WORKSHOP #2

MAKING BETTER CHOICES

- Led by Rodney, Chantee, Sylvia, and Clarence
Overview - Making Better Choices

- Dollar bill game - Rodney
- Opening discussion - Chantee
- Pros and cons - Sylvia
- Taking control of your environment - Clarence
DOLLAR BILL GAME
(Rodney)
Making better choices-
discussion

(Rodney)
Making better choices-
discussion
(Chantee)
Making Better Choices

- The decisions we make effect ourselves, our Family, and Friends.

- Multiplied by generations
  - That means that bad habits, negativity, wrong mind-set and other types of inequities can be passed down
Name a Decision that you’ve made that could have been better for your physical health

Can I ask several volunteers to share about their experience behind:

- A decision that negatively impacted your life and affected your work, friends and family, or school?

What kind of positive decision could have been made?
Name A Decision you’ve made that you think could have been better.
Pros and Cons

(Sylvia)
Making Better Choices
Distress Tolerance Skill: Pros and Cons
Distress Tolerance Skill: Pros and Cons

Use Pros and Cons anytime you have to decide between two courses of action. For example, when deciding whether or not to resist a powerful urge toward a target behavior—such as hurting yourself, abusing alcohol, drugs, overeating, aggression, or any other target behavior.
## Distress Tolerance Skill: Pros and Cons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resist Target Behavior</th>
<th>Use Target Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRO</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advantages of resisting target behaviors and tolerating distress</td>
<td>Advantages of target behavior</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CON</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disadvantages of resisting target behavior and tolerating distress</td>
<td>Disadvantages of target behavior</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Distress Tolerance Skill: Pros and Cons

• Make list of the **Pros** and **Cons** of tolerating distress and resisting the target behavior

• Make another list of the **Pros** and **Cons** of not tolerating distress and resisting the target behavior—that is coping by using the target behavior

• **Check the facts** to be sure that you are honest in your assessment of advantages and disadvantages
Pro’s and Con’s Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resist Target Behavior (Self Injury)</th>
<th>Use Target Behavior (Self Injury)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P R O</strong></td>
<td><strong>C O N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proud of self for not injuring</td>
<td>• Might get less relief from distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No scars</td>
<td>• Might fail and self injure later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get to practice new skill</td>
<td>• Other skills are hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Less guilt</td>
<td>• Will feel guilty and ashamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have to tell friends and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May injure self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources and Citations

- Therapy Packet Handout: “Distress Tolerance”
TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

(Clarence)
TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

The environment that people live in is the environment that they learn to live in, respond to, and perpetuate. If the environment is good, so be it. But, if it is poor, so is the quality of life within it.
HOW TO CONTROL NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

• Do you seem to wake up on the wrong side of the bed every day? If you find that negative thoughts are starting to control your life, take action before stress starts weighing you down. Learn to identify and eliminate negative thoughts, then replace them with positive exercise. Not only will opportunities start to present themselves, but you’ll have the power to change your frame of mind.
METHOD 1.
ELIMINATE NEGATIVE THINKING
1. IDENTIFY NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

• Some might immediately spring to mind, but if you have trouble pinpointing them, consider journaling. Write down a sentence or two describing the negative thoughts whenever you have them.

• Look for thoughts that make you feel sad or discouraged, such as; blaming or shaming yourself for things that are not your fault, interpreting simple mistakes as indicative of personal failings, or imagining small problems bigger than they are (making a mountain out of a molehill’’).
2. STOP THE NEGATIVE THOUGHT IMMEDIATELY

- Once you’ve identified your negative thought, counteract it by saying something positive to yourself. For example, instead of saying “I’m having a really bad morning” try sayings something like “This morning is rough, but my day will get better.” Keep your mind on the positive.

- If you’re struggling with this, keep this one trick in mind: never say something to yourself that you wouldn’t say to someone else.

- Remind yourself to stay positive and it may just become a habit.
3. PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR VOCABULARY

• Do you find yourself frequently using absolute terms? For example, “I’ll never be able to do this,” or “I always mess this up.” Absolute terms are often exaggerated and leave no room for explanation or understanding.

• Your vocabulary includes what you speak out loud to others, as well as how you talk to yourself, whether verbally or mentally.
4. REMOVE OVERLY NEGATIVE WORDS FROM YOUR VOCABULARY

• Extreme terms like “terrible” and “disaster” shouldn't apply to minor annoyances and inconveniences. Toning down your language can help you put negative experiences into healthier perspective. Replace these words with encouraging thoughts or praise.

• When you do catch yourself using one of those words, immediately replace it in your thoughts with a less extreme term. “Terrible” can become “unfortunate” or “not a good as I had hoped.” “Disaster” can become “inconvenience or “Challenge”
5. TURN THE BAD INTO GOOD

• Few situations are totally good or totally bad. Finding the good in an upsetting situation helps bed experiences seem less stark. If you find yourself starting to think a negative thought, immediately stop and consider a positive aspect,

• For example: Imagine your computer stopped working, forcing you to replace an internal component. While inconvenient, the experience also gave you the opportunity to learn a new skill or reaffirm an existing skill
METHOD 2.
MAKING A POSITIVE DAY
1. START YOUR DAY BY THINKING OF 5 GOOD THINGS

• They don’t have to be lofty or ambitious things. They can be as simple as the smell of a good cup of coffee or the sound of your favorite song. Thinking of these things and saying them out loud means you start each day focusing on the positive. This creates an uplifting foundation for the rest of the day, making it more difficult for negativity to grow.

• While you may feel silly verbalizing positive statements or affirmations, studies have shown that saying positive things out loud will actually make you more likely to believe what you're saying. This can make you happier and more focused if you're vocalizing positive thoughts.
2. ENJOY YOUR DAY

• Though you may be busy, little things can keep your spirits high and give your mind fewer reasons to stray into negative habits. Don’t take things so seriously. Allow yourself to relax, laugh, and smile. Take opportunities to socialize and surround yourself with supportive positive people.

• If you find yourself feeling stressed, take a short break and think of something other than the source of your stress.
3. PRACTICE HEALTHY HABITS

• Negative thinking and stress both reinforce one another. While negative thinking can create stress, other unhealthy living habits can contribute to the problem as well. Make an effort to eat fresh, nutritious food whenever possible, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.

• You may find that exercise is actually a good way to distract your mind from negative thoughts.

• Avoid smoking, excessive drinking, or any other substance habits that put strain on the body.
4. CONTROL YOUR ENVIRONMENT

• You are not helpless over your thoughts. If you’re unhappy with something, change it. Playing music, layering clothes so you are never too warm or too cold, and adjusting lighting are just a few ways you can empower yourself against the feelings of helplessness associated with stress.

• After making the change, congratulate yourself on the improvement to your mood. Actively adjusting your mindset will make it easier to remove negative thoughts in the first place.
5. DECOMPRESS AND RELAX IN THE EVENING

• Find a quiet, comfortable place and set aside time to relax. Mentally review your day and identify five positive things you experienced. Say each positive thing out loud or write them down in a journal.

• You might also consider writing down things you're thankful for. In doing so, you're more likely to begin seeing the positive in things.
METHOD 3.
SEEKING OUTSIDE COUNSEL
1. FIND A COUNSELOR OR THERAPIST

• If you feel overwhelmed by your negative experiences, you may benefit greatly from speaking to a counselor, in addition to practicing positive thinking exercise. Look for a therapists trained in cognitive-behavioral Therapy. He or she will be able to help you train your mind to think positively.

• To find a therapist you trust, ask a friend who has sought counsel or therapy before. You can also get a referral from your doctor.
2. SET UP A SINGLE APPOINTMENT

• Think of it as a check-up for your state of mind. You are under no obligation to stay if you feel too uncomfortable and there’s no rule saying you must regularly see this therapist.

• Make the appointment with an open mind. Hope that the counselor can help you. If not, you can always find a counselor that you feel more comfortable with.
3. DESCRIBE YOUR NEGATIVE FEELINGS TO YOUR COUNSELOR

- Remember that therapy is confidential and safe, so you can be totally honest. The more honest you are with your counselor, the better he or she will be able to help.
- Be sure to describe how these negative thoughts make you feel.
- Explain how often you experience them and what you usually do to deal with them.
4. MAKE ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS AS NEEDED

- If you felt comfortable with your therapist, make another appointment or two. Remember that it will take more than a single session to work through your negative thoughts.

Don’t get discouraged if you feel your time with a particular counselor was unproductive. You can seek out a different therapist until you find one that makes you feel comfortable.
6 STEPS TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS

• Ask for Divine Guidance
• Don’t React Right Away
• See the Bigger Picture
• Find other Healthy Outlets
• Replace your Negative thoughts
• Forgive you Emotional Triggers
HOW CAN I STOP MYSELF FROM FEELING LIKE A FAILURE?

• Don't think about all of the stuff that you can’t do, but about all of the stuff you can do.

• Don’t worry about what other people think, and believe in yourself
HOW CAN I SLEEP WHEN I HAVE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS IN MY MIND?

• Sing your favorite song at the top of your voice. Read something fun and entertaining. Hop out, dance, then get back into bed.

• Stroke your pet

• Write in your journal.
WHAT DO I DO IF NO MATTER WHAT I TRY I CAN’T AVOID NEGATIVE THOUGHTS?

• Go to a quiet outdoor place, your balcony, yard or a park, Lie down somewhere comfortable. Observe the sky, people around you, animals and nature with a mild and calm music in your head. This helps to lower your emotions and clear your head.
RESOURCES AND CITATION

• http://www.calmclinic.com/anxiety/symptoms/bad-thoughts


• http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management-in-depth/positive-thinking/art
THANK YOU!