

T.L.C. Facilitator's Manual

Staying Healthy Module Session #9: Staying Calm (2 hrs)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Youth will practice more than one relaxation exercise and identify which helps them to relax the most.
2. Youth will be able to relax themselves.
3. Youth will be able to talk themselves through difficult encounters.
4. Youth will be able to substitute helpful thoughts for hindering thoughts.

RATIONALE:

There is ample evidence that high levels of stress negatively effect physical functioning and the immune system, in particular. Therefore, stress reduction can make a valuable contribution to staying healthy.

There are two approaches to coping with stress. Both are active in most stressful situations. One type of coping response attempts to fix problems and the other type tries to make the person feel better. Throughout the previous workshops, social problem solving has been emphasized. It is an effective reducer of stress because it enables people to find solutions to their problems. In this session, youth will work on coping strategies that may help them feel better.

This session teaches relaxation techniques, the use of self-talk, and how to counter negative thoughts. Relaxation has proven to be one of the most effective stress management tools. It has been used in managing emotions, coping with physical illness, and coping with psychological disorders. Studies have shown that HIV-positive men can use relaxation combined with exercise to improve immune system functioning.

Another effective stress management tool is self-talk. Self-talk takes advantages of the endless chatter that goes on in our minds and uses it as a guide to getting through provocative situations. In effect, people learn to prepare for a situation and to coach themselves during the interaction.

Finally, the session will teach youth how to identify thoughts that increase their distress and how to substitute helpful thoughts in their place. Such thought types as over-generalization, jumping to conclusions, and catastrophizing are dealt with.

Rev. 6-94

SUMMARY:

1. Welcome the youth. Review between-session goals and efforts to make life better. Do a lottery. Present the day's agenda. (20 minutes)
2. Practice using self-talk in provocative situations. (25 minutes)
3. Practice using three kinds of relaxation and creating one's own relaxation approach. (35 minutes)
4. Identify and correct unhelpful thoughts. (20 minutes)
5. End with goal setting and group appreciation. (20 minutes)

MATERIALS:

Module 1 Attendance Sheet
Lottery tickets
Lottery envelope
Lottery prize
"Thanks"
Newsprint and pens
Feeling Thermometer
Examples of Self-talk
Self-talk cards
Goal Summary Sheet
Goal Cards
Goal Setting Chart
Script: "Oh, My Aching Back"
Chart of Muscle Groups
Hand out of Muscle Groups
Relaxation sequence: Muscle groups
Relaxation sequence: On the Beach Relaxation
Relaxation sequence: Breathing
Quick Relaxations
Thinking that Causes Tension

Note to the Facilitator: **Bold** letters tell you what each exercise is to accomplish. CAPITAL letters tell you what to do. Small case letters give you an example of what to say. Feel free to put what you say into your own words.

NOTES TO MYSELF (REMINDERS, POINTS TO MAKE)

Exercise 1: What Happened Between Sessions?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to build self-esteem, to increase self-efficacy, to enhance group cohesion, to create a positive expectancy, and to present the day's agenda. Positive introductions, "Thanks," reviewing steps taken and efforts to make life better, and a lottery are used to achieve the desired ends.]

■THE FACILITATOR SAYS

I am really pleased to see you here today.

Before we hear what you did to make your life better and how you did on meeting your goal, I want everyone to have a stack of "Thanks", so that you can let others know that you liked what they did, appreciate their being here, or like their style.

■GIVE OUT 20 "THANKS" TO EACH YOUTH.

Between the sessions you were going to take certain steps.

Remember?

You each had a goal or target to achieve.

How did you make out?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF TARGETS. BRAINSTORM
OVERCOMING ONE OR TWO OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVEMENT
IF THEY COME UP. GIVE OUT "THANKS."

As I said before, we are happy that you came today.

To show our appreciation of your attending today's session we will do a lottery.

When you get a lottery ticket, write your name on it and hand it in.

■PASS OUT LOTTERY TICKETS. HAVE THE YOUTH WRITE THEIR NAMES ON THEM. COLLECT THEM, MIX THEM UP, HAVE SOMEONE DRAW A WINNER, AND GIVE THE LOTTERY PRIZE. YOU MAY WANT TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE SURE THAT THOSE YOUTH WHO HAVE NOT WON A LOTTERY YET, HAVE AN INCREASED CHANCE. FOR EXAMPLE, GIVE THEM THREE LOTTERY TICKETS.

I want to take a minute and tell you what we are doing today.

There is ample evidence that getting stressed out is bad for your body.

People who experience lots of stress are much more likely to get sick.

Stress reduces the effectiveness of the immune system.

Think about yourself for a minute.

What kinds of situations really stress you out?

For example, I feel stressed when_____.

■GIVE AN EXAMPLE FROM YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE. IF IT IS EASIER, GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU USED TO FEEL STRESSED, BUT NO LONGER DO.

What are examples that you experience?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF STRESSFUL SITUATIONS.

Thank you for sharing those examples of stressful times.

We want to try to reduce stressful reactions.

Today we will work on three different ways to reduce stress. Those ways are using self-talk, relaxation, and changing unhelpful thoughts.

Exercise 2: How Can I Use Self-talk in Difficult Situations?
(25 minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is to increase the youth's ability to use self-talk to reduce stress in provocative situations. Practicing by responding with the appropriate self-talk in different situations is the approach used.]

If you could slow down your thoughts, you would see that you talk to yourself all the time.

"Man, look who's coming down the hall. Does he look mean. All pissed off. My stomach is jumping. I better get the hell out of here."

We'll try an experiment.

Sit quietly for a few minutes and see if you cannot think and talk to yourself.

■HAVE THE GROUP SIT QUIETLY FOR TWO MINUTES.

Did you have thoughts or talk to yourself?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING.

We want to take advantage of that self-talk and make it help us.

Constructive self-talk can really help you get through a difficult encounter with another person.

When you face a tough situation, it can be broken down into three, or sometimes four parts.

First, is "Getting Ready"--that's preparing yourself for what seems to be an unpleasant experience.

Second, is "Face to Face"--that's dealing with the person, taking the tough time on, being in the middle of it.

Third, can be "Too Much!"--that's when you feel overwhelmed, like maybe your feelings are getting out of

control.

This phase of the tough time doesn't always happen.

You may handle the situation without feeling that you are losing it.

Last, is "Afterwards" --analyzing it and giving yourself some strokes.

There are different kinds of self-talk for each of the four parts.

The self talk is designed to make you feel better and to help you fix the situation.

I am going to hand out some examples of self-talk in each of the four parts of the situation: "Getting Ready," "Face to Face," "Too Much," and "Afterwards."

■PASS OUT "EXAMPLES OF SELF-TALK" AND GO OVER IT.

EXAMPLES OF SELF-TALK

GETTING READY

This is going to be tough, but I can handle it.

I'll take a few deep breaths beforehand.

What is it I have to do?

Here's my plan for how to deal with this.

Don't take it personally.

Don't jump to conclusions.

No matter what other people say or do to me, I am still a good person.

FACE TO FACE

Stay cool, and I'll be in control.

Stick to the issues.

Don't let him rattle me.

I don't need to prove myself.

I can handle it.

I have a right to my point of view.

TOO MUCH!

I'm getting tight, so I better breathe out deeply.

He wants me to get angry.

Don't let him rattle me.

Let him make a fool of himself.

There's no shame in leaving and coming back later.

It isn't worth getting all stressed out.

It won't last much longer.

I'm not giving the control over to him.

AFTERWARDS

IF RESOLVED

It worked out pretty well.

I'll do better next time.

It wasn't as bad as I expected.

I did it!

IF UNRESOLVED

I can do it differently next time.

Forget about it.

Thinking about it only keeps it alive.

These are tough situations and they take time to figure out.

PUT THE SELF-TALK IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Those are just examples of what a person can say to herself or himself.

Have you got the idea?

Now we are going to practice self-talk.

We will use the practice cards.

You will receive a card and pass it as the card says.

The person who gets the card will read you the situation.

Then, you tell us what self-talk you will use.

I'll demonstrate what I mean.

Let's say I passed the card and the person says to me, "Tonight you are going to a party.

If Big Bill is there, he will come over and start pushing you to smoke some crack.

He'll use every trick he can to pressure you.

He'll say you're a dog if you don't smoke some.

What self-talk would you use to get ready for the party?"

I might answer like this: "I'll try to imagine Big Bill coming up to me.

I'll take a few deep breaths just before he gets there.

That will relax me.

When he asks me to smoke, I'll smile, pat him on the back, thank him for the offer, and say 'Not now.'

If he keeps pushing me, I'll go over to some of my friends who don't smoke.

I don't have to prove anything to Big Bill.

What he thinks doesn't make any difference to me.

If he gets too bugged, I can leave.

I'm not letting him play the master and me the slave."

Has everyone got the idea?

Remember that self-talk is what you say to yourself--inside your own head.

Self-talk is not what you say out loud to the person you are dealing with.

Keep the "Examples of Self-Talk" in front of you because you may get some ideas from there.

Here we go.

■PASS OUT THE SELF-TALK CARDS ONE AT A TIME. COACH AS NEEDED. REWARD EVEN PARTIAL PERFORMANCE WITH "THANKS." AFTER EACH PERSON HAS RESPONDED TO THE CARD, ASK FOR FEEDBACK.

What did you like about that self-talk and what would you have said?

■OBTAIN FEEDBACK.

■WHEN THE FEEDBACK IS FINISHED, GO ON TO THE NEXT GROUP MEMBER UNTIL EVERYBODY HAS HAD A TURN TO GIVE SELF-TALK TO A CARD.

SELF-TALK CARDS

1. SELF-TALK

YOU PLAN TO TELL YOUR SISTER THAT YOU ARE HIV-POSITIVE. YOU KNOW SHE WILL START SCREAMING AT YOU AND CRITICIZING YOU. YOU CARE ABOUT HER AND FEEL IT IS TIME SHE KNOWS.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE TO GET READY FOR TELLING YOUR SISTER?

2. SELF-TALK

YOUR PARTNER TURNS TO YOU AND SAYS, "COME ON. TAKE SOME CRACK. IT WILL LOOSEN YOU UP. SEX IS MUCH BETTER WHEN YOU GET HIGH. DON'T LET ME DOWN NOW. I'M SERIOUS. LET'S GET IT ON." YOU DON'T WANT TO MIX DRUGS AND SEX, AND YOU WANT TO PRACTICE SAFER SEX.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE DURING THIS DISCUSSION WITH YOUR PARTNER?

3. SELF-TALK

YOU HAD THIS BIG FIGHT WITH YOUR PARTNER. IT MADE YOU REAL NERVOUS. YOU INSISTED THAT YOUR PARTNER CUT DOWN ON GETTING DRUNK. YOUR PARTNER SCREAMED AND CRIED. YOUR PARTNER SAID YOU DIDN'T LOVE THEM ANYMORE AND

THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE WITHOUT GETTING HIGH. IT WAS TOUGH, BUT YOU STUCK TO YOUR POSITION AND GOT THROUGH IT. YOU DID CALL YOUR PARTNER A FEW NAMES AND YOU WISH YOU HADN'T.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE IN THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU DID?

4. SELF-TALK

ALL WEEK LONG YOU HAVE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO TONIGHT. YOU PLAN TO HAVE RED HOT SEX WITH THIS NEW PARTNER OF YOURS. YOU GET SO TURNED ON WITH YOUR NEW PARTNER THAT YOU ALMOST GO OUT OF YOUR LOVING MIND. YOU WANT TO BE TURNED ON DURING SEX, BUT YOU ALSO WANT TO PRACTICE SAFER SEX. YOU ARE AFRAID THAT YOU'LL GET SO CARRIED AWAY YOU WON'T CARE ABOUT USING A CONDOM AT THE LAST MOMENT.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR TONIGHT?

5. SELF-TALK

YOU JUST TOLD YOUR PARTNER THAT YOU WANT TO SEE OTHER PEOPLE AND NOT BE TIED DOWN ANYMORE. YOUR PARTNER STARTS CALLING YOU NAMES AND SAYING YOU ARE UNFAITHFUL. YOUR PARTNER CRIES AND CRIES, ACTING VERY HURT.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE DURING THIS FACE TO FACE SITUATION?

That was very good.

How do people feel now?

■CHECK FEELINGS AND GIVE OUT "THANKS."

What kinds of self-talk would you use in addition to what we came up with here?

What have you found that works well for you?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING AND DISCUSSION.

Exercise 3: How Can I Use Relaxation to Stay Calm?
(35 minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is to increase the youth's ability to relax. Taking the youth through different relaxation approaches (physical, visualization, and breathing) and having them make up some ways of their own are the approaches used.]

Now, we will try another way to stay calm.

To start off, could I have two volunteers to play the parts in a brief scene from the soaps?

■SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS. DECIDE WHICH PARTS THEY
WILL PLAY. GIVE THEM THE SCRIPT AND HAVE THEM READ
THE SCENE ALOUD TO THE GROUP.

OH, MY ACHING BACK!
(GIRLS'/BOYS' GROUP)

KAREN/KEVIN: Will you do me a favor?

JOYCE/JOHN: Sure.

K: Massage my neck and shoulders. They are so sore.

J: Wow! Are you tight.

K: That feels great.

J: Are your neck and shoulders where you feel tension?

K: I don't know. I thought I must have done something to them.

J: Can you tell when you are getting tense?

K: I'm tense all the time. Now that you mention it, I feel tight all over. I get headaches. My stomach is upset. My hands sweat.

J: Can you tell when its starting to come on?

K: I don't know. I never thought of it. There's nothing I can do about it.

J: You are wrong there. You could learn how to relax and stop yourself from getting too tense.

K: Don't criticize me.

J: I didn't mean to. I just thought some relaxation might help you control your tension. Let's give it a try.

THE END

That was great!

■GIVE THE PLAYERS "THANKS."

As you can guess, the next technique for reducing stress is relaxation.

Over and over again relaxation has been shown to help people deal with many emotions, as well as tension.

There is even evidence to show that relaxation can strengthen the immune system in people with HIV.

A little while ago you shared some situations in which you felt tense.

What are some stressful situations that happened in the last three days?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF RECENT SITUATIONS IN WHICH TENSION IS HIGH. TRY TO HAVE EVERYONE COME UP WITH A SITUATION THAT IS PERSONAL FOR THEM.

People can detect the early warning signs of tension in their bodies.

However, there are different ways to experience tension.

For example, some people feel it in their stomachs, others develop sweaty palms, and others person might get headaches.

What physical signs tell you that you are getting tense or stressed?

■ENCOURAGE EACH YOUTH TO IDENTIFY HIS OR HER EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF TENSION AND SHARE IT WITH THE GROUP.

Our goal in this part of the workshop is to teach you some different relaxation approaches that you can use.

Some kinds of relaxation techniques will work for one person but not for another.

Therefore, we will do three different ones: physical, imagining, and breathing.

That way you can see which one you like best.

We will start with a physical relaxation approach.

In the physical relaxation procedure we work on muscles.

Here are the muscle groups.

■PUT UP A CHART OF THE MUSCLE GROUPS. AS YOU READ EACH GROUP, POINT TO THE MUSCLE ON YOUR OWN BODY.

MUSCLE GROUPS

Hand and lower arm, right, left, then both together

Upper arm, right, left, and then both together

Lower leg and foot, right, left, and then both together

Thighs

Chest (and breathing)

Shoulders and lower back

Back of neck

Lips

Eyes

Lower forehead

Upper forehead

Now, I want you to tense each muscle.

After I demonstrate tensing the muscle, you do it.

■TELL THE GROUP TO GET COMFORTABLE IN THEIR CHAIRS.
THEN, GO THROUGH THE PROCEDURE:

Lower arm - Make a fist, palm down, and pull wrist up toward the upper arm.

Upper arm - Tense biceps. With arms by side, pull upper arm toward side without touching. (Try not to tense lower arm while doing this; let lower arm hang loosely.)

For some people, this works best by pushing your elbow down towards the arm of your chair or towards seat of your chair.

Lower leg and foot - Extend leg so it is straight. Point toe upward toward knees.

Thighs - Pull knees together until upper legs feel tense.

Abdomen - Pull in stomach toward back.

Chest and breathing - Take a deep breath and hold it about 10 seconds, then release, at the same time pull shoulder blades together.

Neck - Pull chin down toward chest and at the same time try to prevent it from actually touching chest.

Lips - Press lips together; don't clench teeth or jaw.

Eyes - Close eyes tightly, but don't close too hard. (Be careful if you have contact lenses.)
Wrinkle your nose tightly.

Forehead - Raise eyebrows as high as you can.

Now that you know how to tense your muscles, I will show you how to relax them.

First, close your eyes. Get comfortable in your chair.

Tighten--by making a fist, palm down with your right hand and pulling your wrist towards your upper arm--hold it--PAUSE--now relax.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Now tighten your left hand and lower left arm. PAUSE--hold it--PAUSE--now relax.

Notice the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Push your right elbow down so you tighten your right upper arm. Hold it--PAUSE--and relax.

Now, push your left elbow down--hold it tense to tighten your upper left arm--PAUSE--now let it relax.

You're becoming aware of the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Let's move to your legs. Tighten your right foot and lower right leg by extend your leg and pulling your toe toward your knee--hold it. PAUSE. Now, let your right foot and leg relax.

Tighten and relax your left foot and lower left foot. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax both your thighs. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your abdomen - your stomach muscles. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your chest--take a deep breath and hold it, then let it out slowly. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your shoulders and lower back. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax the back of your neck. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your lips. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your eyes. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your lower forehead. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your upper forehead. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Now, as I count from 1 to 5, feel yourself becoming more and more deeply relaxed.

1...2...3...4...5 PAUSE.

Now let yourself become more alert as I count from 5 to 1.

5...4...3...2...1 PAUSE

Yawn and stretch.

Open your eyes and feel peaceful.

How do you feel after the physical relaxation?

■ENCOURAGE COMMENTS.

Here is a copy of the muscle groups, so that you can practice at home.

■GIVE OUT A COPY OF THE MUSCLE GROUPS CHART AND
RELAXATION SEQUENCE: MUSCLE GROUPS

Now, we will do relaxation based on imagery.

First, get up, walk around and think of something that makes you tense.

Do you have something in mind that makes you tense?

OK, here is the imagination relaxation.

■READ THE RELAXATION SEQUENCE "ON THE BEACH".

RELAXATION SEQUENCE: ON THE BEACH

Get yourself in a comfortable position. PAUSE.

Observe your breathing. PAUSE.

Now, breathe out deeply three times.

One. PAUSE.

Two. PAUSE.

Three. PAUSE.

Close your eyes, if you wish, as we take a little journey.

You are in a little house by the beach. PAUSE.

You open the door to the deck, and, before you can even step outside, the sun greets you warmly.

See how blue the sky is. PAUSE.

Just a few wispy clouds.

Smell the tangy salt air. PAUSE.

Can you feel the breeze gently passing over the skin on your arms? PAUSE.

You walk to the edge of the deck and step down into the fine white sand.

Feel the warm sand between your toes. PAUSE.

You hear the surf breaking and the sea gulls crying.

See the waves slowly rolling on the shore. PAUSE.

You walk on the soft sand, moving closer to the ocean, and spread your towel.

You sit watching the soothing rhythm of the sea.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

You lie there on the empty beach.

Can you feel the sun on your face? PAUSE.

On your shoulders? PAUSE.

On your stomach? PAUSE.

On your arms? PAUSE.

On your legs? PAUSE.

On your feet? PAUSE.

Your whole body becomes one with the sun, waves, sand, and sky.

Can you see the gulls gliding without effort, nodding on the breeze as if they were asleep? PAUSE.

Can you see the gulls gracefully swoop and bank and turn? PAUSE.

Feel the breeze blowing softly, cooling, and cleansing you.

You seem to sink into the sand.

Can you feel your breath becoming deep and slow? PAUSE.

Can you feel your heartbeat--regular, an easy rhythm, strong? PAUSE.

You rest. PAUSE.

You rest a little longer. PAUSE.

Slowly you sit up. PAUSE.

You see a little purple shell carved by the sea, so that it seems to have magical writing on it.

Put it in your pocket.

You stand up. PAUSE.

Walk slowly back to the beach house. PAUSE.

The sand covers your feet and you dig with your toes.

You are almost at the step to the deck.

Step up. PAUSE.

You look back at the ocean feeling so refreshed.

So peaceful. Open the door to the house and go in.

How did that relaxation make you feel?

■ENCOURAGE COMMENTS.

Here is a copy of that relaxation, so that you can use it at home.

■GIVE OUT A COPY OF THE RELAXATION SEQUENCE: ON THE BEACH.

We are almost ready for the last kind of relaxation.

First, get up and walk around.

Think of something that makes you tense.

OK, sit down and we will work on breathing.

■LEAD THE GROUP THROUGH THE BREATHING

RELAXATION.

RELAXATION SEQUENCE: BREATHING

Get yourself in a comfortable position.

Begin by watching your breath. PAUSE.

Just let it come and go naturally. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE-- and out. PAUSE.

Continue to breathe slowly in and out, while you listen to me.

Your abdomen is the balloon where your breath is stored.

Put your hand right below your belly button and feel it move up as you take in air.

Feel your hand rise. PAUSE.

Feel your hand go down as you let the air out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

With your thumb still centered near your belly button, lift the rest of your hand in the air and feel it swing back and forth like a gate as you breathe.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

Lay your hand back down on your abdomen. Now, I want you to start counting your breath.

Out on one. PAUSE.

In on two. PAUSE.

Out on three. PAUSE.

In on four. PAUSE.

Out on five. PAUSE.

In on six. PAUSE.

Out on seven. PAUSE.

In on eight. PAUSE.

Out on nine. PAUSE.

And in on ten. PAUSE. Back to one.

Out on one.

Keep it going.

If a thought gets you off count, go back to one.

If thoughts enter your head, that's ok.

Don't try to stop them. PAUSE

Hear them and let them go. PAUSE

Don't talk with them. PAUSE

Just keep breathing and counting. PAUSE

Do it on your own. LONG PAUSE (about 45 seconds)

Yawn and stretch.

That was very good.

Here is a copy of the breathing relaxation sequence, so that you can use it if you wish.

■GIVE OUT A COPY OF THE BREATHING RELAXATION.

Do you have a sense of which one works best for you?

**■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF WHICH RELAXATION APPROACH
WORKS BEST FOR THEM.**

Here is a copy of some quick relaxations.

Take them and read them over at home. See if any of them work for you.

■PASS OUT THE QUICK RELAXATIONS.

Exercise 4: How Can I Change My Thoughts?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to increase the youth's ability to identify thoughts that lead to tension and to substitute helpful thoughts for these dysfunctional ones. Modeling and responding to unhelpful thoughts are used.]

Often our own thoughts make us tense.

First, it helps to recognize these kinds of thoughts.

Here is a list I want to go over with you.

■HAND OUT "THINKING THAT CAUSES TENSION" AND GO
OVER IT BRIEFLY.

THINKING THAT CAUSES TENSION

1. ALL-OR-NOTHING: You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
2. LABELING: You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself: "I'm a loser."
3. FOCUS ON A SICK TREE INSTEAD OF THE WHOLE FOREST: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it.
4. IGNORE THE POSITIVE: You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or another.
5. JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.
 - a. Mind reading. You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and you don't bother to check this out.
 - b. The Fortune Teller Error. You anticipate that things will turn out badly and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.
6. CATASTROPHIZE: You exaggerate the importance of negative things (such as a goof-up).

7. EMOTIONAL REASONING: You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the ways things really are: "I feel it, therefore, it must be true."
8. SHOULD STATEMENTS: You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts or "musts" and "oughts". This just makes you feel guilty.
9. I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event which in fact you were not primarily responsible for; (e.g., it's a rainy day and you say, "It's my fault, cause I'm in such a lousy mood.")

(Adapted from Burns, D. (1980) Feeling Good, New York: William Morrow)

Can you see yourself in any of these?

Which of these kinds of thinking do you use?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF EXAMPLES OF UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS THAT ARE USED FREQUENTLY.

The next question is, how would you change these thoughts?

Many of them are almost automatic--we are not even aware we are having them.

When you start to feel uncomfortable, check out what you are thinking.

Stop the negative thoughts.

■IN THE NEXT SENTENCE REALLY YELL "STOP!" LOUDLY.

Yell, "Stop!" in your head.

Then, start picking those negative thoughts apart.

Argue against them.

For example, let's say that these were my thoughts.

Nobody likes me.

Everybody looks down on me.

I'm just a dope.

I haven't got a friend in the whole world.

I'll never have any friends.

If I were to challenge these thoughts I could say,

Stop!

What evidence do I have for these conclusions?

I haven't met everybody in the world.

I haven't been everywhere in the world.

Some people like Ed seem to dislike me, but Barry likes me a lot.

I do have some friends.

I will probably develop some new friends in the future.

I am pretty smart--good at what I do. Not a dope.

Have you got the idea?

You want to challenge the thoughts that make things worse for you and substitute helpful thoughts in their place.

We will go around the room.

I will present you with a thought, you tell us how you would challenge it, and what thought you would put in its place.

The rest of you also think about what you would say because I will ask for some feedback.

■GO AROUND THE ROOM. GIVE EACH YOUTH--ONE AT A TIME-- A LINE TO RESPOND TO IN TERMS OF CHALLENGING IT AND SUBSTITUTING A MORE HELPFUL THOUGHT. GIVE OUT "THANKS."

■AFTER EACH PERSON RESPONDS, ASK FOR ONE OR TWO OTHER PEOPLE TO GIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW THEY WOULD HAVE DONE IT. BELOW ARE A LIST OF UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS TO CHOOSE FROM. GIVE ONE TO EACH GROUP MEMBER.

"I'm a total failure."

"My body is ugly."

"I am really stupid."

"The bus driver was mad at me because I dropped the change."

"My lover's really upset because I didn't want to go to the movies."

"If I don't get up on time, the whole day is ruined."

"I was late for my appointment. I can't do anything right."

"I feel sad. Life really sucks."

"I feel terrible when someone looks over my shoulder. I am going to lose this job."

"She hates me."

"The first time I tried the medicine I felt kind of sick. Next time will be terrible."

"My friend is always yelling at me. I must be doing something to irritate my friend."

"I tried to get the attention of someone I would like to know better but was ignored. It looks like I will be without a friend forever."

That was very good.

You challenged the negative thought and came up with a positive one.

Exercise 5: What Is Next?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to build self-esteem, to strengthen group cohesion, and to facilitate generalization of skills to the outside environment. Setting up between session goals and giving appreciation to each other are the processes employed.]

Today we worked on staying calm because feeling all upset can weaken your immune system and create other physical problems.

In this session we learned how to relax, use our own thoughts to guide us through a rough encounter, and how to substitute positive thoughts for negative ones.

In other sessions, we have practiced problem solving, which is another very important way to stay calm.

It is critical to take what was learned here and try it in your daily life.

I would like you to pick one small step that you agree to take between sessions.

Make it something related to what we did today: self-talk, relaxation, and challenging negative thoughts.

For example, you could agree to:

1. Take five minutes at the end of each day and relax, using one of the approaches we did today.
2. Write out what you would say to yourself--your self-talk--when preparing for a difficult situation that you expect to happen during the week.
3. For three days, keep a record of the negative thoughts you catch yourself thinking.
4. Practice one of the many "quick relaxation scenes" we handed out at least once during the week.

When coming up with a goal for between the sessions, remember that the goal should be realistic, clear, not too much or too little, and easy to tell if you did it.

■POST GOAL SETTING CHART.

What step do you agree to take?

■GO AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK EACH YOUTH WHAT STEP HE OR SHE AGREES TO TAKE.

■GO AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK EACH PERSON WHAT HE OR SHE PLANS TO DO. DISTRIBUTE GOAL CARDS, COMPLETE GOAL SUMMARY SHEET FOR SESSION 9.

Those are quite a list of good goals.

In the next session we will be working on _____ (topic).

We will meet on _____ (day and date) at _____ (time and place).

Let's end today with showing appreciation to each other.

Make sure people know that you appreciate what they said and did today, their presence, and their style.

■ENCOURAGE SHOWING APPRECIATION TO EACH OTHER. USE "THANKS" AND PRAISE. MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS INCLUDED.

I'll see you next time.

END OF SESSION ON STAYING CALM

EXAMPLES OF SELF-TALK

GETTING READY

This is going to be tough, but I can handle it.

I'll take a few deep breaths beforehand.

What is it I have to do?

Here's my plan for how to deal with this.

Don't take it personally.

Don't jump to conclusions.

No matter what other people say or do to me, I am still a good person.

FACE TO FACE

Stay cool, and I'll be in control.

Stick to the issues.

Don't let him rattle me.

I don't need to prove my self.

I can handle it.

I have a right to my point of view.

TOO MUCH!

I'm getting tight, so I better breathe out deeply.

He wants me to get angry.

Don't let him rattle me.

Let him make a fool of himself.

There's no shame in leaving and coming back later.

It isn't worth getting all stressed out.

It won't last much longer.

I'm not giving the control over to him.

AFTERWARDS

IF RESOLVED

It worked out pretty well.

I'll do better next time.

It wasn't as bad as I expected.

I did it!

IF UNRESOLVED

I can do it differently next time.

Forget about it.

Thinking about it only keeps it alive.

These are tough situations, and they take time to figure out.

PUT THE SELF-TALK IN YOUR OWN WORDS

CARD 1: SELF-TALK

YOU PLAN TO TELL YOUR SISTER THAT YOU ARE HIV-POSITIVE. YOU KNOW SHE WILL START SCREAMING AT YOU AND CRITICIZING YOU. YOU CARE ABOUT HER AND FEEL IT IS TIME SHE KNOWS.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE TO GET READY FOR TELLING YOUR SISTER?

CARD 2: SELF-TALK

YOUR PARTNER TURNS TO YOU AND SAYS, "COME ON. TAKE SOME CRACK. IT WILL LOOSEN YOU UP. SEX IS MUCH BETTER WHEN YOU GET HIGH. DON'T LET ME DOWN NOW. I'M SERIOUS. LET'S GET IT ON." YOU DON'T WANT TO MIX DRUGS AND SEX, AND YOU WANT TO PRACTICE SAFER SEX.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE DURING THIS DISCUSSION WITH YOUR PARTNER?

CARD 3: SELF-TALK

YOU HAD THIS BIG FIGHT WITH YOUR PARTNER. IT MADE YOU REAL NERVOUS. YOU INSISTED THAT YOUR PARTNER CUT DOWN ON GETTING DRUNK. YOUR PARTNER SCREAMED AND CRIED. YOUR PARTNER SAID YOU DIDN'T LOVE THEM ANYMORE AND THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE WITHOUT GETTING HIGH. IT WAS TOUGH, BUT YOU STUCK TO YOUR POSITION AND GOT THROUGH IT. YOU DID CALL YOUR PARTNER A FEW NAMES AND YOU WISH YOU HADN'T.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE IN THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU DID?

CARD 4: SELF-TALK

ALL WEEK LONG YOU HAVE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO TONIGHT. YOU PLAN TO HAVE RED HOT SEX WITH THIS NEW PARTNER OF YOURS. YOU GET SO TURNED ON WITH YOUR NEW PARTNER THAT YOU ALMOST GO OUT OF YOUR LOVING MIND. YOU WANT TO BE TURNED ON DURING SEX, BUT YOU ALSO WANT TO PRACTICE SAFER SEX. YOU ARE AFRAID THAT YOU'LL GET SO CARRIED AWAY YOU WON'T CARE ABOUT USING A CONDOM AT THE LAST MOMENT.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR TONIGHT?

CARD 5: SELF-TALK

YOU JUST TOLD YOUR PARTNER THAT YOU WANT TO SEE OTHER PEOPLE AND NOT BE TIED DOWN ANYMORE. YOUR PARTNER STARTS CALLING YOU NAMES AND SAYING YOU ARE UNFAITHFUL. YOUR PARTNER CRIES AND CRIES, ACTING VERY HURT.

WHAT SELF-TALK WOULD YOU USE DURING THIS FACE TO FACE SITUATION?

OH, MY ACHING BACK!

KAREN/KEVIN: Will you do me a favor?

JOYCE/JOHN: Sure.

K: Massage my neck and shoulders. They are so sore.

J: Wow! Are you tight.

K: That feels great.

J: Are your neck and shoulders where you feel tension?

K: I don't know. I thought I must have done something to them.

J: Can you tell when you are getting tense?

K: I'm tense all the time. Now that you mention it, I feel tight all over. I get headaches. My stomach is upset. My hands sweat.

J: Can you tell when its starting to come on?

K: I don't know. I never thought of it. There's nothing I can do about it.

J: You are wrong there. You could learn how to relax and stop yourself from getting too tense.

K: Don't criticize me.

J: I didn't mean to. I just thought some relaxation might help you control your tension. Let's give it a try.

THE END

MUSCLE GROUPS

Hand and lower arm, right, left, then both together

Upper arm, right, left, and then both together

Lower leg and foot, right, left, and then both together

Thighs

Chest (and breathing)

Shoulders and lower back

Back of neck

Lips

Eyes

Lower forehead

Upper forehead

RELAXATION SEQUENCE: MUSCLE GROUPS

First, close your eyes. Get comfortable in your chair.

Tighten--by making a fist, palm down with your right hand and pulling your wrist towards your upper arm--hold it--PAUSE--now relax.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Now tighten your left hand and lower left arm. PAUSE--hold it--PAUSE--now relax.

Notice the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Push your right elbow down so you tighten your right upper arm. Hold it--PAUSE--and relax.

Now, push your left elbow down--hold it tense to tighten your upper left arm--PAUSE--now let it relax.

You're becoming aware of the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Let's move to your legs. Tighten your right foot and lower right leg by extend your leg and pulling your toe toward your knee--hold it. PAUSE. Now, let your right foot and leg relax.

Tighten and relax your left foot and lower left foot. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax both your thighs. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your abdomen - your stomach muscles. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your chest--take a deep breath and hold it, then let it out slowly. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your shoulders and lower back. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax the back of your neck. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your lips. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your eyes. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your lower forehead. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Tighten and relax your upper forehead. PAUSE.

Feel the difference between tight and relaxed. PAUSE.

Now, as I count from 1 to 5, feel yourself becoming more and more deeply relaxed.

1...2...3...4...5 PAUSE.

Now let yourself become more alert as I count from 5 to 1.

5...4...3...2...1 PAUSE

Yawn and stretch.

Open your eyes and feel peaceful.

RELAXATION SEQUENCE: ON THE BEACH

Get yourself in a comfortable position. PAUSE.

Observe your breathing. PAUSE.

Now, breathe out deeply three times.

One. PAUSE.

Two. PAUSE.

Three. PAUSE.

Close your eyes, if you wish, as we take a little journey.

You are in a little house by the beach. PAUSE.

You open the door to the deck, and, before you can even step outside, the sun greets you warmly.

See how blue the sky is. PAUSE.

Just a few wispy clouds.

Smell the tangy salt air. PAUSE.

Can you feel the breeze gently passing over the skin on your arms? PAUSE.

You walk to the edge of the deck and step down into the fine white sand.

Feel the warm sand between your toes. PAUSE.

You hear the surf breaking and the sea gulls crying.

See the waves slowly rolling on the shore. PAUSE.

You walk on the soft sand, moving closer to the ocean, and spread your towel.

You sit watching the soothing rhythm of the sea.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

You lie there on the empty beach.

Can you feel the sun on your face? PAUSE.

On your shoulders? PAUSE.

On your stomach? PAUSE.

On your arms? PAUSE.

On your legs? PAUSE.

On your feet? PAUSE.

Your whole body becomes one with the sun, waves, sand and sky.

Can you see the gulls gliding without effort, nodding on the breeze as if they were asleep? PAUSE.

Can you see the gulls gracefully swoop and bank and turn? PAUSE.

Feel the breeze blowing softly, cooling, and cleansing you.

You seem to sink into the sand.

Can you feel your breath becoming deep and slow? PAUSE.

Can you feel your heartbeat--regular, an easy rhythm, strong? PAUSE.

You rest. PAUSE.

You rest a little longer. PAUSE.

Slowly you sit up. PAUSE.

You see a little purple shell carved by the sea, so that it seems to have magical writing on it.

Put it in your pocket.

You stand up. PAUSE.

Walk slowly back to the beach house. PAUSE.

The sand covers your feet and you dig with your toes.

You are almost at the step to the deck.

Step up. PAUSE.

You look back at the ocean feeling so refreshed.

So peaceful. Open the door to the house and go in.

RELAXATION SEQUENCE: BREATHING

Get yourself in a comfortable position.

Begin by watching your breath. PAUSE.

Just let it come and go naturally. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE-- and out. PAUSE.

Continue to breathe slowly in and out, while you listen to me.

Your abdomen is the balloon where your breath is stored.

Put your hand right below your belly button and feel it move up as you take in air.

Feel your hand rise. PAUSE.

Feel your hand go down as you let the air out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

In--PAUSE--and out. PAUSE.

With your thumb still centered near your belly button, lift the rest of your hand in the air and feel it swing back and forth like a gate as you breathe.

In and out. PAUSE.

In and out. PAUSE.

Lay your hand back down on your abdomen. Now, I want you to start counting your breath.

Out on one. PAUSE.

In on two. PAUSE.

Out on three. PAUSE.

In on four. PAUSE.

Out on five. PAUSE.

In on six. PAUSE.

Out on seven. PAUSE.

In on eight. PAUSE.

Out on nine. PAUSE.

And in on ten. PAUSE. Back to one.

Out on one.

Keep it going.

If a thought gets you off count, go back to one.

If thoughts enter your head, that's ok.

Don't try to stop them. PAUSE

Hear them and let them go. PAUSE

Don't talk with them. PAUSE

Just keep breathing and counting. PAUSE

Do it on your own. LONG PAUSE (about 45 seconds)

Yawn and stretch.

THINKING THAT CAUSES TENSION

1. ALL-OR-NOTHING: You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
2. LABELING: You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself: "I'm a loser."
3. FOCUS ON A SICK TREE INSTEAD OF THE WHOLE FOREST: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it.
4. IGNORE THE POSITIVE: You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or another.
5. JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.
 - a. Mind reading. You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and you don't bother to check this out.
 - b. The Fortune Teller Error. You anticipate that things will turn out badly and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.
6. CATASTROPHIZE: You exaggerate the importance of negative things (such as a goof-up).
7. EMOTIONAL REASONING: You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the ways things really are: "I feel it, therefore, it must be true."
8. SHOULD STATEMENTS: You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts or "Musts" and "oughts". This just makes you feel guilty.
9. I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event which in fact you were not primarily responsible for; (e.g., it's a rainy day & you sat "It's my fault, cause I'm in such a lousy mood.")

(Adapted from Burns, D. (1980) Feeling Good, New York: William Morrow)

QUICK RELAXATIONS

1. Waves

- Imagine yourself at the sea shore, looking out on a vast ocean
- See the waves coming over and over
- Hear the sound of the waves, the rhythm of the waves
- Smell the waves, the salty waves

2. The Cloud

- Close your eyes
- See yourself lying on a cloud
- Feel yourself floating
- Feel no weight in your body
- Just feel yourself floating

3. Dunes

- Close your eyes
- See the dunes along the beach
- Imagine lying by the foot of the dunes
- Feel yourself growing comfortable on the sand
- Feel the restful dunes protecting you
- Feel yourself at peace

5. Sky

- Look up at the sky
- Study the sky
- Feel the immensity
- Watch the sky's characteristics
- Read the sky
- Watch the show in the sky

6. The Sun

- Imagine the sun--not too hot--just pleasantly warm on your feet
- Feel the sun warming your legs
- Feel the sun on your abdomen
- Feel the warmth on your chest from the sun
- Feel your fingers and hands warming from the sun
- Feel the sun on your arms and your arms becoming warm
- Feel the sun gently warming your face

7. Mountain Air

- See yourself in the mountains
- Take a deep breath

- Smell the cool, fresh mountain air
- Feel your lungs filling with that sweet, refreshing air
- Breathe again and feel, the cool air coming into your nose
- Smell how pure the mountain air is

8. The Moon

- Close your eyes
- Imagine it is a clear night
- See the full moon brightly shining in the dark night
- Look down at your feet
- See the moon--the whole, huge moon--reflected in a tiny pool of water
- Concentrate on the moon's reflection

9. A Pebble in the Lake

- Imagine sitting beside a clear, blue lake
- Drop a small pebble in the water
- Watch it slowly, slowly float to the bottom
- See the circles on the water's surface
- Watch the circles widen and widen until you feel completely relaxed

10. Tight fist

- Tighten the fist on your right hand
- Hold it, hold it, tighter and tighter
- Release it slowly
- Feel the tension being released
- Tighten the fist on your left hand
- Hold it, tighter and tighter
- Release the fist slowly

- Feel all the tension spread away

11. The Magic circle

- Make a circle with your thumb and forefinger, leaving a 1/4 inch space between them
- Focus on your fingers, the circle, the space
- As you become more relaxed, the thumb and forefinger will close forming a complete circle
- Focus on the circle
- Feel your finger and thumb closing the circle
- As the circle closes, feel the relaxation become deeper and deeper

12. The Neck drop

- Close your eyes
- Let your chin drop to your chest
- Rotate your head slowly from left to right in a complete circle
- Stop and let your chin fall to your chest again
- Now, rotate your head again in a full circle from right to left

13. Warm Hands

- Close your eyes
- Place your right hand, palm down, in your lap
- Concentrate on your hand
- Imagine your hand getting warmer and warmer

- Feel your fingers getting warmer
- Feel your palm getting warmer
- Feel your face and forehead becoming pleasantly cool

14. The Shrug

- Stand up or sit straight
- Let your shoulders drop
- Now bring your shoulders up toward your ears
- Let them drop again
- Shrug your shoulders and release them five times
- Feel your shoulders relax

15. The Stairs

- Close your eyes
- Imagine you are standing at the top of a flight of ten stairs
- Count the stairs
- Imagine at the bottom of the stairs is total peace and harmony
- Slowly descend the stairs one step at a time, counting the stairs as you go
- With each step you are getting closer to total peace
- At step five say, "I'm half way there"
- Feel yourself going deeper and deeper into relaxation
- Go all the way to ten
- At ten say "I am deeply relaxed"

16. Bodiless

- Close your eyes
- Say to yourself "My feet are warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My legs are warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My abdomen is warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My hands are warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My arms are warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My back is warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Say to yourself "My neck and shoulders are warm, heavy and relaxed"
- Feel your whole body become relaxed

17. Music

- Close your eyes
- Listen intently to a piece of soothing, special music
- Hum the piece as you hear it
- Let the music surround you
- Let the music sink into your pores
- Feel the music enter your entire being

18. Texture

- Close your eyes
- Select the feel of a favorite texture such as silk or a down comforter
- Imagine the texture on your skin
- Feel the texture
- Feel yourself pleasantly wrapped in the texture

19. Fragrance

- Close your eyes
- Think of a fragrance you enjoy such as cedar, gardenias, fresh cut grass
- Fix the fragrance in your mind
- Breathe in the fragrance
- Smell the pleasant fragrance
- Imagine yourself in a cloud of fragrance

20. The Phrase

- Close your eyes
- Select a favorite phrase such as "Walk with beauty," "The Lord is my shepherd," "An eternity of endless space"
- Repeat the phrase three times, breathing deeply as you do

21. Pouring Out tension

- Close your eyes
- Extend one hand in front of you with your arm straight
- Turn your palm up and make a small cup with your hand
- Imagine the cup in the palm of your hand being full of tension
- Very, very slowly turn your hand over
- As your hand turns over, feel all the tension spilling out
- The more your hand turns over, the more you are at peace
- Let all the tension pour out

22. The Tub

- Close your eyes
- Imagine lowering yourself slowly into a hot tub
- Feel your feet become warm and heavy
- Feel your legs become warm and heavy
- Feel your whole lower body sink into the warm water
- Feel the water cover your chest
- Feel the warmth spread up over your neck and shoulders
- Feel your whole body become warm and sinking downward into the pleasant water

23. Tingle Breathing

- As you breathe in, feel the air flowing up your nostrils
- As you breathe out, feel the air touching the hairs at the end of your nose
- Feel the tingle as the air brushes across the hair in your nose

- Breathe with awareness of the tingle for about one minute