

START NOW

Real Life Practice Exercise Session 1

Please fill in this page and bring it to the next group meeting. Set one positive change goal that you would like to make for yourself. Make it specific so you'll be able to tell whether or not you meet your goal.

My START NOW Personal Goal

Key Points:

- ✓ We can't change the past, but we can make positive changes starting from the present.
- ✓ Develop a clear goal.
- ✓ Writing it down helps.

This is my START NOW Personal Goal:



Here are some reasons this goal is important to me:



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 2

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

- Choose one of the following activities for your practice.
- Check the one you will try:
 - Brushing your teeth
 - Eating one food at a meal
 - Looking at a picture
- For about 3 minutes, do that activity and use the focusing skills from the session.

Focusing

Key Points for Focusing:

- ✓ Decide to focus, and tell yourself to focus.
- ✓ Slow down and quiet down.
- ✓ Notice what is happening right now.
- ✓ When you lose focus, simply turn your attention back to the task at hand.

What went well?

What was difficult?

Anything else you noticed?

START NOW

Real Life Practice Exercise Session 3

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting. Also, read each of the examples and look at the two extremes shown underneath. Then fill in how you could deal with these situations using an open and balanced attitude.

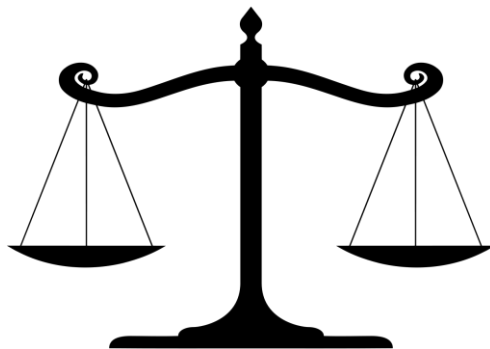
Open & Balanced Attitudes

Key Points:

- ✓ You'll be more likely to succeed by having an open & balanced attitude
- ✓ A person with an **open & balanced attitude**:
 - is easy going,
 - listens to other people's ideas
 - will try a new approach
 - looks at the **whole** picture, not just one side of things
- ✓ Also, replace extreme words, like "always", "never", "no-one", etc, with less extreme, more realistic words.

Put an "X" on the line below, to show how you see yourself at this time in your life- an open vs. closed attitude: **CLOSED** _____ **OPEN**

1. Imagine that you apply for a job that a lot of people are trying for.



CLOSED _____

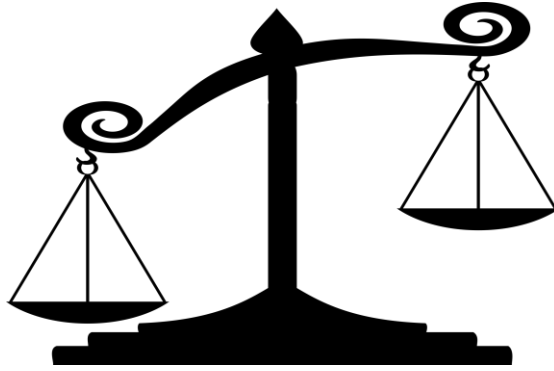
_____ **OPEN**

One extreme-
"I can't do it."

Balanced Attitude-
"I'll do the best I can."

Another extreme-
"I'll do it perfectly."

2. Imagine that your family member cancels a visit to see you at the last minute.



CLOSED

OPEN

One extreme-

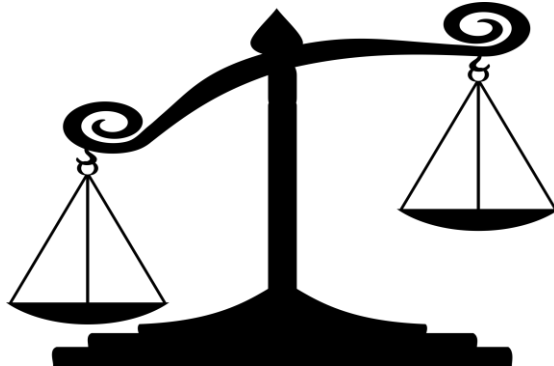
"No one does anything nice for me."

Balanced Attitude-

Another extreme-

"Everyone always does what I want."

3. Imagine that you have a court case that is taking a long time to get through.



CLOSED

OPEN

One extreme-

"My case better be over today, or I can't take it!"

Balanced Attitude-

Another extreme-

"I give up- this case is never going to get done!"

BREAK IT DOWN, USING THE ABC SYSTEM

ACTIVATORS <i>What triggered me?</i>		BEHAVIOR <i>What did I do?</i>	CONSEQUENCES <i>What happened?</i>	
<i>Activators around me</i>	<i>Activators inside me</i>	Action I took	<i>Positive Consequences</i> +	<i>Negative Consequences</i> -
What? <i>Watching TV and someone changed my channel</i> Where? <i>Dayroom</i> When? <i>Afternoon</i>	Thoughts? <i>That patient was so rude. "I hate this place".</i> Feelings? <i>Angry. Annoyed. Frustrated.</i>	Action <i>Walked out of the room and slammed a door.</i>	<i>I did not get into a fight with a patient.</i>	<i>I did not get to finish watching my show.</i> <i>A staff person talked to me about my disruptive behavior</i>



For Behaviors above that did not work out well for you, fill in the boxes to the right, showing what you can do instead, when faced with similar Activators.

BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES <i>What are the likely consequences?</i>	
What I can do instead?	<i>Positive Consequences</i> +	<i>Negative Consequences</i> -
<i>Tell the patient I was watching that program. Ask for help from the staff.</i>	<i>Get to watch my program. Person knows how I feel.</i>	<i>Feel anxious talking to patient and staff. Tension between me and the others.</i>



Real Life Practice Exercise

BREAK IT DOWN, USING THE ABC SYSTEM

Please complete the next page, about a stressful situation you recently faced.

ACTIVATORS <i>What triggered me?</i>		BEHAVIOR <i>What did I do?</i>	CONSEQUENCES <i>What happened?</i>	
<i>Activators around me</i>	<i>Activators inside me</i>	Action I took	<i>Positive Consequences</i> +	<i>Negative Consequences</i> -
What?	Thoughts?	Action		
Where?	Feelings?			
When?				



For **Behaviors** above that did not work out well for you, fill in the boxes to the right, showing what you can do instead, when faced with similar **Activators**.

BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES <i>What are the likely consequences?</i>	
<i>What I can do instead?</i>	<i>Positive Consequences</i> +	<i>Negative Consequences</i> -



**Real Life Practice Exercise
Session 5**

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Accepting Myself

Key Points:

- ✓ It helps to treat yourself and others with kindness and acceptance.
- ✓ Self-acceptance is often reflected in the way you “talk” to yourself.

Here are some ways I have not treated myself with self-acceptance:

Here are some ways I am beginning to treat myself with self-acceptance:

Fill in some examples of Negative Self-Talk that you have noticed in yourself, & replace it with Positive Self-Talk (an example is shown).

Negative Self-Talk	Positive Self-Talk
Example: <i>I'll never pass the GED test.</i>	Example: <i>Even though I failed it once, I'll study more and I will pass.</i>



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 6

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Accepting My Situation

Key Points:

- ✓ We all have some situations we don't want to accept, because they're hard realities.
- ✓ Accepting what is real allows us to begin dealing with it.
- ✓ We can accept by:
 - Learning skills to cope with the feelings that come up.
 - Using focusing to just look at the situation with detachment.
 - Reminding ourselves that we can't control other people's actions.
 - Being patient with ourselves and others.

Situations I have Accepted:

Situations I am Having a Hard Time Accepting:

Pick one situations you are having a hard time accepting.

What can you do to help yourself accept that situation?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 7

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Self-Care Skills: Check Up

Think about how you've been taking care of yourself in the past few months. How many checks do you give yourself in each of the following areas of wellness? See the box below for what each number of checks means.

Place checks below:	Area of Wellness
	Healthy Eating
	Exercise
	Healthy Sleep
	Good oral hygiene (brushing teeth twice per day)
	Exercise your Mind
	Build your Self-Confidence
	Stick with the Winners
	Taking medications as prescribed

no checks = This is an area I don't do at all, or do hardly at all. There's a lot of room for me to get stronger in this area.

✓ = This is an area that I do a little bit- quite a bit of room for me to get stronger in this area.

✓✓ = This is an area I do a medium amount- fairly strong in this area.

✓✓✓ = This is an area I do quite a bit- I'm especially strong in this area.

My most important area of wellness right now is _____

Why? _____

The area of wellness I struggle with is _____

What would you like to see yourself do differently? _____



**Real Life Practice Exercise
Session 8**

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

My Spiritual Self

Key Points:

- ✓ Each person’s spiritual beliefs & practices are to be respected.
- ✓ Spirituality can be expressed & developed through:
 - Being focused & centered “in the moment”
 - Prayer & worship
 - Participating in a spiritual organization
 - Looking for meaning, seeing the good in a “bad” situation
 - Spiritual music or literature

Ways I feel good about my spiritual self (What are you doing spiritually that is working for you?):

Ways I’d like to develop my spiritual self (What would you like to do to develop your spiritual self?):



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 9

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Identifying & Developing My Values

Key Points about Values:

- ✓ No one can determine your values but you.
- ✓ When it comes to values, actions speak louder than words.
- ✓ Your values may change as you change.
- ✓ You may keep the same values as you change, but find new ways to express the same value. For example, you may value excitement, but find new ways to meet that need as you mature.

MY VALUES

Use the space on this page to show your values. You can do so through drawing, writing, etc.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 10

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

My Personal Boundaries

Key Points about Personal Boundaries:

- ✓ People have the right to decide their own boundaries.
- ✓ Knowing & setting your boundaries can:
 - Feel strange and good at the same time, especially if you're not used to setting boundaries.
 - Helps you feel "safer" to connect with people.
- ✓ You need to know and set your boundaries about many areas of life, including:
 - Your time
 - Your belongings
 - Your values (honesty, criminal behaviors, sex, respect, etc.)

I know and respect personal boundaries in these ways:

I'd like to develop clearer personal boundaries in this area:

Here are some things that I can do to develop my boundaries in this area (check off all that apply):

___ spend some time thinking about my boundaries

___ talk to someone about this- who? _____

___ read about this- read what? _____

___ something else- what? _____

START NOW





Real Life Practice Exercise Session 11

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

My Emotions & Feelings, part 1

Key Points:

- ✓ Some people learned, through their pasts, to distrust their emotions & feelings.
- ✓ Emotions give us helpful information.
- ✓ Emotions help us have fuller lives.

Emotion	Clues	Feeling Words
Happiness 	smiling, a feeling of warmth, talking in a way that sounds excited, laughing, singing, dancing, thinking that a lot of good things are possible	happy, glad, hopeful, excited, enthusiastic, joyful, content, satisfied, thrilled, pleased, cheerful
Sadness 	mouth & eyes turn down, crying, thinking that everything is bad & not going to get better, low energy, tired, isolating	sad, down, depressed, glum, morose, lonely, "blah," "bummed out," low, gloomy
Anger 	clenching teeth, pupils (the black inner part) of eyes look smaller, making hands into fists, face turns red, thinking over & over of how you were harmed, thinking of revenge, increased swearing	angry, annoyed, irritated, enraged, aggravated, crabby, furious, frustrated, fuming, resentful
Fear & Anxiety 	upset stomach, eyes widen, hands trembling, looking around quickly, keyed up, sweating, body feels tense, thinking you or someone you care about is going to be harmed	afraid, nervous, anxious, worried, "freaking out," "nerved up," frightened, terrified, "bugging out"
Guilt & Shame	not looking people in the eye, face gets red, thinking everyone is looking at you or judging you, feeling badly about a mistake you made	ashamed, guilty, embarrassed, humiliated, self-conscious, mortified



(guilt) or something you think is wrong with you
(shame)

--



Real Life Practice Exercise

Briefly describe a stressful situation you experienced in the past 2 weeks:

List the feeling or feelings you experienced when you went through that situation. Write any of the clues you noticed in yourself that went along with that feeling. List any ways that feeling was helpful to you:

Feeling	Clues	How this feeling was helpful to me

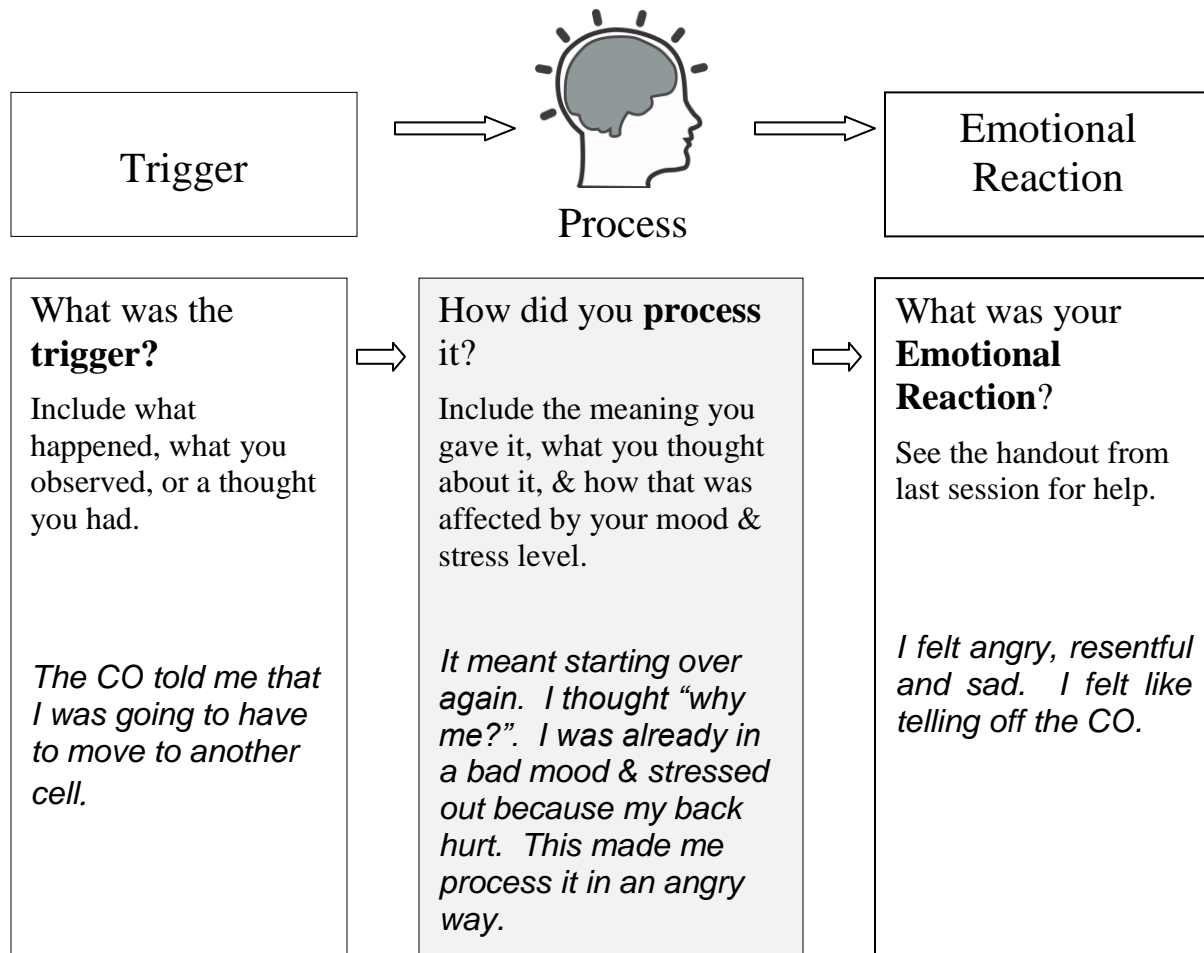


Real Life Practice Exercise Session 12

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Understanding My Emotions & Feelings

This Practice Exercise asks you to use the diagram of emotions to understand a recent emotional reaction you had. This page shows an example of how to do it. The next page is a blank one for you to fill in.





**Real Life Practice Exercise
Session 13**

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Upset Feelings through Actions

Key Points:

- ✓ Participate in pleasant activities that involve your senses.
- ✓ Do things that help you calm down. Of course, no one can say what will be soothing for someone else.

Fill in some examples that appeal to you in each of the following areas. Please bring your responses to the next group meeting.

Looking at something nice- pictures of family, something in nature (clouds, plants), art.

Listening to something enjoyable- music, silence, chirping birds, etc.

Tasting something I enjoy- something sweet, something warm like coffee or soup, etc.

Smelling something good- breakfast cooking, fresh air, shampoo, etc.

Touching something pleasant- lotion, freshly washed laundry, etc.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 14

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Upset Feelings through Thoughts & Imagery

Joe has been getting along with his peers and making good choices, but he just received a notice that his treatment team wants to talk with him about his interactions with a new peer. Joe starts to have thoughts that lead to hopeless feelings.

- Which thought errors do you see in Joe's thoughts?
- How could Joe replace these thought errors?

Thoughts	Check off the Thought Errors	Replacement Thoughts
"Everything I've been doing is a waste. I might as well give up."	<input type="checkbox"/> All or Nothing Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Self-Talk <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Expecting the Worst	
"Now I'm never gonna get out of here."	<input type="checkbox"/> All or Nothing Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Self-Talk <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Expecting the Worst	
"They're all out to get me."	<input type="checkbox"/> All or Nothing Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Self-Talk <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Expecting the Worst	

How can Joe also use imagery to cope with this upsetting news?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 15

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

My Personal Plan for Recognizing & Coping with Depression

Key Points:

- Feeling sad at times is normal, and is not, in itself, depression.
- Signs of depression include:
 - feeling mostly sad
 - feeling numb
 - nothing feels fun
 - appetite changes (up or down)
 - sleep changes (up or down)
 - feeling guilty for no reason
 - irritable
 - concentration problems
 - isolation
 - tiredness or restlessness
 - hopelessness
 - thoughts of death
- Treatment (therapy and/or medication) helps depression
- Take thoughts of death/suicide seriously; your own thoughts or those of others, and seek professional help.

Ways to cope with Depression:

➤ ***Through Actions***

- Do positive things, even your depression may interfere with your motivation.
- Keep up with self-care, your basic nutrition and hygiene.
- Push yourself to do enjoyable things, interact, and ask for help.
- Participate actively, if you are in treatment

Through Thoughts & Imagery

- Thought errors are very common during depression.
- Replace them with open & balanced thinking.
- Talk to yourself the way you'd talk to a friend.
- Picture yourself feeling better.
- Take a vacation from depression by imagining a beautiful place.

From what I know about myself, these are my depression warning signs:

If I do notice signs of depression, here is what I'd encourage myself to do:

If I experience thoughts of wanting to harm myself, here is what I will do:

If I believe someone else may be experiencing thoughts of wanting to harm themselves, here is what I will do:



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 16

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Anger

Key Points:

- First, learn to recognize your anger triggers, and signs of anger
- Then, use the following skills to cope with anger, preventing impulsive actions:
 - Slow down & breathe slowly.
 - Tell yourself, "I don't need to do anything right away."
 - Change your thinking. Replace thought errors.
 - Replace hot thoughts, like "I'm not gonna take this!"
 - With cool thoughts like "Let it go."
 - Think it through.
 - Do an ABC of the situation.
 - Think of possible consequences of actions you may take.

Describe a recent time when you did not handle your anger as well as you would have liked to:

What skills could you have used to handle it in a way that may have worked out better for you?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 17

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Worry & Anxiety

Key Points:

- Anxiety can be a useful signal of some type of risk. It can help us respond accordingly.
- Some people are naturally more or less anxious than others; it's in our genes.
- Some people learned to numb out their anxiety through substance abuse and/or denying their feelings. If and when they start to feel their anxiety, they may think they can't tolerate it. With time and practice, they **can** learn to cope.

Ways to cope with Worry & Anxiety:

- Put it into words. That can help you calm down and also get support.
- Face your fear. Do what you feel like avoiding. Avoiding it often makes the worry & anxiety worse.
- Take some slow, deep breaths.
- Use calming self-talk like, "I can get through this", or "I'll be all right."
- Distract yourself. Try physical exercise, music, television, good conversation, etc.

Describe a situation that you are worried or anxious about, or that might get you worried in the future.

Write down some ways that you'd like to see yourself cope with that anxiety, and try out these skills between now and next session.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 18

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Loss & Grief

Key Points:

- Loss and grief are normal parts of living.
- In addition to deaths, we grieve other losses, like loss of freedom, reduced time with family, etc.
- Even a positive change, like new job, usually involves some loss.
- A stressful childhood often goes with more experiences of loss.
- Sometimes grief comes out looking like anger, because we don't want to feel the sadness behind the anger. Be careful not to act on the anger.
- Allowing oneself to feel that sadness helps us mourn and heal.

Ways to cope with Worry & Anxiety:

- Tell others about the loss you've experienced.
- Find those who will listen kindly.
- Express your loss through writing, drawing, music, or finding some symbol of who/what you've lost.
- Learn to say "goodbye" before you part ways.
- Tell others what they meant to you.
- Remind yourself of the positive you gained from knowing that person.
- Remember that we all grieve on our own timetable.
- Be patient and kind to yourself.

Describe a situation of loss. It could be something you've experienced in the past. It may be something coming up in the next several months.

How have you been doing coping with this loss (if anything)?

What additional ways of coping do you think would be helpful?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 19

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Building Positive Relationships

- List someone you feel you have a positive relationship with:

- What are some things you have done to help make that relationship good?

- List someone you'd like to improve your relationship with:

- What are some things you can do to help make that relationship positive?

- **Circle** one of the things you listed above that you would be willing to try before the next group meeting. Try it out. Write about your experience below:

My Reaction

The Other Person's Reaction



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 20

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Active Listening

- Look for a conversation before the next session where you can try out active listening skills.

- Make some brief notes to describe the situation:
Who were you talking with? _____
General Topic: _____

- Check off below whether you used each of the active listening skills.

Active Listening Skill	Did not use this skill	Used this skill
Focus Really tune in to what is said.		
“Active Listening” Body Language Make eye contact, nod, etc.		
Listen without Interrupting Let the other person finish their sentences.		
Open Ended Questions These questions call for more than a 1-word answer.		
Reflect Tell the other person what you heard them say- “So you’re telling me that . . .” “You’re saying . . .” etc.		

What were the results?

How did your active listening seem to affect the speaker?

How did your active listening skills affect you?

How would you like to improve you active listening in the future?

Other observations:



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 21

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Assertive Communication

- Before the next session, look for a situation where you can practice assertive communication.

- Ask yourself:

Who were you talking with? _____

What did you say? _____

- Check off below whether you used each of the assertive communication skills.

Assertive Communication Skill	Did not use this skill	Used this skill
Keep a relaxed posture.		
Reflect understanding & show respect.		
State your view using "I statements."		
State your request clearly & simply.		
Suggest solutions or compromises.		
Invite the other Person to respond.		
Be patient.		

What were the results?

How did the other person respond?

How did you feel when you were using assertive communication skills?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 22

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Responding to Feedback Key Points:

When you get some feedback, think-
was the feedback positive or negative?

If positive (a compliment)-
-say "thank you"
-just notice the feelings you get
(happy or uncomfortable)
-don't explain the compliment away
-don't start to brag

If negative (a criticism), think-
was it constructive or destructive?

Constructive- it's about something you did, something you can change.

How to Respond:

- Keep/get an open attitude.
- Use active listening skills to hear what they're saying.
- Find something in the feedback to agree with.
- Suggest a solution.

Destructive- It's about who you are, something you can't change, and may be name-calling.

How to Respond:

- Ignore it. Focus on other things.
- Spend less time with them.
- Ask them to stop.
- Don't attack back.
- If verbal abuse, ask a helping professional about other options.

Look for a situation before the next session where someone gives you feedback. If no one gives you feedback, write down a situation you remember in the past when someone gave you feedback.

➤ **Who gave you feedback?** _____

➤ **What did the person say?**

➤ **Was the feedback** **positive**
or
 negative

If negative feedback, was it

constructive
or
 destructive

➤ **How did you respond to the feedback? What did you say?**

Look at the Responding to Feedback tips:

➤ **Which of the tips describe the way you responded to the feedback?**

➤ **What additional tips could you have used to respond to the feedback? How?**



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 23

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Increasing My Support System

- From the previous page, choose one person or group you listed under “Supportive Relationships I Want to Build” Select a person or group you can work with now. Who did you choose?

- Write down one specific thing you will do before the next group meeting to take a step toward building that relationship.

- ***Reflecting on your experience:***

When did you take the step? _____

What did you do (be specific)? _____

How do you feel it worked out so far?

How did the other person (or group) appear to react?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 24

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Recognizing & Avoiding Negative Relationships

Key Points:

- You can **recognize** potentially negative relationships by the following signs:
 - You feel or act worse when you spend time with that person.
 - It's not equal- one person does all or most of the taking.
 - One minute it's ok, next minute you're fighting, and so on.
 - It's an intense relationship, with a lot of jealousy and/or control issues.

- You can **avoid** negative relationships by doing the following:
 - Be honest with yourself about the risky signs you notice.
 - Talk with a positive person about these signs and your concerns.
 - Keep busy with other people and activities.
 - Look ahead to what problems may follow from this relationship.
 - Figure out if you tend to be drawn into certain types of negative relationships.

Is there a specific type of negative relationship you'd like to be careful to avoid? If so, how would you describe it?

To help yourself recognize this type of negative relationship, what signs do you need to look out for?

If you find yourself starting to get into a negative or risky relationship, what steps would you advise yourself to take?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 25

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Setting Boundaries: Skills for Setting Boundaries

- Be clear about your boundaries. Know your own limits.
- When you mean “no”, say “no” in a calm, respectful tone.
- If you need practice, start out by setting limits about easy things.
- If the request is aggressive or bullying, keep your response brief and move onto something else, if possible. Ask for help if the bullying doesn’t stop.
- If it’s a simple non-bullying request that you are saying “no” to, consider adding a statement of understanding. Let the person you mean no harm by saying “no”.

Think of a situation where you need or needed to set boundaries.

Describe the situation

Look at the skills listed above. How could (or did) you apply those skills to set boundaries in the situation?

What did you do and say?

How did that response work out?

What, if anything, would you do differently to set limits more effectively?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 26

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Coping with Rejection

Key Points: Coping with Rejection

- We all experience rejection at times:
 - A relationship ends
 - We're turned down for a job or release
 - Our loved ones don't visit or call
 - We're left out of something

- First- be careful not to react impulsively.
 - Impulsive angry actions just make things worse.
 - Remember that there will be future options for things to go better.

- Talk yourself through it with positive self-talk, and calm, cool thoughts.

- Distract yourself from your upset feelings by doing something you enjoy.

- Talk to supportive people.

- Ask for their help.

- Use imagery
 - Instead of just focusing on the current rejection, picture yourself having a better outcome in the future.
 - See yourself finding a new love, getting a new job, making new friends, etc.

Think of a situation you are experiencing now or have experienced in the past that required you to manage rejection.

Describe the situation

How could (or did) you use coping with rejection skills to cope?

If the situation happened in the past, what did you say or do?

If it's a current situation, try out the skills listed above. Write down what you did or said.

How did that response work out?

What, if anything, would you do differently to better cope with rejection?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 27

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Believing in My Future

Key Points:

- It helps to picture a positive future life. Seeing a hopeful future helps us take steps to get there.
- You may be someone who tells yourself negative things about your future. You might even tell yourself that you won't live to see a future. If so, try to catch yourself and replace these thoughts with positive thoughts.

Use the space below to write or draw a positive picture of your future.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 28

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Setting & Making My Goals

- Set a goal.
- Make it specific, so you'll know when you reach it.
- Make it neither too easy nor too hard to reach. Write it down below.

My Goal: _____

Next, brainstorm possible steps toward reaching your goal.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now, put the steps in the order it will take to complete your goal. Write them below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 29

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Using the Problem-Solving Method

- Apply this method to a problem or concern in your own life.
- Fill in the blanks below.
- Bring this completed page to the next group meeting.

Define the problem as clearly as possible.

Describe the problem. Be specific.

Use brainstorming to come up with many possible solutions.

List all possible solutions here (continue to the back of the page, if needed).

Evaluate the possible solutions, and develop a plan.

What is the plan?

Follow the plan. Evaluate how it worked out.

How did the plan work out?



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 30

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Key Points for Setting Educational Goals:

- Keep an open mind about getting more education.
- Consider a goal that is not too hard, but challenging enough for your interest.
- Encourage yourself by focusing on the possible benefits of more education.

Set an educational goal.

This can be a goal that you feel committed to, or one that you are simply open to considering at some point.

If you were going to seek additional education, what kind of education would it be?

What would be some benefits of getting the education listed above?

Key Points for Reaching Educational Goals:

- Ask for support with your goal. Look for a mentors or someone who can guide you.
- Encourage yourself with positive self-talk. Tell yourself, "I can do it".
- Break your education goal down to steps. Take one step at a time.
- Use problem solving to address any barriers to education.

To focus in class-

- Sit up front.
- Remind yourself to focus.
- Stay active: take notes, ask questions, and make comments.

When studying-

- Make your space comfortable.
- Stick with it for a set amount of time. Take planned breaks.
- Use active methods like taking notes, making charts, etc.

Address possible barriers. What could get in the way of getting additional education? Please also brainstorm and list any possible solutions to the problem(s).

Possible barrier #1: _____

Possible Solutions: _____

Possible barrier #2: _____

Possible Solutions: _____

Take a step toward your educational goal.

If you wanted to begin working toward your educational goal, what could you do now?

If possible, carry out that step between now and the group meeting, and write down the results.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 31

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Setting & Reaching Vocational Goals: What Kind of Job Should I Apply for?

- What am I good at doing?

- Do I like working with my hands? How so?

- Do I prefer to work alone? Please explain.

- What did I always dream I would be when I grew up?

- What is a step you could take now to begin working toward future employment?

- If possible, carry out that step between now and the group meeting, and write down the results.



Real Life Practice Exercise Session 31

Please complete this practice exercise before the next group meeting.

Key Points for Celebrating & Continuing your Progress:

- Positive change does not happen as a straight upward path. When you go through setbacks, keep moving forward.
- Coach yourself with positive self-talk. Remind yourself of your strengths and what you have accomplished.
- Review your START NOW materials to address new situations.
- “Stick with the winners”- people whose lives you admire.
- Build new supports as your life changes.
- Remember that it’s normal to feel anxious when your life changes, even if it’s change for the better.

Here are some positive changes I’ve made, and/or steps I’ve taken toward my goals:
