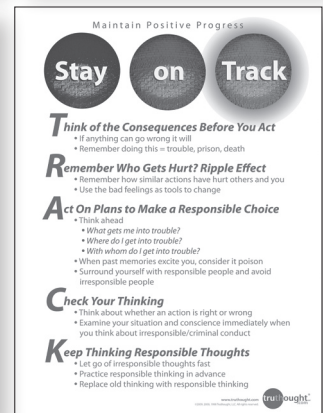
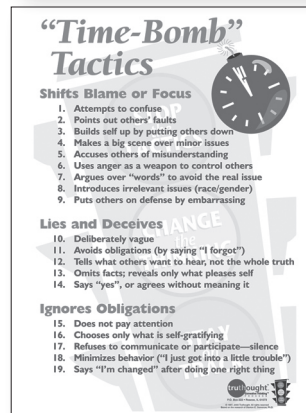
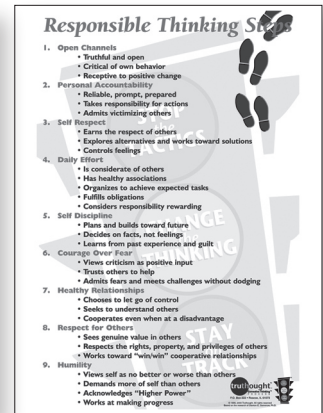
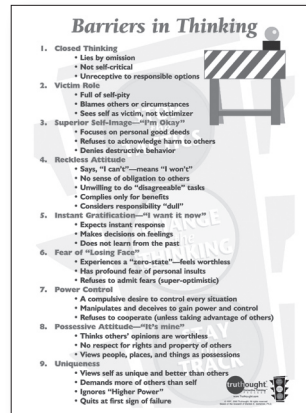
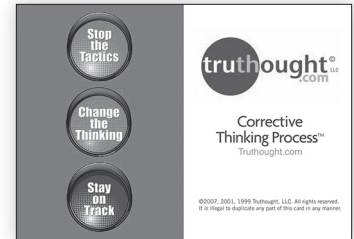


Visual Tools

You will need a set of posters for each classroom and a pocket guide for each person in the group. The language of the posters is the same language used in *Charting a New Course* to discuss thinking and behavior.

The posters and pocket guides uphold the standard by putting the thinking and behavior to follow or to avoid clearly in focus. Learners are frequently asked to identify their thinking

or tactics on the corresponding poster or their pocket guide. The *Stay on Track Poster* is used for reviewing consequences, problem solving, decision-making, and role-playing. *The Way of Life Poster* is used to identify lifestyle patterns.



If Your Life Was A Movie How Would It Be Rated?

GR	GENERALLY RESPONSIBLE	GI	GENERALLY IRRESPONSIBLE	GA	GENERALLY ARRESTABLE	GE	GENERALLY EXTREME
1	Is responsible in daily routine at home, work and socially	1	Acts semi-responsible giving many excuses	1	May act responsible when there is no alternative, but exists all the way	1	Responsible only when it benefits self or takes advantage of others
2	Balances hard work, fulfillment of obligations, and recreation	2	Unreliable, inconsiderate, late, careless	2	Closed, unceptive, does not pay attention, thoughtless	2	Commits crime, uses drugs and alcohol to feel superior
3	Shows genuine consideration for others	3	Routinely lies, manipulates, and intimidates to get by	3	Deceptive, secretive; thinks of self as better than others	3	Promotes self at others' expense; reckless
4	Earns others' respect through achievement; respects others' rights and property	4	Lazy, fails to fulfill obligations; has poor work or study habits; lacks goals or direction	4	Feels successful because offenses or crimes have gone undetected	4	Over confident, arrogant; tries to "beat the system" against all odds
5	Urges to be slack or violate may arise, but disappear with little or no effort	5	Exhibits good behavior only when immediate benefits are at hand	5	If consequences and restraints are removed, will commit offenses previously only imagined	5	Continually plots and focuses on selfish and criminal thoughts
6	Makes choices for the good of others and self; values opinions and judgments of others	6	Pits authorities against each other (parents, teachers, officers, etc.)	6	Seems "nice," surprises many when caught in a seriously wrong act	6	Acts without regard for the consequences to others or self
		7	Expects to fail; is apathetic, makes incomplete attempts	7	Moves away to gain more freedom and avoid detection	7	Enjoys using anger to intimidate and get own way
				8	Uses others; sees kindness from others as a weakness	8	Sees self as a "good" person; ignores harm done to others
						9	Blames others, cries unfair, claims injustice

Way of Life
Continuum of Thinking/Behavior

By referring to the posters facilitators decrease the opportunity for power struggles that occur when learners perceive the facilitator as “the standard” and create an “us against them” atmosphere. Pointing to the Poster Series as the standard says to your students that you really care about the way they learn – within the realm of individual discovery, dignity, and mutual respect.



Group Facilitation and Delivery

When participants enter the group room they are expected to:

- Check-in, turn in any assignments,
- Write their name on a sticky-note and post it on the column on the Way of Life Poster that most closely represents how they have been thinking since your last group meeting
- Then take their seat.

The group begins with a brief welcome followed by routine recitals:

- Group Purpose
- Group Creed
- Group Expectations
- Common Ground for that day’s lesson
- Review Way of Life sticky-note posts and follow-up on any previous commitments

The lesson selected by the facilitator for that day follows the opening ritual. The session is frequently closed with a verbal and written closing commitment from group members to do something different and report back at the next group session. It is important that facilitators carefully pace the use of group commitments with other facilitators to avoid overwhelming participants with more new responsibility than they can practically handle. Keeping levels of commitment within reachable achievement is crucial to the process.

The Group Purpose is best when it is brief and to the point such as, “*The purpose of our group is to find solutions to our problems and learn to live pro social, responsible lives.*” A longer group purpose is not easily remembered and loses its emphasis as it rambles on.

The Group Creed: “*Crime hurts people. When I commit crime I hurt people. I will not hurt others or myself again.*” Of course other topics than crime can be substituted such as, drugs, or irresponsibility or one that suits your group.

You will need to develop **Group Expectations** that are relevant to your group but at minimum they should include expectations of timeliness, participation, homework, and how you will treat each other during your time together. This could include conversation, listening, how to ask questions, and appropriate movement. It is advised that the Group Expectations be read aloud by one of the participants prior to every group.

A **Common Ground** is the group's common goal and focus for your time together. Many times your group participants have different goals in mind. Their goals may be to get by with as little effort as possible, or to get out of the program as quickly as possible (even if it means getting kicked out), or the goal may be to side rail the meeting and get lots of attention, and so on. A common ground points everyone in the same direction so that you all have the same finish line in mind. It has the added benefit of helping bring participants back on task when it is referred to during the group process, but only when it is established up front.

Typically, the common ground would be posted on the board. Learners are expected to write it down and recite it aloud together. Rarely, learners will resist or refuse. After offering several opportunities for them to change their mind, if they persist it indicates they are not willing to participate with the group and that they prefer to receive a consequence.

At first glance the recitals might seem to be a time-waster to the responsible staff person. To us the idea of reciting the same kind of information prior to every meeting seems redundant, unnecessary, and condescending. To us, it might suggest that someone thinks we are not capable of "getting it" or of supervising ourselves. We intuitively know that we would not get away with this kind of routine in our staff meetings.

For participants who are irresponsible the opening recital holds a different purpose and their opinion

of it is quite different, too. Many learners find it difficult to trust others. After a few meetings, the predictability of the ritual sends the message that this is a trustworthy, safe process and there is no need to be on guard. Responsible people do not need this reassurance, whereas the irresponsible person is put at ease by the predictability of the opening recital. If it is skipped participants will immediately ask why and request that the routine be followed. The ritual sends a message of predictability that translates to one of safety and sets the tone for a productive session.

Review of Way of Life sticky-note posts.

Learners are encouraged to place their name on the column of the poster that best represents the way they have been thinking during the interim since you last met. Initially, they may pile up on the responsible column. When this happens it is an opportunity to explain that even if they had no infractions it does not mean that their thinking was free from irresponsible thoughts. Their thoughts may run along the lines of wanting to get high, to run away, to hurt someone, or take something that does not belong to them. It is vital that they come to grips with the fact that their behavior will eventually follow their thinking. If their behavior has been golden, but their thoughts have not, they are not changing.

It's important that they understand that this is a safe place to talk openly about their thinking. Hold them accountable for lying if they place themselves on the Responsible column early on and ask them to select a different column. You

can ask the group to help them, if they resist. The group is usually aware of incidents that reflect other columns that might be a better choice.

Another incentive to honesty is to offer points for accuracy. If a learner accurately places their sticky-note they get 2 points. If they have to move their sticky-note they lose a point. Initially, and perhaps most of the time, they will actually lose points for putting themselves in the Responsible column.

Closing Commitments and follow-up. Requiring learners to make a commitment to do something different is crucial to the change process. Without this action it is easy for learners to absorb knowledge without translating it into personal change. They learn to “talk the talk” but not to “walk the walk.” Learners should be encouraged to choose commitments that are within their reach. For example, a person who is prone to violence might make a commitment to stay out of fights for a week, or a person who is chronically late might make a commitment to be on time next week. Although we would prefer they stay out of fights for the rest of their days, or that they arrive promptly to all of their appointments a commitment of that magnitude would likely end in failure. It is essential that the

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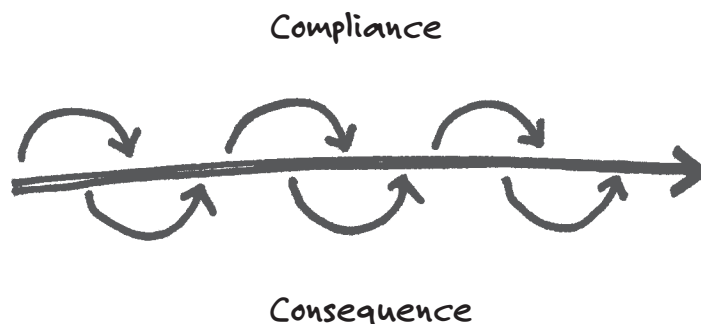
Way of Life
Continuum of Thinking/Behavior

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commitments to do something different allow the person to achieve an 80% success rate in order for the momentum of change to get traction. For that to happen we need to guide their choices to bite-sizes that are within their capacity, but still offer a bit of a challenge.

Make It Fool-proof

You can make their commitments to do something different fool-proof by adding just the right cognitive behavioral consequence if they do not follow through with their commitment. The beauty of this arrangement is that the participant gains



positive ground either way, through compliance or through consequence.

As a facilitator you can relax, do not take it personally when they fail to comply because your job is done either way if you have established effective cognitive behavioral consequences. It is up to the facilitator as to how frequently to ask learners for commitments to do something different. You do not want to overwhelm them with more than they can handle, but you do not want them going through the motions and unchallenged either. The savvy facilitator keeps a close eye on the needs of the group and what will be helpful for each individual.

Facilitate Role-playing

Each tabbed section contains some exercises with optional role-playing--a powerful teaching tool when facilitated well.

When the group is new to role-playing introduce it to them by explaining what it is and what it is not. It is a chance to apply what we have been learning. It is not a drama where the actor is playing for the audience. The situation they are role-playing is taken from the real world and the actors are playing to find solutions, not to provide entertainment. Keep this in mind when assigning parts. If participants are not ready they may be uneasy and that is expected, but sometimes it may lead them to act like a “ham” and play to the audience, rather than focus on finding solutions.

When participants are re-enacting a past

personal incident or practicing for a future encounter it will be critical for the facilitator to help them set the stage by asking:

- Who are you meeting with?
- Where are you meeting?
- Are you sitting or standing?
- What has happened already?
- What do you hope will happen when you meet?
- What reactions do you anticipate?
- What alternatives are you prepared for?

After the role-play ask the group:

- What goals did the main player have? How well were they met?
- What goals did the 2nd player have? How well were they met?
- Were their goals in conflict or agreement? Was a win-win achieved or within reach?
- What did they do that helped them meet their goals?
- What did they do that hindered their progress?
- What suggestions can you offer?

It is up to the facilitator to keep the role-play dialogue moving and to keep the role-play focused on what needs to happen next. Don't allow too much time to be spent in long dialogue; once a point has been made or a step has been completed if the players do not move on, stop the action by saying “Freeze!” Keep the focus and pace moving by asking the entire group, “What has to happen next?”

Example: role-players are discussing a step for building relationships called “finding mutual interests.” They are correctly talking about

interests they have in common as a step for building relationships. While this is correct it could go on and on in the dialogue. So, after a few minutes of the role players clearly establishing their mutual interests you would say, “okay, freeze!” Then simply mention, “this is correct, they would continue talking about mutual interests for quite a while, but what needs to happen next?” Bring the group to focus on what happens next and ask the role-players to proceed with the next step.

Make role play assignments clear so that each person knows what’s expected of them, but be careful not to give so much detail that they do not have to do any problem-solving. Keep it moving. Role playing merely takes up time if players simply act out parts and invent dialogue. Keep reminding them what to portray; “freeze” the action when it is not demonstrating what it should and ask, “What has to happen next?” Urge all group participants to offer suggestions. The following should occur in successful role plays:

- The persons playing the roles should agree as to what the problem is.
- There should be exploration of possible solutions.
- There should be mutual agreement on a solution.

Facilitator Preparation, Delivery and Style

The facilitator prepares for the session by choosing a lesson from a chapter (tabbed section) that is suited to the thinking and behavior dynamics the group has currently been demonstrating-- a lesson from a

section that closely resembles the kind of thinking most group members seem to engage at present. Facilitators should exercise their own judgement in choosing lessons from the curriculum in an order and sequence suited to the groups’ thinking and behavior patterns. It is neither necessary nor recommended to do exercises in sequence. It will be far more beneficial to choose lessons based on current thinking and behavior of participants.

Many of the exercises in this curriculum will take more than one group session to complete. There is no need to rush to get lessons finished in one session. It is more important to complete the opening recital and delay part of the lesson than to rush through the opening in order to get to the lesson.

Facilitators have a neutral and approachable manner and deal with questions confidently and accurately. The facilitator avoids asking “WHY” about behavior, and instead asks questions like “What were you thinking?” or “What happened?” or “What is your responsibility?” Misbehavior intended to get attention is often ignored. Calm responses that help learners stay on task are directed toward learners who like to disrupt the process or challenge staff. The gentle, but clear and firm message is “No one gets out of participating or out of assigned work by misbehaving.”

The facilitator varies tone and pace to add interest and variety to the lesson. They encourage participation and personal application by asking open-ended questions and paraphrasing learner

comments. They are comfortable with pauses or brief silence and they guide the process without dominating. They stay factual and emotionally neutral when describing behavior or problems and they present options in the form of *limited choices* letting learners make the final decision rather than telling them what to do.

Facilitators adapt their presentation and pace to the functioning level of learners, encouraging learners to paraphrase their understanding and what they hear from other learners. If during instruction facilitators realize that many participants are not getting it, they will retrace some steps with them before moving forward. They may role-model and ask learners to copy their example, make connections to other instances or other class academia, or reframe and repeat key points. In any case, the facilitator knows when to move on and when to linger on a point.

The facilitator summarizes clearly and frequently making key points and includes points made by learners when appropriate. To apply lesson principles the facilitator will often close by asking for commitments from participants to do something different. The facilitator consistently follows-up on the individual and group commitments and in turn, the learners are taking individual ownership of pro social change.

Group Facilitation Checklist

- Avoid telling — offer choices
- Ask open-ended questions to start discussions
- Avoid judging, put-downs and personal jokes — stay factual and brief
- Avoid distancing and diverting — stay in the present and on topic
- Avoid lecturing, probe the group to prompt discovery and allow them to learn through discussion
- Facilitator's demeanor — engaging, but not acting overly familiar with the learners
- Use tactic re-direction questions before administering consequences
- Facilitator does NOT offer lessons in sequence
- Facilitator selects appropriate lessons based on the thinking and behavior demonstrated by most of the group members
- Opening ritual — review rules, creed, common ground, review post-it sticky-notes
- Provide variation in teaching — give concrete examples as often as possible, use visuals, use objects and object lessons
- Be non judgmental when asking questions and providing feedback
- Address the thinking patterns, not behavior
- Model what you teach—respect, cooperation, compromise, healthy social behavior

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Peer Review of My Tactics

Opening

Common Ground: During our time together I will do whatever it takes to offer helpful feedback and learn from the feedback of others.

Objective: (Individuals will receive peer pressure, peer help, and peer accountability to stop particular tactics.)

Instructions

1. Every other group session select 1 group member that the others will evaluate during the regular course of activities for that session. Make the necessary copies of the handout and pass it out.
2. At the close of each session, ask the individual being evaluated to collect and tally the results by adding up how many of each particular tactic was recorded and to report those results in the next group session.
3. The individual being evaluated should bring a written plan and commitment for eliminating their tactics and should be prepared to read it to the group at the beginning of the next session.
4. For the remainder of the initial group session, you may want to discuss what their motives are for using tactics. What they expect to gain or accomplish?
5. Ask them to discuss what it is that responsible people do to interrupt or prevent themselves from using tactics.

Optional Role-Play (see guidelines p.9)

6. Along with the written plan in step # 3 above. The participants can prepare a role-play to demonstrate a scenario where they avoid using tactics. They can use Stay on Track steps from the poster or their Pocket Guide to prepare their role-play. They may need some guidance from you as they prepare. Be sure to review their role-play ideas prior to their presenting to the group. The group should offer feedback on their ideas, not their acting abilities.

Peer Review of My Tactics



Evaluator's Name: _____

Person being evaluated: _____ Date: _____

List the number of each tactic you have observed this person using and the circumstance when the tactic was used.