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Anger Management and Assertiveness Skills

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Introduction

In the last issue of *Positive Practices*, the authors introduced an overview of an Anger Management Curriculum. The article described the successful implementation of the curriculum with a wide range of consumers served by the Institute for Applied Behavior Analysis' supported living services (also known as Social and Community Integration and Participation, or SCIP). It also discussed the development of the curriculum and examined strategies for forming the groups and monitoring progress. See *Positive Practices, Volume III, Number 3, April 1998* (McLain & Lewis, 1998). The first session of the curriculum was included as an example.

In this installment the authors detail each of the eleven sessions in the curriculum specifying the goals, scripts, exercises, homework assignments and notes to the leader for each session. The reader should keep in mind that these sessions were designed to be taught in a small group composed of four to eight participants, a leader, and one

to two support staff and lasting between 15 minutes and an hour. As the need arises, the curriculum can be modified to meet the changing needs of the individuals in the group, as well as their particular learning styles and abilities. "For example, when presenting the program to a group of adolescents who have mild disabilities and who

are able to read and write, the focus should be on changing the internal thoughts that precede an anger outburst. Written homework exercises would also be useful with such a group. A group of children who have moderate disabilities and limited abilities to read and write would benefit from an emphasis on role playing and behavior rehearsal of appropriate behavior following exposure to provoking situations. The cognitive-behavioral aspects of the program may be simplified in order to suit the children's cognitive abilities. For people with severe disabilities, a focus on relaxation training and a specific, prescribed plan for responding in challenging situations may be most beneficial" (McLain & Lewis, 1998, p. 10).

As discussed in the previous issue of *Positive Practices* "this curriculum is an attempt to incorpo-

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Editors' Note...

Welcome to another issue of *Positive Practices*. As usual, work has been busy for us. We are in the midst of our multi-year trainer of trainers and consultation project with Specialist Education Services in New Zealand. We are also off to the United Kingdom again for another round of training. We will be providing seminars in Belfast, Edinburgh, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham and London. We will also be launching our fifth longitudinal course in London with 39 participants, our best turn out ever.

We have had a remarkable response to the anger management article written by Bill McClain and Ellen Lewis. Since its publication, Ellen has left IABA to take up an important position for an oversight agency in California. In that position, she is responsible for developing and overseeing a resource to monitor the quality of life of people challenged with a developmental disability who are living in the community. Knowing first hand Ellen's insistence on quality, we know that a lot of people will benefit enormously from her efforts. We are very pleased to publish this second in a hoped for series of articles on anger management.

Finally, we are pleased to include another article reporting the implementation of a Periodic Service Review (PSR) system. This one is reported by Hamish Jones from New Zealand. It is exciting for us to include this as the lead article in this issue of *Positive Practices*. This is not only because it describes the use of the PSR as part of a very successful systems change effort, but also because Hamish developed a way of quantifying outcomes that we have found very powerful. We think you will agree that he has created a measurement strategy that would strengthen any PSR system in the area of outcome measurement.



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PSR: Progressively Sustainable Results

A case study on the use of the Periodic Service Review concept to improve the quality of vocational services provided to people with intellectual disabilities

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Editors' Note: In this article, Hamish Jones describes a very successful effort in transforming a traditional facility based day service to a community based service guided by consumer choice. In utilizing a PSR system as part of this effort, Hamish developed what we believe is a very powerful way of measuring outcomes. When Hamish visited us in California, he presented his work to our staff and we were immediately able to see its power and potential. Accordingly, after Hamish' article, we present a short article written by LeeAnn Christian, the new Director of STEP, our primary day service provision, giving an example of how we plan to apply Hamish' brilliant idea at IABA. We hope you find both articles interesting and of use.

The Periodic Service Review (PSR) as developed by the Institute for Applied Behavior Analysis (IABA) in Los Angeles, California, has played an integral role in the achievement of improved vocational services for people with intellectual disabilities in the township of Ashburton, New Zealand. Through the development of simple measurement criteria, combined with recording and feedback systems, the PSR has helped bring about significantly improved outcomes for both the individuals and the provider organization (LaVigna, Willis, Shaull, Abedi & Sweitzer, 1994).

Background

A review in 1996 of vocational services being provided to thirty-three people with intellectual disabilities in Ashburton, New Zealand, found that neither the individuals nor the organization providing the services were meeting their stated goals.

Prior to the review, services had been facility-based, with activities focusing on; Arts and Crafts (45%); Contract Work (35%); and Landskills (20%). Community inclusion was estimated at around

5% of service time. Opportunities were limited to what was offered.

Analysis of what Service Users were *wanting* out of vocational services was significantly different. The sum result of their requests were placed in broad Activity Groups with the intention that service directions would move to reflect the percentages listed; Recreation and Leisure (27%); Contract Work (25%); Arts and Crafts (19%); Personal Development, which related mainly to education-

ally oriented activities (17%); Supported Employment, which included all community-based work activities - paid or unpaid - with an external employer (12%). While there were still many requests that reflected opportunities that already existed, the inclusion of Supported Employment and Personal Development were seen to be significant developments.

It was subsequently determined that services needed to focus on identifying and achieving the vocational goals of individual Service Users, while recognizing the organization's philosophies of community inclusion and family involvement.

PSR

Because previous attempts to change service focus had resulted in the eventual return to the status quo, it was decided that a suitable means of measuring and controlling performance had to be implemented. The PSR was chosen because it:

- Monitored outcomes and processes on a monthly basis.
- Encouraged multilevel teamwork within the organization.
- Incorporated the use of simple visual feedback.

The PSR was developed in such a way that it would monitor the degree to which services moved towards the Activity Groups and percentages as requested by Service Users. It would also record the degree that the organizational goals of individualized service, community inclusion, and partnership with families were being achieved.

After an initial trial period, formal scoring began using the

monthly PSR Checklist in September, 1996. The Checklist covers areas that include:

- Service Users have current Day Service Plans, with quantifiable goals that were developed in conjunction with their families and friends.
- Day Service Plan goals are being actioned, and people involved in the planning process receive regular feedback on progress.
- Service User personal files contain current, easily accessible, and relevant information.
- Service planning and reporting is taking place
- Staff responsibilities are negotiated and their performance reviewed.
- Staff training is identified and actioned
- Management support is visible and easily accessible to staff.
- Adequate numbers of trained relievers are available.
- An Advisory Committee is in place and operating.
- Health and Safety issues are being addressed.
- Administrative requirements are met.

Computerised Database

To enable the accurate and ongoing assessment of the organization’s performance in meeting its stated goals, a computer database was developed that would record the daily activities of each Service User. Starting in October, 1996, information has been entered into the computer on a daily basis through the use of a simple form. Each activity is coded against; its Activity Grouping; whether it is group-based or individualized; and whether it is community-based or not.

In an effort to encourage ongoing improvement in the quality of service provision, a further indicator is coded against all activities. This indicator was developed from the belief that just because an activity was *more* individualized or *more* community-based, did not necessarily indicate that it created better quality in the lives of the Service Users. Called the Community Participation Code (CP Code), a “quality” weighting is recorded against each activity as outlined in Figure 1, whereby the time spent on the activity is multiplied by the corresponding weighting, 1 through 8, to give a Community Participation Score (CP Score). Reports are generated on a monthly basis, and used by staff to analyze performance and take corrective action where required.

An example of the usefulness of this concept can be described in the analogy of a Service User who wanted to be involved in a regular aerobic exercise program. The goal could be achieved in many ways:

- A group could do exercises in the facility with staff support (CP Code 1).
- A group could do exercises in the facility with the help of a qualified aerobics instructor (CP Code 3).
- Staff could take a group to a commercial facility in the community (CP Code 5).
- Staff could support the individual at a commercial facility (CP Code 6).
- The person could attend a commercial facility supported by people from that organization (CP Code 8).

All of the listed situations would achieve the goal for the Service User. However the differences for the person through achieving the goal in the CP Code 8 situation as opposed to the CP Code 1 situation are significant.

Results

Due to the variables created by fluctuations in attendances and the available working days in any one month, the figures used to report on outcomes in the various performance areas are based on the percentage of total Service User time spent in any category for each calendar month.

Percentage of Individualized and Community-based Service Time

Achievement of both individualized and community-based service delivery for the twenty-month period from October, 1996 through to May, 1998 is outlined in Table 1 and Figure 2 (see page 5).

Individualized service has ranged from a low of 33% in December, 1996 through to a high of 87% in December, 1997. The increase from 55% in October, 1996 to 65% in May, 1998 equates to an overall

Community Based				Facility Based			
Community Support		Staff Support		Community Support		Staff Support	
Individual	Group	Individual	Group	Individual	Group	Individual	Group
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Figure 1 - Community Participation Codes

growth factor of 1.2 to date. The greatest period of growth in this indicator occurred over the first ten months to July, 1997, after which it stabilized at an average of 75% for the remaining ten months. The drop to 65% in May, 1998 is of concern, and corrective action has been taken to rectify this.

Community integration has ranged from a low of 19% of total Service User time in January, 1997 to 73% in March, 1998. The increase from 28% in October, 1996 to 68% in May, 1998 equates to a growth factor of 2.4 over the total period. It is significant to note that lessons learned from the “dip” in January, 1997, which is the period for summer holidays in New Zealand, ensured that the same trend did not occur for the equivalent period in 1998.

Recording the percentage of time spent in the community versus the percentage of time spent on individualized programs is particularly important, as these are the two main components that make up the CP Score. Through careful analysis, staff are able to take any corrective action needed to ensure the likelihood

of continued growth in the overall quality of service provision.

Community Participation Score

The average CP Scores per Service User for the period October, 1996 through to May, 1998 are presented in Table 2 and Figure 3 (see page 6). The results show a continued trend upwards in the CP Scores for the period. The scores range from 2.5 in December, 1996 through to 5.9 in March, 1998. The increase from 3.1 in October, 1996 to 5.5 in May, 1998 equates to an increase of 77% for the entire period.

The initial goal of the organization was to achieve a CP Score above 4. This has been continuously achieved since August, 1997.

Through the use of the CP Score, the efforts of the organization have become focused, not only on achieving the Service Users’ goals, but also the realization of services that are individualized, community-based, and supported by community networks.

Months	Oct-96	Nov-96	Dec-96	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97	Jun-97	Jul-97	Aug-97	Sep-97	Oct-97	Nov-97	Dec-97	Jan-98	Feb-98	Mar-98	Apr-98	May-98
% Time in Community	28	27	24	19	28	34	31	33	34	32	43	46	45	41	45	57	56	73	63	65
% Time Individualized	55	52	33	50	55	73	78	74	77	81	73	74	78	82	87	76	74	73	71	65

Table 1 - Percentage of Service User Time in Community versus Percentage of Time on Individualized Programs

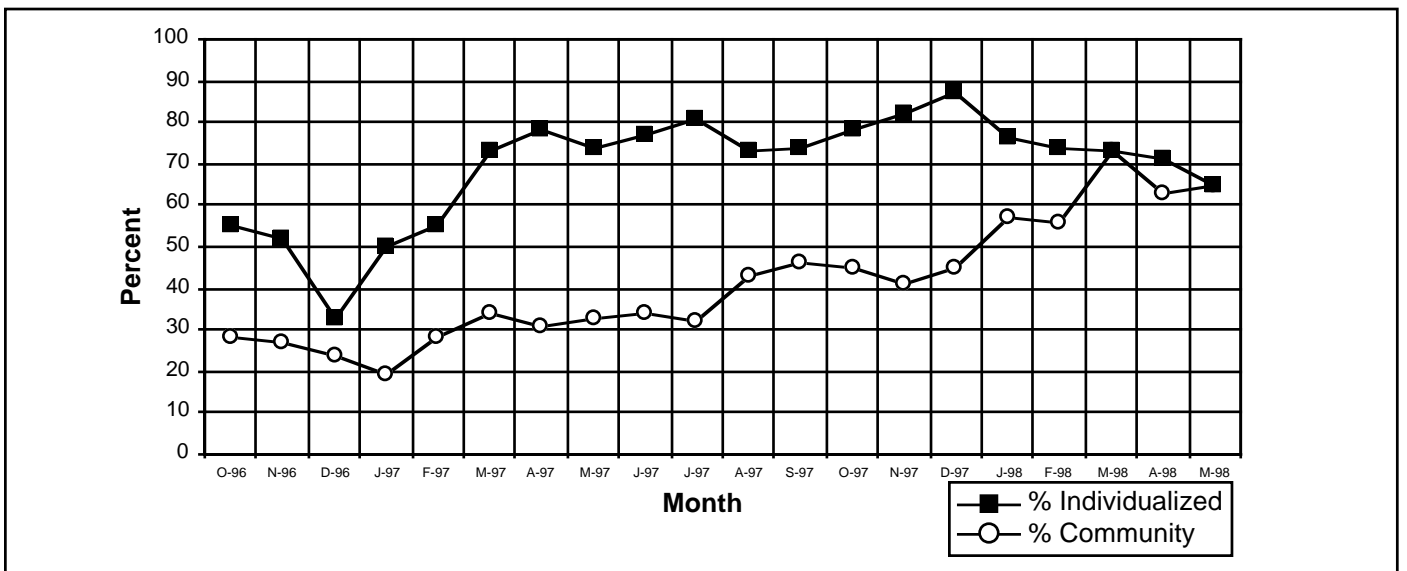


Figure 2 - Percentage of Service User Time in Community versus Percentage of Time on Individualized Programs

Activity Groups

Trends in the five Activity Groups (Arts & Crafts, Contract Work, Personal Development, Recreation & Leisure, Supported Employment) are monitored every three months as shown in Table 3 and Figure 4 (see page 7). Once again, the figures are based on the percentage of total Service User time spent in each grouping.

Analysis of the data shows that over the twenty months of the project, increases have occurred in the percentage of time spent in Personal Development (from 10% to 36%), Supported Employment (from 9% to 25%), and Arts & Crafts (from 5% to 6%). Decreases have resulted in the percentage of time spent in Contract Work (from 50% to 14%) and Recreation & Leisure (from 26% to 19%).

In the October-December quarter of 1996, the two Activity Groups that utilized the greatest percentage of Service User time were Contract Work (50%) and Recreation/Leisure (26%). By the January-March quarter of 1998 the two Activity Groups that utilized the greatest percentage of Service User time were Personal Development (36%) and Supported Em-

ployment (25%). These figures indicate a major shift in the type of activity being undertaken by Service Users in the twenty months covered by the project.

PSR Update

In February, 1997, an updated version of the PSR was introduced on the advice of Dr. Gary LaVigna, Clinical Director of IABA. This version includes several new standards; the most significant being the inclusion of standards based on the CP Score. For the first six months after the implementation of the second PSR Checklist, both versions were scored. This was done to reduce the likelihood of a lower score having a negative effect on the motivation of staff in the service.

The results of the monthly PSR scores from September, 1996 through to May, 1998 are presented in Table 4 and Figure 5 (see page 8). It can be seen that the organization has achieved a continual upward trend in achieving the standards it has set itself. Comparison of the months when both versions of the PSR Checklist were being scored shows that a greater rate of growth occurred in the second, more difficult, version.

Months	Oct-96	Nov-96	Dec-96	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97	Jun-97	Jul-97	Aug-97	Sep-97	Oct-97	Nov-97	Dec-97	Jan-98	Feb-98	Mar-98	Apr-98	May-98
CP Score	3.1	3.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.6	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.9	4.9	5.9	5.3	5.4

Table 2 - Average Community Participation (CP) Score per Service User

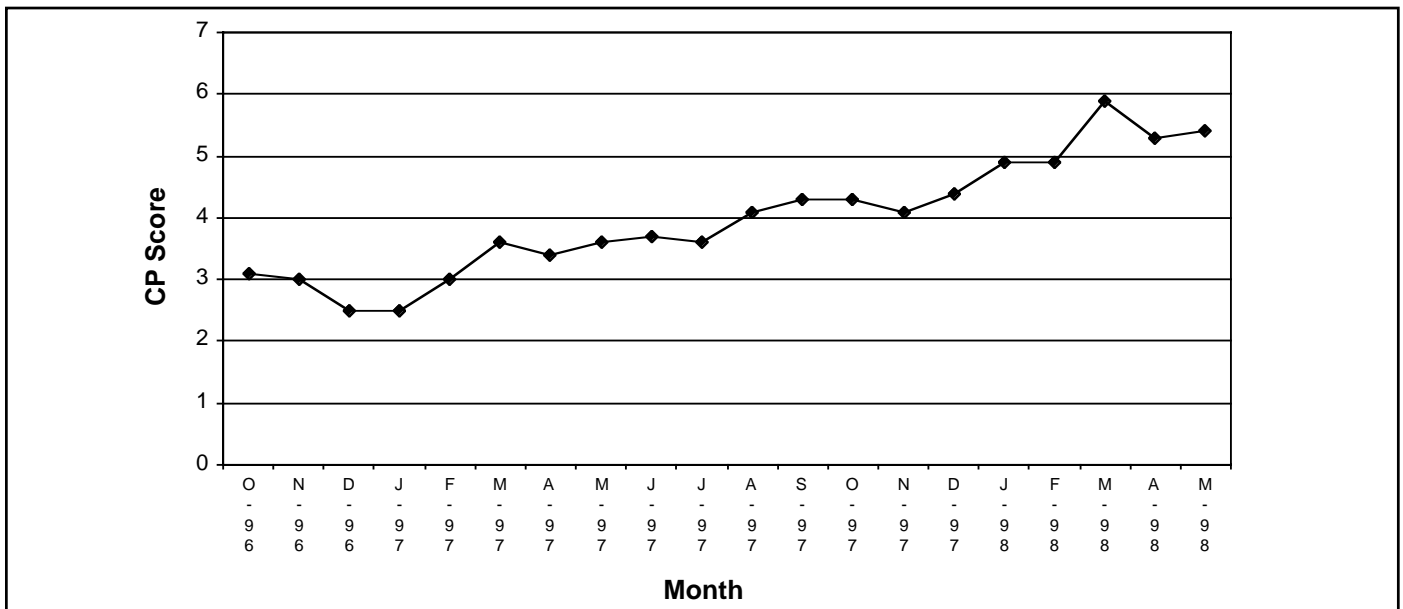


Figure 3 - Average Community Participation (CP) Score per Service User

Benefits Achieved

The PSR has helped bring about improved quality in the vocational services provided in Ashburton through encouraging:

- The development of clear organizational objectives.
- Communication between the organization, Service Users and their families.
- Updating of policies and procedures so they are unambiguous to all involved.
- Setting up of systems to record the daily activities of the service.
- Regular, objective, and positive feedback on the performance of the service.
- Making staff and management accountable for the results that are achieved.

Many other lessons have also been learned during the course of the exercise. These include:

- The realization that consumer-driven services in

the disability sector can be made a reality.

- The importance of vision, commitment and leadership.
- That unsatisfactory service performance is more likely to be the result of poor management than the fault of hands-on staff.
- The importance of focusing on the retention of existing staff, thus ensuring the continuation of organizational knowledge, and the maintenance of positive long-term working relationships.
- That improved service performance does not have to cost more money. Detailed analysis of relevant data encourages resources to be focused where they can best achieve the desired results.
- The importance of community networks in the provision of ongoing support.
- That a culture of “quality” must be present in all levels of the organization for any significant growth to be achieved.
- As long as organizations continue to be “facility”

Time Period (d/m/y)	Arts & Crafts	Contracts	Personal Development	Recreation & Leisure	Supported Employment
1/10/96 to 31/12/96	5%	50%	10%	26%	9%
1/1/97 to 31/3/97	7%	41%	15%	25%	11%
1/4/97 to 30/6/97	8%	38%	22%	19%	13%
1/7/97 to 30/9/97	7%	37%	22%	19%	15%
1/10/97 to 31/12/97	8%	31%	18%	19%	24%
1/1/98 to 31/3/98	6%	14%	36%	19%	25%

Table 3 - Percentage of Total Service User Time Spent in Each Activity Group

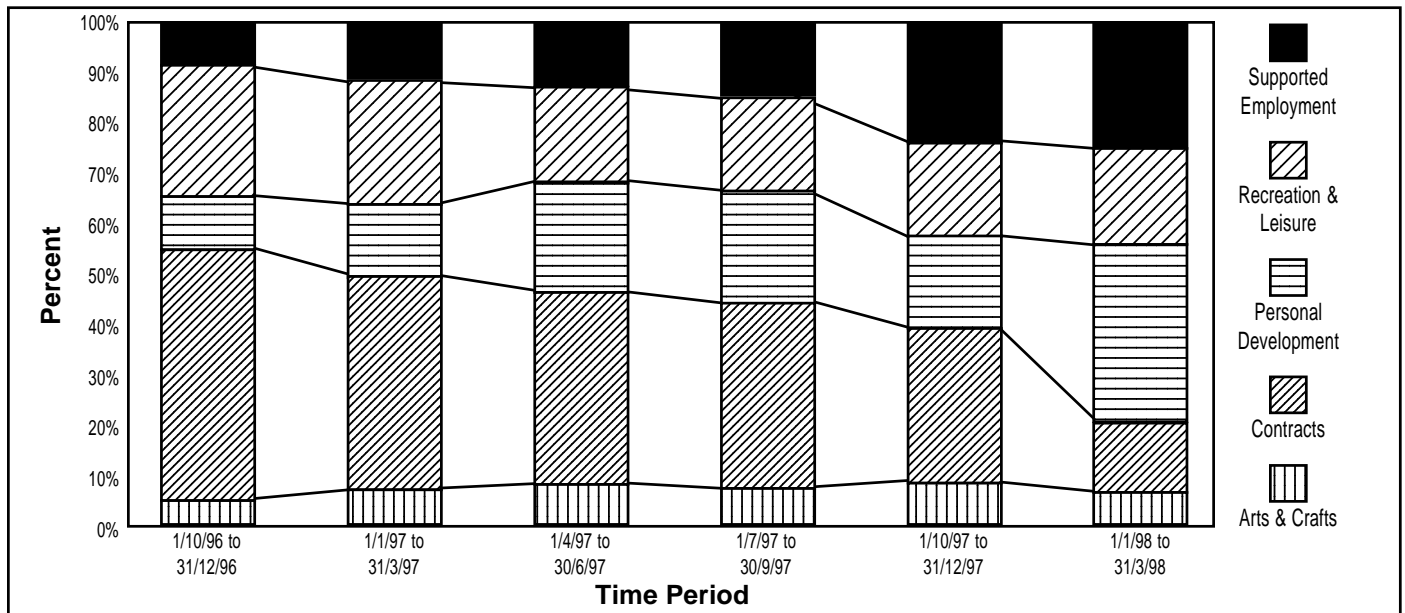


Figure 4 - Percentage of Total Service User Time Spent in Each Activity Group

based in their approach, there will always be a conflict with achieving the principle of community inclusion.

- That as Service Users have their initial goals realized, they appear to overcome their “learned helplessness” and request even more significant goals.

the ability to monitor the achievement of Service User goals.

- Developing of a Consumer Feedback process to ensure that Service Users and their families are happy with the way the organization interacts with them.

The Future

Following the success of the initiatives in vocational services, several further developments are planned:

- Implementing an updated version of the vocational PSR.
- Ensuring that all Service Users, irrespective of their level of disability, achieve equal opportunity of access to vocational options.
- Introducing the PSR concept to residential services.
- Updating the computerised database to improve

Conclusions

Clear organizational objectives, the collection of daily data, and the PSR have played integral roles in the realization of improved outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities in Ashburton.

PSR has helped create a positive working environment that focuses on constant improvement. Service Users have increasingly higher expectations of success. Staff actively pursue objective feedback on their performance. It’s all **Pretty Sensible Really**.

Months	Sep-96	Oct-96	Nov-96	Dec-96	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97	Jun-97	Jul-97	Aug-97	Sep-97	Oct-97	Nov-97	Dec-97	Jan-98	Feb-98	Mar-98	Apr-98	May-98	
Old PSR	34%	50%	72%	74%	77%	84%	86%	85%	91%	92%	92%											
New PSR						56%	60%	69%	72%	81%	81%	88%	82%	83%	83%	81%	83%	89%	89%	90%	95%	

Table 4 - Monthly PSR Percentage Scores

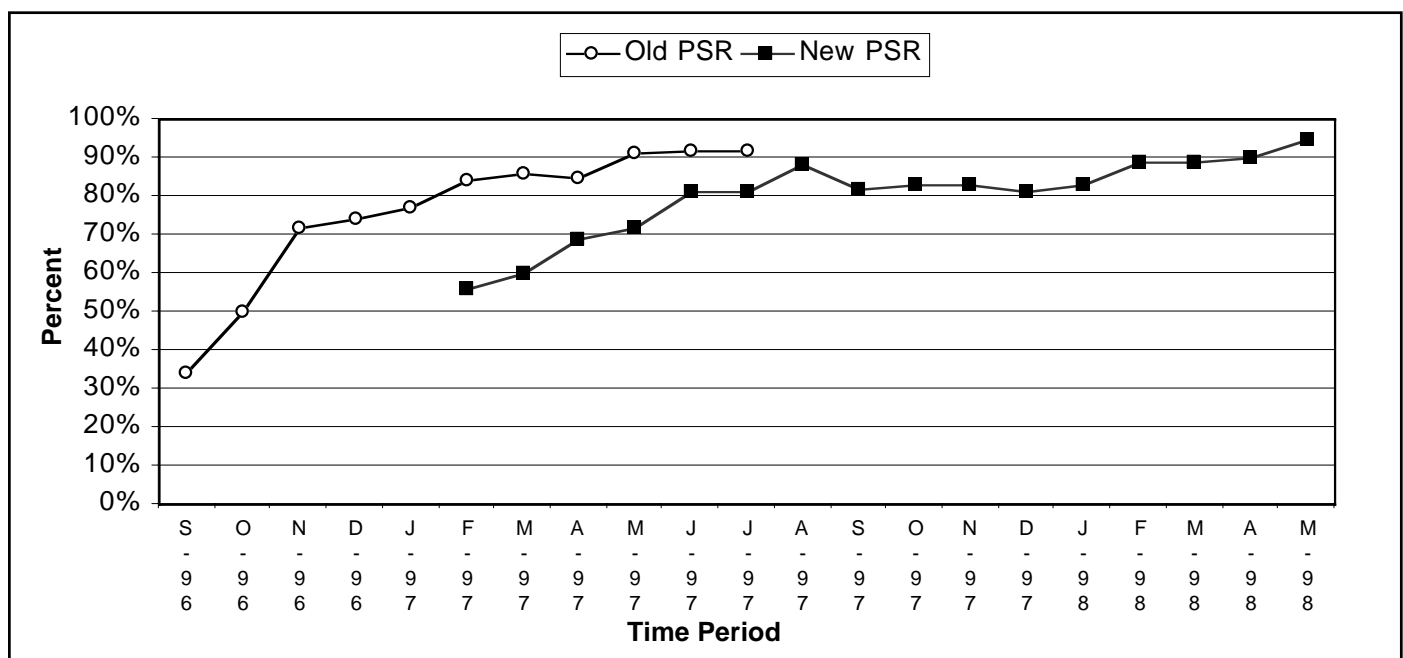


Figure 5 - Monthly PSR Percentage Scores

References

LaVigna, G. W., Willis, T. J., Shaull, J. F., Abedi, M., & Sweitzer, M. (1994). *The periodic service review: A total quality assurance system for human services and education*. Baltimore: Paul Brookes H. Publishing Co.

New Zealand, providing a wide range of advocacy and support services to people with intellectual disabilities and their families. It has an operating budget in excess of \$110 million and employs more than 3,000 staff.

Hamish Jones has worked for IHC for nearly ten years, the last three as Area Manager in Ashburton, a small town in the South Island of New Zealand. Refer to Table 5 for information on contacting IHC or Hamish Jones.

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Footnote

The Organization and the Author

IHC New Zealand Inc. is the largest charitable organization in

The STEP Matrix

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Introduction

STEP has organized its services around a framework that captures the mission, vision and values that define our approach as well as the settings and nature of the services we provide. The mission of STEP is to support the people we serve in spending their days participating in the community, engaging in activities of their choice, enhancing their relationships with others, increasing their productivity and independence, and continuing to grow. The vision of STEP is that the people we support are working in paid employment, pursuing a career of their choice. The primary values guiding STEP are: choice, community presence and participation, natural supports, integrated paid employment, reducing the cost of public funding assistance, quality outcomes, responsiveness, collaborative relationships, growth, productive living, relationship building, respect, and dignity.

As illustrated in Figure 1 (see page 10), the STEP Matrix, our work with participants is

structured around four levels of focus and is described below in detail.

Level A

Level A indicates three domains for where our participants might spend some or part of their six hour service day.

Community Participation

First and foremost, our goal is to have all the people we support spend as much of the day as possible participating in their communities. Community participation involves interacting with other members of the community and/or engaging in activities others in the community engage in. The emphasis in community participation is social integration. Examples of community participation include having a real job for a real paycheck, volunteering at typical local community organizations, taking a college class, attending the local fitness center, etc. STEP places a higher value on community participation than it does on just community presence.

Community Presence

Community presence, in contrast to community participation, may take place in a community setting (physical integration) but does not include social integration. Using the library as a setting for a social skills training session, gathering at the food court of a shopping mall to practice emergency skills, waiting for a bus, and waiting at a donut shop for the rest of their group to gather are examples of community presence but not community participation.

Non-Community

Finally, there are limited circumstances in which STEP services may be provided in a participant’s home or in the STEP administrative offices. For example, we may be providing services to a participant who has been house bound, is temporarily non-mobile due to injury, medical instability, or other reasons, or simply to a participant who has a difficult time leaving the house in the morning. This may require us to spend at least part of the six-hour service day in her or his home setting, even as we try to support

the person in spending as much of the day as possible in community presence and participation. Similarly, there may be limited circumstances when participants participate in a social skills training session or job club in our office setting, although even in these circumstances the goal would be for participants to spend as much time as possible in community presence and participation.

Summary

In summary, community participation is given greater value in the STEP Matrix than just community presence, which, in turn, is given more value than time spent in the participant’s home or in the office. However, we are prepared to provide full support to participants for the full six-hour service day, regardless of the setting as dictated by individual needs and characteristics. Even under the circumstances portrayed in Level A, we continue to express our mission, vision and value by further delineating the quality of activities in which our participants engage. This is portrayed in Level B of the STEP Matrix.

Level	A	Home/Office				Community Presence				Community Participation																			
	B	Non-Instructional		Instructional		Non-Instructional		Instructional		Non-Work		Volunteer Work		Paid Work															
	C	Others' Choice		Self Choice		Others' Choice		Self Choice		Others' Choice		Self Choice		Others' Choice		Self Choice													
	D	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support	Staff Support	Natural Support		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		Value Code																											

Figure 1 - STEP Matrix

Level B

Paid Work

Under community participation, our framework indicates that as a day service for adults, we value paid employment above all other possible activities, regardless of the level of support that individuals may need. This is so, even though STEP participants have not historically qualified for Department of Rehabilitation services nor have they otherwise been considered for paid employment because of the intensity or nature of the supports they need to enter or maintain employment.

Volunteer Work

Our next highest value is for our participants to spend as much time as possible engaged in productive volunteer work through which they can contribute to their community. An individual may participate in volunteer work if he or she is unemployed, employed part-time, employed in a temporary job, or employed in an entry-level job. Individuals in jobs meeting their career goals also may choose to participate in volunteer work.

Non-Work

Finally, if not engaged in paid or volunteer work, we value our participants' full participation in the community through a variety of integrated activities. Examples of such activities include; taking courses at a community college, attending the local fitness center on a regular basis, looking for paid work (for example, by attending a job fair or answering a classified ad), taking care of personal banking, shopping for personal or family needs, engaging in a leisure activity such as attending a professional ball game, taking a day trip to a museum, participating in an activity at their local church or religious affiliation, etc.

Instructional

When not participating but nevertheless present in the community, we hold it as a higher value for our participants to be engaged in instructional or constructive activities vs. non-instructional/constructive activities. Examples of instructional or constructive activities in the community that might involve com-

munity presence but not community participation would include social skills training at the local library or park, practicing emergency skills, looking through the classified section of the newspaper, reviewing a participant's personal goals and plans while sitting at the food court of a local shopping mall and supporting a participant in planning their schedule for the coming week.

The same emphasis on valuing instructional activities extends to those limited times a participant might receive STEP services in non-community settings such as a in his or her home or at the STEP office. Examples of instructional or constructive activities at home might include learning how to dress or bathe, how to prepare a simple meal, how to place a "911" call, and/or how to do any domestic chore or independent leisure activity such as accessing the Internet, using the cassette player, etc. Examples of instructional or constructive activities at the office might include learning relaxation skills, a variety of social skills (e.g., how to say "no" or how to initiate and maintain a conversation), emergency skills, attending a personal planning conference, going through the classified ads in the newspaper, developing a resume, attending a job club meeting, etc.

Non-instructional/constructive

In contrast, non-instructional/constructive activities would include waiting for the group to gather, waiting for a bus, waiting for staff to complete an activity with another participant in the group, watching a movie, just laying out at the beach or in transition from one activity to another, hanging out while the Employment Specialist is coaching another participant. However, some of these activities may be considered instructional or constructive if the person needs to learn that skill. For example, if a person needs to learn how to wait for the bus to properly take the bus to and from work or other community activities, it would be considered an instructional or constructive activity.

Non-instructional/constructive activities at home or in the office would include watching TV, listening to music, eating, sunning oneself on the front porch, etc., or at the office, activities such as hanging around after an instructional session, reading a magazine, or waiting for a staff or for a ride to arrive.

Level C

Level C of the STEP Matrix illustrates that regardless of the activity in which the participant participates, it is considered of higher value if he or she has chosen to engage in that activity as opposed to the activity being chosen by someone else.

Self-Choice vs. Others' Choice

This dichotomy exists regardless of the activity. For example, with reference to paid work, is the person's job, the job of choice or one that fits squarely on the person's career path or is it one that is simply "paying the bills" or one that is filling the time until a better or preferred job comes along? Is the community activity in which the person is participating of her or his choosing or is it something chosen by another member of the group and the focus person is just "going along" as a member of the group? As a last example of how we value participant choice, an activity would be of higher value if it involved a skill the person wanted to learn, such as learning to play the guitar, as opposed to a skill that others thought was important for the person to learn, such as how to access community resources such as the fire department, police department, or dialing "911" in an emergency.

It is important to determine what an individual's choice is when he or she has limited communication skills and/or decision-making skills. Often, this is done by involving the individual's circle of support in an effort to ensure that the individual is participating in activities of his or her choice.

Level D

Natural Support vs. Staff Support

Level D of the STEP Matrix indicates that a staff supported activity, for example through a job coach or mobility trainer, is not as valued as an activity that is supported by the community, for example, by a co-worker, bus driver, unpaid friend or volunteer. Increased improvement in providing services through natural support might eventually allow the participant to qualify for competitive employment through Department of Rehabilitation services or, at the very

least, allow us to reduce the in-the-aggregate-costs for providing services to those enrolled in STEP.

Conclusions

When we integrate the values expressed in Levels A, B, C and D, the STEP Matrix illustrates that we are able to put a value code of 1 through 28 on any activity for each period of a participant's six hour service day. The higher the number, the higher the value placed on that activity. In this framework, the activity given the highest value is paid work of the participant's own choice, supported without paid staff. The activity given the lowest value is staff supported, non-instructional/constructive, not of the person's choice, at the person's home or in STEP offices.

By developing the STEP Matrix, we are able to hold ourselves accountable to our participants, to the funding regional center and to our own Mission, Vision and Values statements. Further, we are able to maintain a profile of how STEP participants spend their day and to establish objectives at both the service level and individual participant level in the following ways. We plan to establish minimum performance against these objectives as outcome standards on our STEP PSR (LaVigna, Willis, Shaull, Abedi & Sweitzer, 1994).

1. Average value of activities in which participants participate.
2. Percentage of time spent in Community Participation vs. Community Presence vs. Non-Community Activities.
3. Percentage of time spent in Paid Work vs. Volunteer Work vs. Non-work.
4. Percentage of time spent in Instructional vs. Non-instructional activities.
5. Percentage of time spent in self-chosen vs. others' chosen activities.
6. Percentage of time with Natural vs. Staff support.

References

- Jones, H. (1998). PSR: Progressively sustainable results. *Positive Practices, III*, (4), 3-9.
- LaVigna, G. W., Willis, T. J., Shaull, J. F., Abedi, M., & Sweitzer, M. (1994). *The periodic service review: A total quality assurance system for human services and education*. Baltimore: Paul Brookes H. Publishing Co.

Continued from page 1

rate the work of Novaco's Stress Inoculation Therapy (1977), Kaufmann and Wagner's Systematic Treatment Technology for Temper Control Disorders (1972), Benson's (1986) approach to self-instructional training and problem-solving skills, as well as Personal Effectiveness Training described by King, Liberman, Roberts, and Bryan (1977). It is an effort to utilize the approaches which have appeared most promising for all populations, adapt them for use by persons with varying degrees of cognitive disabilities, and present them in a flexible group format that can be adjusted to the participants' abilities and learning style." Hence, "this program is an eclectic blend of various anger management strategies that has been successfully used with children, adolescents, and adults who possess the following prerequisite skills:

1. The ability to attend in a small group setting (4 - 8 participants) for at least fifteen minutes at a time.
2. The ability to receptively and expressively communicate verbally, with signs or pictures or through a communication device" (McLain & Lewis, 1998, p. 10).

The sessions follow a logical progression and continue to develop and expand on the skills learned in each of the previous sessions. The list below gives a brief description of each session to assist in orienting the reader to the detailed descriptions that follow.

- Sessions 1 and 2 — a rationale for learning to manage one's anger
- Sessions 3 and 4 — participants begin to learn the fundamental skills required for anger management
- Session 5 — the participants learn the physiological cues that are present when one becomes angry
- Session 6 — serves as a review for the previous sessions
- Session 7 — focuses on the advanced cognitive-behavioral aspects of temper control
- Session 8 — assertiveness skills are taught with a special emphasis on discriminating assertiveness and aggression
- Session 9 — explores problem-solving techniques including outcome evaluation strategies
- Session 10 — the more subtle aspects of assertiveness skills are developed

- Session 11 — serves as a review for all of the previous sessions and offers participants an opportunity to set their own personal goals for anger management

It should also be noted that the curriculum has been successfully used to provide ongoing training and support to individuals with disabilities. The sessions can be broken into smaller parts and/or repeated in order to ensure practice and mastery of the skills.

Session 1: Rationale for Training

Why is it Important to Learn to Control Your Anger?

This discussion should focus on problems created by poor anger control. Discuss each of these facts with the group.

- When people lose their jobs it's usually because they can't get along with their boss or co-workers, not because they can't do the work.
- If you hurt someone and the police are called, the person you have hit may wish to press charges, which can result in you having to go to court. If it has happened before, you may be asked to move to a different place. If you get really mad and are hurting people, you may have to go to a special hospital called a psychiatric facility.
- You may lose friends or relationships. Your family may not want to spend time with you. People may not want to be around you. This can be very lonely.
- You can lose your job and lose the chance to get a new job. If your boss fires you because you fight with others, it may be hard to get another job.
- You may be kicked out of school for a few days (suspension), or be sent to a different school (expulsion) if you can't get along with others around you.
- You may not be allowed to continue to ride a bus independently if you have problems with your temper while you are riding the bus. This cuts down on your independence.
- People who stay angry may get sick more often and may even die at a younger age. Getting angry is hard on your body.
- When you yell a lot or hit others you might have to move out of places where you like to live.

- Most of you have decided you want to have a happier, better life by learning ways to control your anger and solve problems better.

Exercises

Have individuals list and discuss events in their lives in each area, which have been affected by their anger:

- School
- Transportation
- Legal
- Friends
- Jobs
- Relationships
- Roommates
- Family

Homework

List the things that happen this week that make you feel angry and write down or dictate how you handled them. Use this format:

1. Date _____
2. Time _____
3. Situation _____
4. What You Thought and Did _____

Notes to the Group Leader

Provide practice for the homework assignment in class by demonstrating from your personal life an event you might include on the worksheet. Have each individual complete at least one entry and assist as necessary. Fade prompts so that the individual is able to demonstrate independent completion of an item.

Contact the key social agents in the participants' home, school or work environments and share with them any pertinent information, which came out of the first session. Give them information about the homework assignment, and ask them to provide social reinforcement to the group member following daily completion of the homework.

Session 2: What is Anger?

About How This Group Will Work

Explain how the group will be structured with discussion and group role-playing. Let people know

that in the group they will have the opportunity to talk about things that bother them. Set up ground rules for turn taking and interrupting in-group discussions.

Explain the idea of confidentiality of information shared in the group. Information about other group members is not to be shared outside of group without their explicit permission. The group leader, of course, has these same confidentiality and additional reporting responsibilities. Explain that there may be visitors to the group who will participate in the role-play sessions and that they too are bound to strict confidentiality. None of the "barbs" discussed in the group are to be used outside of the group unless there has been a clear agreement among the involved member(s) and the group leader for this to happen. The group leader may not share specific information about the participants without their permission, unless the group leader is aware of a situation of potential harm or abuse. The group leader must follow guidelines for mandated reporting of suspected abuse.

The group is here to learn how to manage anger. No person will produce perfect responses in each role-play or group discussion. Therefore, criticism, teasing or ridicule has no place in the group interactions (unless structured in a "barb" role-play situation). Group members should practice finding positive qualities of each person's participation. This is how people will learn best.

Anger is a Normal Part of the Range of Human Emotions

Discuss the differences between anger and aggression.

An emotion is a feeling that we have. Can you name some emotions? Anger is a human emotion that is not by itself "bad." It can help save our life if we are in danger. Anger can help us work to change the things that make us mad. Anger is a problem when we get so mad that we hurt people by hitting them, yelling at them, or saying things we don't really mean. Aggression is the way some people show angry feelings. Aggression includes yelling at people, hitting, kicking, telling people that you are going to hurt them, pouting, or going off by yourself. Aggression does not solve problems. It often gets people into trouble and makes people lose friends, lose help from their family and their teachers, lose their job, etc.

This group is here because you can learn to control your anger and learn better, more effective ways to

solve problems than getting angry. This does not mean that you will never get angry after you are part of this group. You may learn how to control your anger so that you can solve problems in ways that are more positive for you and the other people in your life. When you learn to control your anger, you will learn to understand better what it was that made you mad.

One of the best ways to learn these skills is to watch other people control their anger and solve problems with words, and then practice in this group and most importantly, practice in your everyday life.

Lots of people who find it hard to control their anger believe that it is always someone else's fault when they get mad. When people talk about what made them mad they usually "point the finger" at someone else or find someone to blame for their anger outburst. In this group you will hear over and over again that **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN FEELINGS AND YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR**. You are not responsible for anyone's feelings or behavior.

Exercises

Do a responsible statement exercise where each group member asks another member, "Who are you responsible for?" The desired response is "Myself." The person who responds then asks the question of someone else. Ask group members for situations when people interact and quiz group members about whether these people are taking responsibility for their behavior or the behavior of others. Check the homework from the last session and allow group members to share part of their homework if they want to. Allow some time for discussion of the situations that came up during the week for group members. Identify situations, which illustrate the issue of personal responsibility.

Notes to Group Leader

In the second exercise, encourage and prompt the use of real-life situations of which you are aware. These situations may occur just prior to or during the training session, as group members interact informally with each other, or may come out of participants' homework assignments. In both exercises, model the desired behavior only as necessary. As group members demonstrate competence with the exercises, throw in "error responses" and see if group members are able to identify them. If not, have the

other leader model a response to the "error response." Check in with the key social agents (within the limits of confidentiality) regarding any challenging situations that may have come up for the group member during the week. See if the member's report matches the report from the key social agent.

Session 3: Identifying Antecedents

What are "Antecedents?"

Antecedents are the things that happen, inside you or outside of you right before you have a temper outburst. An antecedent might be something that no one else can see (internal) or something that other people can see (external).

Has anyone ever seen a barbed wire fence? (Draw a picture). The barbs are the little prickles on the fence. If you touch them they can poke you or hurt you. In this class, we call barbs the things that happen just before we get angry. Barbs are things that may hurt us or make us feel angry. They may be things people say like somebody telling us we haven't done a very good job, or they may be things we tell ourselves inside our head, like "he's not going to get away with that."

Examples of internal events: pictures in our minds, things we say to ourselves, or physical feelings such as menstrual cramps, sore throat, tiredness, tight muscles, breathing quickly, upset stomach, fast heartbeat, etc.

External events are things that people do (actions), words, or other things that happen around us that we can see and feel. Some examples from the social environment are a teacher telling you that you did something wrong, your mom or dad asking you to do something, a friend making a face at you, a stranger swearing at you or giving you the finger, etc. Examples of antecedents or barbs from the physical environment might include being in a room that is too hot or noisy, breathing polluted air, etc.

Why Identify Antecedents to Angry Outbursts?

People who get mad easily get mad when certain things happen. It may be hard to be told that you have done a bad job or to be told to do a job that you don't like. It may be confusing to be told to do different things by two different people, etc. Usually the things that upset people are different for each person. Some-

thing that doesn't bother one person may easily upset another person. Sometimes it depends on the day or time. Something that doesn't bother you one day might bother you on another day. The purpose of this next exercise is to find out exactly the things that people say or do that make you get really angry.

Exercises

Make a list of things people have said to you that make you angry. Include who says them, where, when, and the way that they say them. The instructor may need to help with this list. It could be written on a large sheet of paper that is taped to the wall. *Put the items that make you most angry at the top of the list, and so on, to the things that make you less angry.*

Make a list of the things you say to yourself or things you see in your mind when these things happen. For example, you may say things like:

- “He can't talk to me that way.”
- “That isn't fair.”
- “I never get what I want.”
- “People never see things my way.”
- “I'm going to get even.”
- “I'm going to punch her in the nose.”
- “That jerk.”

These types of statements are “trouble” statements that we will learn to change into “coping” statements. For now it is most important to recognize when you're telling yourself these types of things and then stop them. These self-statements will *not* help you to control your anger and they may make you more angry or lead to more trouble in your life.

Homework

Write down the date, time, and barb anytime that you get angry this week. This is like the homework that you did before. If you would like to use a tape recorder to record this information or if you need for someone to help you do this, talk to me after the session.

Notes to the Leader

It may be easier for people to put their barbs in order if each one is written on a 3-inch by 5-inch card. Often what is the strongest barb at one time will not elicit as strong a response even at the very next meeting. By

putting the barbs on cards, the participants can re-order them according to how they are feeling each session. The experiences that they have had during the time between sessions may influence the order of their barbs. Check to see if what the participant reports as their barbs fit with the information that you have collected from key social agents. If you notice any striking differences, it may warrant further investigation and/or direct observation. The group leader should again model the homework exercise with a clear example. People who are unable to read or write may use a tape recorder or pictures, or may narrate their barbs to someone else who is able to write them down.

Session 4: Relaxation Training

The following is an abbreviated version of Jacobsen's Progressive Muscle Relaxation. Since the most important aspect of relaxation is that the individual can use it unnoticed, in any environment, this procedure will always pair the sub-audible cue of the word “relax” with each exhale during the relaxation. The goal is for individuals to be able to relax without having to tense each muscle group. When the sensation of relaxation is consistently paired with the word relax, the word will begin to induce relaxation by itself.

When narrating these exercises always 1) pace your instruction (a slow presentation will allow time for deeper relaxation and may have a slightly hypnotic effect); 2) have the individual breathe deeply following the tension release, hold the breath, and say “relax” to him/herself.

Sit so that you are comfortable. Rest your hands on your lap, palms up. Focus on your hands. Make a fist with both hands, like this. Hold tight. Now relax and open your hands. Relax each arm completely. Let your arms feel very heavy. Now relax them some more. Take a deep breath and “relax.”

Now focus on your shoulders. Hold all of the muscles in your shoulders very tight, like this. Now even tighter. Now relax and let your shoulders hang down, very heavy. Take a deep breath and say “relax” to yourself.

Focus on your neck. Move your head a little bit forward and up. Hold it until you can feel your neck getting tight. Now let your neck relax and breathe deeply.

Focus on your face. Squint your eyes. Wrinkle your nose. Clench your teeth. Tighten your mouth. Hold

tight. Relax. Relax your eyelids, letting them feel very heavy. Relax your cheeks, and lips, forehead. Take a deep breath, and say “Relax” as you exhale.

Focus on your stomach. Make your stomach tense by lifting your feet a little bit off the ground. Feel the tense feeling. Hold it. Now let your feet down. Relax, take a deep breath and say relax as you exhale.

Focus on your back muscles. Tighten your back by sitting up very tall and pulling your back away from the chair. Hold it. Now sink down and relax. Take a deep breath and relax even more. Breathe deeply and each time you exhale feel yourself sink just a bit deeper into relaxation than before.

Now focus on your leg muscles. Point your toes and tighten all the muscles in your legs. Hold it. Now relax your toes, let your legs hang down and let all the tension just melt away. Practice deep breathing on your own.

Now take a minute and see if you can let your entire body relax as completely as possible. See if you can find any tension in your body and simply release it. Let it go and continue to deep breathe, relaxing just a bit deeper each time you exhale.

I am going to come around and see if you are really relaxed. If you are very relaxed, your arms and legs should feel like noodles that have been cooked, soft and floppy. I will try to lift your arm. If you are relaxed, it should be very heavy for me. If your arm does not feel relaxed, I will have you try to lift my arm and I will show you what a relaxed arm feels like.

Exercises

Practice relaxation in identified role-play situations without having to use tension/release. Use real-life items reported in participants’ homework.

Now we’re going to use these relaxation skills. I’m going to give each of you a barb. As I give you the barb, I want you to tell yourself “relax” on the inside, take a deep breath, and let yourself completely relax. When you feel very relaxed, answer me.

Now we’ll practice using relaxation when you get more than one barb all at once. I’m going to give each of you more than one barb. I want you to keep practicing relaxation as you answer me.

Homework

Practice relaxation the way we did in class today (tension/release) until you can become very relaxed

without having to tighten each part of your body (i.e., skip directly to the “release” part). You will know that you are very relaxed when your arms and legs feel very heavy.

Notes to Group Leader

Make sure that you are training relaxation in a conducive setting. It should be quiet, with dim lighting if possible, or outdoors in a quiet area. Group members should be seated comfortably or stretched out on mats or grass. There should be no interruptions.

Ask group members to notice, during relaxation if there are any parts of their body, which are particularly difficult to relax. Have them direct their attention to those areas until they are able to relax those areas too.

Communicate with key social agents and, with group members’ permission, invite them to specific meetings. Share the current barbs that the person is working on, and their progress with relaxation training. Ask the key social agent to allow the group member to practice relaxation with them and to show them what they have learned following this session. Ask the key social agent to provide positive social reinforcement to the participant when they are observed to demonstrate the use of relaxation techniques, especially under stressful conditions. Perhaps the participant can teach a family member how to do the relaxation exercises.

Session 5: Recognizing Body Cues

Review of the Internal Antecedents Identified in Session 3

Today we are going to help you learn to find the things that happen inside your body when you are just starting to get angry. When some people get angry, they feel their muscles get tight and hard. Other people feel their heart start to pound or they clench their teeth together very tightly. Everybody is different. I want you to find out what happens when you get angry.

Exercise

Have the group members practice the relaxation response and develop the deepest state of relaxation possible for each individual.

When you are very deeply relaxed, lift your finger to signal me.

I am going to come around to each of you and

describe the thing that you said made you most angry. Pretend that this is really happening to you now. As you think about it notice what happens to your body. Are any muscles getting tense? Is your stomach getting upset or tight? Is your heart beating faster? Is your jaw tight? Do you feel like you are getting a headache?

Repeat the exercise several times for different scenes. Use real-life situations that have been reported in homework or in members' barb lists.

Survey the members of the group after having them open their eyes and have them describe the sensations they experienced. Write them on a blackboard or a large sheet of paper and draw pictures.

Use the most salient body responses as a cue to begin a self-control procedure:

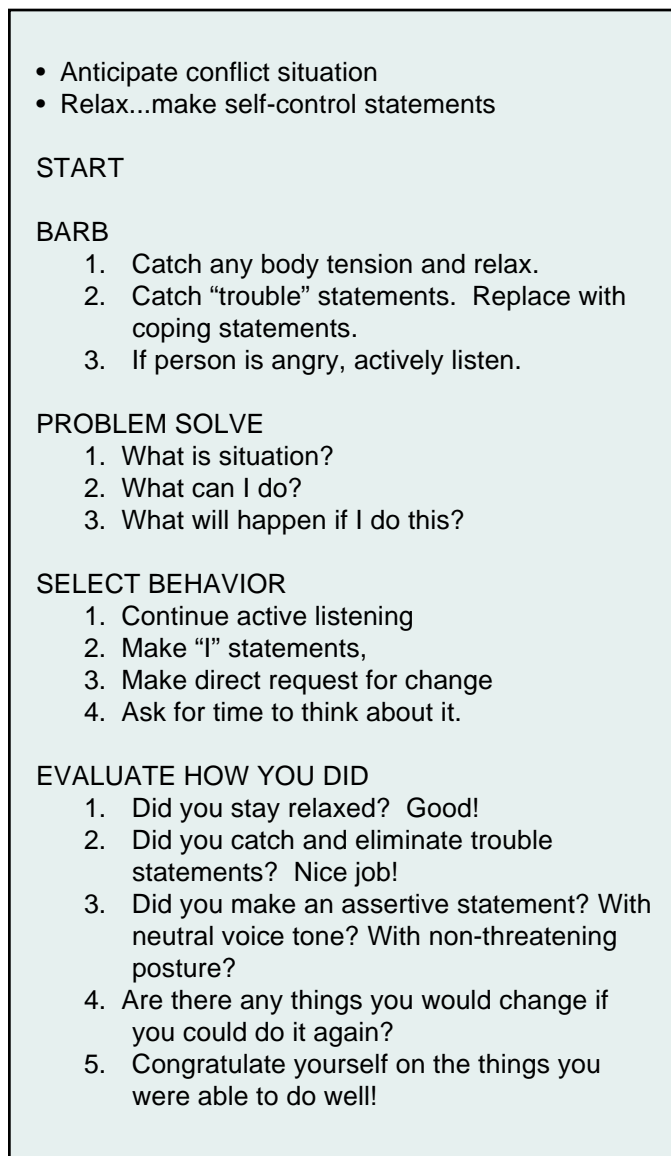


Figure 1 - Anger Management Flowchart

Draw the flow chart for anger management (Figure 1) for those persons who are able to read. Use pictures instead of words for those persons who are not able to read. Proceed up to the point where the person identifies their bodily response, makes a coping or self-instructional statement and then relaxes.

Present group practice exercises by narrating various real-life scenes for the group and follow each scene with group discussion about identifying internal cues, making self-coping statements and relaxing.

Notes to the Leader

Some people may have difficulty identifying their body responses. It may help them if you can give them observational feedback such as, "I notice that your face gets very red when you seem to be upset about something. What happens inside when that happens?"

Discuss physical manifestations of tension and stress such as headaches and stomachaches.

Explore the use of soft, slow music before, during, and after relaxation exercises. Talk to the group about how certain kinds of music may create certain moods and feelings and how they can use music to lower their arousal level or to stay relaxed.

It may be a good idea to discuss and record other relaxation and coping strategies that people have found helpful such as taking a warm bath, going for a walk, talking with a friend, eating a bowl of warm soup, etc.

Session 6: Review

Session 1 - Rationale for Training

- Anger in itself is not "bad."
- How we handle anger determines whether it is a problem.
- Each individual is responsible for his or her feelings, and behavior.
- Uncontrolled anger can create many problems in school, work, home and social environments. Review some of the individual challenges that each person has had.

Session 2 - What is Anger?

- Review of anger diary

Session 3 - Identifying Antecedents

- Review with the group what barbs are, what each individual's barbs are, and why we are tracking them.
- Review with each individual member what are the specific "trouble" statements they have identified.

Session 4 - Relaxation Response

- Review relaxation procedures and practice in-group.
- Review applications in real life.

Session 5 - Recognizing Body Cues

- Review body cues that anger should be managed, and practice with exercise from previous session.
- Review anger diary for information on body cues.
- Review the flowchart up to this point and practice exercises used in previous sessions.

Session 7: Recognizing Self-Statements

Recognizing "Trouble" Statements

"Trouble" statements happen when you say to yourself how unfair a situation is, or how another person is wrong. Some words that are a signal that it may be a trouble statement include "always," "never," "everyone," and "no one." Describe how making trouble statements will interfere with the individual's relaxation, recognizing internal cues, and problem solving.

"Coping" statements happen when you say to yourself something that helps you feel better and solve a problem, like "That person is probably just having a bad day. I can handle this."

Exercise

See if you can tell which of these statements is a "coping" or "trouble" statement:

- "That guy is such a jerk."
- "Nobody likes me."
- "I'm starting to get mad but I'm going to handle this like a pro."
- "If I punch him it won't solve the problem and I'll just get in trouble."

- "She is always telling me what to do."
- "Yep, this person wants me to change the way I work."
- "If she says another word I'm going to scream."
- "How could he be so stupid?"
- "Hmmm...I wonder how I could deal with this situation."
- "I hate him."
- "Time to take a deep breath and use the old noodle."

Review of Previously Identified Self-Statements (from Session 3)

- Determine if they are "coping" or "trouble" statements.
- Save the statements that are coping statements.
- Decide what new coping statements could be used to replace the old "trouble" statements.
- Make a personalized list of coping statements that each participant will practice in a role-play.

Exercise

Making self-statements: *I want you to pretend that _____ (describe antecedent) is happening with _____ (group member's name), and when she gives you the barb, I want you to say what you were thinking out loud (insert individual's selected statement). Ok?*

Provide any positive or corrective feedback and have the person immediately repeat the role-play, saying the coping statement silently.

Notes to Leader

Use a situation from real life for the exercise. Ask other group members to act as observers and to give their feedback, too.

Check in again with key social agents. Find out if they are seeing any changes in the group member's behavior. Let them know how the person is progressing in the group. Enlist their assistance if the person needs additional practice on any specific part of the program up to this point. Ask the key social agent to model some coping statements for the participant in the natural setting.

Session 8: Assertiveness Skills I

What is Assertive Behavior?

Assertive behavior is 1) figuring out what your own feelings are (e.g. anger, admiration, sadness); 2) figuring out what are the behaviors of others that you would like changed; 3) asking directly for change in a way that keeps your rights and respects the rights of others. People have the right not to be yelled at, threatened or ridiculed.

Exercise 1

Discrimination Training: Assertive vs. Aggressive responses

Group leaders should model examples of assertive or aggressive behaviors along these parameters, having individuals identify what element is being demonstrated and whether it is assertive or aggressive behavior.

- Posture
- Tone of voice
- Facial expression
- Verbal content

Active Listening Skills

These skills will help you by slowing you down so that you don't say or do anything before you have decided how you really want to handle the problem.

It is important not to interrupt when another person is talking, especially if the other person is angry.

Restate the problem in your own words to insure that you understand what the problem is.

Exercise 2

Now let's put everything together. We'll do relaxation, find a nice tone of voice and put a pleasant expression on your face, and use good listening. I'm going to take one of the barbs and give it to you. When I say _____, I want you to take a deep breath and relax, then restate what I say the way that we practiced before. Make sure you don't sound or look angry. We will tell you the good things that you do. Everybody will have a chance to practice this many times, because it is very important.

We will work on what things to say to solve the problem in the next few sessions.

Notes to the Leader

If possible, videotape this session. After the session, edit the videotape so that you retain the best demonstrations of the target behaviors. Do some additional videotaping in natural settings, attempting to capture similar behaviors by the participants or by people they know. Plan to view the videotape and allow time for discussion in an additional session or at the beginning of the next session.

Talk with the key social agents about reinforcing assertive behavior, even if the group member is making a choice that the key social agent may not agree with. Encourage the key social agents to give specific praise for the target behaviors listed above as they occur in natural settings. It may be necessary to do some attitude assessment and education with key social agents about individual rights and the importance of teaching people to make choices and the key social agent's responsibility to respect those choices.

Session 9: Problem Solving Strategies

What to do When You are Having a Problem

This session will focus on selecting a behavioral response to provocation. Use the antecedent information from previous sessions to practice this.

Ask yourself the question "What is the problem?"

Then ask, "What can I do?" Think of at least three different ways you could handle the problem.

Then ask "What will happen if I...?" and decide which is the best thing to do. Pay special attention to things that you could say or do that might cause more trouble instead of solving the problem.

Then choose a plan that will not make the situation worse and that is most likely to get you what you want. Try out the plan.

How did you do with your plan? Did you get what you wanted? Did you get something that works for you and for the other people around you?

Exercise

I want each of you to think of the barb that is on the top of your list today. Think of at least three different ways you could handle the situation. We will talk about them with the group and you can decide which the best option is. You may get some ideas from

listening to how other people handle their barbs.

Homework

Find situations where you can use these skills and practice them over the next week. Bring back a story about your experience to share at the next session.

Notes to the Leader

Refer to the flow chart in Figure 1 for the steps of the whole process. For the people in the group who cannot read, use a picture flow chart with symbols representing the steps listed in Figure 1.

Individual role playing will occur with the group, or in pairs coached by the group leader utilizing direct instruction, modeling, behavior rehearsal, feedback, shaping and positive reinforcement (see Figure 2). Some people might have difficulty thinking of three different ways to handle a situation. Try two first. This is an important session in which to have key social agents participate. They need to be aware of the skills the individual was practicing in the sessions.

When possible, conduct practice sessions in the actual environment where the individual tends to have problems. This may be done when other students or individuals are not present if that is more comfortable for people.

Session 10: Assertiveness Skills II

Review Session 7 Skills

Discriminate assertive from aggressive responses (practice with various role played responses in-group).

Practice relaxation during provocation (practice with antecedent information identified previously).

Practice active listening (practice with antecedent information identified previously).

Exercise: Handling Angry People

Today we’re going to practice what to say to people when their behavior makes you angry. This is a way of asking them to change their behavior after you have stayed calm and actively listened to their complaint.

Describe something you like about the way they treat you. For example, “I like it when you tell me what is bothering you.”

Make an “I” statement about how you feel when

<p>1.0 INSTRUCT</p> <p>1.1 RATIONALE - Give a rationale to the individual for working on the target behavior. Explain the specific behavior’s usefulness and how it may be used to avoid or solve problems or “get things you want.” Describe the “modeling” procedure as a way of “showing” the individual exactly what you want her to do.</p> <p>1.2 DESCRIPTION - Describe the stimulus situations in which it would be appropriate to use the target behavior. Describe how the behavior should look and/or sound when it is successfully learned.</p> <p>2.0 MODELING</p> <p>2.1 INSTRUCT - Have the individual observe you as you demonstrate the behavior with another person.</p> <p>2.2 REPEAT-Repeat the demonstration several times pointing out an important aspect of the target behavior after each demonstration. You should draw attention to things such as voice volume, content, eye contact, and tone of voice and posture (including the use of the hands).</p> <p>3.0 BEHAVIOR REHEARSAL</p> <p>3.1 DESCRIBE - Reiterate the stimulus condition you will present that should cue the individual to emit the behavior.</p> <p>3.2 PRESENT - Present the stimulus and, if necessary, prompt the desired behavior.</p> <p>4.0 FEEDBACK</p> <p>4.1 SHAPE - Point out the positive aspects of the performance, citing all correct components performed. Omit description of undesirable aspects of the behavior. Use short statements containing one aspect of the target behavior at a time.</p> <p>4.2 INSTRUCT - Ask the individual to repeat the performance and give instructions for correct behavior where the performance was lacking. You do not need to describe how the performance was inadequate.</p> <p>4.3 RECYCLE - If necessary model the desired performance again by recycling back to step 2 until the response closely resembles the target behavior. At this point move to step 5 for generalization.</p> <p>5.0 GENERALIZE</p> <p>5.1 ANTECEDENTS - Introduce the stimulus settings requiring the target behavior that were identified in the assessment. Begin with the least anxiety arousing situations and proceed to more stressful settings. This may include new persons presenting the discriminative stimuli, or slight variations of the original stimulus setting.</p> <p>5.2 RECYCLE - Repeat steps 2-5 as needed during the generalization programming. When all stimulus settings reliably elicit the desired response move to step 6.</p> <p>6.0 MAINTENANCE</p> <p>6.1 INFORM - Be sure all of the key social agents in the individual’s environment are aware of the new target behavior so the behavior can be reinforced when it occurs naturally.</p>
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Figure 2 - Using Modeling and Behavior Rehearsal

they do _____. *Do this without blaming them for how you feel. Your feelings are your responsibility.*

For example, “I feel nervous when your voice gets louder.”

Nicely tell them how you would like them to treat you. Don’t demand. For example, “I would like it better if you could talk to me with a quieter voice.”

Putting this together

Here is something that you might say if your boss corrected you in front of your co-workers:

“Ms. Jones, when you tell me I’m doing a good job I really appreciate it but when you tell me I’m doing it wrong, especially in front of other people, I feel embarrassed and a little angry. Could you please talk to me alone if I’m doing something wrong?”

Have participants identify situations from their own list of barb situations and practice including each of the three parts. The group should provide positive feedback on correct portions of each person’s performance.

Notes to the Leader

Find out what current real-life situations fit into this training topic. If possible, role-play these, then actually go out and coach the participant through a real interaction with someone in the natural setting. Prompt only as much as necessary to assist the participants to solve a problem in an assertive way. Then come back to the group and talk about how it worked or didn’t work and what might be done differently the next time.

Contact key social agents and communicate about the progress of group members on the current topic. Ask that they provide positive social reinforcement for demonstration and practice of the target behaviors in natural settings.

Session 11: Review

Putting it all Together

Review the flow chart combining all of these components and practice using antecedent information in role-plays.

Preparation: Prepare for the situation using relaxation, coping, and planning statements.

Use body cues (tension, nervousness) to relax and change trouble statements to coping statements.

Use problem solving; anticipate probable outcomes of choices:

You may choose any one or more than one of these ideas to use: Active listening, making “I” statements, describing the other person’s positive behaviors, describing the behaviors you want changed, and making a direct request for behavior change. You may ask for more time to say or do something. If you feel like you can’t control your anger you may go to another place so that you can practice relaxation and assertive responses.

Evaluate performance in positive terms and identify things to alter in future conflicts.

Ask group members to choose one or two specific goals for themselves, relative to the implementation of what they have learned in the program.

Encourage group members to share their learning with others. Often group members report that other people in their environment have difficulty managing their anger. Demonstrate some non-threatening ways to offer assistance to someone else who needs to learn to manage their own anger more effectively.

Notes to the Leader

If possible, arrange to observe the group members in a variety of natural settings and at different times. Let the members know that you will be stopping by to see how well they remember and use what we have been working on. Give group members feedback during observations when you see them using target behaviors effectively.

Use the observation time as an additional opportunity to communicate with others in the participant’s life about their goals and progress and about ways that key social agents can help the person work toward their goals. Find out if key social agents have noticed any changes in the member’s behavior during the course of the program.

Encourage the group members to continue to keep track of the things that make them angry and their response. You may be able to teach some people how to graph their own behavior and monitor their continued progress. They may wish to keep a written diary, draw pictures, or tape record the situations and how they solved the problem.

Throw a party! Celebrate group members' graduation from the program. Do something fun together. Pass out diplomas. Instill and share a sense of accomplishment.

Conclusion

This curriculum is designed to be used in a flexible, creative manner. Sessions can be expanded and adjusted to fit particular needs. The curriculum has been successfully utilized with groups of varying sizes and across different settings (work, home, school, community). It is most effective when elements from an individual's whole life are included and when issues are explored from all of the environments and contexts in which a person spends time. Outcomes that participants have experienced include reductions in temper outbursts, increases in self-control and coping skills, and the formation of meaningful relationships among group participants.

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