

Lesson 25 – Next Steps



Summary and Rationale

This program has emphasized the importance of skill practice. The goal of this lesson is to help group members cross the bridge from practicing the skills to making them a part of their everyday way of living.

This lesson will provide closure and give feedback to the group members. It will celebrate their efforts towards new thinking and subsequent behavioral changes.

Concepts and Definitions

Objectives – As a result of this lesson the group members will:

1. Celebrate their successful completion of the **Thinking for a Change** program. (Aftercare is an option for group members/agencies).
2. Develop a personal plan for making the skills they have learned part of their life.

Major Activities

Activity 1: Homework Review

Activity 2: Reflection

Activity 3: Celebration

Activity 4: Homework

Activity 5: Wrap-up

Supplements

Charts – Make before facilitating lesson. (See supplement section in each lesson for full text of chart page.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



Handouts - Make copies before lesson. (See supplement section of each lesson for camera ready pages.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



Presentation Slides - Make transparencies if projector is not available. (See supplement section of each lesson for camera ready pages.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



Equipment

- Easel (chart stand)

Supplies

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape
- Certificates of completion (to be designed by host agency)

Activity 1: Homework Review

For your homework, I asked you to identify a situation that caused you some type of problem. You were to focus on what you did in that situation that helped you to not make the problem worse. Who would like to start out by sharing how you tried out something we've learned in **Thinking for a Change** to solve a problem or at least not make it worse?

Activity 2: Reflection

We have spent many weeks learning and practicing skills to take charge of our lives by taking control over the thoughts and feelings that go on inside of us.

Do you remember when we talked about how these skills give us all sorts of tools to put in our pockets?

Which of the tools that you have learned do you think will be most helpful as you leave this program?

Keep this homework review positive. Ensure that group members include the situation, thinking check in, and then emphasize an example of trying something they've learned in T4C.

Remind group members of the "pocket" analogy from lesson 1.

Conduct a "round robin," having each group member report on his or her favorite tool or tools.

It will be helpful to have

Activity 3: Celebration

Today is a very big deal! You have completed the **Thinking for a Change** program! We've had a long journey together.

Let's recognize and honor each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication throughout the program. I have learned from you, just as I hope you have learned from me and each other.

copies of the table of contents available for group members to review.

Even if group members plan to continue straight into an aftercare program, it is important to celebrate the completion of this portion of the program.

Keep this lesson upbeat and celebratory!

Convey respect for the graduates – some of them may have never completed a program before.

This is an ideal role for a leader in the agency.

If feasible, consider photo opportunities for the graduate, family/friends, facilitators, and agency

And now, I would like each of you to come up in turn to receive your certificate.

Let's give each graduate a hand when I call their name.

Activity 4: Homework

As a reward for having completed the main curriculum of **Thinking for a Change**, you will not have a written homework assignment for this lesson. However, I want you to continue to practice the tools you have learned so far, and to remember that your thinking controls your behavior.

leader(s) together.

Each agency should design certificates of completion.

If the group is going to continue working together you will assign the homework.

If not, skip this activity and proceed to Activity 5: Wrap-up.

The group facilitators should decide in advance how many sessions of aftercare there will be.

Group facilitators can decide together, or in collaboration with the group, which type of lesson they will work on next: cognitive self-change, a social skill, or

a problem solving lesson. (This same decision must be made at the end of each aftercare lesson).

Facilitate a discussion about what type of lesson the group would most benefit from. Do not make it overly complicated. Empower the group to create their own direction. If the group wants to work on a social skill, the next decision must be whether to review a skill from a previous lesson or to work on a new one. Appendix C features a complete list of social skills from which to choose.

Option 1 (facilitators have decided what the next lesson will be):

When we meet next time, we are going to focus our attention on *[cognitive self-change; social*

The outline for aftercare lessons in cognitive self-change can be found in appendix A.

skills; or problem solving].

Option 2 (Facilitators decide to let group help decide what lesson comes next):

We now have to decide what type of lesson we will work on next time: Cognitive self-change, a social skill, or problem solving.

Activity 5: Wrap-up

Remember to *practice* the tools you have learned in **Thinking for A Change**. Remember to pay attention to your thoughts and feelings, and to use new thinking when you recognize risk. Remember to stop and think when you encounter a problem, and to carefully approach each problem and solution in a thoughtful and deliberate manner. Remember that when you are dealing with other people,

Run social skills aftercare lessons using appendix B. Social skills lessons can be either a review of social skills already completed (if the group facilitator(s) and/or the group members feel there are some skills that need additional work), or a new social skill, choosing from the list in appendix C.

Problem solving lessons will follow the format outlined in appendix D.

This will be the wrap-up for your very last session, whether it is lesson 25 or after you have completed aftercare.

your social skills are made up of steps that include both thoughts and actions. And finally, remember that THINKING CONTROLS BEHAVIOR.

As you continue to take control of your lives by taking control of your thinking, I will not wish you good luck. Instead, I will wish you good decisions.