

T.L.C. Facilitator's Manual

Being Together Module

Session #6: How Can I Be A Good Person? (2 Hours)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Youths will develop their own personal, ethical standards.
2. Youths will identify their own ethical dilemmas with emphasis on substance abuse and sexual transmission.
3. Youths will increase their skills in resolving ethical dilemmas, particularly around self-destructive behavior.

RATIONALE:

The last session ended with good thoughts related to other people and understanding what life is all about. It was also indicated at the beginning of the session that wisdom and compassion are the twin goals that bring peace, harmony, and goodness to life. Through them self-destructive cognitions, affect, and behavior are reduced. The assumption underlying this session is that wisdom and compassion must be demonstrated in daily actions. A sound set of ethical standards is one factor in guiding daily actions and in leading a good life.

Ethical standards are not simply a set of rules to follow. They pose questions about dealing with situations, and every person must decide for him or herself what is the thing to do in this particular situation. It is their relativity that makes them so useful, and their value is found in the way that they deepen the ethical person's relationship to life and all living things. Substance use and unprotected sex are influenced by implementing these ethical standards.

Thus, this session focuses first on identifying what standards each youth will use as a guide to living his or her life. Then these values are framed in ethical dilemmas often focused on sex and drugs, and youths are encouraged to struggle with the decisions involved.

SUMMARY OF SESSIONS:

1. Review experiences that youths had between sessions and introduce the topic for today with a script. (20 minutes)
2. Word-storm "good person" and review an ethical statement. (15 minutes)
3. Have youths write their own ethical statements. (15 minutes)
4. Role play various ethical dilemmas and have group assist in resolving them. Identify a personal ethical dilemma. (40 minutes)
5. Sit and walk slowly. (10 minutes).
6. Agree on new experiences for between sessions and show group appreciation. (20 minutes)

MATERIALS:

Newsprint and marking pens
Script: "I Shouldn't Do It"
Example of Ethical Statement
Pencils
"My Ethical Standards"
Cushions
Experience Sheet
Experience Cards
Example of an Ethical Statement

Exercise 1: What Happened?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to provide support for the youths' new experiences, to increase group cohesion, and to introduce the session's focus. Review of experiences, engaging in an opening ritual and a script are the approaches employed.]

It's good to see you again.

We have been working on improving the quality of your lives by increasing your own inner peace.

The approaches taken are studying the self through sitting and becoming aware of every moment in your life.

Let's open today's session with a saying about the fact that you don't need to change yourself and desire other qualities.

Please take a deep breath, let it out slowly, and silently repeat this thought after me.

■PAUSE

"I am perfect and complete, lacking nothing."

Now please sit for three minutes.

Make sure you have three parts of you making contact: your rear on the front of the cushion and your knees touching the floor.

■HAVE THE YOUTHS GET SEATED.

Get your posture straight.

Imagine a wire from your head pulling it toward the ceiling.

Sway a little bit to settle in to a good position.

**■ASSIST ANY YOUTH WHO NEEDS HELP IN SITTING
CORRECTLY.**

Simply count your breath - 1 to 10.

If thoughts come into your head, note them, and let them float away.

Just watch them - don't get wrapped up in them.

If your counting gets off, go back to 1 and start again.

I'll keep the time for three minutes.

Go ahead and start.

**■HAVE THE YOUTHS SIT FOR THREE MINUTES AND SIT
WITH THEM.**

Time is up.

At the end of the last session you agreed to try some new experiences.

Let's hear how you made out.

■GO AROUND AND HAVE EACH YOUTH REPORT ON WHAT HAPPENED. BE SUPPORTIVE. COACH AS NEEDED. IF A YOUTH DID NOT DO WHAT HE OR SHE AGREED TO, INDICATE THAT PROCEEDING AT ONE'S OWN PACE IS IMPORTANT AND RESPECTED.

That was very good.

To introduce what today is about I need two volunteers to be the Wise Person and the TV reporter.

Who will help out?

■SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS, DECIDE ON WHO WILL READ THE PARTS, GIVE THEM THE SCRIPT AND HAVE THEM READ IT ALOUD TO THE GROUP.

I SHOULDN'T DO IT.

TV REPORTER: This is off the record. There are no mikes on.

WISE PERSON: I have nothing to hide.

TV REPORTER: You may not, but I do. I try so hard to be good, but I always seem to miss the boat.

WISE PERSON: Like what?

TV REPORTER: I went to this party and somebody offered me a snort of coke. I knew I shouldn't but I did.

WISE PERSON: What is wrong with that?

TV REPORTER: Well, it is going to ruin my nose, and I can't think straight. Besides I might get hooked - although it seems impossible.

WISE PERSON: So you believe that you did something you should not have done.

TV REPORTER: Well. I'm only human. Everybody makes mistakes. Nobody's perfect. I didn't want to hurt the feelings of the person who was giving it to me. She is so sensitive. I tried to protect her from criticism by taking the coke. I usually don't do coke anymore.

WISE PERSON: Anything else?

TV REPORTER: Yes. If I made a slip, it would be some special occasion like Mother's Day or a fiftieth wedding anniversary or winning the lottery.

WISE PERSON: Which was it?

TV REPORTER: My friend's dog had puppies. Say, Wise Person, this discussion is not going like I want it to. I'm going to turn the mikes back on and we can talk about something else.

THE END

That was very good.

Thank you for introducing today's session on being a good person.

Do you have reactions to the scene?

■ENCOURAGE SHARING OF REACTIONS. PROBE: ARE THERE ANY OTHER RATIONALIZATIONS THE TV REPORTER COULD HAVE USED?

Last time we learned about the eight ways to lead a life of happiness and to reduce suffering.

First there was positive talk, positive actions, and positive work.

The next step is to take what is meant by ethical conduct and see how fits in with our lives.

Today we are going to explore what it means to be a "good person."

Exercise 2: What Does Being a Good Person Mean?
(15 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to link ethics to the youths' lives and to present them with a model of an ethical code of behavior. A word-storm and giving out a model are used.]

When you think of the words "good person," what comes to your mind?

Word-storm "good person."

■WRITE "GOOD PERSON" ON NEWSPRINT. ENCOURAGE
THE YOUTHS' ASSOCIATIONS AND WRITE THEM ON
NEWSPRINT.

That's a good list.

What kind of guidelines would you follow to be a "good person?"

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES.

Here is an example of a set of ethical standards.

I'm not saying these are standards you should have, because each person has to figure out his or her own.

■HAND OUT ETHICAL STATEMENT AND GO OVER IT.

EXAMPLE OF AN ETHICAL STATEMENT

APPRECIATE LIFE - DO NOT KILL

BE SATISFIED - DO NOT STEAL

RESPECT THE BODY - DO NOT MISUSE SEX

SEEK TRUTH - DO NOT LIE

KEEP A CLEAR MIND - DO NOT ABUSE DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

APPRECIATE OTHERS - DO NOT LOOK FOR THEIR FAULTS

REALIZE WE ARE ALL ONE - DO NOT ALWAYS PUT YOURSELF FIRST

GIVE GENEROUSLY - DO NOT HOLD BACK

CREATE HARMONY - DO NOT HOLD GRUDGES

EXPERIENCE EACH MOMENT - DO NOT MISS OUT ON LIFE

THE END

You can see that the statements can be either positive or negative.

What to do or what not to do.

Do you have any questions about this list?

■ANSWER QUESTIONS.

Do you think it is hard to follow guidelines on being a good person and why?

■ENCOURAGE A DISCUSSION OF FOLLOWING ETHICAL GUIDELINES.

I think it is harder when the choice is between two positive alternatives.

We will work on conflict between two positive ethical standards a little later.

For now, I would like you to take some time to write out your own ethical standards.

Exercise 3: What Are My Ethical Standards?
(15 minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is for youths to develop their own ethical standards. Writing them down on a work sheet and sharing them with a partner is the approach employed here.]

What do you want to use to guide the way you behave?

I'll give you paper and pencils.

You have 10 minutes to make up your own ethical standards.

Then I will ask you to share them with a partner, if you are comfortable doing so.

If you get stuck working on your own code of ethics or if you want to check something out, you can ask either of the two facilitators or anybody else in the room.

■PASS OUT PENCILS AND FORM ENTITLED "MY
ETHICAL STANDARDS"

MY ETHICAL STANDARDS

Instructions: Make up your own ethical standards. You can take them from standards that are already written down or you can create completely new ones. Any format that you use is fine.

■ALLOW TEN MINUTES FOR DEVELOPING THEIR OWN ETHICAL STANDARDS.

Now that you are finished, I will divide you into pairs so you can share your standards with a partner.

■HAVE THE YOUTHS SHARE THEIR STANDARDS IN PAIRS.

OK, now we are going to move to conflicts involving two positive ethical standards.

Exercise 4: What If I Can't Decide What To Do?
(40 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to clarify ethical standards, to experience using them, to demonstrate their complexity, and to increase skills in resolving conflict between positive standards. Role playing conflict scenes and discussion are the methods used here.]

When a conflict is between doing something negative or doing something positive, making a decision may not be that hard.

But when the conflict is between two "positive" ways of behaving, things get much harder.

Conflicts between two positive values is what we will work on next.

We will do a role play around an ethical decision.

Then as a group we will see what we think is the way to handle the decision.

Everyone will have a chance to do the role play.

I need two volunteers to start us off.

[WRITE EXERCISE HERE]

■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND GIVE THEM PARTS -
JEFF and TONY/TONI. THEN GIVE THEM INSTRUCTIONS.

(TO JEFF) - You broke up with your lover three months ago, and you are still feeling very down.

Your friend Tony/Toni talks you into going to a party with him/her to cheer you up. He/She says will be a lot of hot guys there.

At the party you see Rick, someone you met just after you started going with your ex.

The attraction was very strong between you, but you decided to avoid Rick and stayed true to your lover.

Rick approaches you, saying that he heard you broke up, and how much he wants to get with you now.

You are very turned on by Rick and ask him what he wants to do.

Rick says he wants to do EVERYTHING to you, winking slyly as he adds, “ And I don’t want anything to get between us either, your ex or a rubber.

Rick convinces you to leave the party and to go to his apartment down the street.

You look for Tony/Toni to say you are leaving.

(TO TONY/TONI) - You have been watching the play between Jeff and Rick, and overheard Rick’s desire to have sex without condoms.

You are concerned that Jeff’s loneliness and his attraction to Rick may affect his judgement.

You don’t want him to do anything that he may regret later, feeling responsible for bringing him to the party in the first place.

Express your concerns to Jeff, both for wanting him to feel good and have fun, and also for his acting responsibly.

Go ahead and do the role play.

■ROLEPLAY FOR 3 MINUTES

That was great - thanks.

What were the issues in this conflict?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. CONSIDER TONY/TONI'S SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR HELPING JEFF TO GET OUT OF HIS BLUES, AND ALSO FOR JEFF'S HEALTH AND SAFETY. JEFF IS CAUGHT BETWEEN THE CHANCE TO ESCAPE FROM HIS SADNESS (AND MAYBE A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH A REALLY HOT GUY), AND HAVING TO DISREGARD HIS INTENTIONS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY AND TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF (AND DISAPPOINT HIS GOOD FRIEND).

What is the group's opinion about what decision to make?

■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUES AND PRINCIPLES INVOLVED. ALLOW 5 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION.

Now let's look at another situation.

First I need two more volunteers.

■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND ASSIGN THEM PARTS
-LOLA AND SHIRLEY. THEN GIVE THEM INSTRUCTIONS.

(TO LOLA) - You have a little baby, no job, no money, and little chance of getting a job because you don't have your green card. You aren't a US citizen. You are afraid to report for welfare because you might get deported.

You are desperate, and you are afraid your baby will get sick.

A man has offered you the chance of being a prostitute.

The money is better than you have seen, but selling your body is not something you ever dreamed you would do.

What are you to do?

Discuss it with your friend.

(TO SHIRLEY) - Lola is in a very bad place and needs your help in deciding what to do.

Help Lola make her own decision.

Go ahead and do the role play.

■ROLE PLAY FOR 3 MINUTES.

That was a good role play - thanks.

What was the conflict between?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. CONSIDER CARING FOR BABY AS OPPOSED TO DISHONORING HER BODY. -- RISKING LEGAL PROBLEMS, LOSING HER BABY, DISEASE, ETC.

What is the group's opinion about what decision to make?

■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION ON THE ETHICAL ISSUES. ALLOW 5 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION.

Now let's look at another situation.

First I need two more volunteers.

■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND ASSIGN THEM PARTS - JERRY AND OLDER BROTHER OR OLDER SISTER. THEN GIVE THEM INSTRUCTIONS.

(TO JERRY) - You have two friends who are lovers.

You like them both equally.

You just learned that one of them is cheating on the other one.

It won't be long before the one getting cheated on is going to ask you if it is true.

On the one hand, you don't believe in saying bad things about someone else.

On the other hand, you don't want to see your other friend hurt.

What should you do?

Discuss it with your older brother or sister.

(TO OLDER BROTHER OR SISTER) - Help Jerry figure out whether to say something negative about a friend.

Go ahead and do the role play.

■ROLE PLAY FOR 3 MINUTES.

Thank you for acting out a great role play.

What was the conflict between?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. CONSIDER TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE IN A NEGATIVE WAY AS OPPOSED TO LETTING A FRIEND GET HURT. ALSO LYING TO A FRIEND.

What is the group's opinion about what decision to make?

**■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION ON THE ETHICAL ISSUES.
ALLOW 5 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION.**

Now let's look at another situation.

First I need two more volunteers.

**■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND ASSIGN THEM PARTS
- DRUG USER AND FRIEND. THEN GIVE THEM
INSTRUCTIONS.**

(TO THE DRUG USER) - You are a nervous person.

You are particularly uncomfortable around other people.

You have friends - people like you.

But they think you are cold and stuck up at times when it is really your discomfort that is showing.

You want to be nice to them and show you care.

You don't want to seem rude and distant.

So, you take drugs and drink to loosen up - reduce your fear.

You don't like going around with your head all fogged up, but at least you are nice to people.

Is that wrong?

Explain it to your friend and find out what your friend thinks.

(TO THE FRIEND) - Your friend isn't sure about whether it is better to be on drugs and alcohol and to be nice to people or to cut out the drugs and alcohol - taking care of body and mind - and be unpleasant to people he/she cares about.

Explore the issues with your friend.

Go ahead and do the role play.

■ROLE PLAY FOR 3 MINUTES.

Thanks for doing this role play.

What was the conflict between?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. CONSIDER FRIENDLY AND CARING AS OPPOSED TO NOT CLOUDING THE MIND.

What is the group's opinion about what decision to make?

■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION ON THE ETHICAL ISSUES. ALLOW 5 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION.

Now let's look at another situation.

First I need two more volunteers.

**■SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS AND ASSIGN THEM PARTS
- THE GIVER AND THE FRIEND. THEN GIVE THEM
INSTRUCTIONS.**

(TO THE GIVER) - You have always believed in giving to others.

You drop money in beggar's cups.

You have a friend who is into drugs.

Every once in a while he asks you for money.

You know it will go to buy more drugs, but you don't see turning your friend down when you have the money or can get it.

You believe in giving what you can to your friends and being there when your friends need you.

Sometimes you have doubts about this, but not often.

This is one of those doubting times.

(TO THE FRIEND) - Try to convince your friend that from your point of view giving money to a friend hooked on drugs is harming that person.

Go ahead and do the role play.

■ROLE PLAY FOR 3 MINUTES.

I really appreciated your doing the role play.

What was the conflict between?

■ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. CONSIDER BEING GIVING AS OPPOSED TO NOT CONTRIBUTING TO SOMEONE'S HURTING THEMSELVES

What is the group's opinion about what decision to make?

■ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION ON THE ETHICAL ISSUES. ALLOW 5 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION.

Are there any conflicts that you are facing right now?

■ENCOURAGE THE GROUP MEMBERS TO SHARE ANY ETHICAL CONFLICTS THAT THEY CURRENTLY FACE.

Those are some good examples.

Let's take a look at a couple of them.

■COACH THE GROUP IN IDENTIFYING THE COMPETING VALUES IN SEVERAL OF THE SITUATIONS THAT WERE BROUGHT UP. THEN HAVE THEM SHARE REACTIONS ABOUT WHAT TO DO.

Those were some good suggestions.

Next it is time for a brief period of sitting.

Exercise 5: How Can I Study Myself?
(10 minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is to increase the youths' ability to sit and count the breath so that studying the self can occur. Sitting and slow walking are used.]

First we will sit for six minutes.

■GIVE OUT CUSHIONS.

Count your breaths and let thoughts drift by.

Then when I stand up, you stand up and we will walk slowly for a few minutes, still counting the breath.

Remember to sit straight, hands in lap, and make your stomach go out when you breathe in and relax when you breathe out.

■CHECK POSTURE. THEN SIT WITH THE GROUP FOR SIX MINUTES. AFTER SIX MINUTES, STAND UP AND WALK SLOWLY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TEN MINUTES SET ASIDE FOR THIS EXERCISE. REMIND GROUP TO COUNT BREATHS WHILE WALKING.

OK, our sitting and walking time is up.

What did your thoughts reveal about yourself?

The session is coming to an end.

Next it is time to set between-session experiences.

Exercise 6: What Can I Do Between Sessions?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to increase the transfer of what goes on in the sessions to the real world and build group cohesion. Agreeing to between session tasks or experiences and giving group appreciation are the approaches used.]

At the end of each session I want you to agree to continue some of the activities we have begun in here.

See if you can keep practicing when you are not in the session.

The more sessions that we cover, the more experiences you have to choose from.

Already you know some of the options such as increasing the length of sitting and increasing the number of times you sit.

Also you could take a simple task and really concentrate on it every day.

Tasting every bite when you eat and not being distracted by TV during the meal is another example.

Writing out "Who Am I" or expressing your self directly through an art project are other examples.

From today you could add

1. re-writing your own ethical standards.
2. talking with a friend about an ethical conflict that you have.

3. picking out someone you really admire for being good (Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Ghandi, Mother Theresa, and Caesar Chavez) and reading something about their ethical standards.

Can you give the group some other suggestions to choose from?

■ENCOURAGE ADDING TO THE LIST.

Think a moment and decide on what you agree to do.

■HAVE EACH YOUTH INDICATE WHAT HE OR SHE AGREES TO DO. NOTE THE AGREEMENT ON THE FACILITATOR'S EXPERIENCE SHEET.

Those are some good things to try.

I hope you have your experience cards with you.

Please write on the card I gave you what you plan to try during the next week.

Keep the cards with you.

Now it is time for you to show that you appreciate the other members of the group.

Go around and let people know that you are glad they are here and that you like the contributions they made to today's session.

You can appreciate things they said or did, their style, their presence, their depth, their quietness - all kinds of things.

■ENCOURAGE GIVING APPRECIATION TO EACH OTHER.
MODEL REINFORCING CONTRIBUTIONS. MAKE SURE
EVERYONE IS INCLUDED.

I would like to end with a thought.

Take a deep breath, let it out slowly, let your eyes relax, and contemplate this thought:

"I will find my original nature, forget my false self, and be kind to others."

■PAUSE, THEN REPEAT THE THOUGHT.

Thank you.

I look forward to seeing you at the next session.

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

THE END OF SESSION 6

I SHOULDN'T DO IT.

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WISE PERSON: I have nothing to hide.

TV REPORTER: You may not, but I do. I try so hard to be good, but I always seem to miss the boat.

WISE PERSON: Like what?

TV REPORTER: I went to this party and somebody offered me a snort of coke. I knew I shouldn't but I did.

WISE PERSON: What is wrong with that?

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WISE PERSON: So you believe that you did something you should not have done.

TV REPORTER: Well. I'm only human. Everybody makes mistakes. Nobody's perfect. I didn't want to hurt the feelings of the person who was giving it to me. She is so sensitive. I tried to protect her from criticism by taking the coke. I usually don't do coke anymore.

WISE PERSON: Anything else?

TV REPORTER: Yes. If I made a slip, it would be some special occasion like Mother's Day or a fiftieth wedding anniversary or winning the lottery.

WISE PERSON: Which was it?

TV REPORTER: My friend's dog had puppies. Say, Wise Person, this discussion is not going like I want it to. I'm going to turn the mikes back on and we can talk about something else.

THE END

EXAMPLE OF AN ETHICAL STATEMENT

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EXPERIENCE EACH MOMENT - DO NOT MISS OUT ON LIFE

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MY ETHICAL STANDARDS

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