Charting a New Course
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Introduction & Facilitator Instructions

*Charting a New Course* is designed for use with youth or adults in any group or classroom setting. The lesson plans are created with the busy facilitator in mind offering brief, start to finish instructions for each of the cognitive behavioral group exercises. The lesson plans are easy to follow so that someone with no previous exposure to Truthought can implement this curriculum with ease.

Ideally, groups using this curriculum will be open-ended allowing new members to join at any time. But the curriculum is flexible to allow for groups with set beginning and end dates as well.

**Thinking Assessment**

Establishing a baseline among your group will give you a running start. The Truthought Thinking Assessment, which is available for free from Truthought.com, will help you pinpoint the best starting mark and focus for your group.

Each learner’s score indicates their dominant Thinking Barriers from the highest to the lowest. Compare the top 2 or 3 scores across the spectrum of learners’ results and the most common thinking patterns emerge as the target for addressing risk, needs and intervention within the group context. The correlating number of Responsible Thinking (1-9) represents the focus for directed skill practice.

Please note that when you are targeting any of the thinking barriers you are truly touching on all of them, so there is no need to rigidly adhere to a particular section. Best practice is to use your best judgment as to what exercises will be most suitable and effective for your group.

**Charting a New Course Layout**

At the beginning of each tabbed section is a brief overview of the Tactic or Thinking Barrier that is the topic of that section followed by ten or more group-tested, evidence-based, cognitive behavioral exercises with lesson plans designed to develop cognitive processes for responsible decision-making and promote pro-social, responsible lifestyles.

**Reproducible Exercises**

Facilitators will want to choose exercises that are particularly suited to their group. Truthought’s free *Thinking Assessment* at Truthought.com will help the savvy facilitator make wise exercise choices that target the thinking habits of their group. The exercises are flexible enough to be administered in any order. The exercise pages may be photocopied as handout material for use by the purchasing agency or individual. Exercises may not be reproduced for use outside of the purchasing entity.
Lesson Discussion Plans
Each exercise is preceded by a lesson discussion plan for facilitators as shown on a large manila envelope. Many exercises cover more than one page. Look for the envelope to signal the beginning and end of exercise pages. Quotes interspersed throughout the material are included to stimulate your thinking as a facilitator and you may find them useful to share with your learners.

Visual Tools
You will need a set of posters for each classroom and a pocket guide for each person in the group. The language of the posters is the same language used in Charting a New Course to discuss thinking and behavior.

The posters and pocket guides uphold the standard by putting the thinking and behavior to follow or to avoid clearly in focus. Learners are frequently asked to identify their thinking or tactics on the corresponding poster or their pocket guide. The Stay on Track Poster is used for reviewing consequences, problem solving, decision-making, and role-playing. The Way of Life Poster is used to identify lifestyle patterns.
Perceptions of Me

Opening
**Common Ground:** During our time together I will do whatever it takes to be open to feedback from others.

**Objective:** Today we will begin to discover how we may see ourselves differently than others see us or as we really are.

**Instructions**

1. Pass out only the 1st handout page. Ask group members to complete the items independently. Then, discuss their answers as a group.

2. Pass out the 2nd handout and repeat the above procedure.

3. Pass out the 3rd handout and repeat the above procedure.
Perceptions of Me
"Here’s Looking at Me"

Write your name here: ___________________________________________

1. Make a list of your positive traits.

2. Make a list of your negative traits.

3. List what Thinking Barriers you find yourself getting into most often.

4. List the Tactics you find yourself using most often.

5. Write a brief paragraph on the back of this handout describing how you see yourself. Be honest and open.
Write the name of the person on your right here: ____________________________

1. Make a list of their positive traits.

2. Make a list of their negative traits.

3. List what Thinking Barriers you find them getting into most often.

4. List what Tactics you find them using most often.

5. Write a brief paragraph on the back of this handout describing how you see them.
   Be honest and open.
**Perceptions of Me (3)**

"Here’s Another View of Me"

Write your name here:  
__________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this column rewrite the traits you listed about yourself</th>
<th>In this column rewrite the traits someone else listed about you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below, describe how you would like to be and how you would like others to view you in the future. Explain how you will make this happen. Use the back of this sheet for more space.
Opening

Common Ground: During our time together I will do whatever it takes to be open and honest about myself.

Objective: Today we will learn how to be more honest and how to improve our relationships.

Instructions
1. Read the introduction about “masks” on the first page and about the “Macho Person Mask” on the next page.
2. Ask group members to circle all of the numbers that apply to them in the first 3 sections of the “Macho Person.” Discuss their answers as a group.
3. At the bottom of each worksheet under Responsible Correctives, have group members choose one from numbers 1 – 4 that they will commit to doing. Ask them to explain how, with whom, and what they will do to fulfill the corrective they chose. Each individual should share their explanations and commitments with the group. (You will need to take a few notes on their choices so you can follow-up.)
4. Follow up on their commitments in the next group. Then repeat the above process in the next 2 group sessions allowing one session for each mask.

Optional Role-Play (see guidelines p.9)
5. Ask participants to do role-plays to demonstrate their corrective choices from step #3 above. They can use Stay on Track on their Pocket Guide or the poster as a guide.
Individuals using tactics develop distorted views of themselves and block out anything that challenges the view they prefer. They choose not to be considerate of others because it is easier to justify their actions. They are afraid someone will discover they are not perfect, and they don’t want to know what others think of them if it doesn’t agree with their view. Masks are a way to maintain a superior but false view of themselves, and to keep others fooled while their tactics are in operation.

Indicators of Irresponsible Masks

2. A pattern of deceit and lies.

3. Feeling guilty but afraid to admit it because others may discover the real you.

4. You cannot help yourself, or be helped by others, because you are not genuine or honest about yourself.

5. You prefer to stay the way you are, despite the destructive lifestyle, rather than risk changing.

When You Remove Your Irresponsible Masks You Will
- Discover the real you.
- Learn to accept yourself.
- Develop real friendships.
- Avoid law breaking and irresponsible behavior.

Types of Irresponsible Masks
1. THE MACHO PERSON
2. THE MANIPULATOR
3. THE GOOD PERSON
The Macho Person

1. Uses street jargon.
2. Is hard toward others.
3. Takes advantage of weak or nice people.
4. Puts on a false front of confidence.
5. Presents a negative attitude in demeanor and dress.

Behind the Macho Mask:

1. Fearful of insults.
2. Is insecure.
3. Rejects others to avoid rejection.
4. Considers being similar to others a put down.

A Macho Mask is Destructive Because:

1. It is deceitful.
2. It is denial of reality and problems.
3. It is a reckless way to avoid loneliness by controlling others.
4. It usually involves an abuse of drugs or alcohol and other people.

Responsible Correctives:

1. Develop relationships with responsible peers.
2. Practice being real and fully honest with others.
3. Gather input from others about you that will help you grow.
4. Take full responsibility for your decisions, feelings, and actions of the past and into the future.
A common characteristic of Barriers in Thinking is that they never function alone. There are always at least two or more operating at the same time. The Closed Thinking Barrier is the most common error in thinking because one has to be somewhat closed to be engaged in any of the Thinking Barriers.

Closed Thinking is being unwilling to listen to another person’s point of view, refusing to learn new ways or ideas, and choosing to ignore facts, especially about oneself. Closed thinking is indicated in a failure to be receptive, failure to disclose information, and failure to be self-critical.

Failure to be Receptive – Does not receive or respond well to new information, new ideas, or different opinions.

Failure to Disclose – Deceitful, does not reveal all of the information, facts or details.

Failure to be Self-critical – Refusal to analyze oneself truthfully and completely.

Closed Thinking is the most important thinking barrier to recognize and overcome for two reasons. One, because it is the most common thinking barrier, and two, because closed thinkers have enclosed themselves in their own little world that shrinks smaller and smaller as they choose to ignore the real world around them.

Because they are fearful, closed thinkers tend to block out any information that could disrupt their beliefs. They reject any information that goes against the way they want things to be.

Responsible Thinking: OPEN CHANNELS
To move out of closed thinking, a person learns to:
1. Be Receptive – a willingness to consider new information, other points of view, and ideas.
2. Do Something Different—cooperate with new ideas, try alternatives.
3. Disclose – be open and truthful, sharing the entire information even when it is uncomfortable.
4. Be self-critical – Make every effort to see yourself as you really are, both good and bad characteristics, talents and limitations, honest and dishonest traits.
Closed Thinking

Opening

Common Ground: During our time together I will do whatever it takes to be open-minded and honest.

Objective: All of us are closed in some ways. Today we will begin discovering in what ways.

Instructions

Ask group members to:

1. List what the opposite would be in each situation.
2. Next, put a ‘c’ for change in front of those you wish you had done differently and responsibly.
3. Put an ‘n’ for no change in front of those you would do the same again.
4. Explain what thinking leads you to want to change those you marked with a ‘c’ and what thoughts keep you from not wanting to change those you marked with an ‘n.’
5. Get group reactions to those situations marked with an ‘n.’ Do they detect any Barriers in Thinking? What do they suggest?

Optional Role-Play (see guidelines p.9)

6. As an alternative to step #5 prepare participants to practice receiving critical feedback and being receptive to new ideas from others even when they may disagree. Demonstrate the process for them first showing: Appropriate, respectful, attentive posture and eye contact, the difference between listening to understand vs. listening to find fault. How to paraphrase another person’s viewpoint. How to express appreciation for the person’s view whether you agree or disagree.
7. Allow each participant the opportunity to hear feedback from the group on the items they marked ‘n.’ No more than 2 or 3 may offer feedback. Then ask the participant to paraphrase the ideas that were presented to them and show their appreciation according to the steps in #6.
Closed Thinking

Share a personal example of how you have demonstrated each of the following by writing your example below each number.

1. Being secretive to keep others from knowing something about me that I do not want them to know.

2. Boasting about a time when I got away with breaking a rule or law.

3. Being closed to another person’s opinion or point of view.

4. Seeing others’ faults but denying my own faults.

5. Lying.

6. Sharing only the information that will benefit me while leaving out important facts that could hurt me or make others think less of me.