



Intensive Outpatient Program

Fidelity with Flexibility: Facilitating Effective and Engaging Group Therapy for Adolescents and Young Adults

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Today's Agenda

Check-In and Introductions

Session Guidelines

Mindfulness Activity

Skills Training

- Making Groups Effective
- Qualities of Effective Group Leaders
- Making Groups Engaging

Integration Activity

- Emotion Thermometer Demonstration
- Hope Box Demonstration

Goal Setting

Typical Group Agenda

Check-In and Introductions

Group Guidelines

Mindfulness Activity

Skills Training + Integration Activities

Goal Setting + Check Outs

Transition Activity

(Rathus et al, 2017; Salk et al, 2021)

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Diary Cards and Check-Ins

1. Answer based on how you have been since the last time you were at STAR
2. Hand your card to a group leader
3. We will complete daily intros/check-ins after for coping skills and goals

Name: _____		
Since the last time you attended group, how would you rate your mood? (1-10, 10 = best)	_____	
Since the last time you attended group, did you...	Yes	No
1. Wish you were dead?		
2. Have a thought of killing yourself?		
3. Have a way of killing yourself in mind?		
4. Have a plan to kill yourself?		
5. Try to kill yourself?		
6. Have you had urges/thoughts to purposefully hurt yourself without wanting to die?		
7. Have you purposefully hurt yourself without wanting to die?		

Adapted from the ASQ Suicide Risk Screening Toolkit (NIMH 2024)

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Group Intros

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Summary of Group Guidelines

Please come to every group and stay for the whole group

- If you must leave group early or may arrive late for a group, please let a group leader or your individual therapist know.
- Please do not leave the group room other than for individual appointments or the restroom.

Please turn cell phones and other electronic devices off prior to the start of group.

- To protect confidentiality, all cell phones must be stored away for the duration of group.
- No texting, phone/video calls, taking photos, or recording of any type during group.

Confidentiality & Privacy

- Do not discuss group content outside of group including in the lobby or waiting room areas.
- Do not discuss group members that are no longer in group
- Relationships with group members outside of group time are prohibited and may lead to dismissal from the program.

Group considerations:

- Respect other group members, which includes using members' preferred name and pronouns
- Avoid "hot topics" including politics, religion, violence, sexuality, drug or substance use, alcohol, and use of profanity.
- Avoid details related to suicidal thoughts or actions and self-injurious behaviors – these can be discussed in weekly individual sessions

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Today's Session Guidelines

The best groups are INTERACTIVE! With that in mind...

- If you are comfortable, please keep your camera on
- Participate as fully as you are able - especially at the experiential portion
- Feel free to write questions in the chat as we go



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mindfulness

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ACTIVITY TIME

On a piece of paper, write your automatic thought when viewing the following pictures....

Don't react or share your thoughts out loud! Keep them to yourself until after the activity, please 😊

8



9



10



11



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ACTIVITY TIME

OK – now discuss your automatic thoughts and reactions with the group!

What thoughts were similar? What thoughts were different?

Why do you think you had different thoughts or reactions to the same picture?

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Making Group Effective

- Psychoeducational skills group vs process group
- Our core curriculum is rooted in evidence-based CBT and DBT skills
 - Core DBT Skills: Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness (Linehan, 2015)
 - Core CBT Skills: Cognitive strategies, Behavioral Strategies, Core Beliefs (Beck, 2011)
- Why?
 - The combination of CBT and medication is an effective treatment for depression (Brent et al, 2011)
 - DBT has shown to be effective in reducing self-harm and suicide attempts in self-harming adolescents and associated with reducing suicidal thoughts and behaviors among college students (McCauley et al, 2018; Salk et al, 2021)
 - DBT broadly supports emotion regulation skills needed by most adolescents (Brent et al, 2011)

(Brent et al, 2011; McCauley et al, 2018; Salk et al, 2021)

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Making Group Effective

Module	Skills	Evidence-Based Therapy
Psychoeducation: Depression	Depression education	CBT
Psychoeducation: Anxiety	Anxiety education	CBT
Noticing Thoughts	Identifying unhelpful thoughts	CBT
Understanding Thoughts	Understanding unhelpful thoughts	CBT
Challenging Thoughts	Challenging unhelpful thoughts & hope boxes	CBT
Problem Solving & Chain Analysis	Problem solving and chain analysis steps	DBT
Behavioral Activation	Choosing helpful actions and energy generating behaviors	CBT
Values & Goals	Identifying values and setting SMART goals	DBT
Understanding Emotions	Understanding, identifying, and normalizing emotions	DBT
Self-Care	PLEASE skills	DBT
Sleep health	Sleep hygiene	DBT
Mindfulness	Mindfulness of emotions, emotion thermometer, wise mind	DBT
Crisis Survival	Distress tolerance skills: TIPP, STOP, ACCEPTS, Urge Surfing, IMPROVE	DBT
Coping Ahead	Coping ahead plan, pros and cons of using skills, opposite action	DBT
Walking the Middle Path	Radical acceptance and dialectical thinking	DBT
Validation and Assertive Communication	Self-validation and validating others, Communication styles, FAST	DBT
Effective Conversations	DEARMAN, "I" Statements	CBT + DBT
Navigating Relationships	How to make and keep friends, set boundaries, social media	DBT

(Beck, 2011; Linehan, 2015)

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Making Group Effective

"Treatment fidelity refers to the extent to which treatments are delivered as intended, and is considered to encompass adherence (the extent to which pre-specified interventions are used) and competence (the skill with which they are implemented)..."

The most comprehensive meta-analysis to date suggests that fidelity may play very little, if any, role in explaining outcome across different treatment modalities...

...training of therapists should incorporate a greater focus on adherence flexibility and tailoring treatment to individual patient features. While this may make training more complex and lengthy, and thus more costly, it may improve effectiveness and reduce treatment costs."

-Excerpted from "Fidelity vs flexibility in the implementation of psychotherapies: time to move on."
Peter Fonagy & Patrick Luyten, 2019

(Fonagy and Luyten, 2019)

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Qualities of Effective Group Leaders

- Group leaders must fluidly incorporate and integrate both technical and interpersonal skills
 - Grounded in Technical skills
 - Group leaders must overlearn the material and use the skills themselves, then apply them to group contexts in a flexible, balanced way that breathes life into the material (Brent et al, 2011; Rathus et al, 2017)
 - Fluid Interpersonal skills (Brent et al, 2011)
 - Be willing and able to collaborate
 - Bring a genuine, nonjudgmental presence
 - Communicate self-confidence
 - Demonstrate assertiveness
 - Be flexible
- Group leadership requires being present and fully engaged with each moment – passionate, focused, and non-self-conscious (Rathus et al, 2017)

(Brent et al, 2011; McCauley et al, 2018; Salk et al, 2021)

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The Importance of Flexibility

- A sense of humor is required
- Check your ego at the door
- Expect and embrace the absurd
- Let the curriculum guide you, but not drive you (learning objectives vs set manual approach)



(Malekoff, 2014)

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Making Group Engaging



Make it
visual



Make it
relevant



Make it
interactive



Make it
fun



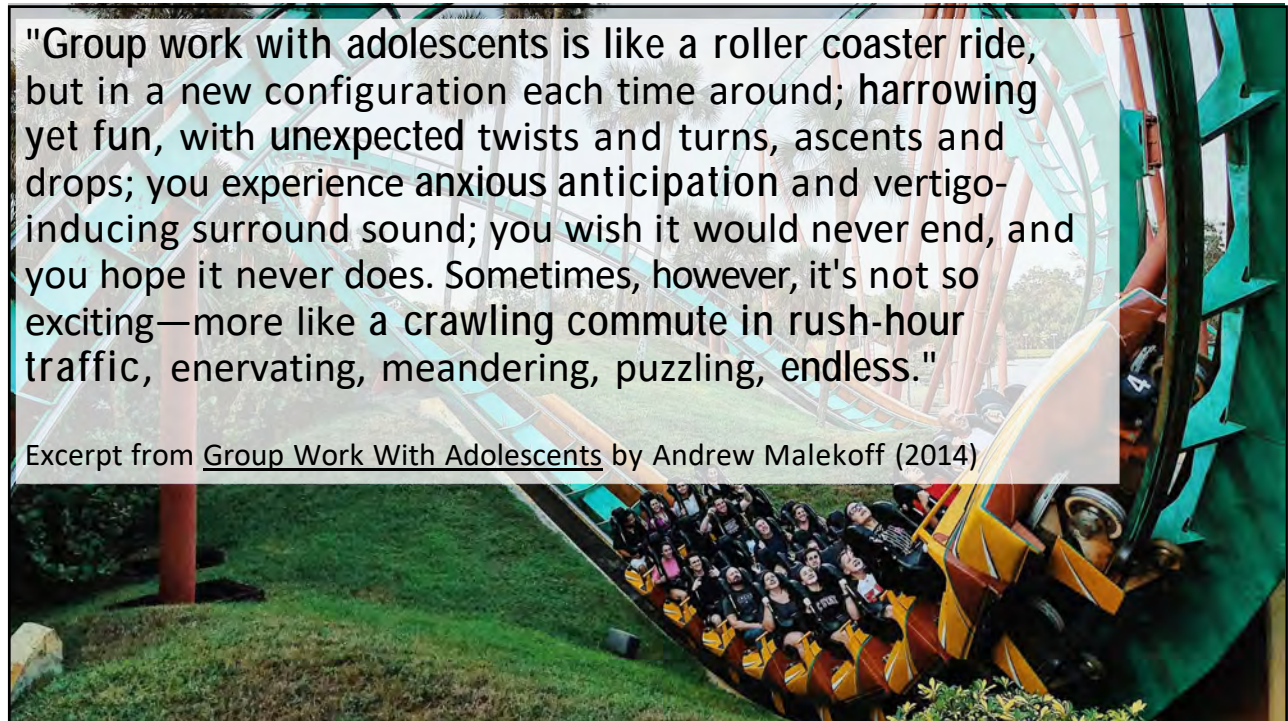
Make it
memorable

Remember - If the group is not engaged, the content is completely irrelevant!

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"Group work with adolescents is like a roller coaster ride, but in a new configuration each time around; harrowing yet fun, with unexpected twists and turns, ascents and drops; you experience anxious anticipation and vertigo-inducing surround sound; you wish it would never end, and you hope it never does. Sometimes, however, it's not so exciting—more like a crawling commute in rush-hour traffic, enervating, meandering, puzzling, endless."


Excerpt from Group Work With Adolescents by Andrew Malekoff (2014)



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Integration Activity


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Emotion:	Feelings, Sensations, Behavior or Action Urges, Thoughts	<small>Please do not reproduce without written permission from STAR-Center</small>
	10	
	9	
	8	
	7	
	6	
	5	
	4	
	3	
	2	
	1	

My Emotion Thermometer

(Adapted from Burg 2015)

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Emotion: <i>Insert text here</i>	Feelings, Sensations, Behavior or Action Urges, Thoughts
	10 <i>Insert text here</i>
	9 <i>Insert text here</i>
	8 <i>Insert text here</i>
	7 <i>Insert text here</i>
	6 <i>Insert text here</i>
	5 <i>Insert text here</i>
	4 <i>Insert text here</i>
	3 <i>Insert text here</i>
	2 <i>Insert text here</i>
	1 <i>Insert text here</i>

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My Emotion Thermometer

(Adapted from Burg, 2015)

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HOPE



What is it? A hope box is a box of items that remind us of our values, positive experiences we have had in life, our reasons for living, and our hopes for the future. Hope boxes can also include items that help us feel better in the moment.


Why make one? When you are feeling low, taking out your hope box and looking at the items in it can help boost your mood, calm you down, or inspire hope for the future.



Adapted from www.speakingwithkids.com and Rathus, J. H. & Miller, A. L. (2015). DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

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HOPE

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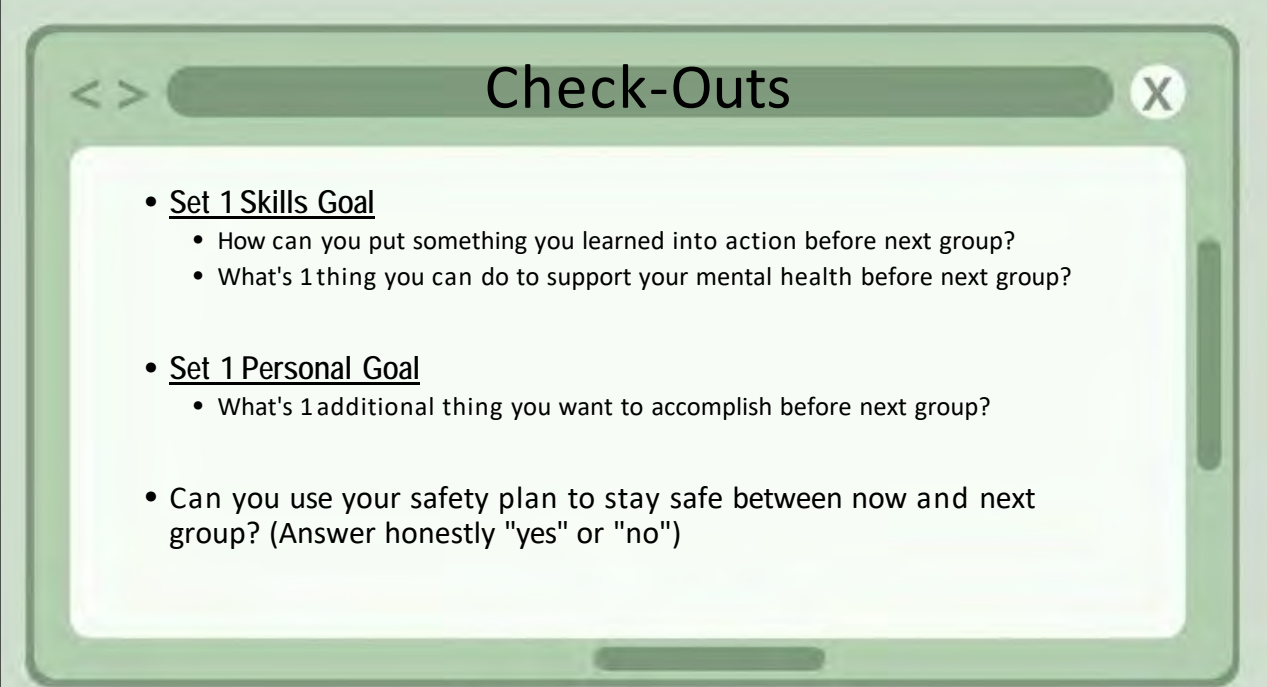
Here's some ideas of things you can put in your hope box:

- Letters, notes, or cards from loved ones
- Pictures of special times you've had or would like to have
- Photos of loved ones
- Mementos from something you are proud of
- Inspirational quotes of song lyrics
- Affirmations, poems, or spiritual quotes
- Treasured or significant objects
- Soothing sensory objects you can look at, smell, touch, or taste
- Good distractions like puzzles, games, jokes, or things to read
- A copy of your safety plan

List below what you plan to put in your hope box:

Adapted from www.speakingofsuicide.com and Rotholz, J. H. & Miller, A. L. (2015). DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

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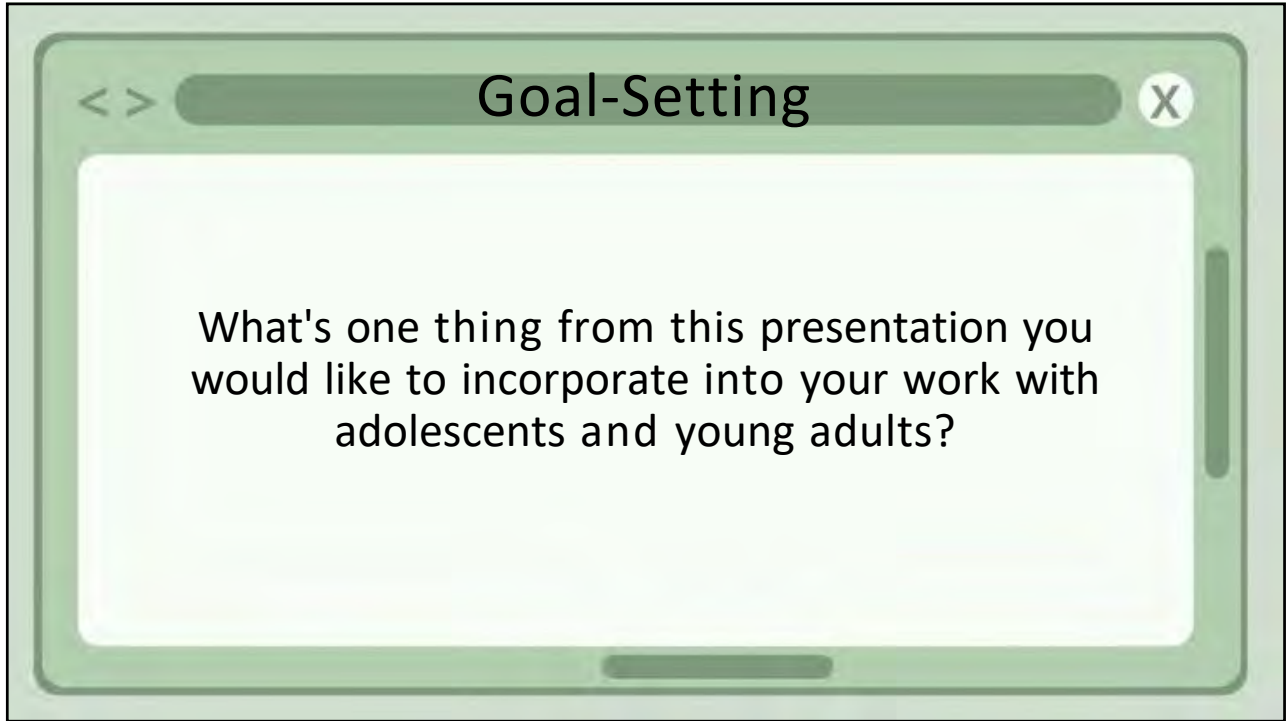


Check-Outs

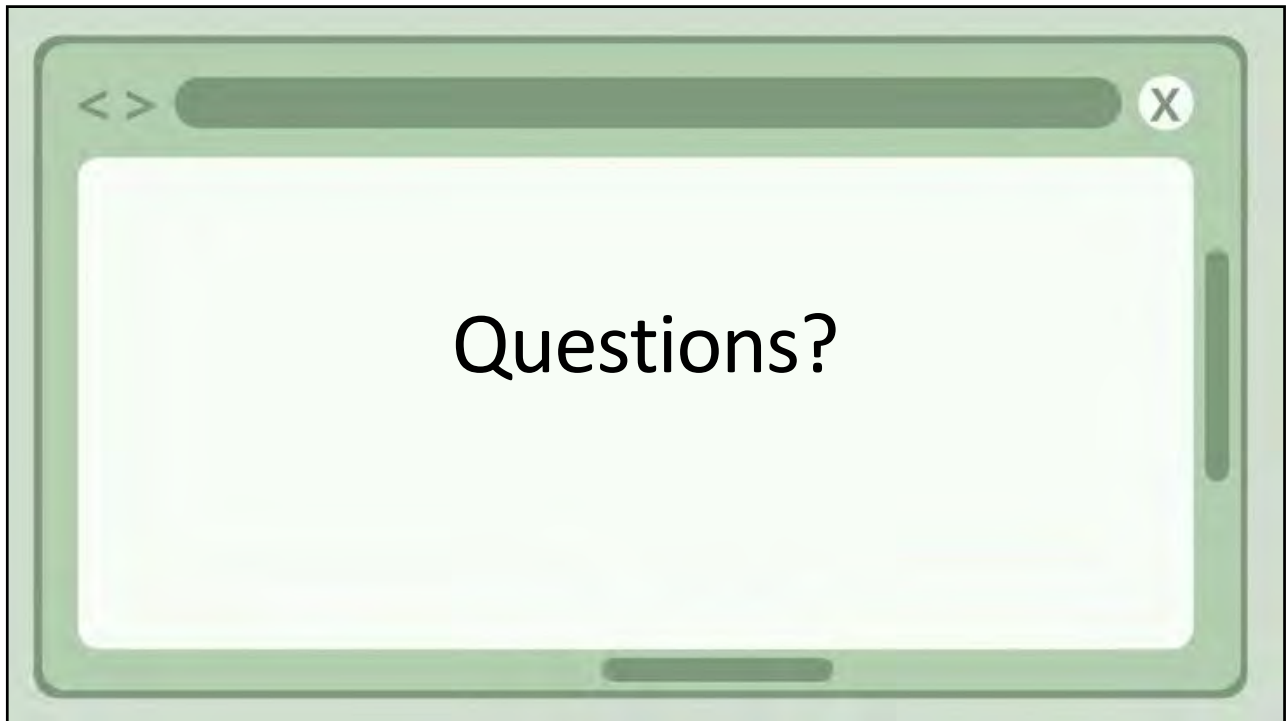
- **Set 1 Skills Goal**
 - How can you put something you learned into action before next group?
 - What's 1 thing you can do to support your mental health before next group?
- **Set 1 Personal Goal**
 - What's 1 additional thing you want to accomplish before next group?
- Can you use your safety plan to stay safe between now and next group? (Answer honestly "yes" or "no")

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