



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 13: insert date

Today's Topic: Clear Thinking--summary and overview.


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Summary and review of Problem Solving, Emotional Self-Regulation and Clear Thinking
 - What are they?
 - How are they related?
- Clear Thinking worksheets: Analysis of real-life example.
 - Initial Reactions.
 - Using self-regulation Strategies to  .
 - Asking questions.
 - Making revisions.
- Roleplay: Initial Reactions vs. revised Options.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use new Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
- Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
- Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Session 13

Module 5: **Summary and Overview: Knowing you have a problem** (Sessions 13-15)

Session 13 Goal: For group members to review first half of group while learning purpose and focus of second half.

Session 13 Overview: Leaders review the Self-Reg./Clear Thinking model and the definition of “a problem.” A previous session’s example is used to introduce new worksheet and to illustrate type of problem that group will focus on for remaining sessions. Next week, focus is on Knowing you have a problem.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use in Session 14.

KEY WORDS: Warning Signs, Self-Regulation Strategies, Clear Thinking

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Briefly review focus of group from Session 1:

“In order to solve interpersonal problems effectively, you first have to deal with the emotional Reactions that interfere with your ability to think clearly.”

Our goal in the first 12 sessions was to help you figure out the influence of your emotional Reactions on your thinking and how to effectively Stop those Reactions.

- A. Learning to Stop emotional Reactions (first 12 sessions).
- B. Learning to think clearly using a step-by-step plan (second 12 sessions).

So far we have been looking at the self-regulation aspect of problem solving. Today, we are going to start looking at the step-by-step Clear Thinking aspect.

“First, remember there are two broad types of problems:

A. Original plan is blocked (i.e., no solution is readily available or apparent; e.g., You lost your keys, and you are locked out of your house, what do you do now?)

B. Conflict situations. In this group, when we say, ‘give us an example of a problem,’ from now on, we will mean, give us an example that involves a conflict:

The conflict can be:

- A. Between past and present abilities (n.b., without good Self-Reg skills, your emotional Reaction to this situation may disrupt your ability to think clearly).

- B. Between two of your own goals (e.g., two things you want to do are happening at the same time).
- C. Between your own goal and someone else's goal.

Because face-to-face interpersonal problems tend to be particularly difficult for people with brain-injuries, the remaining sessions will focus primarily on the third type of conflict when it occurs in a face-to-face interaction. (However, the group also applies to the other types of problems as well.)”

“Today, we are going to shift from looking at a problem from an emotional self-regulation perspective to looking at it from the perspective of step-by-step, Clear Thinking.”

2. Using a previous session's example, introduce Clear Thinking worksheet.
 - A. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario. Remind group members that this scenario was already analyzed in group, using a self-regulation perspective, on (insert date).
 - B. Distribute completed Self Reg. Worksheets. Identify WARNING SIGNS and Self-Reg. STRATEGIES. Point out that by knowing your Warning Signs, you can Stop the emotional Reaction by using your Self Reg. Strategies.
 - C. Distribute completed Clear Thinking Worksheets. Review Column I (Observe Reactions). Point out that knowing Warning Signs and using Strategies from the Self-Reg. Worksheet allows one to Stop the initial emotional Reaction.
3. Group leaders roleplay:
 - A. Down the Initial Reaction column
 - B. Across (i.e., first using Strategies to stop emotional Reactions, and then using ASK QUESTIONS column of Clear Thinking Worksheet to MAKE REVISIONS and REFRAME situation).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use new Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of self regulation Strategies that work for you to Stop your initial Reaction.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

BACKGROUND INFO. FOR GROUP LEADERS:

Formal Definition: A problem is “a situation for which no effective response is immediately apparent or available.”

BUT, our focus is on “interpersonal problems.”

When we say, “give us an example of a problem” we mean a situation that usually (but not always) involves a conflict.

Some ways of knowing you have a problem (**Signals/Alarms**):

1. Someone else points it out to you
2. Other people aren't acting the way you expected them to
3. Your own “alarm” goes off
4. You know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem

Two broad types of problems:

1. Original plan is blocked (i.e., no solution is readily available or apparent; e.g., You lost your keys, and you are locked out of your house, what do you do now?)

2. Conflict situations:

--Between goals:

You want to see a movie, your friend wants to go to dinner (a conflict between your own goal and someone else's goal)

You want to go to the movie, but you have an exam tomorrow (your own 2 goals are in conflict)

--Between what you want to do and what you are capable of doing:


You want to go to the movie and then stay up and study all night, but you no longer have the stamina to do that (n.b., without good Self Reg skills, your emotional Reaction to this situation may disrupt your ability to think clearly).

This internal conflict sets up an emotional Self-Reg problem--if you become overwhelmed emotionally, Clear Thinking goes “out the window.”

Interpersonal element: My brother says, “Oh, you big baby, come to the movies.” This activates the internal conflict. If you have good Self Reg Strategies, you can manage your emotional Reaction to your altered capabilities and go on to think clearly in a step-by-step manner about the interaction with your brother. If not, you will “react” emotionally, rather than think clearly (i.e., either go to the movies, although it's not in your best interest, or have an emotional outburst at your brother, or experience an emotional shutdown or “inburst”).

Problems involving changed capabilities (conflicts between what you want to do and what you are capable of) are addressed early on in the Self-Reg. portion of the group.

Focus of the second half of the group is on Interpersonal Problems (conflicts between your own goal and someone else's goal).

I. OBSERVE Reactions START	III. REFRAME/PLAN	
II. ANALYZE Precursors	I. OBSERVE Reactions	III. REFRAME/PLAN
WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning <u>Earliest Physical Signs</u>	What was my Initial REACTION?	ASK QUESTIONS
STRATEGIES used to "STOP"	MAKE REVISIONS	
<p> STRATEGIES used to "STOP"</p>	<p>1A. <u>Initial Problem Definition</u></p> <p>2A. <u>Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</u></p> <p>3A. <u>Initial Option(s)</u></p> <p>+ consequences:</p> <p>- consequences:</p>	<p>1B.</p> <p>2B.</p> <p>3B.</p> <p>4B.</p> <p>5B.</p> <p>1C. Rev. Problem Definition</p> <p>2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p> <p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p> <p>4C. Evaluation</p> <p>5C. Follow-up</p>
<p><u>Earliest Behavioral Signs</u></p> <p><u>Earliest Cognitive Signs</u></p> <p><u>Earliest Emotional Signs</u></p> <p><u>Signals/Alarms</u> (How did you know that you had a problem?)</p> <p>--Someone else pointed it out to you?</p> <p>--Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to?</p> <p>--Your own "alarm" went off?</p> <p>--You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?</p> <p>--Original plan was blocked?</p> <p>--Conflict between:</p> <p>--Goals?</p> <p>--Past/present abilities?</p>		<p>Clear Thinking Worksheet</p>

***** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 13: insert date

You and your wife were invited to a party on Saturday night. Your wife was looking forward to the party because, since your brain injury, you don't get out much as a couple. You, on the other hand, were concerned that the alcohol, noise, and crowd at the party would be overwhelming.

Saturday morning you woke up with a **headache**, and you **felt run down** because you **hadn't slept very well**, but you avoided mentioning this to your wife until that afternoon. When you told her that you didn't want to go, she got upset and complained that she went to a lot of trouble to arrange a baby sitter and that you guys never go out anymore.

You tried to explain to her that you were afraid you'd be overwhelmed by the party and that you'd wind up feeling sick for three days. But since your brain injury, it's **harder for you to pull your ideas together** and **harder for you to communicate your side of an argument**. Meanwhile, your wife repeated, "Let's just try going; if you don't like the party, we can leave."

You **felt guilty** because you know you don't do things as a couple anymore and because your wife had put in a lot of effort getting ready for the party. Up to that point, you were feeling calm, but as your wife persisted, you **started to feel hot and flushed**. You noticed that you were **gesturing a lot with your hands**, and your **head felt "filled up"** (since your brain injury, whenever anyone puts you on the spot, you feel **flooded with thoughts**, and you have **trouble sorting and prioritizing your options**).

At that point, **you said to yourself, "Stop! I don't want to explode in front of my kids."** You **took a deep breath** and **decided to leave the scene**. You **went into the bathroom** and gave the door a **REALLY HARD, loud slam**. You **stayed in the bathroom for 10 minutes, until you cooled off**.

When you came out, you sat down with your wife and quietly discussed your concerns. The two of you decided to compromise: instead of going to the party, you decided to take advantage of having a babysitter by spending a nice, quiet evening out together. So the two of you went out on your boat and wound up having a great time.

Although you handled this situation pretty well, next time a situation like this comes up, you'd like to handle it even better. Next time, you'd like to be able to communicate your needs calmly, early on, before you wind up overreacting (before doing something like slamming the bathroom door).

CONTEXT (Background)	WARNING SIGNS (Reaction beginning)	What was my initial reaction?	STRATEGIES	PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p><u>Triggering Event:</u> four wife was persistent in trying to get you to go to the party.</p> <p><u>External Stressors</u> baby sitter is already arranged.</p> <p><u>Internal Stressors</u> tired felt run down headache</p> <p><u>Personal Injury/Disability</u> falls difficulty communicating trouble pulling ideas together difficulty sorting & prioritizing options visibly flooded</p> <p><u>Personal Style Pitfalls</u></p>	<p><u>Earliest Physical Signs</u> - felt hot & flushed</p> <p><u>Earliest Behavioral Signs</u> - gestured alot with hands</p> <p><u>Earliest Emotional Signs</u> - head felt "fiked-up"</p> <p><u>Signals/Alarms</u> (How did you know that you had a problem?) - Someone else pointed it out to you? - Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? - Your own "alarm" went off? - You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?</p> <p>--Original plan was blocked? --Conflict between: V-Goals?</p>	<p><u>Actions/Behaviors</u> - wanted to explode at wife - gave door a really hard, loud slam</p> <p><u>Feelings/Emotions</u> - had felt guilty about effort wife put into getting ready for party</p> <p><u>Thoughts/Assumptions</u> - I am really being put on the spot. - my only option is to not go to the party</p>	<p>- said to yourself, "Stop!..."</p> <p>- took a deep breath</p> <p>- left the scene</p> <p>- went to quiet, private place</p> <p>- waited to "cool off"</p>	<p>- Next time catch my warning signs even earlier</p> <p>- communicate my needs to my wife earlier</p>
Self-Regulation RATING				
<p>+ Consequences</p> <p>- Didn't explode in front of children</p> <p>- Consequences</p> <p>- felt bad about slamming door</p>				

II. ANZE Precursors	I. OBSERVE Reactions	III. REFRAME/PLAN
WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning <u>Earliest Physical Signs</u>	START What was my Initial REACTION? <u>1A. Initial Problem Definition</u> If I go to the party, I will wind-up feeling sick & overwhelmed.	ASK QUESTIONS <u>1B. - what assumption am I making?</u> - what do I know about my relationship with other person? - Is there another way to look at this situation?
<u>Earliest Behavioral Signs</u>	<u>2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</u> To Avoid feeling sick & overwhelmed	<u>2B. - what does other person want?</u> - what do I really want? - Can we both get something we want out of situation?
<u>Earliest Emotional Signs</u>	<u>3A. Initial Option(s)</u> Explode at wife & refuse to go to party	<u>3B. - what would the impact of my initial option be?</u> - Are there any other options?
- felt hot & flushed	+ consequences: - would avoid feeling sick & overwhelmed	<u>4B. - Does revised option satisfy goals?</u>
- gestured alot with hands	- consequences: - add stress to relationship with wife	<u>5B. - How did other person react?</u> - Were my revised goals satisfied? - Can I "live with" the outcome?
- head felt "filled-up"		<u>3C. Revised Option(s)</u> 4C. Evaluation 5C. Follow-up
Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)		
--Someone else pointed it out to you? --Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? --Your own "alarm" went off? --You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?		
--Original plan was blocked? --Conflict between: ✓--Goals? ✓--Past/present abilities?		



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PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 14: insert date

Today's Topic: Using Clear Thinking worksheets to analyze a problem.


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Mini Scenarios:
 - Knowing that you have a problem.
- Analysis of real-life example:
 - Initial Reactions.
 - Knowing your Warning Signs.
 - Using self-regulation Strategies to  .
- Roleplay 1:
 - Initial Reaction.
- Roleplay 2:
 - Think clearly by asking Questions.
 - Make Revisions and Reframe situation.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
- Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
- Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Treatment Plan
Session 14

Module 5: **Summary and Overview: Knowing you have a problem** (Sessions 13-15)

Session 14 Goal: For group members to learn how to use Clear Thinking worksheets to analyze a problem.

Session 14 Overview: Using a prepared example, leaders introduce terms and demonstrate use of Clear Thinking Worksheet.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use in Session 15.

KEY WORDS: Warning Signs, Signals/Alarms, Self-Regulation Strategies, Clear Thinking, Problem Definition, Goals, Options.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Mini Scenarios: Knowing you have a problem. Distribute Mini-Scenario handout. Briefly, have group members identify SIGNALS/ALARMS for each scenario (use Signal/Alarm section only of Clear Thinking Worksheet). Continue next week.
2. Using a group member's preselected example, review use of Clear Thinking Worksheet.
 - A. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Have group members review Section I (Observe Reactions). Emphasize terms: PROBLEM DEFINITION, GOALS/SUBGOALS, OPTIONS.
 - B. Go to Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs and Signals/Alarms, what Self-Regulation Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction (so that you could Think Clearly)?
3. Group leaders roleplay Section III (Reframe/Plan) process (Think clearly by asking Questions to MAKE REVISIONS to Initial Problem Definition, Goals/Subgoals, Options).
 - A. Roleplay down the Initial Reaction column
 - B. Roleplay across columns (i.e., first knowing Warning Signs, then using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, and finally using Questions column of Clear Thinking Worksheet to Make Revisions and Reframe situation).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use a Clear Thinking Worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of Strategies that work for you.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.



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Problem Solving Group
Sessions 14 and 15: insert date

Mini-Scenarios: Knowing that you have a problem

1. You left your appointment book on the bus. You know that you have a doctor's appointment sometime tomorrow, but you don't know what time the appointment is.
2. You want to see a movie that is closing today, but you also really want to get your hair cut for a wedding that you are going to tomorrow.
3. Your lease is up in 3 months, and it will not be renewed. Your friend tells you that it's really hard to find an apartment these days.
4. You want to go out to dinner, but your friend wants to go to the movies. Your friend is complaining to you that you always "get your way."
5. Your doctor told you that you shouldn't ride your dirt bike anymore. You really don't want to go riding anyway, because you know that if you do, you will be sore for a week. Your brother just called you "chicken" in front of your friends, because you won't go riding with him.
6. You thought that you were doing a good job at work. But, your boss just called you into her office and told you that you need to keep better records, because your weekly reports are very disorganized. You are afraid to tell your boss about your cognitive problems.

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 14: insert date

You are in another group at Rusk, and one of the group members decided to invite everyone to a Labor Day party at her home in Queens. As everyone was getting the details, a question arose about how a group member, who is in a wheelchair, was going to get to the party (she lives in Brooklyn).

You **felt uncomfortable and started to fidget** as the other group members wondered aloud if anybody had a car (you live in the Bronx and have a car). Everybody was talking at once, and you **got a little confused**. You **felt sympathetic and concerned** that this other group member was in need (you **know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem for you**, because you tend to volunteer your help too quickly).

You **thought to yourself, "I'm the only one who can help, so I'll have to do it--I'd be a bad person if I didn't."** You noticed that your **whole body was tense** and that you **weren't making eye contact** with anyone. The next thing you knew, you were volunteering to pick her up and drive her to the party--even though you knew that driving from the Bronx to Brooklyn then to Queens was too much for you to offer. **Before your brain injury, it might have been okay, but things like that are much harder for you now.**

As it turned out, on the way to Brooklyn, you got stuck in traffic for four hours because of a parade! By the time you got to the party, you had a headache and you were very tired; you wound up having a really bad time.

Next time you'd like to catch your Warning Signs sooner, so you can use your emotional self-regulation Strategies to STOP your emotional flooding--before you offer to do something that isn't really in your best interest. After you use your Strategies, then you can think through the situation clearly, using a step-by-step plan.

START I. OBSERVE Reactions

II. ANALYZE Precursors

III. REFRAME/PLAN

WARNING SIGNS
of Reaction beginning

STOP
STRATEGIES used to "STOP"

What was my Initial REACTION?

ASK QUESTIONS

Earliest Physical Signs

1A. Initial Problem Definition

1B. - What assumptions am I making?

1C. Rev. Problem Definition

Earliest Behavioral Signs

2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)

2B. - What does other person want?

2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)

Earliest Emotional Signs

3A. Initial Option(s)

3B. - What would the impact of my initial option be?

3C. Revised Option(s)

Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)

4A. Initial Option(s)

4B. - Does revised option satisfy goals?

4C. Evaluation

Original plan was blocked?
Conflict between:
--Goals?
--Past/present abilities?

5A. How did other person react?

5B. - Were my revised goals satisfied?
- Can I live with the outcome?

5C. Follow-up




The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 15: insert date

Today's Topic: Using Clear Thinking worksheets to analyze a problem.

- I. **APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER**
 - Any announcements affecting attendance
- II. **REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):**
 - Be organized.
 - Be concise, yet cover the content.
 - Be loud and clear.
- III. **TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)**
 - Mini Scenarios:
 - Knowing that you have a problem.
 - Analysis of real-life example:
 - Initial Reactions.
 - Knowing your Warning Signs.
 - Using self-regulation Strategies to  .
 - Roleplay 1:
 - Initial Reaction.
 - Roleplay 2:
 - Think clearly by asking Questions.
 - Make Revisions and Reframe situation.
- IV. **SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)**
 - What did you learn from this session?
- V. **HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)**
 - Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
 - Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
 - Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
 - Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Session 15

Module 5: Summary and Overview: Knowing you have a problem (Sessions 13-15)

Session 15 Goal: For group members to practice using Clear Thinking worksheets to analyze a problem.

Session 15 Overview: Using a prepared example, leaders introduce terms and demonstrate use of Clear Thinking Worksheet. Next week, focus is on asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use in Session 16 and review individual brain injury and personal style Pitfall lists.

KEY WORDS: Warning Signs, Signals/Alarms, Self-Regulation Strategies, Clear Thinking, Problem Definition, Goals, Options.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Mini Scenarios (continued from last week): Knowing you have a problem. have group members take out last week's Mini-Scenario handout. Briefly, have group members identify SIGNALS/ALARMS for each scenario (use Signal/Alarm section only of Clear Thinking Worksheet).

2. Using a group member's preselected example, review use of Clear Thinking Worksheet.
 - A. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Have group members review Section I (Observe Reactions). Emphasize terms: PROBLEM DEFINITION, GOALS/SUBGOALS, OPTIONS.
 - B. Go to Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs/Signals/ Alarms, what Self-Regulation Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction (so that you could Think Clearly)?

3. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (Think clearly by asking Questions to MAKE REVISIONS to Initial Problem Definition, Goals/Subgoals, Options).
 - A. Roleplay down the Initial Reaction column
 - B. Roleplay across columns (i.e., first knowing Warning Signs, then using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, and finally using Questions column of Clear Thinking Worksheet to Make Revisions and Reframe situation).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use a Clear Thinking Worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of Strategies that work for you.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.



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Problem Solving Group
Sessions 14 and 15: insert date

Mini-Scenarios: Knowing that you have a problem

1. You left your appointment book on the bus. You know that you have a doctor's appointment sometime tomorrow, but you don't know what time the appointment is.
2. You want to see a movie that is closing today, but you also really want to get your hair cut for a wedding that you are going to tomorrow.
3. Your lease is up in 3 months, and it will not be renewed. Your friend tells you that it's really hard to find an apartment these days.
4. You want to go out to dinner, but your friend wants to go to the movies. Your friend is complaining to you that you always "get your way."
5. Your doctor told you that you shouldn't ride your dirt bike anymore. You really don't want to go riding anyway, because you know that if you do, you will be sore for a week. Your brother just called you "chicken" in front of your friends, because you won't go riding with him.
6. You thought that you were doing a good job at work. But, your boss just called you into her office and told you that you need to keep better records, because your weekly reports are very disorganized. You are afraid to tell your boss about your cognitive problems.

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 15: insert date

At the **end of a long day** at the beach, you and your family were packing the car to leave. Out of nowhere, somebody sped through the parking lot and grabbed the parking space facing yours--completely disregarding the fact that your kids were nearby and could have been hurt. (**You know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem for you**, because you are very protective of your family). You called the driver a jerk (actually something a bit more colorful), not quite to his face, but loud enough so that he could hear you.

You **wished that you could have said something more** to him about how dangerous his driving was, but **since your brain injury, it's harder for you to find the words to express yourself**. You **kept kicking yourself** for not making it clear to this guy that he needs to be more careful.

You were **still stewing about it** while your wife was buckling the kids into the back seat, but you went ahead and got into the car. As you started the car, you **thought to yourself, "What an idiot! If someone had been standing in the way, they would have been hurt. It could've been me. Or my wife. Or my kids!"** When you thought about your family getting hurt, your **face got flushed and your muscles were tense**. You **felt anxious** and your **head was "filled-up."**

Without stopping to think, you decided to teach the other driver a lesson by revving your engine and lurching backward as if you were going to ram his car. Your wife lost her balance and snapped, "What's the matter with you?" She pointed out that she hadn't finished buckling the kids in, and that you could have hurt someone by playing games with the car.

Next time you'd like to catch your Warning Signs sooner, so you can use your self-regulation Strategies to STOP your emotional flooding-- before you do something that isn't really in your (or your family's) best interest. After you use your Strategies, then you can think through the situation clearly, using a step-by-step plan.



I. OBSERVE Reactions

START

II. ANALYZE Precursors

III. REFRAME/PLAN

WARNING SIGNS
of Reaction beginning

STOP
STRATEGIES
used to "STOP"

What was my Initial REACTION?

ASK QUESTIONS

MAKE REVISIONS

Earliest Physical Signs

1A. Initial Problem Definition

1B. How do my BIG personal

1C. Rev. Problem Definition

So that he'll be more careful in the future, this guy needs to be taught a lesson

STATE affect me in this type of situation?
What do I know about other people?
Do I have exp with similar situations?
Is there another way to look at it?

2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)

Earliest Behavioral Signs

2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)

2B. Is my initial goal what I really want?
What goals are important to me, based on my values?

3C. Revised Option(s)

To teach him a lesson
To protect my family

3B. What bad things might happen if I try initial option?
Are there any other options?

4C. Evaluation

Earliest Emotional Signs

3A. Initial Option(s)

4B. Does revised option satisfy revised goals?

5C. Follow-up

Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)

Make him think I'm going to ram his car

5B. What kind of feedback did I get?
Can I live with the outcome?

Session 15 Example
Clear Thinking Worksheet

--Someone else pointed it out to you?

--Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to?

--Your own "alarm" went off?

--You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?

--Original plan was blocked?

--Conflict between:

--Goals?

--Past/present abilities?

+ consequences:

- consequences:



PROBE #5 (Sessions 13-15) – IDENTIFY SIGNALS/ALARMS

“HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?”

Did your own “alarm” go off?

Did someone else point it out to you?

Were others acting toward you in a way that you didn’t expect?

Did you know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?

“WHAT CAUSED THE PROBLEM? WAS IT BECAUSE…”

Your original plan was blocked?

There was a conflict between different goals?

There was a conflict between past and present abilities?

1. You left your appointment book on the bus. You know that you have a doctor’s appointment sometime tomorrow, but you don’t know what time the appointment is.
2. You want to see a movie that is closing today, but you also really want to get your hair cut for a wedding that you are going to tomorrow.
3. Your lease is up in 3 months, and it will not be renewed. Your friend tells you that it’s really hard to find an apartment these days.
4. You want to go out to dinner, but your friend wants to go to the movies. Your friend is complaining that you “always get your way.”
5. Your doctor told you that you shouldn’t ride your dirt bike anymore. You really don’t want to go riding anyway because you know that if you do, you will be sore for a week. Your brother just called you “chicken” in front of your friends because you won’t go riding with him.
6. You thought that you were doing a good job at work. But your boss just called you into her office and told you that you need to keep better records because your weekly reports are very disorganized. You are afraid to tell your boss about your cognitive problems.



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 16: insert date

Today's Topic: Problem Definition and Goals


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- List of Questions.
- Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
- Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition & Goals.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
- Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
- Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Session 16

Module 6: Problem Definition and Goals (Sessions 16-18)

Session 16 Goal: For group members to learn how to use Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals.

Session 16 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal Pitfalls.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Problem Definition/goals.

KEY WORDS: Clear Thinking, Problem Definition, Goals, Questions.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Using group member's preselected example, introduce list of Questions for Revising Problem Definition and Goal/subgoals.
 - A. Distribute and review list of Questions.
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs /Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
2. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition, Goals/subgoals):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Make Revisions to initial Problem Definition, Goals/Subgoals). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.
3. At appropriate junctures while working through the Clear Thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on Clear Thinking steps (see next page).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of Strategies that work for you.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:

Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).

2. Revising Options

Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).

Problems with initiation.

Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).

3. Evaluation

Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)

4. Follow-up

Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

*****EXAMPLE** Brain Injury & Personal Style Pitfalls (from Session 7)

FELIX

Gets angry faster, more easily; loses patience with people and situations

Confused more easily; trouble thinking clearly

Difficulty keeping train of thought, gets distracted

Trouble finding right words

Holds things in, then “blows.”

Personal Style: Jumps the gun, glosses over things, believes that she gets taken advantage of (“Paranoid”).

PATTY

Trouble finding right words

Fatigued, over-stimulated more easily

Doesn't feel in-charge or effective

Personal Style: Self-critical, full of self-blame.

DAVEN

More passive

Harder to make decisions

Higher level of depression; more sensitive emotionally

Harder to keep track of, and stay focused on, one thing

Dizziness

Personal Style: Overly responsible for everyone, esp. family; “tyranny of the shoulds.”

AMADEUS

Trouble absorbing & processing information

When listening, has trouble taking in new information

Personal Style: Always says yes; then feels taken advantage of. If goal is blocked may become overly assertive and unintentionally harsh.

CHRISTINA

Trouble with verbal memory

Less flexible

Distractible

Personal Style: Takes everything personally. World revolves around her; respect of others is very important. Sets high standards for self and others.

SCOTTY

Distractible

Trouble remembering detailed info.

Less flexible

Slurs speech

Personal Style: Avoidance; don't make a fuss.



RUSK INSTITUTE OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE

Problem Solving Group Session 16: insert date

CLEAR THINKING QUESTIONS

SIGNALS/ALARMS

Some **common types of problems** are:

1) Your original plan is blocked, 2) two of your own goals are in conflict or can't be done at the same time, or 3) your own goal is in conflict with somebody else's goal.

Some **ways that people usually can tell that they have a problem** are:

1) Someone else points it out to you, 2) other people aren't acting the way you expected them to, 3) your own "Alarm" goes off, or 4) you know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem.

REVISE PROBLEM DEFINITION (1B Questions)

1. How do my brain injury Pitfalls affect me in this type of situation?
2. What about my brain injury (or personal style) Pitfalls are relevant here?
3. Is the situation an emergency? How immediate?
4. How much impact (big or small) will the problem have on my life?
5. What assumptions am I making? What evidence do I have?
6. Do I have enough information to proceed?
7. How "good" is the source of the information?
8. Is the information fact? Or, is it opinion?
9. Do I need to consult another other source of information (an expert, map, dictionary, etc.)?
10. Which details are most important? Which are irrelevant?
11. Is there any flexibility in the problem? Or, is the problem rigid?
12. What do I know about my relationship with the other person?
13. What is my past experience with this person?
14. What is the other person's "status"?
15. Do I need to ask questions of the other person?

16. Do I have experience with other problems that were similar?
17. If so, what do I know from the last time that I can use here?
18. Is there another way to define the problem?

REVISE GOALS AND SUB-GOALS (2B Questions)

1. Are my initial Goals/subgoals what I really want from this situation?
If not, what do I really want from this situation?
2. What does the other person want?
3. Do my desires/wants match the other person's?
If not, can we both get something we want out of this situation?
4. Which Goals and sub-goals are most important to me based on my beliefs and values?
5. Are there financial considerations?
6. Do I need to go back one step and revise the Problem Definition?

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 16: insert date

Your sister-in-law, her husband, and their two young daughters have been staying with you and your family for an extended visit. You welcomed their visit, but having out-of-town guests stay in your home is always a little stressful for everyone, and you've been under pressure planning your son's bar mitzvah.

Late one evening, your brother-in-law took his daughters out for pizza and they didn't return until around 11PM. He promptly went to bed, leaving his girls unattended. The girls were loud, boisterous, and full of energy (probably from drinking soda).

Meanwhile, your wife and her sister also stayed up having a loud conversation in the living room. Between their conversation and the two hyper, screaming little girls, you couldn't get to sleep.

You felt miserable as you laid awake in your bed, hoping that the conversation would end soon and that the girls would be sent to bed. You tossed and turned as you thought to yourself, "Oh well, I can't do anything about it I don't want to rock the boat Even if I tried to do something, I'd be ineffective." You wound-up being kept awake for hours, and you were tired and irritable the next day.

I. OBSERVE Reactions	III. REFRAME/PLAN	
START	ASK QUESTIONS	MAKE REVISIONS
<p>1A. <u>Initial Problem Definition</u> All the noise is keeping me awake, but there's nothing I can do about it. ----></p>	<p>1B. ----></p>	<p>1C. <u>Rev. Problem Definition</u></p>
<p>2A. <u>Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</u> - To get some sleep - To not rock the boat</p>	<p>2B. ----></p>	<p>2C. <u>Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</u></p>
<p>3A. <u>Initial Option(s)</u> Just lay there awake & not do anything.</p>	<p>3B. ----></p>	<p>3C. <u>Revised Option(s)</u> What would the impact of my initial option be?</p>
<p>+ consequences: - couldn't get to sleep - tired and irritable the next day</p>	<p>4B. ----></p>	<p>4C. <u>Evaluation</u> Does revised option satisfy revised goals?</p>
<p>- consequences: - couldn't get to sleep - tired and irritable the next day</p>	<p>5B. ----></p>	<p>5C. <u>Follow-up</u> Were goals satisfied? - How did the person react? - What kind of feedback did I get? - Can I live with the outcome?</p>

II. AN. _YZE Precursors	STRAATEGIES used to "STOP"
<p>WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning</p> <p>Earliest Physical Signs Sinking feeling in pit of stomach</p> <p>Earliest Behavioral Signs Tossing & turning</p> <p>Earliest Emotional Signs Felt miserable ineffective & powerless</p> <p>Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?) --Someone else pointed it out to you? --Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? --Your own "alarm" went off? *You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?</p> <p>--Original plan was blocked? *Conflict between: *Goals? --Past/pres. abilities?</p>	<p>- take a deep breath</p> <p>- interrupt negative & judgmental thoughts (e.g., "I can't do anything about this situation." Even if I tried to do something, I wouldn't be effective.</p> <p>- replace negative thoughts with positive & permissive self-talk (e.g., "I'm a capable person." "I can handle this situation.")</p>




**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 17: insert date

Today's Topic: Problem Definition and Goals

- I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER**
 - Any announcements affecting attendance
- II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):**
 - Be organized.
 - Be concise, yet cover the content.
 - Be loud and clear.
- III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)**
 - Brief report on logs: Problem definition & goals?
 - Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
 - Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition & Goals.
- IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)**
 - What did you learn from this session?
- V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)**
 - Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
 - Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
 - Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
 - Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Session 17

Module 6: Problem Definition and Goals (Sessions 16-18)

Session 17 Goal: For group members to practice using Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals.

Session 17 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Problem Definition/goals.

KEY WORDS: Clear Thinking, Problem Definition, Goals, Questions.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Brief report on logs; go around the table, and ask group members to briefly give their definitions of the problem.
2. Using group member's preselected example, review list of Questions for Revising Problem Definition and Goal/subgoals.
 - A. Have group members take out their list of Questions (last week's handout).
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs /Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
3. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition, Goals/subgoals):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Make Revisions to initial Problem Definition, Goals/Subgoals). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.
4. At appropriate junctures while working through the Clear Thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on Clear Thinking steps (see next page).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of Strategies that work for you.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:

Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).

2. Revising Options

Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).

Problems with initiation.

Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).

3. Evaluation

Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)

4. Follow-up

Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example

Session 17: insert date

You felt tired and achy because you've been pushing yourself pretty hard lately. So you called to schedule an appointment with a chiropractor that you had gone to once before.

You spoke to the receptionist who told you that you couldn't see the doctor until you confirmed the number of sessions available under your insurance plan. Two thoughts crossed your mind: First, it's the receptionist's job to call your insurance company. Second, you have good coverage and it's pretty obvious that you'd have to be covered for more than just one session, so why not just schedule the second appointment now and worry about checking with the insurance company later?

You tried to get your point across to the receptionist three times. The first time, she insisted that it was your responsibility to find out how many sessions you have available. The second time, she repeated herself a bit more harshly. During these exchanges, you noticed that you were **feeling drained** and that you had a **throbbing pain in your neck**. You were **fidgiting**, and you **felt like this was just one more unfair consequence of your injury**. You recognized these Warning Signs, and you used your emotional self-regulation Strategies to Stop yourself from over-reacting.

You tried one more time. This time when the receptionist continued to insist that you could not schedule an appointment until you spoke to your insurance company, you let her know, in no uncertain terms, that she was **WRONG**, and then you hung up on her.

Not only did you wind up not getting the appointment you wanted, but now having hung up on the receptionist, you don't feel comfortable calling back.

Next time, after you use your self-regulation Strategies to Stop the emotional over reaction, you'd like to be able to think through the situation using a step-by-step plan.

I. OBSERVE Reactions

START

II. ANALYZE Precursors

III. REFRAME/PLAN

WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning	STRATEGIES used to "STOP"	ASK QUESTIONS	MAKE REVISIONS
<p>Earliest Physical Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - felt drained - throbbing pain in neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - used calming self-talk - ("calm down, we're just talking") - ("don't get upset") - tuned-out the receptionist & ignored her lecturing 	<p>1B.</p> <p>1A. Initial Problem Definition</p> <p>- I want to schedule an appt. right now but receptionist is more concerned about my insurance coverage. ---></p>	<p>1C. Rev. Problem Definition</p>
<p>Earliest Behavioral Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fidgety 	<p>2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have receptionist check on insurance concerns herself - make appt. right now - take care of aches & pains ---> 	<p>2B.</p>	<p>2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p>
<p>Earliest Emotional Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why do I have to deal with this? - IT'S just another unfair consequence of my injury) <p>Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Someone else pointed it out to you? - Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? - Your own "alarm" went off? - You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem? 	<p>3A. Initial Option(s)</p> <p>Hang up on receptionist when she refused to schedule appt./ find out insurance info. on her own. ---></p> <p>+ consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Didn't let receptionist talk down to me. <p>- consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NO appointment - NOW I'm not comfortable calling back 	<p>3B. What will happen if I try my initial option? ---></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there any other options? ---> <p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p>	<p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p>
<p>Original plan was blocked?</p> <p>Conflict between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Goals? - Past/present abilities? 	<p>4B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the revised option satisfy my goals? 	<p>4B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the revised option satisfy my goals? ---> 	<p>4C. Evaluation</p>
<p>5C. Follow-up</p>	<p>5B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have my goals been satisfied? ---> - Can I live with the outcome? ---> 	<p>5B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have my goals been satisfied? ---> - Can I live with the outcome? ---> 	<p>5C. Follow-up</p>




**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 18: insert date

Today's Topic: Problem Definition and Goals

- I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER**
 - Any announcements affecting attendance
- II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):**
 - Be organized.
 - Be concise, yet cover the content.
 - Be loud and clear.
- III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)**
 - Brief report on logs: Problem definition & goals?
 - Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
 - Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition & Goals.
- IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)**
 - What did you learn from this session?
- V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)**
 - Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
 - Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.
 - Add to your personal list of self-regulation Strategies that work for you.
 - Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Problem Solving Group: Session 18

Module 6: **Problem Definition and Goals** (Sessions 16-18)

Session 18 Goal: For group members to become proficient at using Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals.

Session 18 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goals. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls. Next week, focus is on Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an interpersonal problem for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Problem Definition/goals.

KEY WORDS: Clear Thinking, Problem Definition, Goals, Questions.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Brief report on logs; go around the table, and ask group members to briefly give their definitions of the problem.
2. Using group member's preselected example, review list of Questions to Revise Problem Definition and Goal/subgoals.
 - A. Have group members take out their list of Questions (from Session 16).
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs /Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
3. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition, Goals/subgoals):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Make Revisions to initial Problem Definition, Goals/Subgoals). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.

4. At appropriate junctures while working through the Clear Thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on Clear Thinking steps (see next page).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems (focus on interpersonal problems)
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies that you used.
3. Add to your personal list of Strategies that work for you.
4. Continue list of positive self-statements for replacing negative self-talk.

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:

Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).

2. Revising Options

Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).

Problems with initiation.

Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).

3. Evaluation

Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)

4. Follow-up

Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 18: insert date

A couple of weeks ago, your roommate was in a serious car accident. The passenger in the car was pretty badly injured, and she is now in a rehabilitation hospital. Therefore she's unable to take care of her 12 year-old dog.

One day, you came home to find that, without consulting you, your roommate had brought the dog home to your apartment. As soon as you saw and smelled the dirty little dog, you assumed that you would be the one who got stuck taking care of the dog all day while your roommate is at work. You were also concerned that if you got stuck caring for the dog for a long time (you had no idea how long the owner was going to be in the hospital), you might get attached to it and not want to give it back.

You **felt your stomach start to turn into a tight little knot**, and as you spoke to your roommate, you **heard your voice start to "take on an attitude."** You noticed these Warning Signs, but you didn't use any Strategies to Stop the emotional reaction.

In a blunt, nasty tone, you told your roommate "That filthy dog is not staying here!" Your roommate offered to take the dog to be bathed and groomed. You knew that having the dog groomed wouldn't change the fact that responsibility for caring for the dog was going to fall on you, but since your brain injury, it's harder for you to keep your train of thought and to find the right words to communicate your side of an argument, so you just agreed with this option.

Having not resolved the long-term issue, you got stuck taking care of the dog, and a few days later you found out that the dog had "wet" your couch. Next time, you'd like to be able to think through the situation using a step-by-step plan, so that you can make sure the long-term consequences are in your best interest.

I. OBSERVE Reactions	III. REFRAME/PLAN		
START	I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
I. OBSERVE Reactions	II. AI -YZE Precursors	III. REFRAME/PLAN	III. REFRAME/PLAN
<p>1A. Initial Problem Definition My roommate wants to watch this dirty, smelly dog but I don't want to get stuck taking care of it - for who knows how long - while my roommate is out at work everyday ----></p>	<p>What was my Initial REACTION?</p>	<p>1B.</p>	<p>1C. Rev. Problem Definition</p>
<p>2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To not be responsible for dirty, smelly dog while roommate is at work everyday ----> 	<p>2B.</p>	<p>2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p>	
<p>3A. Initial Option(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get dog groomed & bathed ----> 	<p>3B.</p>	<p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p>	
<p>+ consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dog is clean - Roommate is happy - Helped out dog's owner 	<p>4B.</p>	<p>4C. Evaluation</p>	
<p>- consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Got stuck with responsibility for dog while roommate is at work - Dog "wets" your couch 	<p>5B.</p>	<p>5C. Follow-up</p>	
<p>II. AI -YZE Precursors</p> <p>WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning</p> <p>Earliest Physical Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stomach started to turn into tight little knot 	<p>STRATEGIES used to "STOP"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could have talked discussion for later 	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>MAKE REVISIONS</p>
<p>Earliest Behavioral Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voice started to "take on an attitude" 	<p>Earliest Emotional Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Felt Angry - Felt taken advantage of 	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>MAKE REVISIONS</p>
<p>Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Someone else pointed it out to you? --Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? --Your own "alarm" went off? --You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem? 	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>MAKE REVISIONS</p>
<p>--Original plan was blocked?</p> <p>Conflict between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Goals? --Past/present abilities? 	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>MAKE REVISIONS</p>



PROBE #6 (Sessions 16-18) – MINI-SCENARIOS
“INITIAL VS. REVISED PROBLEM DEFINITIONS”

You and your wife have been invited to go to a party on Saturday night. Your wife has been looking forward to going out all week, but you have real concerns. Ever since your injury you have become very sensitive to noise, crowds, and staying up late. You know that you may very well wind up feeling sick for three days if you go. Your wife wants you to "just give it a try."

Initial Problem Definition	Questions	Revised Problem Definition
Your wife wants to go to a party but you don't.	Is there another way to look at the situation?	

One possible answer:

Your wife wants to go for a romantic night out with you, but you don't want to go the noisy, crowded party you've been invited to.



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 19: insert date

Today's Topic: Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up.


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- New list of Questions.
- Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
- Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.

Problem Solving Group: Session 19

Module 7: Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up (Sessions 19-21)

Session 19 Goal: For group members to learn to ask Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up

Session 19 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on asking Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an example for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up.

KEY WORDS: Options, Evaluation, Follow-up.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Using group member's preselected example, introduce list of Questions for Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up:
 - A. Distribute and review new list of Questions.
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs/Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
2. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Revise initial Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.
3. At appropriate junctures while working through the clear thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on clear thinking steps (see attached).

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:
Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).
2. Revising Options
Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).
Problems with initiation.
Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).
3. Evaluation
Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)
4. Follow-up
Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems.
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.



RUSK INSTITUTE OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE

Problem Solving Group

Session 19: insert date

CLEAR THINKING QUESTIONS

REVISE OPTIONS (3B Questions)

1. What good things will happen if I try my initial Option, in the short run? In the long run?
2. What bad things will happen if I try my initial Option, in the short run? In the long run?
3. What good things will happen if I don't try it, in the short run? In the long run?
4. What bad thing will happen if I don't try it, in the short run? In the long run?
5. What would the impact of my initial Option be on my family and friends?
6. Are there any other Options for dealing with this situation?
7. Do I need to go back one step and revise my Goals/subgoals?

EVALUATE (4B Questions)

1. Will the solution (revised Option) satisfy my revised Goals/subgoals?
2. What action steps will I need to take in order to carry out my revised Option? Does my brain injury impose any restrictions on my ability to do this?
3. Is the revised Option actually possible? Is it probable?
4. Do I need to go back one step and revise more Options?

FOLLOW-UP (5B Questions)

1. How did the other person react to my solution?
2. What kind of feedback did I get?
3. Have my Goals/subgoals been satisfied?
4. Can I "live with" the outcome?
5. Do I need to go back and revise the Problem Definition, Goals, or Options?

**** **SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBER'S EXAMPLE**

Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example

Session 19: insert date

Tuesday, you woke up in the hospital recovering from the surgery you had the day before. You weren't feeling very well, and you were still kind of "doped up" on the pain medications. You were scheduled to be in the hospital for another day, and you had made arrangements for a friend to pick you up on Wednesday. However, in talking to the nurses and attendants, you started to get the impression that you were going to be discharged right away.

Sure enough, your doctor came in and said that you were being discharged. You didn't even argue with him (**you know from past experience that this type of situation is a problem** because you tend to be passive when dealing with doctors). After the doctor left, you started asking the hospital staff if you really had to be discharged. Your nurse told you that you had to go home by Tuesday night, because your insurance wouldn't pay for another day.

It **didn't make sense to you** because you were originally cleared to stay until Wednesday. You **felt helpless**, and you thought to yourself, "If they say I have to go home, **there's nothing I can do about it.**" Then, you **started to feel angry and upset** (one personal style Pitfall is that you tend to go along with things, and then you feel taken advantage of).

You noticed these Warning Signs, but you **didn't use any Strategies to Stop the emotional reaction.** So, **without stopping to think**, you decided that if they didn't want you there, you would leave as soon as you were physically able to drag yourself out of bed. You packed your bags and called a cab. You wound up leaving by noon, even earlier than they wanted you to leave.

Next time, you'd like to think through the situation using a step-by-step plan, before you wind-up reacting in a way that isn't in your best interest.

I. OBSERVE Reactions

START

II. ANALYZE Precursors

III. REFRAME/PLAN

WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning	STRATEGIES used to "STOP"	What was my Initial REACTION?	ASK QUESTIONS	MAKE REVISIONS
<p>Earliest Physical Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - body was tense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - could have slowed down (to take a close look at what was going on) - Could have talked/discussion for later (I'm not feeling well, can we talk later?) 	<p>1A. Initial Problem Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I planned to stay in the hospital for another day, but my doctor says I have to leave today 	<p>1B.</p>	<p>1C. Rev. Problem Definition</p>
<p>Earliest Behavioral Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no eye contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could have used positive affirmations (like situation isn't hopeless, I can do some things about it "Don't give up" right away.) 	<p>2A. Initial Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recover a bit more before going home - stay until tomorrow 	<p>2B.</p>	<p>2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p>
<p>Earliest Emotional Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - felt helpless - Angry - upset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (like situation isn't hopeless, I can do some things about it "Don't give up" right away.) 	<p>3A. Initial Option(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If staff says I can't stay until tomorrow, leave as soon as I am physically able to move. 	<p>3B.</p>	<p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p>
<p>Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Someone else pointed it out to you? XOther people weren't acting the way you expected them to? --Your own "alarm" went off? XYou knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could have waited to "cool off" 	<p>+ consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - left a situation where I felt unwanted - felt proud for being self-reliant <p>- consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - subjected myself to more pain - put self @ risk by leaving before I was ready 	<p>4B.</p>	<p>4C. Evaluation</p>
<p>XOriginal plan was blocked? XConflict between: XGoals? --Past/pre-abilities?</p>		<p>5B.</p>	<p>5C. Follow-up</p>	<p>Session 19 Example Clear Th. ing Worksheet</p>



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 20: insert date

Today's Topic: Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
- Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.

Problem Solving Group: Session 20

Module 7: Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up (Sessions 19-21)

Session 20 Goal: For group members to practice using Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up

Session 20 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on using Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an example for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up.

KEY WORDS: Options, Evaluation, Follow-up.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Using group member's preselected example, review list of Questions for Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up:
 - A. Have group members take out and review their list of Questions for Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up (last week's handout).
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs/Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
2. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Revise initial Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.
3. At appropriate junctures while working through the clear thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on clear thinking steps (see attached).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems.
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:
Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).
2. Revising Options
Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).
Problems with initiation.
Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).
3. Evaluation
Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)
4. Follow-up
Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

***** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 20: insert date

See Session 19



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 21: insert date

Today's Topic: Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up

I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Analysis of real-life example:
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to
- Roleplay/Think Aloud:
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/
Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.



IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.

Problem Solving Group: Session 21

Module 7: **Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up** (Sessions 19-21)

Session 21 Goal: For group members to become proficient at using Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up

Session 21 Overview: Group members analyze a real-life example; focus is on using Questions to Revise Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. Leaders emphasize impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls. Next week, focus is on using Strategies and Questions together.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders elicit an example for use next week and review impact of brain injury and personal style Pitfalls on Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up.

KEY WORDS: Options, Evaluation, Follow-up.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Using group member's preselected example, review list of Questions for Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up:
 - A. Have group members take out and review their list of Questions for Revising Options, Evaluation, and Follow-up (Session 19 handout).
 - B. Distribute printed copies of real-life scenario and completed Clear Thinking worksheets. Briefly review Section I (Observe Reactions).
 - C. Briefly review Section II (Analyze Precursors): What were the Warning Signs? How could you have known that you had a problem? Given these Warning Signs/Signals/Alarms, what Strategies could you have used to Stop the initial emotional Reaction?
2. Group leaders "roleplay" Section III process (asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up):
 - A. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns (i.e., knowing Warning Signs, using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions, then asking Questions to Revise initial Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up). Group members participate by suggesting Questions from list.

3. At appropriate junctures while working through the clear thinking model, emphasize the impact that brain injury and personal style Pitfalls have on clear thinking steps (see attached).

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems.
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log.

Brain injury Pitfalls & Clear Thinking steps

1. Revising Problem Definition & 2. Revising Goals/subgoals:

Inattention, information processing deficits (slow processing, trouble retaining information and holding multiple pieces of information, difficulty identifying salience/main point, inadequate critique of information sources).

2. Revising Options

Impulsivity and inflexibility (fixing on first solution rather than suspending judgment and thinking of more options).

Problems with initiation.

Divided attention deficits (difficulty holding alternatives in mind at the same time without getting confused).

3. Evaluation

Deficits in planning and abstraction (difficulty projecting to the future and comparing options with goals/subgoals, etc.)

4. Follow-up

Problems with initiation, memory, distractibility, organizational deficits.

****** SAMPLE ITEM: REPLACE WITH GROUP MEMBERS EXAMPLE**

**Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
Problem Solving Group: Real-life Example**

Session 21: insert date

You were out-of-state visiting your mother-in-law, and because you are known as a “Mr. Fix-It,” everybody expected you to take care of her broken VCR. You took the VCR to a repair shop, and told your mother-in-law that you would hook it up for her after it was fixed.

You went to pick up the VCR on the appointed day, and it wasn’t ready. There was still had plenty of time before you were leaving, so you weren’t too concerned. The second time you went to pick it up, they told you that they were waiting for a spare part. You were annoyed, but the VCR still would be ready in plenty of time, so you reluctantly agreed to wait a few more days.

The third time you went to pick up the VCR, **you knew from past experience that you were in danger of having a self regulation breakdown.** You noticed some **of your Warning Signs** ahead of time: you were **preoccupied** by the delay in repairs; you felt **“worked up,”** and you were feeling **pressure in the pit of your stomach.** So, as you went into the shop, you **took a deep breath and reminded yourself to stay calm.** Sure enough, they told you that the VCR still wasn’t ready! Now, the situation was a crisis: you were leaving the next day; if you didn’t get the VCR back right way, you wouldn’t be able to hook it up before you left.

You felt **angry** and **anxious** as you started to think, “What am I going to do now? I have to leave tomorrow....this my fault.” Your **raised your voice,** and you **felt flushed.** Your **initial impulse was to yell at the repairman,** but you recognized your Warning Signs, and you **told yourself, “OK, let me calm down, so I can Stop and Think.”** You **counted to 10** and then calmly, but firmly, told the repairman that you needed the VCR fixed right away. You reminded him that this was the third delay. You told him that you were leaving town the next day and that you needed to hook-up the VCR before you left town.

After **asking questions of yourself and the repairman,** you both agreed that, after the VCR was repaired, he would deliver and set it up for your mother-in-law.

I. OBSERVE REACTIONS

III. REFRAME/PLAN

II. ANALYZE Precursors

<p>WARNING SIGNS of Reaction beginning</p> <p>Earliest Physical Signs</p>	<p>STOP STRATEGIES used to "STOP"</p>	<p>What was my Initial REACTION?</p>	<p>ASK QUESTIONS</p>	<p>MAKE REVISIONS</p>
<p>1A. Initial Problem Definition</p>	<p>1B.</p>	<p>1C. Rev. Problem Definition</p>	<p>2C. Rev. Goal(s)/Subgoal(s)</p>	<p>3C. Revised Option(s)</p>
<p>- pressure in pit of stomach - felt flushed</p>	<p>- reminded yourself to stay calm - took a deep breath</p>	<p>- I need to set-up the VCR before I leave, and it isn't ready.</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>
<p>Earliest Behavioral Signs</p> <p>- raised voice</p>	<p>- told yourself to calm-down - counted to 10</p>	<p>- Vent frustration at repairman. - Make him finish repairs, now.</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>
<p>Earliest Emotional Signs</p> <p>- felt "worked up" - Angry - Anxious</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>Yell at repairman</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>
<p>Signals/Alarms (How did you know that you had a problem?)</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>consequences:</p>	<p>4B.</p>	<p>4C. Evaluation</p>
<p>--Someone else pointed it out to you? --Other people weren't acting the way you expected them to? --Your own "alarm" went off? X You knew from past experience that this type of situation is a problem?</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>consequences:</p>	<p>5B.</p>	<p>5C. Follow-up</p>
<p>X Original plan was blocked? X Conflict between: X Goals? --Past/present abilities?</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>	<p>Session 21 Example Clear Thinking Worksheet</p>



PROBE #7 (Sessions 19-21)

Initial Problem Definition	Questions	Revised Problem Definition
Your wife wants to go to a party but you don't.	Is there another way to look at the situation?	Your wife wants to go for a romantic night out with you, but you don't want to go the noisy, crowded party you've been invited to.
Initial Option(s)	Questions	Revised Options
1. Tell your wife "no." 2. Buck up and go to the party.	What are other options will meet my goals? Is there some way we can both get something out of the situation?	

Possible answer:

1. Go out for a romantic dinner for two at a nice restaurant.
2. Take a night ride on your boat and have a picnic dinner under the stars.
3. Invite another couple to double date for quiet dinner and a movie.




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Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 22: insert date

Today's Topic: Roleplaying a real-life example

- I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER**
 - Any announcements affecting attendance
- II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):**
 - Be organized.
 - Be concise, yet cover the content.
 - Be loud and clear.
- III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)**
 - Real-life example (Roleplay/Think Aloud):
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.
- IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)**
 - What did you learn from this session?
- V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)**
 - Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
 - Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.

Problem Solving Group: Session 22

Module 8: **Integration/generalization/catch-up** (Sessions 22-24)

Session 22 Goal: For group members to learn to use emotional Self-regulation and Clear Thinking to manage real-life problems.

Session 22 Overview: Leaders review an example from a previous week, and use roleplay to highlight use of Strategies and Questions.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders review group members' personalized Pitfall and Strategy lists.

KEY WORDS: Strategies, Questions

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute printed copies of a previous week's real-life scenario. Have group members take out their completed Clear Thinking worksheets from that week. Briefly review.
2. Have group members take out their personalized list of Strategies and Questions list.
3. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns:
 - A. "Roleplay" knowing Warning Signs and using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions. All group members participate by contributing self-regulation Strategies from their lists.
 - B. "Roleplay" asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. All group members participate by contributing Questions from their lists.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems.
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

Problem Solving Group
(from Session 10: insert date)

STRATEGY LIST

Dealing with immediate **ACTIONS/BEHAVIORS** and **FEELINGS/EMOTIONS**

1. Know your "warning signs"
2. Stop and think
3. Count to 10
4. Physically remove yourself from situation
5. Wait a minute
6. Take deep breaths
7. Sit down
8. Allow yourself to "shut down" - use denial, or mentally "leave the scene"
9. Hold on to something to steady yourself physically
10. Distract yourself by focusing on something superficial
11. Use calming self-talk or affirmations
 - "Calm down"
 - "Take it easy"
 - "Its going to be alright"
12. Use breathing techniques to calm down
13. Table discussion for later
14. Slow down and take a close look at what's going on
15. Go someplace private
16. Laugh, joke (do something to lighten up and ease tension)
17. Detach if feeling pressured by a situation
18. Look out the window
19. Observe someone who is calm; absorb the calm feeling from the other person.
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____

Dealing with underlying THOUGHTS/ASSUMPTIONS

If self-regulation is affected by comparisons with how you were "before," with a lot of self-critical thoughts (e.g., I'm can't do this, I'm no good anymore):

1. Know your "warning signs"
2. Interrupt judgmental thoughts
4. Use permissive self-talk or affirmations
 - "Its ok if I do this more slowly than I used to"
 - "If I can't do something like I used to, I'm still a good person."
5. Change frame of comparison from "before the injury" to the way things are different now from just after the injury.
6. Change the stakes from everything riding on being able to do a particular thing to "its not a life or death situation."
7. Give others the benefit of the doubt
8. Don't take things personally
9. Remember the bigger picture (keep your overall goal in mind)
10. Concentrate on information most relevant to you
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____

Planning For Improvement

Know your brain injury & personal style Pitfalls and accept them:

1. If you need more sleep than you used to need, get it.
2. Take naps if necessary.
3. Plan fewer activities.
4. Remember that nobody is perfect
5. Cut things down to manageable size.
6. Set small, do-able goals, no matter how small.
7. Make lists
8. Use weekly planner
9. Ask for help
10. Delegate problem-solving or parts of carrying out a problem resolution plan to other people
11. Change time frame (give yourself a longer time to do it)
12. Match size of solution to size of problem
13. Communicate needs to others

14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

Know what Contexts are a problem for you:

1. Avoid or limit exposure to Contexts that are a problem (e.g., crowded department stores).
2. Anticipate "hot topics" (e.g., discussing mother-in-law).
3. In situations you can't avoid, create ways to retreat or take a break (e.g., at a noisy party, take a walk in the middle and come back, go to the bathroom, etc.).
4. Listen to music
5. Meditate
6. Read a book or magazine
7. Go for a walk, take dog for a walk
8. Get frustration out of system by kicking garbage can
9. Call a friend to talk

10. _____
11. _____
12. _____



**The Howard A. Rusk
Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 23: insert date

Today's Topic: Roleplaying another real-life example

I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Brief review of group outline (wrapping up).
- Real-life example (Roleplay/Think Aloud):
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem



Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Continue log of real-life problematic interpersonal situations.
- Use a Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.
- Write down the most important thing you learned in this group.

Problem Solving Group: Session 23

Module 8: **Integration/generalization/catch-up** (Sessions 22-24)

Session 23 Goal: For group members to practice using emotional Self-Regulation and Clear Thinking to manage real-life problems.

Session 23 Overview: Leaders review an example from a previous week, and use roleplay to highlight use of Strategies and Questions.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders review group members' personalized Pitfall and Strategy lists. Next week is final session

KEY WORDS: Strategies, Questions

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute printed copies of a previous week's real-life scenario. Have group members take out their completed Clear Thinking worksheets from that week. Briefly review.
2. Have group members take out their personalized list of Strategies and Questions list.
3. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns:
 - A. "Roleplay" knowing Warning Signs and using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions. All group members participate by contributing self-regulation Strategies from their lists
 - B. "Roleplay" asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. All group members participate by contributing Questions from their lists.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue log of real-life problems.
2. Use Clear Thinking worksheet to analyze a problem from your log. Be sure to write down self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.



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PROBLEM SOLVING GROUP: AGENDA

SESSION 24: insert date

Today's Topic: Wrap-up, and roleplaying another real-life example.


I. APPOINTMENT of NOTE-TAKER and TIME KEEPER

- Any announcements affecting attendance

II. REVIEW OF LAST MEETING (10:05-10:20):

- Be organized.
- Be concise, yet cover the content.
- Be loud and clear.

III. TODAY'S EXERCISES (10:20-11:30)

- Brief report on home assignment: Most important thing you learned in this group?
- Real-life example (Roleplay/Think Aloud):
 - Section I: Initial Reactions.
 - Section II: Warning Signs, self-regulation Strategies used to 
 - Section III: use Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up.

IV. SUMMARY (11:30-11:45)

- What did you learn from this session?

V. HOME ASSIGNMENTS (11:45-11:50)

- Once a week, refresh your memory by using a worksheet to analyze a real-life problem. Be sure to write down the self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.
- Sign-up for post-testing.
- Bring packets of completed questionnaires when you come in for testing.

Problem Solving Group: Session 24

Module 8: **Integration/generalization/catch-up** (Sessions 22-24)

Session 24 Goal: For group members to become proficient at using emotional Self-Regulation and Clear Thinking to manage real-life problems.

Session 24 Overview: Leaders review an example from a previous week, and use roleplay to highlight use of Strategies and Questions.

REMINDERS: Consolidation session leaders review group members' personalized Pitfall and Strategy lists.

KEY WORDS: Strategies, Questions

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute printed copies of a previous week's real-life scenario. Have group members take out their completed Clear Thinking worksheets from that week. Briefly review.
2. Have group members take out their personalized list of Strategies and Questions list.
3. Roleplay/Think aloud across columns:
 - A. "Roleplay" knowing Warning Signs and using Strategies to Stop emotional Reactions. All group members participate by contributing self-regulation Strategies from their lists
 - B. "Roleplay" asking Questions to Revise Problem Definition/Goals/Options, Evaluate, and Follow-up. All group members participate by contributing Questions from their lists.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

1. Once a week, refresh your memory by using a worksheet to analyze a real-life problem. Be sure to write down the self-regulation Strategies and Questions that you used.
2. Sign-up for post-testing.
3. Bring packets of completed questionnaires when you come in for testing.



PROBE #8 (Sessions 22-24) – **MAKING IT WORK FOR YOU**

WHAT ARE *YOUR* PITFALLS?
WHAT STRATEGIES WORK FOR *YOU*?

“My Pitfalls”	“Strategies that Work for Me”