Thinking for a Change (T4C) Youth and Parent Orientation Manual

Revised 10.4.16

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Overview of Thinking for a Change (T4C)

- Thinking for a Change (T4C) is a cognitive–behavioral therapy (CBT) program that includes:

    o cognitive restructuring (sessions 6-10)

    o social skills development (sessions 2-5 and 11-15)

    o the development of problem-solving skills (sessions 16-24)

- T4C combines cognitive restructuring theory and cognitive skills theory to help individuals take control of their lives by taking control of their thinking. The foundation of T4C is the utilization of CBT principles throughout the group sessions.

- There is an extensive body of research that shows cognitive–behavioral programming significantly reduces recidivism of offenders.

- The program is divided into 25 lessons (each lasting approximately 1 to 2 hours), with the capacity to extend the program indefinitely.

- The curriculum is implemented with small groups of 8 to 12 offenders.

- Each lesson teaches important social skills (such as active listening and asking appropriate questions) as well as more complex restructuring techniques (such as recognizing the types of thinking that get them into trouble and understanding the feelings of others).

- Most sessions include didactic instruction, role-play illustrations of concepts, a review of previous lessons, and homework assignments in which participants practice the skills learned in the group lesson.

- Thinking for A Change is identified as a *promising* program at crimesolutions.gov. Thinking for A Change is a closed group model.

Conduct & Behavioral Policy

{SERVICE PROVIDER}, aware of its responsibility to provide each youth a safe, comfortable, and non- threatening therapeutic environment, has established a policy regarding group conduct and behavior. {SERVICE PROVIDER} promotes youth behavior that encourages others to become effective citizens of the community. For youth to grow and mature, they must accept the responsibilities and obligations of good citizenship which enable self-discipline, good health, reasonable standards of behavior, and a favorable atmosphere for group sessions, learning and skill development. Youth present during groups facilitated by {SERVICE PROVIDER} staff must abide by the rules established to achieve this goal.

YOUTH RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Group Psychoeducation
Right - Youth have the right to attend a group session unimpaired because of gender, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disabling conditions, or intellectual ability.

Responsibility - Youth have the responsibility to attend groups, make a conscientious effort in all group work, and conform to rules and regulations. Youth also have the responsibility to avoid actions or activities, individually or in groups, which interfere with the right of any other person.

Environment
Right - Youth have a right to a safe and orderly group environment which is conducive to self-expression, learning, skill development, and therapeutic processing.

Responsibility - Youth have the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not disrupt the group or group activities and that they abide by applicable laws and conditions of probation, if applicable.

Respect
Right - Youth have a right to expect and receive courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of {SERVICE PROVIDER} staff and other youth.

Responsibility - Youth have the responsibility to respect the rights and authority of group leaders, and all others included in the group process. Youth have a responsibility to respect each other.

Property
Right - Youth have a right to expect that other youth and group personnel will respect their personal property.

Responsibility - Youth have the responsibility to respect the personal property rights of other youth and group leaders, as well as the public's property, including equipment, transportation vehicles, and buildings.

Participation

Right - Youth who comply with all rules and regulations have a right to participate in group and group activities.

Responsibility - Youth have a responsibility to comply with all rules and regulations for youth behavior at all group functions.

Expression

Right - Youth have the right to exercise freedom of expression, through appropriate channels, including the right to address policies publicly, privately, in writing, or orally. Youth may advocate change in any policy or regulation.

Responsibility - Youth have a responsibility to see that their expressions do not interfere with the group program. Youth have a responsibility not to use profane, obscene, slanderous, ethnically derogatory, or libelous statements; not to use disruptive tactics; and not to advocate violation of the law, rules, or regulations.

Appeal

Right - Youth and their parents have the right to appeal policies both publicly and privately, in writing and orally, through appropriate channels. Youth may advocate change in a policy or regulation that is considered not to be in their best interest.

Responsibility - Youth and their parents who believe that conditions of the group or decisions made by staff members are not in their best interest and wish to appeal have the responsibility of presenting these complaints to the group leader or clinical director, who shall make himself/herself available or schedule an appointment to hear these complaints. If a youth or a parent is not satisfied that a complaint previously presented has been resolved satisfactorily, a meeting may be requested with the youth, parent, and CEO of {SERVICE PROVIDER}.

Dress Code for Group Services

{SERVICE PROVIDER}'s has a required dress code policy for all youth receiving group services. If a youth comes to group violating any portion of the dress code, the youth will be asked to adhere to the dress code (e.g., change their shirt, remove certain items, or pull up pants). In the event the youth does not comply with the dress code, the youth will be asked to leave the group and be counted absent for the day. Program staff will contact a parent or guardian in the event a youth is ask to leave the group.

{SERVICE PROVIDER} prohibits clients from wearing "gang-related apparel." For this purpose, {SERVICE PROVIDER} shall define "gang-related apparel," as any apparel that, if worn or displayed during a   group, could reasonably be determined to threaten the health and safety of the environment.

The following items will not be allowed to be worn or in a youth's immediate possession during a facilitated group:

- Bandanas of any color
- Hats or do-rags
- Pants below the waist
- Any item of clothing that is representative of gang involvement, profanity, alcohol, drugs, or weapons

{SERVICE PROVIDER} encourages all youth to wear white shirts when possible to minimize any concerns or violations.

Updated 10.4.16

<center>**Attendance & Participation Policy**</center>

Attendance Policy

The attendance policy for the T4C program requires that any sessions missed must be made up within one week of the originally scheduled session. Most make up sessions will occur after groups each week. In the event that a youth has to stay after group to make up a session, DJJ/Juvenile Court transportation services will likely not be available; in such event, the parent or guardian will be responsible for picking up the participant from make-up group session at the designated time. Participants cannot have more than three (3) excused absences; an excused absence is any absence that is deemed excused by the JPO/Juvenile Court officer. Any participant who has missed more than two consecutive weeks (i.e., 4 consecutive sessions) of group shall be discharged as ''unsuccessful'' from the program. If the participant missed the four consecutive sessions due to circumstances outside their own volition, the participant may be re-enrolled in the program during the next group cycle.

Participation Policy

The participation policy for the T4C program requires that each participant participate in all sessions. Participating in each group session is an important and required component in the T4C program. Participation is characterized by the following:

- Showing mutual respect for others in group and appropriately interacting with other group members/peers and group facilitators during each group session;
- Completing homework and/or assigned reading for each session and coming to group ready and willing to discuss homework with others in group; any participant who fails to complete homework for the third (3rd) time in group will be required to arrange to stay after group, during the session make-up period, and complete the required session homework; any participant who fails to complete or makeup homework for the fourth (4th) time will be discharged unsuccessfully from the group.
- Freely engaging and interacting during all group discussions;
- Asking questions when a participant don't understand an idea or concept discussed;
- Displaying a positive attitude towards the ideas, concepts, and others in group;
- Supporting and showing understanding to other clients in group;

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- Taking ownership (not blaming) for a participants own actions and behavior;

- Participant is able to see a view of others (no self-centered thinking);

- Being patient with others in group and acting in accordance with the Conduct and Behavioral Policy;

- Working with group facilitators and group members to meet each weeks session objectives;

- Being an active listener when others are speaking;

- Promoting equal contribution from all participants;

- Refraining from interrupting others;

- Participating in the ENTIRE group session;

- Maintaining the confidentiality of what others discuss in group. It is expected that all information shared in the group setting will be kept within the group, unless such information indicates possible harm to the individual or others;

- Staying for make-up sessions to make up group material from any absence;

- Showing respect towards what is shared: All statements should be accepted as information for learning purposes. As such, participants should ensure that opinions and statements shared are constructive for the purpose of meeting the objectives of the lesson and content of the curriculum;

- Taking turns speaking and sharing: Participants need to speak one at a time, listening to what is being said, remaining focused on the topic and subject matter, and providing opportunities for others to respond should they disagree with something;

- No aggression or violence: Physical or verbal aggression and violence is not permitted and will not be tolerated.

Successful Completion Policy

In order for a participant to successfully complete Thinking for a Change (T4C), the participant must have participated in (or made up) 25 of the 25 group sessions and have successfully met at least 70% of the session objectives for each T4C session. Meeting the above requirements will result in a Certificate of Successful Completion being issued during the graduation ceremony. Any participant not meeting the criteria above for successful completion, but still enrolled in the program during the graduation ceremony, will be issued a Certificate of Attendance, which will indicate the participant attended XX out of 25 T4C group sessions and will not reference successful completion of the T4C program. A certificate of attendance will be reported to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), grant funders, as "unsuccessful", where as a certificate of successful completion will be reported to CJCC as "successful." Homework is required to be completed in the T4C program; homework is an integral part of T4C and completion of homework demonstrates graduated practice and skill attainment. Any participant who fails to complete homework for the third (3rd) time in group will be required to arrange to stay after group, during the session make-up period (7:10pm – 7:40pm), and complete the required session homework. Any participant who fails to complete or makeup homework for the forth (4$^{th)}$ time will be discharged unsuccessfully from the group.

Missing or Incomplete Homework Occurrence Policy

- 1st incident - Participant is reminded about the importance of completing homework.
- 2nd incident- Verbal warning & discussion occurs with participant about a corrective action plan.
- 3rd incident - Participant required to attend make-up session group (7:10pm – 7:40pm) within the next 7 days to complete missing homework.
- 4th incident- Participant required to attend make-up session group to complete missing homework. Participant is discharged unsuccessfully if missing homework is not made up within 7 days.

Parents' Guide to How to Help Their Youth Be Successful in T4C

How can I help my youth be more successful in this program?

- Sessions 2-5 and 11-15 teach social skills. Parents can assist youth in being more successful during these sessions by recognizing and praising a youth when the youth is demonstrating appropriate social skills.
- Sessions 6-10 teach the cognitive self-change process. Parents can assist youth in being more successful during these sessions by helping youth recognize how thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs lead to predictable patterns of behavior and help by encouraging youth to identify new thoughts and attitudes and beliefs that will reduce the risk in their old ways of thinking.
- Sessions 16-24 teach problem solving skills. Parents can assist youth in being more successful during these sessions by encouraging youth to solve his or her own problems and recognizing and praising youth who do exercise appropriate problem solving skills.
- Below is a list of specific learning objectives your youth will be focusing on during each session. Plan to take time to ask questions about the most recent sessions learning objectives. Encourage your youth to do required homework. Touch base with the group facilitator at least once a month to inquire about the progress with your youth and you can better support him or her in the program. Overall, being involved with your youth and in the program will help increase the probability of a successful outcome.

What does my youth need to do to be more successful in this program?

Some important predictors of being successful in this program include:
- Participants coming to group during all scheduled sessions is one of the most important components predictive of success
- Participants participating in each session and actively engaging in all session activities
- Participants doing all assigned homework and coming to group ready to discuss homework assignments
- Participants asking questions to group leaders when he or she doesn't understand what is being discussed in group
- Participants practicing all the skills discussed in groups
- Participants being open to recognizing how attitudes and beliefs impact behavior
- Participants being open to new ways of thinking
- Participants being open to recognizing feelings

Updated 11.9.15

T4C SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES DESCRIPTION

Session 1: Introduction

Session Objectives

As a result of this lesson, group members will:

1. Describe the 3 key parts of Thinking for a Change.
2. Describe their expectations for Thinking for a Change.
3. Agree to group rules and norms to follow during Thinking for a Change.

Session 2: Active Listening

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of active listening in this group and in other social situations.
2. Perform the steps of active listening during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of active listening in real life situations.

Session 3: Asking Questions

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of asking questions.
2. Perform the steps of asking questions during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of asking questions in real life situations.

Session 4: Giving Feedback

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of giving feedback.
2. Perform the steps of giving feedback during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of giving feedback in real life situations.

Session 5: Knowing Your Feelings

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of knowing your feelings.
2. Perform the steps of knowing your feelings during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of knowing your feelings in real life situations.

Session 6: Thinking Controls Our Behavior

Session Objectives

1. Recognize how thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs lead to predictable patterns of behavior.
2. Practice "objective detachment" in observing and describing thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs.
3. Practice the three steps of cognitive self-change during the Lesson.
4. Apply the steps of cognitive self-change to real life situations.

Session 7: Pay Attention to Our Thinking

Session Objectives

1. Use thinking reports to observe and report their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs.
2. Establish, as a group norm, an objective, non-argumentative frame of reference for each group member to examine his/her own and others' thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs, and behaviors.
3. Write a thinking report using a situation where they have identified a time they had a conflict with another person.

Session 8: Recognize Risk

Session Objectives

1. Identify thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs that have led them to trouble in the past.
2. Use an objective point of view when describing the risk in their thoughts and feelings.
3. Write a thinking report about a recent or past time when they broke a rule or hurt someone.

Session 9: Use New Thinking

Session Objectives

1. Identify new thoughts and attitudes and beliefs that will reduce the risk in their old ways of thinking.
2. Continue to develop their skill in observing their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes and beliefs (step 1 – pay attention to our thinking), and in recognizing the risk in their thinking (step 2 – recognize risk).
3. Practice using new thinking to reduce the risk of getting into trouble or hurting themselves or others.

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Session 10: Thinking Check-in

Session Objectives

1. Practice a thinking check-in to reinforce the 3 steps of cognitive self-change in his/her everyday life.
2. Continue to develop the skill of objective self-observation.

Session 11: Understanding the Feelings of Others

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of understanding the feelings of others.
2. Perform the steps of understanding the feelings of others during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of understanding the feelings of others in real life situations.

Session 12: Making a Complaint

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of making a complaint.
2. Perform the steps of making a complaint during the Lesson.
3. Perform the steps of making a complaint in real life situations.

Session 13: Apologizing

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of apologizing.
2. Perform the steps of apologizing during the session.
3. Perform the steps of apologizing in real life situations.

Session 14: Responding to Anger

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of responding to anger.
2. Perform the steps of responding to anger during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of responding to anger in real life situations.

Session 15: Negotiating

Session Objectives

1. Describe the importance of negotiating.
2. Perform the steps of negotiating during the lesson.
3. Perform the steps of negotiating in real life situations.

Session 16: Introduction to Problem Solving

Session Objective

As a result of this lesson the group members will be able to answer questions that help them apply the problem solving skills to a situation.

Session 17: Stop and Think

Session Objectives

1. Identify specific warning signs: physical reactions, risk thoughts and risk feelings that indicate that they are in a problem situation;
2. Intervene in their internal experiences to begin to use thinking skills to reduce their risk reactions.

Session 18: State the Problem

Session Objectives

1. Identify a warning sign they experience in a problem situation.
2. Describe problem situations objectively.
3. Identify how their physical reactions, risk thoughts, and risk feelings create a risk of their reacting impulsively to make the problem worse.

Session 19: Set a Goal and Gather Information

Session Objectives

1. Develop positive and realistic goal statements.
2. Identify reasons to consider other people's thoughts and feelings.
3. Better determine the thoughts and feelings of others.
4. Differentiate between facts and opinions.

Session 20: Practice Problem Solving Skills 1 – 3

Session Objectives

Demonstrate problem solving skill 1: stop and think; skill 2: state the problem; and skill 3: set a goal to gather information.

Session 21: Think of Choices and Consequences

Session Objectives

1. Generate multiple actions possible in problem situations.
2. Identify possible consequences of the choices generated, both for themselves and other people.
3. Choose an action based on consequences and goals.
4. Identify thinking to support chosen actions.

Session 22: Make a Plan

Session Objectives

As a result of this lesson group members will apply problem solving skill 5: make a plan to a real life situation.

Session 23: Do and Evaluate

Session Objectives

1. Demonstrate the steps for "do it" and then use questions to evaluate what happened after they "did it."
2. Using the answers to their evaluation questions, they will decide what they need to do next.

Session 24: Problem Solving – Application

Session Objectives

As a result of this lesson the group members will be able to apply all 6 problem solving skills to real life situations.

Session 25: Next Steps

Session Objectives

1. Celebrate their successful completion of the Thinking for a Change program. (Aftercare is an option for group members/agencies).

2. Develop a personal plan for making the skills they have learned part of their life.

Policy Acknowledgement Signature Forms

Youth Name (printed): _____

Parent Name (printed): _____

Conduct & Behavioral Policy Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the above policy on group conduct and behavior and agree to abide by all statements, rules, and/or regulations above. I have been given an opportunity to have all of my questions answered.

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dress Code for Group Services Policy Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the above policy on the group dress code and agree to abide by all statements, rules, and/or regulations above. I have been given an opportunity to have all of my questions answered.

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attendance & Participation
Policy Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the above policy on the requirements for attendance and participation of the T4C program and agree to abide by all statements, rules, and/or regulations above. I have been given an opportunity to have all of my questions answered.

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Updated 11.9.15

Successful Completion Policy Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the above policy on the requirements for successful completion of the T4C program and agree to abide by all statements, rules, and/or regulations above. I have been given an opportunity to have all of my questions answered.

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____