

Working Through and Coping with Neurological Processes

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)


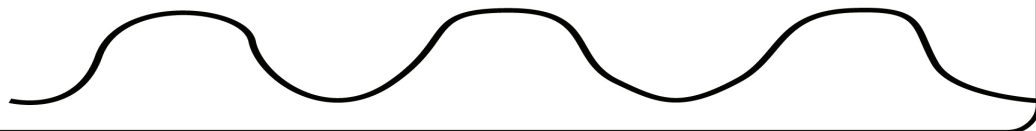
Practice Curriculum/Topic

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.

Working Through and Coping With Neurochemical Processes Volume II; Subject Five; Pages: Subject 5-15 – 5-24

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 inter-personal 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. 	10 Minutes 
<p><u>Summarize Introduction of the Group Topic and Why It's Important (page Subject 5-14):</u> <i>Augment</i> means to increase or to make greater. When stress is put on the human body, the nervous system responds in a way that is intensified, amplified, or <i>augmented</i>. For example, when the doctor checks reflexes by tapping on the knee with an instrument that looks like a small hammer, the body produces a reaction in the form of a knee jerk. Pressing the palms of the hands together for a few seconds would <i>augment</i> or make the reaction <i>greater</i>. The doctor will now get a greater “knee jerk” response.</p> <p>In early recovery there will be many times when augmenting – based on the brain and body healing – will occur. In other words, due to the stress brought about by the cellular changes in the system, individuals can experience feelings with such intensity that it feels overwhelming. It is important to understand that in an addiction, it's not just the feeling you are having but the <i>intensity</i> of the feeling. This is not necessarily good or bad, it is just a physiological phenomenon that occurs in the neurological system during augmentation.</p> <p>Today, we will focus on how to work through and cope with these neurological processes.</p>	5 Minutes 

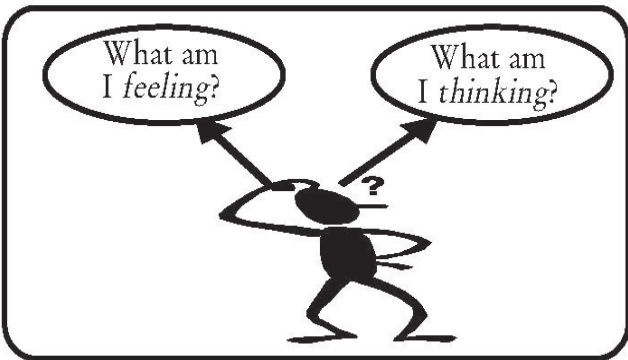
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Psychoeducation Part I: Topics & Focus	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions	Time- Frame						
Augmentation Intensifies Emotions	Subject 5-14 – 5-15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize two paragraphs. 2. Discuss the <i>daily</i> augmentation graph seen below. 3. Summarize four paragraphs. 4. Discuss the <i>weekly</i> augmentation graph seen below. 5. Summarize one paragraph. 6. Discuss the three important points seen in the table below. Note: This is the important “hope” information! 	30 Minutes						
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>EXAMPLE: NUMBER OF AUGMENTING TIMES IN ONE <u>DAY</u> PLUS LENGTH OF TIME EACH EPISODE LASTS</p> <p>DEPRESSED LEVEL 8</p> <p>“BLUE” LEVEL 5</p> <p>SADNESS LEVEL 3</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>EXAMPLE: NUMBER OF AUGMENTING TIMES IN ONE <u>WEEK</u> PLUS LENGTH OF TIME EACH EPISODE LASTS</p> <p>DEPRESSED LEVEL 8</p> <p>“BLUE” LEVEL 5</p> <p>SADNESS LEVEL 3</p>  </div>									
<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td>Augmented emotional responses will lessen in intensity.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td>Augmentation won’t happen as often.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td>Times of augmentation won’t last as long once they occur.</td> </tr> </table>				1	Augmented emotional responses will lessen in intensity.	2	Augmentation won’t happen as often.	3	Times of augmentation won’t last as long once they occur.
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Blaming <i>Internal</i> Emotions on <i>External</i> People, Places, and Things	Subject 5-15 – 5-16	Summarize two paragraphs.							
Animal Studies	Subject 5-16	Summarize two paragraphs.							
Working Through and Coping With Neurological Processes	Subject 5-16 – 5-17	Summarize five paragraphs.							
First, Lighten Up 😊	Subject 5-17 – 5-18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize two paragraphs. 2. Read “A Little Story About a Woman and a Brain Disorder.” 3. Summarize remaining one paragraph. 							











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Psychoeducation Part I: Topics & Focus (continued)	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions	Time- Frame
Don't Analyze or Psychologize Augmented Emotions	Subject 5-18	Summarize five paragraphs.	Continued ↓
Short-Term Pain Equals Long-Term Gain	Subject 5-19	Summarize one paragraph.	
Discomfort and Pain Can Be Necessary, Helpful, and Motivating	Subject 5-19	Summarize one paragraph.	
Break			10 Minutes



Psychoeducation Part II: Topics & Focus	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions	Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing
Suppressed Feelings Come Out Somewhere	Subject 5-20	Summarize four paragraphs.	15 Minutes ↓	20 Minutes ↓
Difficulty in Sharing Feelings Is Common	Subject 5-20	Summarize two paragraphs.		
Don't Let Emotions Drive Your Bus	Subject 5-21	Summarize seven paragraphs.		
The Recovery Process and Emotions	Subject 5-22	Summarize one paragraph.		
Overreacting and Under-Reacting	Subject 5-22	Summarize one paragraph.		
Feelings Are Not Always Accurate	Subject 5-22	Summarize one paragraph.		
Delaying Response Gives Time to Check Out Over or Under-Reactions	Subject 5-22	Summarize three paragraphs.		
Balance Between Suppressing and Overly Expressing Emotions	Subject 5-23	1. Summarize two paragraphs. 2. Illustrate graphic to show a visual.		
				

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Psychoeducation Part II: Topics & Focus (continued)	Pages & Location	Presentation Suggestions	Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing
<p>To the Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What comments to you have at this time? 2. Are emotions difficult to manage? 3. Is it uncomfortable to share feelings with others? 4. Do you typically act on your emotions without <i>thinking</i> very much? 5. Or do you stay mostly in your head (thinking) and are not very aware of how you <i>feel</i>? 6. Do you feel balanced between your thinking and your feeling? 7. What ideas do you have for achieving more balance in these areas? 			 Continued 	 Continued 

Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion:			Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing																						
Facing Emotions Without Addictive Behaviors Takes Courage	Subject 5-23	Summarize one paragraph.	 15 Minutes 	 20 Minutes 																						
Identifying Feelings	Subject 5-23	Name emotional states located in the table below:																								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>1</td><td>HAPPY</td><td>3</td><td>MAD</td><td>5</td><td>AFRAID</td><td>7</td><td>STRONG</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>SAD</td><td>4</td><td>CONFUSED</td><td>6</td><td>WEAK</td><td>8</td><td>GUILTY</td></tr> </table>					1	HAPPY	3	MAD	5	AFRAID	7	STRONG	2	SAD	4	CONFUSED	6	WEAK	8	GUILTY						
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Uncomfortable Emotional States	Subject 5-23	Name uncomfortable feelings located in the table below:																								
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Unhealthy Ways of Reacting to Intense or Unpleasant Feelings	Subject 5-23 – 5-24	Name the common unhealthy ways found in the table below:																								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>1</td><td>SUBSTANCE ABUSE</td><td>3</td><td>ACTING OUT</td><td>5</td><td>DEFENSIVE BEHAVIORS</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>CUTTING OR HARMING SELF</td><td>4</td><td>AVOIDANCE</td><td>6</td><td>SUPPRESSING EMOTIONS</td></tr> </table>			1	SUBSTANCE ABUSE	3	ACTING OUT	5	DEFENSIVE BEHAVIORS	2	CUTTING OR HARMING SELF	4	AVOIDANCE	6	SUPPRESSING EMOTIONS												
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Skill Building Exercise and Discussion - Suggestions for topic discussion:			Time-Frame with Crisis Processing	Time-Frame without Crisis Processing					
Becoming Aware of Feelings and Emotions in Recovery	Subject 5-24	1. Summarize one paragraph. 2. Name/discuss information in the table below:	Continued 	Continued 					
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Learning to recognize your feelings.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Learning how to tolerate those feelings.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Developing healthy coping strategies and problem solving skills.</td> </tr> </table>		1			Learning to recognize your feelings.	2	Learning how to tolerate those feelings.	3	Developing healthy coping strategies and problem solving skills.
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3	Developing healthy coping strategies and problem solving skills.								
<p>To the Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What feeling would you identify with right now? Right at this moment, i.e. Happy, Sad, etc.? If you don't know... that's OK too. 2. Which uncomfortable emotional state is the most uncomfortable for you personally, i.e. Depression, Fear, etc.? 3. At the times you may choose a less than healthy way to express your emotions, what would that be, i.e. Avoidance, Acting Out, etc.? 4. What goal(s) do you have in the future for managing your emotions and feelings? 									
Crisis Processing			Time-Frame						
<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						
“Paper Work”			Time-Frame						
Group participants fill out Group Notes.			5 Minutes						
Group Closure			Time-Frame						
<p>“Risk Taking Is Free” Handout located at the back of Subject Five. Presentation suggestions include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the handout to the group, <i>or</i> 2. Give a copy of the handout to each group member, <i>or</i> 3. Hand a copy to a group member and ask them to read aloud to the group. 			5 Minutes						