

Living the Program, Maintaining the Program, Setting Goals, & Managing Conflicts

EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES (EBP): Integrated System of Care; Universal Dual Diagnosis Capabilities; Principles of Empathy and Hope; Motivational Interviewing Approach; Stages of Change Model Design; Strength Based; Skill Building; Solution Focused; Neurochemistry Based Disorders of the Brain; Symptom Identification; Symptom Management; EBP Curriculum Topics, i.e. Nutrition, Stress Management, Cognitive Behavioral, and more...

Consistency in the Group Setting

The importance of *consistency* in a treatment setting can't be overstated. This is especially true when people are placed in vulnerable situations. *Inconsistency* can, at best, increase uncertainty and insecurity for the person receiving services. At worst, unpredictability can create a sense of helplessness while simultaneously decreasing a person's development of self-reliance. In fact, all human beings benefit from a dependable approach in the treatment of chronic disorders. When a person learns they can rely on consistency, they are less stressed and more relaxed. Consistency in the group setting includes the group structure, psychoeducational material, and the approach.

Each agency or facility will have different requirements – such as group receipts or paperwork – however, consistency can still include a structure similar to the following:

1. Group members pick up: a. Clip Board, b. Paper, and c. Pencil/Pen as they enter the room.
2. Group facilitator picks up the group receipts from each person in the group, and/or the group facilitator passes out the sign-in sheet for the group members to sign.
3. Group facilitator provides a Positive Group Beginning, Consistent Psychoeducational Material, Consistent Approach, and a Positive Group Closure.

Psychoeducational Groups and Crisis Event Processing (when requested)

Notes to Facilitator(s):

1. *THE BASICS, Second Edition* meets the definitions and goals of Psychoeducational Groups, Skill Building Groups, and Cognitive Behavioral Groups.
2. Group participants who have become accustomed to Interpersonal Processing Groups – as well as staff who have facilitated them – may find it a challenge to now facilitate Psychoeducational Groups.
3. Likewise, facilitators who may have followed a more lecture-style education presentation, may find it challenging to now devote at least 1/3rd of group time to specific topic discussions and interactions.
4. Both types of groups (Interpersonal Processing Groups and Psychoeducational Groups) are extremely important, yet each has different goals and structure.
5. The structure of Psychoeducational Groups, Skill Building Groups, and/or Cognitive-Behavioral Groups in no way means that there will not be *interaction* – far from it. It just means that the interactions, discussions, and exercises will be about the topic(s) of each group.
6. Facilitators *may* – or not – still want to allow time in each group for the group member(s) to discuss a crisis that may have occurred since the last group.
7. We do know, of course, that *every* person in group is typically experiencing many challenges each and every week; however, most of these incidents are often best resolved in ways other than group time where the event does not pertain to every group member.
8. Suggested responses to a challenge, problem, or crisis can also include suggesting the person contact their primary care provider; schedule a 1:1 appointment; reschedule their next 1:1 to an earlier time; or, meet with the facilitator after group to explore options and develop a plan.
9. A facilitator would, of course, not “*grade*” an event as being worthy or not for group time. If a person requests individual time in the group, then that would be accepted as valid and time allotted at the end of the group.
10. Over time, the group begins to understand the differences between a situation, a challenge, a problem, or a crisis and can make decisions to utilize group time or continue with the current psychoeducational topic.

Prepare Professionals

Suggestions for professionals to prepare themselves for group typically includes:

1. Review all content material, appendices, and/or handouts *prior* to group to avoid a lecturing style.
2. Decide beforehand the *key points* to be covered in each group to produce flexibility for group responses, discussions, or questions.
3. Gain an overall understanding of the content so summarizing is possible in order to create an interactive facilitation style.
4. Determine the group structure to achieve the essential balance between education and discussions.
5. Check group room to be sure there are enough clipboards, pencils or pens, and markers or chalk for the board.
6. Make enough copies of any handouts *before* group.
7. Write any group content on the board *prior* to the beginning of group whenever possible.

Master Guide & Master Tips to Professionals

Note: *The Master Guide* (located at the beginning of Volume I & II) and the *Master Tips to Professionals* (located at the back of Volume I) have many topics to assist in the group process like Master Tip #39: Suggestions For Managing Handouts For Groups (pages Master Tips 64-67). Other tips include:

1. Master Guide: Interactive Style (pages Master Guide 10-11)
2. Master Tip #1: Suggestions for Beginning Group (pages Master Tips 1-4)
3. Master Tip #3: Empathetic Treatment Approach (pages Master Tips 7-9)
4. Master Tip #4: Promoting Hope (page Master Tips 9)
5. Master Tip #5: Maintaining a Consistent, Nonjudgmental, and Positive Attitude (pages Master Tips 10-13)
6. Master Tip #12: Responding to Requests for Copies of APPENDICES (pages Master Tips 27-29)
7. Master Tip #13: Depth of Psychoeducational Content (pages Master Tips 29-30)
8. Master Tip #14: Group Closure Suggestions (pages Master Tips 30-31)
9. Master Tip #16: Motivational Interviewing (pages Master Tips 31-32)

Present Curriculum/Topic

1. It is extremely important that each group participant leave every group with more Psychoeducation than they came in with – which may also include discussing a “familiar topic” yet with a “present-day” focus. Psychoeducational Groups are designed to provide education about all areas related to the management of Substance Use Disorders and Psychiatric Disorders. Psychoeducational Groups are not Interpersonal Processing Groups – even though interaction and processing the particular *psychoeducational topic(s)* is essential to individualizing the topic(s) or skill(s) presented.
2. It is recommended that a minimum of 1/3rd of group time be devoted to interaction (therapeutic counseling *topic* discussions). This can be accomplished – depending on the individual style of the group facilitator(s) – by any “present education-interact/discuss – present education-interact/discuss” combination while still structuring the group to include the curriculum/topic education to be covered.
3. The presentation of material will, of course, be modified by the facilitator to match the functioning skills of group participants. It is important to note, however, that *THE BASICS, Second Edition* was written in a conversational language while taking into consideration a wide-range of symptom acuity and severity. Persons with co-occurring psychiatric and substance disorders benefit from learning about their disorders and how to manage them, as do all individuals with any chronic disorder(s). Each group participant will retain what is meaningful to them at the present time.

Group Beginning Suggestions

A positive group beginning (and ending) is extremely important. There are many ways to begin (and end) a group in a positive way. Suggestions to choose from can include:

1. Reading the Thought For The Day from a meditation book. (Note: Meditation books that also contain an index at the end of the book – such as *Easy Does It* – are helpful in choosing a specific reading that matches the topic(s) presented in group like Self-Esteem.), or
2. Reading an inspirational or humorous curriculum handout from *THE BASICS, Second Edition*, or
3. Practicing a deep breathing or a stretching exercise, *or*
4. Sharing of one thing that each person is grateful for today, *or*
5. Sharing of one positive thing that he/she did that contributed to their recovery in the past few days, *or*
6. Reading an AA Slogan with a brief explanation or AA/NA/Dual Recovery inspirational reading.



* Recommended Beginning: Breathing Exercise (located on page Master Tips 3)

Practice Curriculum/Topic

Practicing subject material is the best way participants can internalize and personalize the curriculum content. Practice includes the group interactions, worksheets, exercises, handouts, and content discussions.

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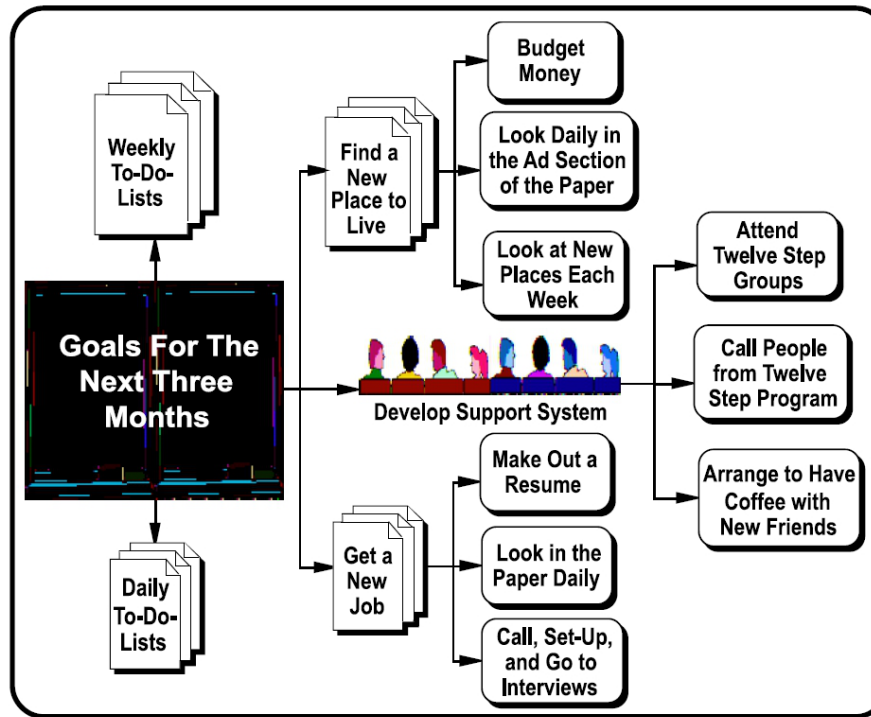
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Based on a 2-Hour group: Two 50 minute segments	Time-Frame
Group Beginning	20 Minutes Total
Positive group beginning (suggestions are located on the previous page).	5 Minutes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief Group Introductions: (Note: The <i>interactions</i> in a psychoeducational group are discussions about the <i>topics</i>, not interpersonal processing or case management questions which do not apply to the entire group.) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask the group members to tell the group their name. b. Welcome any group members who are new to this group or phase. 2. Crisis Processing (when requested and optional): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask the group if anyone has experienced a crisis since their last group, and if they need/want additional time in this group to discuss it, i.e. what happened, how they managed the crisis, and/or explore options and develop a plan. b. Let the person(s) know that you will allow time at the end of this group for them to share their experience and receive support from their fellow group members. 	<div style="text-align: center;"> 10 Minutes  </div>
<p><u>Summarize Introduction of the Group Topic and Why It's Important:</u> <i>Knowledge practiced becomes wisdom</i> (K. Hickey, personal communication, March 23, 2001)</p> <p>Continued recovery will mean never having to deal with <i>active</i> addictions again, but you'll have to deal with sobriety each and every day or you'll lose it. Continued recovery means not having to cope with Psychiatric Disorders that go untreated and get worse, but it also means working a program each and every day. It's as <i>simple</i> as that – even though it isn't <i>easy</i>. (Subject 8-64)</p> <p>There are many skills that are extremely important to the recovery process. Two of those are setting goals and managing conflict. In fact, the importance of conflict management can't be overemphasized for every person – whether they have a disorder or not. All human beings experience conflict, disagreements, and differences of opinion. Yet, we seldom get information on how to resolve conflicts or how to fight fair. Unresolved conflict can make it more difficult to remain abstinent and more of a challenge in maintaining stabilization of psychiatric disorders.</p> <p>Today we will talk about living the program, maintaining recovery, setting goals, & conflict management.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> 5 Minutes  </div>

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Psychoeducation Part I: Topics & Focus	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions	Time- Frame
Living The Program	Subject 8-64 – 8-65	1. Summarize one paragraph. 2. Name the five “Just for Today...” referring to the examples located in the text.	30 Minutes
Developing Advanced Skills to Maintain Recovery	Subject 8-65	Summarize one paragraph.	
Goals and Decisions	Subject 8-65	1. Summarize two paragraphs. 2. Illustrate GRAPHIC ONE shown below. 3. State and discuss the three examples provided in the graphic.	

GRAPHIC
ONE



Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion:

To the Group:

1. What comments do you have so far?
2. When a person sets a goal it's always helpful – even necessary – to brainstorm different ideas or ways to start toward accomplishing the larger goal.
3. Remember brainstorming just means throwing out ideas as you dream them up or think about them – there is never a “right” or a “wrong” with brainstorming.



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Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion: (continued)

Time-Frame

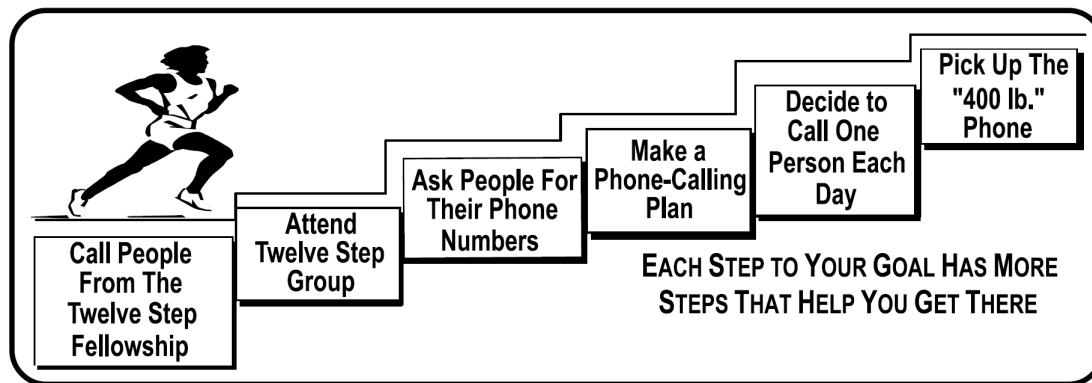
To the Group: (continued)

4. Brainstorming doesn't mean you will pick each of the ideas – it just means you want as many ideas to choose from – so have some fun with it.
5. What goal does someone have on their *weekly* to-do-list? Can you offer the secondary goals or things that would be helpful in accomplishing that goal? What other suggestions to meet this goal does the group have in addition to the ones already stated?
6. What other goal is on another person's *weekly* to-do-list? What are some brainstorming ideas for that goal?
7. What goal does someone have on their *daily* to-do-list? Can you offer the secondary goals or things that would be helpful in accomplishing that goal? What other suggestions to meet this goal does the group have in addition to the ones already stated?
8. What other goal is on another person's *daily* to-do-list? What are some brainstorming ideas for that goal?




continued

Psychoeducation Part I: Topics & Focus (continued)	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions
Setting Goals and The Steps to Get There	Subject 8-66	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize one paragraph. 2. Illustrate GRAPHIC TWO shown below. 3. State the example provided in the graphic and explain the process of taking steps by setting small goals to reach a larger goal. 4. For Example: if the goal is to “<i>Call People From the Twelve Step Fellowship</i>” there are many steps to be taken before the phone is actually picked up – the phone that may seem like it weighs 400 lbs!. 5. Notice in GRAPHIC TWO below that there could even be more steps before “Attend 12 Step Group” like getting a schedule of AA meetings, deciding on the meeting to attend, looking up the address, arranging transportation to the meeting, etc.

GRAPHIC
Two



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Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion: (continued)					Time-Frame																		
To the Group: 1. Every goal has specific steps. In fact, there are often many, many smaller steps – and each step along the way is a success. 2. Will someone offer an example of a goal they have at this time? 3. Brainstorm as a group as many small steps you can think of to meet the goal. 4. What other goal does someone have at this time? 5. Brainstorm as a group any ideas or steps to get there. 6. Remember – <i>each</i> and <i>every</i> step is a success and an important step forward! 7. Even a step you may decide to not take again is still a <i>learning</i> and <i>trying</i> experience.					continued 																		
Break					10 Minutes																		
Psychoeducation Part II: Topics & Focus		Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions		Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing																	
Conflict Management		Subject 8-66	Summarize one paragraph.		15 Minutes 	20 Minutes 																	
Communication Helpful to Resolving Conflict		Subject 8-66	1. Summarize one paragraph. 2. Name the first nine of the suggested eighteen suggestions to resolving conflict and guidelines for fighting fair. 3. Refer to the text for explanations of each.																				
<table><tr><td>1</td><td>USE “I” STATEMENTS</td><td>4</td><td>WATCH TIMING</td><td>7</td><td>DELAY YOUR RESPONSE</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>AVOID “I FEEL THAT YOU...”</td><td>5</td><td>BE PATIENT & ACTUALLY HEAR</td><td>8</td><td>AFFIRM THE OTHER’S FEELINGS</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>SLOW DOWN</td><td>6</td><td>NEGOTIATE THE RELATIONSHIP</td><td>9</td><td>AGREE ON THE BEST TIME TO TALK</td></tr></table>		1	USE “I” STATEMENTS	4	WATCH TIMING	7	DELAY YOUR RESPONSE	2	AVOID “I FEEL THAT YOU...”	5	BE PATIENT & ACTUALLY HEAR	8	AFFIRM THE OTHER’S FEELINGS	3	SLOW DOWN	6	NEGOTIATE THE RELATIONSHIP	9	AGREE ON THE BEST TIME TO TALK				
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Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion:																							
To the Group: 1. Is conflict management sometimes difficult for you personally? In what way? 2. Have you received any education on conflict management? 3. How was conflict managed in your childhood? Avoided? Expressed in anger? Something else? 4. From the nine steps just discussed – what is the <i>most challenging</i> for you to do, or to remember, or to practice when you are experiencing conflict with another person? 5. Remember, it is understandable and common for people to want to write down their conflicts with another person and then just give the list to the other person and say “Here – this is what <i>you</i> need to do and everything will be better!” Except it doesn’t work that way.																							

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Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion: (continued)						Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing
To the Group: (continued)						15 Minutes	20 Minutes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> However, it can be helpful to share these conflict management steps with the person in your life that you want to resolve conflict with or to learn to fight fair. However – remember you can’t change another person – only <i>yourself</i>. And whether the <i>other</i> person “fights fair” or not, changing <i>your</i> patterns of conflict resolution will be extremely important to <i>you</i> and <i>your</i> recovery. From the nine steps we just discussed – which ones do you <i>already</i> practice to help you resolve conflict? Which two would be the most helpful to you personally in managing conflict or fighting fair? Which one(s) will you begin to practice in your communication with others? Perhaps one or two that might actually <i>prevent</i> conflict before it begins? What would be the <i>most helpful</i> for <i>you</i> to practice or remember the next time you experience conflict? 							
Psychoeducation Part II: Topics & Focus (continued)		Pages & Location		Presentation Suggestions			
Communication Helpful to Resolving Conflict (continued)		Subject 8-66 – 8-67		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Name the last nine of the suggested eighteen steps to resolving conflict and guidelines for fighting fair. Refer to the text for explanations of each. 			
10	TAKE YOUR THOUGHTS & FEELINGS INTO CONSIDERATION	13	STAY ON ONE ISSUE	16	DON'T FIGHT DIRTY		
11	LISTEN, CLARIFY MAJOR POINTS & ASK FOR FEEDBACK	14	ALWAYS CONSIDER COMPROMISE	17	FORGET THE PAST & STAY IN THE PRESENT		
12	DON'T ASSUME OR PREDICT	15	ALLOW FOR TIME-OUTS WHEN NEEDED	18	CLOSE WITH RESTATEMENT & CHECK-IN		
Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion:							
To the Group:							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> From the nine steps to resolving conflict and guidelines that we just discussed – which ones do you <i>already</i> practice to help you resolve conflict? Which two would be the most helpful to you personally in managing conflict or fighting fair? Which one(s) will you begin to practice in your communication with others? Perhaps one or two that might actually <i>prevent</i> conflict before it begins? What would be the <i>most helpful</i> for <i>you</i> to practice or remember the next time you experience conflict? 							

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Crisis Processing	Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the group member(s) to tell the group what happened. 2. Explore options and/or develop an immediate plan for coping. 3. Allow the group to offer support. 	10 Minutes	continued
Group “Paper Work”	Time-Frame	
Group participants fill out Group Notes.	5 Minutes	
Group Closure	Time-Frame	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share one thing you each will take away from the group today, <i>or</i> 2. What would be the most helpful step for you to practice or remember the next time you experience conflict?, <i>or</i> 3. Share one thing each of you will do today or tonight to protect your recovery, <i>or</i> 4. Read an inspirational message or thought for the day of your choice. 	5 Minutes	