

Transitions into Housing

A New Way Home

Curriculum





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Welcome Letter

Hello _____ and Welcome to the Transitions Program,

Thank you for deciding to take the important steps of maintaining your permanent housing. I am here to support your success as you reach your personal goals.

During our time, we will work together to get the tools and skills that will help you be successful in this time of transition. This will include looking at materials to help build success in areas like being a roommate, a tenant and an employee.

We will also have time each week for you to tell me what additional resources you might need and look for where you can find those. If you need something, please ask. I will do my best to help you find whatever you need to be successful in this program, in your housing and with other goals you might have.

The most important part of the program is the conversations that we will have in our time together. This time will allow us to discuss any challenges you might be having and to celebrate your successes along the way, and I invite you to share these with me whenever you want.

Thanks again for allowing me to assist you during this time, and please let me know how I can best do that.

Sincerely,

Peer Support Specialist
West County Community Services



Information Sheet

Transitions into Housing is a yearlong peer support program with a goal of supporting housing success through the following objectives:

1. One-to-one peer support
2. Tools for successful housing skills
3. Resource referrals for needs
4. Experience of success and responsibility
5. Community engagement

Eligibility criteria:

- Ability to participate in program activities.
- Willingness to commit to the program.
- Self-identified housing challenge.
- 18 years and older.
- Sonoma County resident

Helpful definitions

Transition is the process of changing from one state or condition to another.

Peer support is the process through which people who share common experiences or face similar challenges come together as equals to give and receive help based on the knowledge that comes through shared experiences. A peer is an equal, someone with whom one shares demographic or social similarities. Support expresses the kind of deeply felt empathy, encouragement, and assistance that people with shared experiences can offer one another within a reciprocal relationship.



Phases of Program

Phase 1 Build Relationship: Months 1 and 2 - 5 days per week, 1-2 hours per day

- a. Schedule
 - i. Mon: Check-in/Resources & Community Connection (4)
 - ii. Tues: Transitions Class (9); (Certificate)
 - iii. Wed: Writing/Journaling
 - iv. Thu: Empowering Your Goals (4), Being a Successful Employee (4); (Certificates)
 - v. Fri: Self-Care Skills (4)
- b. Discover Goals and Develop a Plan

Phase 2 Build Skills: Months 3 to 6 - 3 days per week, 1-2 hours per day

- c. Schedule
 - i. Mon: Check-in/Resource Referrals; Transitions
 - ii. Wed: Writing/Journaling
 - iii. Fri: Being a Good Employee (4) (Certificate), Self-Care, Personal Responsibility (1x in 4th and 6th mo.)

Phase 3 Community Engagement: Months 7 to 9 - 2 days per week, 2 hrs. per day

- d. Schedule
 - i. Tues: Financial Literacy (4) (Certificate), Check-in/Resource Referrals
 - ii. Thu: Field Trips 2x/mo., Self-Care 2x/mo., Personal Responsibility (1x in 8th mo.)

Phase 4 Preparing for Completion: Months 10 to 12 - 1 day per week, 2 hrs. per day

- e. Schedule
 - i. Field Trips 2x/mo., Check-in/Resources/Self-Care 2x/mo.
- f. **Graduation Ceremony:** Held quarterly (September, December, March, June)

Transitions to Housing Program Manager Contact information: Paulette Hall, paulette.hall@westcountyservices.org; 707-890-129

PHASE 1



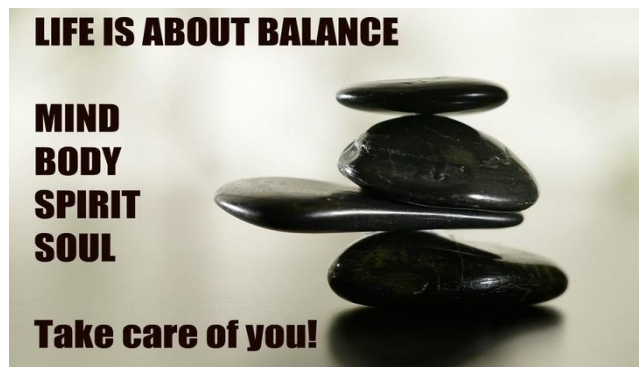
PHASE OBJECTIVE:

BUILD RELATIONSHIP & PROVIDE SUPPORT

This phase of the program is where the Participant and Peer Support Specialist begin their collaboration for the success of the Participant. For this to work it is essential that the two develop a solid foundation on working together during the next 12 months.

Suggested Question for Check-in's

Regular check-ins with participants are important as participants progress through the program and the relationship with the Peer Specialist develops. If you are finding it difficult to get participants engaged during check-in try using one of the questions or set of questions below. Also remember it is important that Peer Specialists also check-in with participants. This reaffirms the “peer” aspect of the program and strengthens the relationship between participant and Peer Specialist.



- Using a percentage, how full is your plate right now?
- What's going well in your life right now? What isn't?
- What's something that brought you joy this month?

- _____
- _____



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:

Week 1: Life Goals: How to Set and Achieve Your Goals in Life

By Katherine Hurst



Using the SMART goal formula is an effective, evidence-based approach to setting and achieving all the types of goals discussed above.

SMART is an acronym that stands for *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound*.

Using these criteria, it's much easier to figure out what you want to achieve and construct a plan for how to do it.

You can apply this format just as readily in your personal life and your professional life, and it clarifies your goals as well as ensuring that they're realistic.

We'll work our way through each aspect of the acronym, explain how to apply it and offer some concrete examples of how a goal might meet (or fail to meet) each specific criterion.

Specific

A specific goal is one that is written down in plain, unambiguous language.

An example, in contrast "I want to make more money" with "I want to gain a promotion by next summer".

The latter is a specific goal, while the former is vague. When you are specific and focus on the action that you'll be taking, you immediately give yourself a clearer image of the steps you need to take.

Measurable

When goals are measurable, it's easy to quantify success. For example, a goal like "I want to go on three dates next month" includes numbers that offer a clear way to evaluate whether you've met your goal.

With this measurable component, you can take an honest look at your progress, and if you don't manage to meet the goal then you can see immediate areas for change (e.g., you might aim for one date next month).



Achievable

Some people use the word “attainable” rather than “achievable” here, but the message is just that your goal needs to be something that you can meet. While it's good to have goals that stretch you, studies on success indicate that unrealistic goals are actually demotivating.

For example, “I want to run a 10K by summer” is achievable if you're just starting training, while “I want to run a 30K race by summer” is less likely.

Relevant

Relevant goals are ones that make sense right now. For example, setting the goal “I want to have three children” isn't a relevant goal just yet if you haven't met the goal of meeting a life partner.

In other cases, the goal might be achievable but not maximally useful. For example, boosting your CV may improve your professional image, but it's not the most relevant to set if you aren't actively looking for a new job.

Time-Based

Lastly, goals should be time-based (or “timely” goals on some formulations of SMART). This means that they should have a time frame attached to them, rather than being open-ended.

So, opt for “I want to lose two stones in the next six months” rather than just “I want to lose two stones.” Once again, time constraints improve motivation and help to keep you accountable.



SMART Goals Worksheet

Goal Statement:

What do I need to do to reach this goal?

Where am I now?

Obstacles:

Solutions:



Empowering Your Goals Curriculum

Week 2: Weekly Schedule

Guide

Weekly schedules can be great to keep track of the task, activities, and appointments you have during the week. Some individuals may use digital calendars such as those you find in a cell phone and some individuals may use paper calendars. Whether digital or paper, keeping a schedule can help you manage your time better and may make sure you don't forget important dates. Throughout this group curriculum packet there are weekly schedules for you to practice your time management skills. Each week complete a weekly schedule with all of your appointments, tasks, and activities you would like or need to get done that week. At the end of the week see how well you were able to keep to your schedule. Also notice what didn't work and think of ways that might work better.

Reflect on what you learned, liked, and will continue to practice.

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
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| Monday | | | |
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Empowering Your Goals Curriculum

Week 3: Goals, Dreams, Vision

List activities you would like to accomplish. Below is a description of a goal, dream, and vision. After listing the items decide which activity is a goal, dream, and vision.

Consider why you have chosen the category you have for each activity.

Example,

| BE DO OR HAVE LIST | IS IT A GOAL, DREAM, OR VISION |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Become an Astronaut | Dream |

Goal- the object of a person's ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.

Dream - a cherished aspiration, ambition, or ideal.

Vision - the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.

| BE DO OR HAVE LIST | IS IT A GOAL, DREAM, OR VISION |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |



Empowering Your Goals Curriculum

Week 4: Give Yourself Credit

In the busyness of your days it can be virtually impossible to see the progress you are making. Take a moment to look at the great work you are doing. Seeing your progress can increase your motivation to continue on your journey or revise your path.

- Did you achieve a goal(s) this week?

- What did you receive from achieving the goal(s)?

- Did achieving the goal this week bring you closer to a bigger goal? If so, how?

- Is there a goal that you discovered this week doesn't work for you? If so, have you chosen a new goal?

NOTE TO SELF:

What is something positive you can say to yourself about what you have done this week?



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
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Resources and Community Connection Curriculum

Week 1: Resources

Tackling the Tough Skills. A Curriculum Building Skills for Work and Life. University of Missouri Extension

I. It's people power!

When we think of resources, we probably think of items that represent wealth or property, or perhaps we think of entities occurring in nature like coal, trees, or diamonds. But often, our most valuable resources are the people who share our lives. "A life without people," says Harold Kushner, "without the same people day after day, people who belong to us, people who will be there for us, people who need us and whom we need in return, may be very rich in other things, but in human terms, it is no life at all."

Our mothers who take care of us when we are sick, our sisters who babysit for us when we have an appointment, our brothers who fill our automobiles with gasoline, our neighbors who let the kids come in when we are going to be home late, and our friends who just listen to us when we need to vent our feelings are all examples of people resources.

Ask: **Who else might serve as a people resource in our lives?**

Those of us who have supportive families may take these people's resources for granted at times. We may **expect** our families to be there for us whenever we need them. Those of us who do not have supportive families may wonder why anyone would expect such a thing as family assistance.

Whether or not we have close ties with our families, we all need support systems in our lives. "No one can develop freely in this world and find a full life without feeling understood by at least one person" (Paul Tournier). **DISCUSS.**

Ask: **Who is the one person in your life who is always there for you?**

The number of resources we have available to us might depend on the number in our extended family. It might depend on whether our extended family lives in the same state or city. It might depend on whether we live in an urban or rural area. It might even depend on our attitude towards our family, neighbors and friends. Do we speak? Do we help them when they need support? Are we pleasant in our dealings with others?



Tackling Tough Skills

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Resources and Community Connection Curriculum

Week 2: Discovering Community Resources

There are many needs that an individual or family may need that can be obtained in their community. The purpose of this lesson is to discover what community resources mean to you, the uses of community resources, and ways to find community resources.

When you think of community resources what comes to mind?

How can community resources be beneficial to you?

What are some ways that you find community resources?



Resources and Community Connection Curriculum

Week 3: Resource Research Contact Activity

Instructions: List four resources that would be beneficial to you (housing, food, service navigation, etc.). Search the internet for an organization in Sonoma County that provides at least one of the resources you have listed. For example, google searches for food resources in Sonoma County or the 2-1-1 website. Find at least one organization for each need and fill in the information for each organization in the space provided.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

#1 Name of Organization: _____

Research (What service do they provide and contact information)

What needs will this resource fill for me?

#2 Name of Organization: _____

Research (What service do they provide and contact information)



What needs will this resource fill for me?

#3 Name of Organization: _____

Research (What service do they provide and contact information)

What needs will this resource fill for me?

#4 Name of Organization: _____

Research (What service do they provide and contact information)

What needs will this resource fill for me?



Resources and Community Connection Curriculum

Week 4: Resource Referral & Meeting Preparation

There are many sources of where you might receive a referral. It can be a Case Manager, your neighbor, your primary doctor, or a friend. Some referrals are simple for example your friend refers you to a barber. You call the barber to make an appointment or go in if walk-ins are available and get a haircut. That simple! What about when your doctor refers you to a specialist? There are a couple more steps involved and things you should do to prepare for your meeting with the specialist.

Here are a few tips on meeting etiquette:

- Know who you are meeting with and why.
- Take notes
- Limit distraction during the meeting such as cell phones.
- Have documents ready for the meeting.
- Speak clearly, politely, and respectfully

What do you need to be prepared for a meeting with your Housing Case Manager or any Case Manager, Social Services worker?

What are some documents will you need to apply for social services (medi-cal, SNAP, general assistance, TANF, etc.?)



Which documents that you know you will need for social services programs do you have?

Which documents that you know you will need for social services programs do you need to get?



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

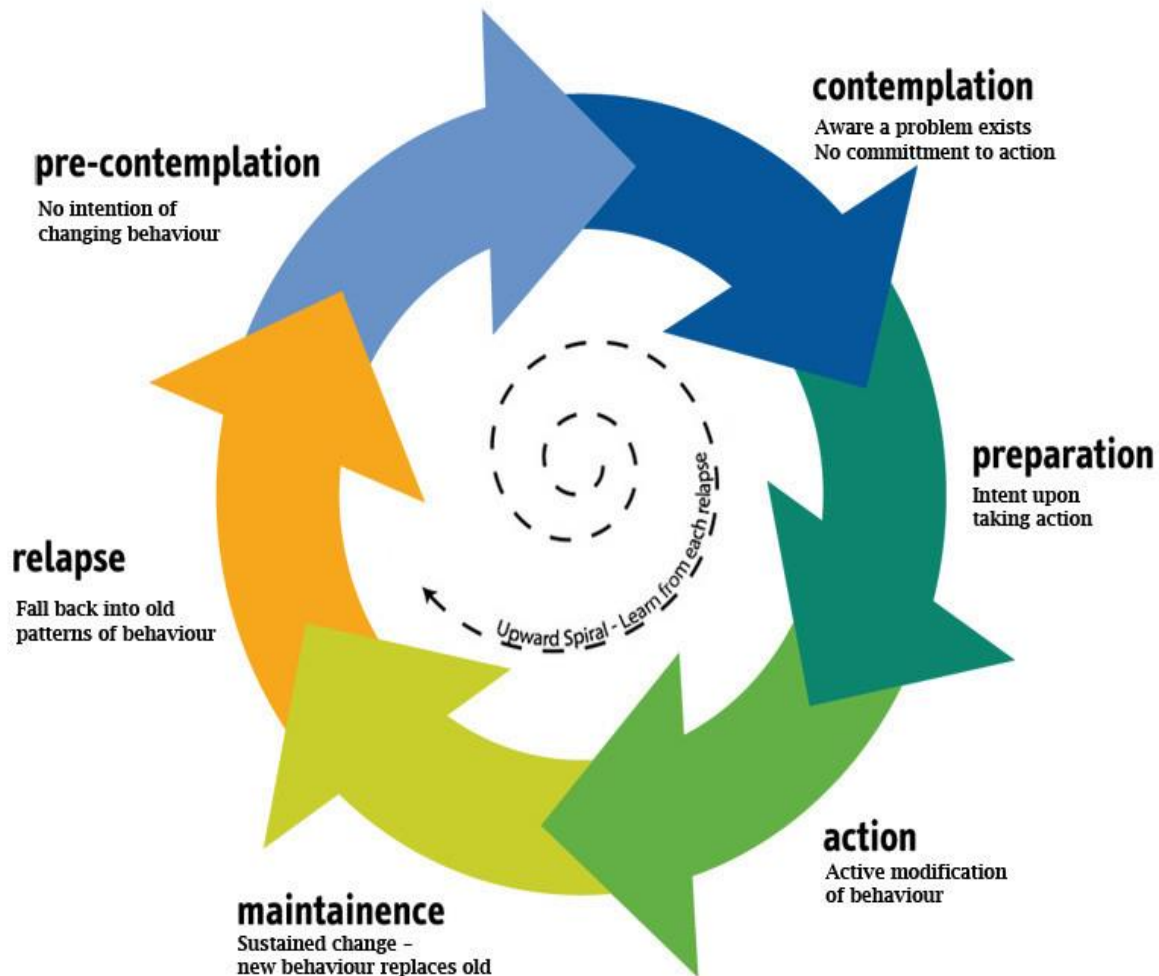
Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
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Transitions Curriculum

Week 1: Stages of Change



Transtheoretical Model of Change

Prochaska & DiClemente

Prochaska & DiClemente's model (1983)

<http://socialworktech.com/2012/01/09/stages-of-change-prochaska-diclemente/?v=f24485ae434a>

Two types of Transitions: Chosen and Non-Chosen

What are some examples of each?

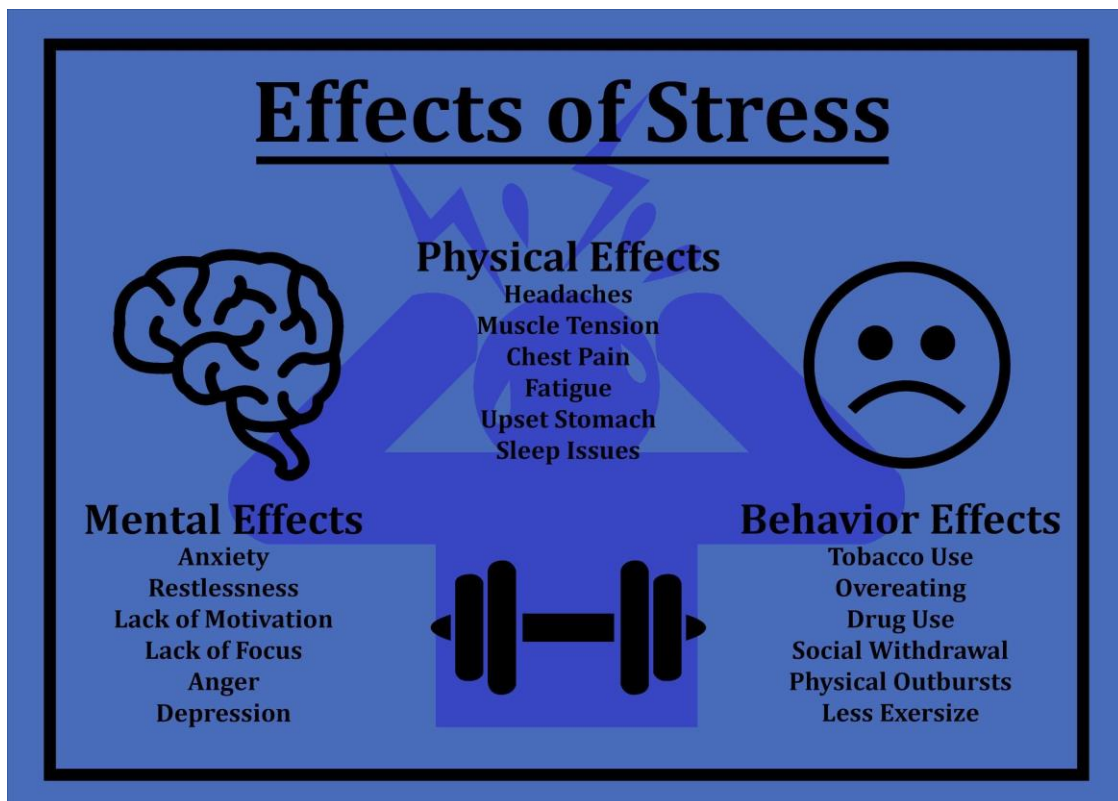
Chosen

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Non-Chosen

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Stress-related Health Issues





<https://www.afimsc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2150673/keep-calm-and-cope-with-covid/>

Write about your current transition:

What stage of change best describes where you are now? Why?

What stage do you hope to be in after completing the class?

Do you relate to any of the effects of stress? Which ones? Others?

How would your life be different if you didn't have those stresses?



Transitions Curriculum

Week 2: Self-Care

What does Self Care mean to you?

Some Definitions

1. Taking an active role in protecting your own well-being and happiness
2. Taking care of your mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health through everyday practices and activities
3. Doing things each day that will help prevent health issues

Why do Self Care?

Mental:

- Increases positive thinking
- Ability to focus better

Physical:

- Reduce aches and pains
- Improve your sleep

Emotional:

- Reduces stress, depression and anxiety
- Improved self esteem

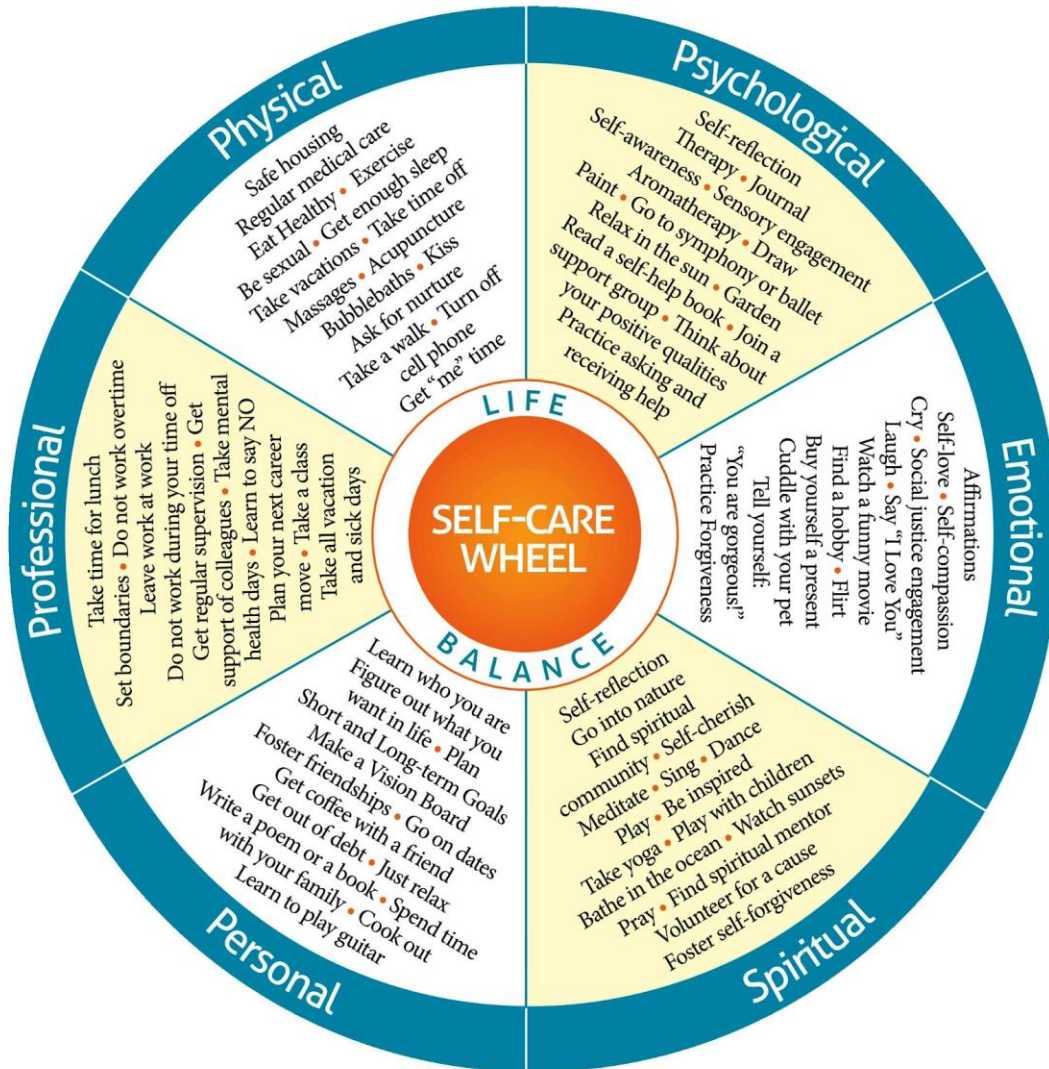
Examples of Self Care

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What's one Self Care thing you can do today?

Will you commit to doing that for yourself?

SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

www.OlgaPhoenix.com



Transitions Curriculum Week 3: Preparing for Changes

Change can be stressful

It can be difficult

It is helpful to have a plan

What are some of your strengths?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



<http://www.oprah.com/inspiration/how-to-identify-your-strengths>



What are some of your weaknesses?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How does knowing your strengths and weaknesses help prepare you for going through a major life change?

Building/Using our Support Network

Who are some of the people who are close to you that you talk to?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(((Trust House Drawing)))

Who are the people in your network or trust house?

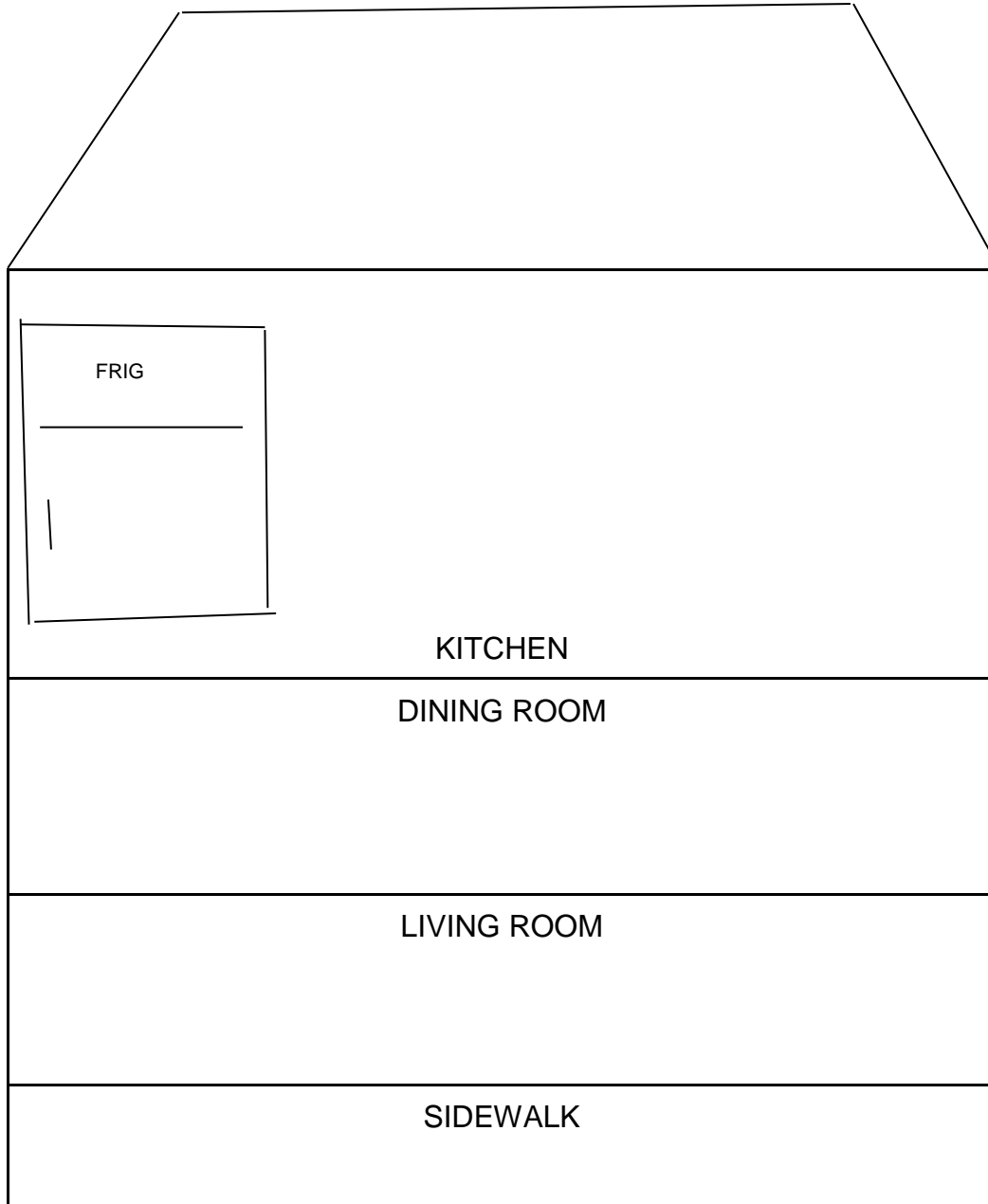
Sidewalk - Individuals that you know occasionally

Living Room - Individuals that you would invite to where you live.

Dining Room- Individuals that you would invite to a meal where you live.

Kitchen - Individuals that you would invite to cook with where you live.

Refrigerator - Individuals who would not have to ask to go into your refrigerator.



A diagram of a house with a trapezoidal roof. The interior is divided into four horizontal sections. The top section is labeled 'KITCHEN' and contains a rectangle on the left labeled 'FRIG'. The second section is labeled 'DINING ROOM'. The third section is labeled 'LIVING ROOM'. The bottom section is labeled 'SIDEWALK'.

| | |
|-------------|---------|
| FRIG | KITCHEN |
| DINING ROOM | |
| LIVING ROOM | |
| SIDEWALK | |



Transitions Curriculum

Week 4: Choices

The most important thing we can learn is the power of the choices we make.

Which of your choices have had a big impact on your life? How did they impact you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are some choices that you have today (Short term or Long term, day to day, etc.)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What process do you use to make an important decision? Why do you use that process?

What are some things you *can* control?

What are some things you *can't* control?

How do you handle things that are out of your control?

Control what you can. Don't try to control what you can't.



Transitions Curriculum

Week 5

Looking at Past and Future Experiences to help with the Present Transition

What are some transitions that you've been through before?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What was your experience with them? (Both positive and negative)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

If you could wave a magic wand and wake up tomorrow with your life exactly as you want it, what would it look like?

What are some of the barriers to attaining this life you have imagined?

What are some ways that you can work through and overcome these?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What is the first step you can take now to move toward creating what you want?

Moving forward into a New Reality



<https://www.alliancebernstein.com/library/beyond-the-brexit-trees-is-there-light-in-the-EU-wood.htm>

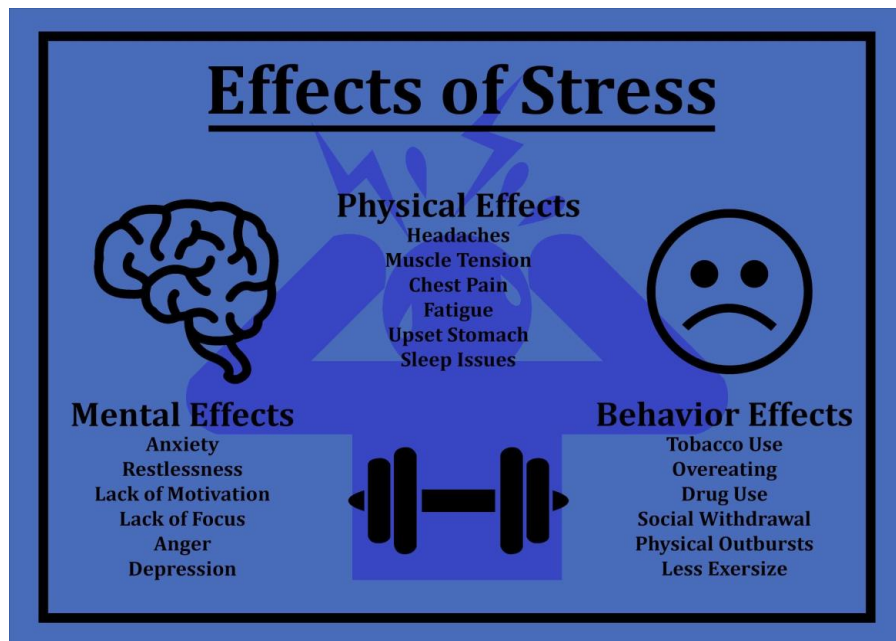
Week 6

Self-Awareness and Communication

Let's take some time to look at how it's going. What are three words you would use to describe your experience so far?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

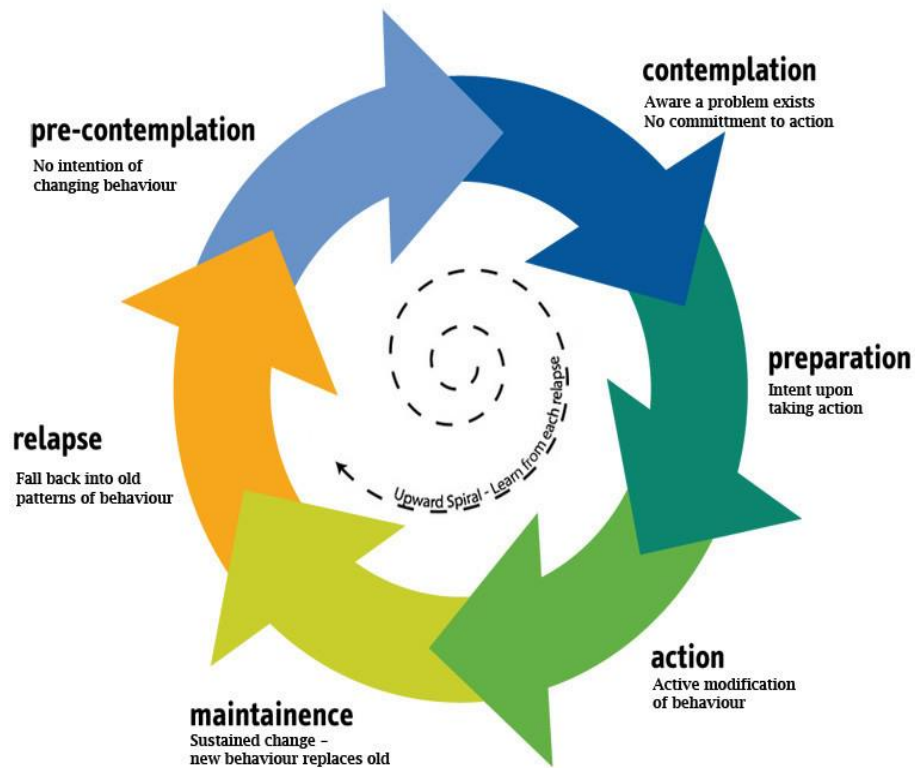
Have you noticed any indications of stress over the last few weeks? If so, what?



<https://www.afimsc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2150673/keep-calm-and-cope-with-covid>

What self-care have you been using as you go through this process?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Transtheoretical Model of Change
 Prochaska & DiClemente

<http://socialworktech.com/2012/01/09/stages-of-change-prochaska-diclemente/?v=f24485ae434a>

What stage of change best describes where you are now? Why?

How have you been using and building the people in your "Trust House"?

Transitions Curriculum

Week 7: Keep on Keeping-On

What are some tasks that you have to complete every day?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What happens when you don't complete them?

How do you get yourself to complete them when you don't feel like doing them?

How do you keep track of things you need to do?



<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/female-hand-writing-do-list-notebook-475732807>

What are some things that motivate you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



<https://www.dreamstime.com/illustration/motivators.html>

Transitions Curriculum

Week 8: Riding it Out

Emotions are like waves



<https://strangesounds.org/2016/02/gigantic-waves-hit-hawaii-coast-strongest-surf-events-in-50-years.htm>

What emotions seem uncontrollable and sometimes take over your day?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do you notice when an emotion is starting to take you over?

What do you do when you feel it taking over?

What are some other ways you could handle the feelings when they come?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



<https://childhood101.com/helping-children-manage-big-emotions/>

Reacting vs Responding

React: _____

Respond: _____

Benefits of Reacting: _____

Benefits of Responding: _____

Dangers of Reacting: _____

Dangers of Responding: _____

As we continue to do self-care, build our support system and use other tools that help us deal with them, the waves of emotion will be smaller and come less often, but they will *always* come. The tools we are learning are like a surfboard that allows us to ride them out instead of being overcome by them.



<https://www.newsweek.com/surfers-riding-wave-environmental-activism-573068>

HOW DO I FEEL RIGHT NOW?



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/45162668861685699/>



Transitions Curriculum

Week 9: Looking Back to Move Forward

This is the final lesson for the Transitions class, which means you are about to *transition* from student to graduate of this course!

What comes to mind when you think about finishing this course?

What are some of the most important tools you are taking from this class?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are you most excited about going forward?

What are you most concerned about?

How do you plan to keep the momentum going that you started in this course?

Congratulations!!!

PHASE 2



PHASE OBJECTIVE:

SKILL BUILDING & MINDSET OF SUCCESS

This phase of the program is where the Participant and Peer Support Specialist focus on skill building.



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
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Success in Recovery & Personal Responsibility Curriculum

Week 1: The Four Stages of Recovery

By Mark Ragins, MD

April, 2007

Recovery is the normal adaptational process that follows destruction just like grief is the normal adaptational process that follows loss. Often the two processes supplement each other. The fluid stages of grief – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance – were first described in the complex context of death and dying, but have been found to be highly generalizable to other serious losses. Recovery has been described in a number of fields, our own work is in the complex context of serious mental illnesses, but any successful description ought to be highly generalizable to other serious destructions. Our present description has four fluid stages – hope, empowerment, self-responsibility, and having a meaningful role in life.

Hope

In the blackest times of despair what's needed first is hope as a light at the end of the tunnel, some idea that things can get better, that life will be more than the present destruction. Without hope there's no real possibility of positive action. To be truly motivating, however, hope has to be more than just an ideal. It has to take form as an actual image of how things could be if they were to improve. It's not so much that people will attain precisely the vision they create, since realistically most outcomes are products of chance and opportunity more than careful planning. But it does seem essential to have some clear image, if people are to make difficult changes and take positive steps.

Empowerment

To move forward, people need to have a sense of their own capability, their own power. Their hope needs to be focused on things they can do rather than new cures or fixes someone else will discover or give to them. It is often needed for someone else to believe in them before they're strong enough to believe in themselves and to start focusing on their strengths instead of their losses. It also often takes some actual experience of success to really believe one can be successful. Waiting until someone is ready to move on can often be stagnating and disempowering, because "readiness" often occurs only in retrospect after something has been done successfully.

Self-Responsibility

At some point most people who recover realize that no one else can do it for them, that they have to take charge of their recoveries. People can, and often



need, to be supported in their efforts to recover, but they can't be caretaken or protected into recovery. Taking one's own risks, setting one's own goals and path, and learning one's own lessons are essential parts of recovery. The appeals of dependency and being taken care of can derail a recovery as can being too frightened or traumatized to take risks.

Meaningful Role in Life

Ultimately to recover one must achieve some meaningful role apart from the destruction. Becoming a destruction victim is not a recovered role, and frankly, neither is destruction

survivor. After achieving increased hopefulness, inner strength and self-responsibility, these traits are applied to meaningful roles apart from the destruction. The blackness of destruction that once seemed to swallow the person whole recedes in importance as the person's other meanings emerge. Connectedness to other people, belonging, and feeling accepted, that may have for awhile only been possible with others who had experienced related destructions, within families, or with compassionate helpers becomes possible in a variety of contexts. The isolation and aloneness the destruction imposed is increasingly broken and life re-entered.

Put together as a coherent series of stages these descriptions can provide a roadmap, albeit a fluid one, of the process of recovery generally and can be applied specifically to our work in helping people recover from the destruction of serious mental illness. The stages of grief have sometimes been applied to medical oncology service by including a specialized counselor or social worker. Sometimes a special hospice service is provided separately from the medical oncology service and "appropriate" people are referred to it when they are ready. Rarely an entire oncology service is built upon these stages and experiential values and it infuses the entire service. The stages of recovery have sometimes been applied to a psychiatric mental health service by including a specialized rehabilitation worker or consumer advocate. Sometimes a special rehabilitative or clubhouse service is provided separately from the psychiatric mental health service and "appropriate" people are referred to it when they are ready. Rarely an entire mental health service is built upon these stages and experiential values and it infuses the entire service. The Village Integrated Services Agency is an entire comprehensive, integrated mental health service built upon rehabilitation/recovery principles and values.

Now in our tenth year of proven success with a variety of people with serious mental illnesses, including homeless, jailed, "high-utilizing", state hospital, and conserved people, we have become a powerful model of a recovery-based program. We have been involved in numerous efforts to spread our principles and practice, working towards widespread system change.



The Four Steps to Recovery

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Success in Recovery & Personal Responsibility Curriculum

Week 2: How to Take Personal Responsibility and Stop Making Excuses

BY Paul Gunter

When things aren't going your way, it's hard to accept your own role in the situation. Often, it's much easier to look externally – at other people, at the circumstances, or at just plain bad luck. However, while all of these things can be factors, failing to take personal responsibility can block you from becoming your best self.

Making excuses provides short-term comfort, but it holds you back from growing and improving, and from avoiding similar mistakes in the future. But how do you know if you're failing to take personal responsibility, and what can you do about it?

If you're ready to empower yourself by taking responsibility and leaving excuses behind, this article is a perfect place to start. We'll explore the key signs that you have difficulty accepting personal responsibility, explain the benefits of changing your approach, and provide concrete tips and reminders that can help you stay on track.

Ready to Start Accepting Responsibility?

Perhaps someone has pointed out that you have a habit of making excuses, or maybe you're feeling stuck and are ready to try anything that might change your mindset and behavior.

However, if taking personal responsibility has been difficult for you in the past, know that this is perfectly understandable.

It can seem scary and negative to think about how we contribute to our own difficulties, and if you already suffer from low self-esteem then it makes sense that you'd want to protect yourself.

Thankfully, taking personal responsibility doesn't have to be frightening or heavily self-critical. Instead, it can mark an empowering new phase of your life in which you take control of who you want to be and how you want to spend your time.

To see why and how, let's delve further into the difference between taking and avoiding responsibility.



Signs You Might Be Avoiding Personal Responsibility

So, how do you know that you need to work on accepting responsibility? We've already gestured toward the kind of excuse-making mentality you might be tempted to adopt, but we'll now consider the profile of a responsibility-avoider in more depth. Do any of the following signs sound familiar? If so, read on to see how you can start making changes

Victim Mentality

If you have a victim mentality, this means that you view yourself as powerless. You're someone who constantly asks questions like, why do bad things happen? Or why do I always seem to get treated badly at some point?

While it's natural to feel bad when things go wrong, a victim mentality involves indulging in self-pity and feeling sorry for yourself at the exclusion of considering productive lessons you can draw from your current situation.

In contrast, when you stop feeling sorry for yourself then you're able to focus on fostering a positive mentality that pushes you toward change and away from stagnation.

If you want to leave the victim mentality behind, start asking yourself "What can I do to make things better?"

This encourages you to see what your power is and how you might be contributing to the problem. Secondly, try emptying your negative thoughts and feelings of self-pity into a journal and then leaving them behind.

Blaming Others

Of course, others will sometimes play a role in negative situations in your life – sometimes by accident, and occasionally on purpose.

However, it's important not to assume that others are entirely to blame for everything that goes wrong. Blame shifting keeps you trapped in the same cycle, making the same mistakes and avoiding the same responsibilities.

If you want to learn how to stop blaming others, it's helpful to dig into the psychological reasons for blaming others.

In particular, as noted in the introduction of this article, we often do this sort of thing because we find it hard to accept our own flaws.

Work on embracing your flaws – you don't have to be perfect to be good enough, and everyone makes mistakes! In addition, develop a practice of questioning your blaming practice. When you say "It's all ____'s fault!", take this as a prompt to stop and ask, "But what role did I play?".

Making Excuses

Making excuses sometimes takes the form of blaming others, but there are further ways to avoid personal responsibility by making excuses.



In particular, you might start to take responsibility and then veer away into explaining to yourself that the situation wasn't really under your control. For example, suppose you make a mistake on a work assignment.

You might acknowledge that this isn't your boss's fault, or the fault of any of your coworkers. However, you might say things like "Well, I was late to work that day because of bad traffic, and the wording of the assignment was quite complicated, so I couldn't really have done anything differently."

So, how to stop making excuses. It takes time and effort to stop making excuses, but the key is challenging your thinking.

Every time something goes wrong, ask yourself to find at least one thing you could do differently next time to help get a better result.

Complaining

Complaining takes up a lot of energy, but it's an easy habit to fall into if you find it tough to take personal responsibility. In some ways, complaining is just a way of externally expressing some of the above signs – blaming others, viewing yourself as a victim, and making excuses.

You might do it in your journal or do it out loud to friends, but either way, it completely distracts you from any role you might have played in your own discontent.

One thing that can help you to stop complaining is to set a time limit.

Try to get it all out within five minutes, for example, viewing it as a cathartic kind of purge. Then, move on to being productive and proactive.

A second strategy that can be useful is to make yourself accountable. Tell your close friends that you're working on complaining less, and let them remind you if you're overdoing it as an accountability partner.

How Accepting Responsibility Can Change Your Life

Armed with a clear idea of what it means to have a habit of avoiding responsibility, let's move on to think about why this all matters so much. As it turns out, accepting personal responsibility can completely transform your life. This should give you the inspiration that you need to start shifting your habits and holding yourself accountable.

Achieve Your Life Goals

Firstly, no matter what your life goals may be, taking personal responsibility goes a long way toward helping you meet those goals. Ask yourself: what's your purpose, or your direction in life? What are the values and aims that undergird all the choices you make? Setting life goals has a huge amount to do with being disciplined in your actions.

In other words, by mindfully approaching each day with a plan for what you want to do, the habits you want to cultivate, and the place you want to direct your energy.



When you don't take responsibility, you block yourself from your life goals by surrendering control. You say that whether you get to where you want to go is more about other people and about luck.

In contrast, when taking personal responsibility, you see that all of this is fundamentally up to you – this opens up a whole new perspective on what you can achieve.

Increase Self-Awareness

When you accept and see that you have responsibility for yourself, your actions and your own life, you start to become self-aware.

What is self-awareness? This is when you learn to develop an ever-rich picture of who you are and what you want, and doing so has knock-on effects on all sorts of other areas of your life.

Why is self-awareness important? Because it means understanding the reality of your own strengths and weaknesses and how to use all of those to your advantage. The benefits of self-awareness also include more mature relationships with better communication.

Your potential is closed off if you can't accept that you could be contributing to the negatives in your life.

Deep down, you have a sense that there are things you could be working on. However, you won't allow yourself to look at those things or to do that work.

There's a wonderful feedback link between self-awareness and taking responsibility for yourself – each of these traits continuously enhances the other. Consequently, you become increasingly empowered and increasingly knowledgeable.

Increase Happiness

At first, you might not see why taking more responsibility for yourself increases your happiness. For example, isn't it uncomfortable and unpleasant to think about your weaknesses and the ways you could do better? Won't that make you sadder rather than happier?

The answer is that it doesn't have to – not if you take the attitude that we all have room for improvements and that making mistakes doesn't undermine your value.

In addition, there's something truly liberating about taking responsibility for your own happiness. In particular, you realize that to a large extent, when considering how to be happier, it's already in your control.

It's not up to your partner, your friends or your family to make you happy, and you can choose to be happier than you are.

So, instead of viewing yourself as being at the whims of fate every day, you can wake up and ask yourself "How do I want to feel today? And what can I do to make that happen?".



Take Control of Your Life

The sense of control discussed above with respect to happiness also extends beyond your emotions. Consider that when you take responsibility, you can take control of your life in all respects. As you begin to view yourself as being personally responsible for the life you live, you start to realize that you can decide what you want to pursue, and when you want to pursue it.

In a nutshell, a shift in mindset doesn't happen to you but rather happen through you. It's considered 'growth mindset vs fixed mindset '. You're in command of what your future looks like, in every area – your dating, career, fitness and your family life.

In contrast, the old mentality involved thinking that others control your life, limiting your choices and keeping you stuck. When it finally dawns on you that this isn't true, the relief can be truly incredible.

Become Self Accountable

Finally, a huge element of taking responsibility for yourself is a willingness to answer for what you do – to consider what happens as a result of your behaviors and choices, and to honestly evaluate those outcomes.

As suggested above, this adds up to doing something different in the future when things don't work out. Consequently, the gap between you and your goals gets shorter and shorter at a faster rate.

As with many aspects of taking responsibility, self-accountability can sound like a heavyweight to carry at first. It can sound as though you'll live a life of self-recrimination and self-doubt.

However, once you start to practice it, you'll see that it frees you up to abandon the things that don't work for you and to lean into the best parts of yourself.

What's more, it makes your social life much better. Instead of blaming others, you apologize when appropriate and little things never get a chance to become chronic grudges.

6 Important Reminders for Taking Personal Responsibility

To take personal responsibility, the biggest step you have to take is deciding that you want to stop making excuses.

However, it's helpful to have techniques on hand to keep you on track.

Having reminders you can refer to when it becomes hard to avoid the urge to blame others is especially good. These reminders will help to stick to your plan and stay consistently accountable to yourself.

Stop Blaming Others

When you catch yourself focusing all your resentment and anger on another person, stop and take a few deep breaths. Pull back from your urge to blame, and focus on yourself. How did you get here? What happened? If you could do the situation over, what would you change?

Stop the Constant Complaining



When you hear consistent moaning coming out of your mouth to friends, family or colleagues, catch yourself and change direction. It's okay to say something like "I just realized I'm moaning about this – let me change track." Ask yourself: what's the positive in this situation, if there is any? If not, how can I move forward?

Be Mindful & Live in The Present Moment

Add a personal reflection period to every day to stop you from analyzing the past and stressing about the future. Whether it's a guided meditation, mindfulness exercises, or just a walk, find time to zone into the present moment.

Get Clear & Set Intentions

Set your goals in clear, unambiguous language. Write them down (write an intention statement) and pin them up somewhere if it helps, and stick to them. Focus on these intentions throughout the day, and let your guiding question not be "Why me?" but "What can I do in order to turn my intentions into reality?".

See Challenges Instead of Problems

We all hit roadblocks, but when you do it's important to view them as beatable challenges. How can you overcome them? What strategies can you use? These are not signs you'll be permanently stuck or that you're powerless. They're not problems but rather prompts to grow beyond your present self.

Be Responsible for Yourself

Finally, don't look to your partner, your friends, your children or anyone else to make sure you're happy. Your happiness is up to you, which is both a great gift and a great responsibility. If you want to feel a certain way, explore how you can get there – don't ask others to take you there.



How to Take Personal Responsibility and Stop Making Excuses

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Success in Recovery & Personal Responsibility Curriculum

Week 3: Helping or Hurting?



Are your emotions and behaviors helping or hurting you?

REBT is a proven system designed to increase emotional self-management in order to empower you to change those things you can change and to accept (though not like) those things you cannot change.

In order for you to think clearly and thus effectively handle stressful situations and solve practical problems, you first have to develop emotional control. Emotional self-management is a vital key to stress management.

The first step in emotional self-management is to become more aware of your habitual emotional stress reactions and to understand clearly that they are not helping you get what you want. Once you are motivated to change your emotional and behavioral reactions to situations, you are then ready to modify your thinking.

Write down an extremely stressful event that happened recently:

Indicate how you felt and how strongly you felt about it by putting a check mark next to the feeling and rating its intensity Moderate or High (M or H):

- ☐ angry
- ☐ guilty
- ☐ anxious
- ☐ depressed

Write down what you did (how did you behave?)

Was your behavior helpful? Did it help solve the problem in the short-term?

Did your behavior help solve the problem in the long-term?

Did your extreme feelings help you to think clearly and solve the problem or deal with the upsetting event?



Success in Recovery & Personal Responsibility Curriculum

Week 4: Making a Plan (MAP)

Older Adult Team – Behavioral Health Division (OAT/BHD) – County of Sonoma

(This is not the complete Making a Plan. For the complete plan visit <https://caringcommunity.org/mental-health/making-a-plan-toolkit/#efill>)

Your Name (print)_____

Phone_____ Date_____

Name/Agency/Contact Information for person helping me to complete this, if applicable.

Name/Agency_____ Phone_____

Introduction/Plan Overview: No matter what our health problems may be, it is important that we are all recognized and respected as being the best source of information about ourselves and what is important to us. This plan can assist you to get the best possible care and support that is based on your values and preferences. If you are unable to make decisions or communicate for yourself, this plan would help guide people you trust, your designated Health Care Agent and health professionals when providing your needed care and support. It will help you direct them to make every effort to honor your wishes. Sometimes, this may not be possible, due to limitations of a conservatorship if you are conserved, or because of lack of resources, such as placement at your preferred place of hospitalization. If there is anything you do not care to answer, please draw a line through that section and initial on the line you draw as your response. Allergy Alert:_____

Medications Alert: I have an allergic or bad reaction and/or severe side effects to the following medication (If possible describe the adverse medication effects):_____

Please see item 8 for more details regarding medication preferences. - 2 v.11/26/18 1.

Emergency Contacts: My doctor and mental health care team include (names, titles and contact information):

Name_____ Title_____ Phone_____

Name_____ Title_____ Phone_____

2. I have an Advance Health Care Directive (Advance Directive) designating who I want to make mental health care decisions if I am unable to do that. ____ Yes ____ No If Yes, here is my Health Care Agent information:



Agent Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Alternate 1 Agent Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Alternate 2 Agent Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

If No, would you like help completing an Advance Directive? ☐ Yes ☐ No Please Note: For Items 3 – 6 there is a “checklist” worksheet attached that could be helpful.

3. For you, what things may trigger a mental health crisis? (Explain please):

4. Are there early warning signs you may be headed towards a crisis? (Explain please):

5. Are there things that are particularly difficult for you that could make a crisis worse?

11. In the Emergency Room, hospital or acute psychiatric care facility, my preferences in a mental health crisis include: ☐ notify my Emergency Contacts immediately ☐ use alternatives to medication ☐ use alternatives to forced medications or restraining me (indicated in #6 above)

Other alternatives that have been helpful to me include: _____

☐ For ECT/Shock Therapy: ☐ use if critical to do ☐ don't use ☐ my doctor can decide Please clarify what this means to you: _____

_____ 12.

Other things important to know about me when I am having a mental health crisis:



Success in Recovery & Personal Responsibility Curriculum

Week 5: Accepting Personal Responsibility

I am a Shawnee. My forefathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. Their son is a warrior... From my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my fortune. – Tecumseh

Accepting Personal Responsibility – I accept responsibility for creating my life as I want it

When psychologist Richard Logan studied people, who had ordeals such as being imprisoned in concentration camps or lost in the frozen Arctic, he found that all these victors shared a common belief. They saw themselves as personally responsible for the outcomes and experiences of their lives.

The essence of personal responsibility is responding wisely to life's opportunities and challenges, rather than waiting passively for luck or other people to make the choices for us.

- When people keep doing what they've been doing even when it doesn't work, they are acting like Victims.
- When people change their behaviors to create the best results they can, they are acting like Creators.

When you accept responsibility, you believe that you create everything in your life! Of course, at times, we are all affected by forces beyond our control. If a hurricane destroys my house, I am a victim (with a small "v"). But if I allow that event to ruin my life, I am a Victim (with a capital "V").

If you accept responsibility for creating your own results, you will look for ways for create your desired outcomes and experiences despite obstacles. We choose to be a Victim or Creator!

- When we respond as a **Victim**, we complain, blame, make excuses, and repeat ineffective behaviors.
- When we respond as a **Creator**, we ask ourselves: "What are my options, and which option will best help me create my desired outcomes and experiences?"

The difference between responding to life as Victim or Creator is how we choose to use our energy.

Here's an important choice you can make immediately. Accept, as Creators do, this belief: **I am responsible for creating my life as I want it!** Ultimately each of us creates the quality of our life with the wisdom or folly of our choices.



In this activity, you will experiment with the Creator role. By choosing to take responsibility for your life, you will immediately gain an increased power to achieve your greatest potential

Journal Entry 1: Write and complete each of the ten sentence stems below. For example, someone might complete the first sentence stem as follows: If I take full responsibility for all my actions, I will accomplish great things.

1. If I take full responsibility for all my actions

2. If I take full responsibility for all my thoughts

3. If I take full responsibility for all my feelings

4. If I take full responsibility for my education

5. If I take full responsibility for my career

6. If I take full responsibility for my relationships

7. If I take full responsibility for my health

8. If I take full responsibility for all that happens to me

9. When I am acting fully responsible for my life

10. If I were to create my very best self



Journal Entry 2: Write about what you have learned in this activity about personal responsibility and how you will use this knowledge to improve your life.

Skip Downing, *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life* (Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2011)

Suggested Question for Check-in's

Regular check-ins with participants are important as participants progress through the program and the relationship with the Peer Specialist develops. If you are finding it difficult to get participants engaged during check-in try using one of the questions or set of questions below. Also remember it is important that Peer Specialists also check-in with participants. This reaffirms the “peer” aspect of the program and strengthens the relationship between participant and Peer Specialist.



- Who is someone that inspired you this week?
- How are you emotionally, physically, spiritually, and mentally?
- What's something that you do to relieve stress?

- _____
- _____



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
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Self-Care Curriculum

Week 1: Step-By-Step Meditation for Beginners: How to Meditate in 5 Steps



BY KATHERINE HURST

Meditation Step 1: Search for A Tranquil Environment

To set yourself up for success, [create your own personal meditation area](#) in which to practice.

Background noise, such as the television and radio, will cause distraction and disrupt your train of thought. Instead consider peaceful, tranquil, and meditation-friendly audio and music.

It's also best to choose a fairly cool or warm area to meditate. Being too cold or too hot won't allow you to concentrate.

Make sure you're in a suitable area where you won't be disturbed.

Meditation Step 2: Sit Comfortably

To meditate, you'll need to find a comfortable position in which to sit for ten to fifteen minutes. You don't need to adopt a specific position if you are going to find it hard to adapt.

Generally, the regular position for meditation is with crossed legs and hands on your lap. However, if you struggle with this at first, find a position you are comfortable with. Just ensure that you are not slouching.

Meditation Step 3: Breathe

Understanding how to meditate with a focused breathing rhythm is an important process. However, you want it to be natural.

Start by closing your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Let it begin with shallow breaths, and just continue to breathe for a few minutes.

Your intake of breath will become deeper as you progress. Take your time to breathe slowly as there is no need to force it.



Recommended reading: [Deep Breathing Benefits & How To Breathe Properly](#)

Meditation Step 4: Focus on Your Thoughts

Through deep breathing, you should feel more at ease. Once that happens, turn your focus to the actual process of breathing.

Be conscious of each breath that you inhale and each that you exhale. It may take a while for your mind to fully focus on your breathing.

Don't worry if you struggle with your train of thought. It's perfectly ok for your mind to wander onto other subjects. Simply let it drift and gently try to bring your attention back to your breathing.

It may be difficult to concentrate, whether you're a beginner at meditation or not, however, as you start to continually practice, your attention should gradually improve.

If you find it easier, then use numbers to 'count' your breathing. So, for instance, count one to inhale and two to exhale, and continue to repeat these numbers as you breathe in and out. This can be an effective way to get into the mindset when learning how to meditate.

Meditation Step 5: Open Your Eyes

When you are ready to end your meditation, open your eyes. You should be in a calm and serene state.

How to Meditate: Tips for Beginners

When you're first learning how to meditate, it's important to view it as a skill that you cultivate and strengthen over time. When you're just getting started, use these meditation tips to enhance your practice...

- Keep an eye on your posture, ensuring your back is straight. This will help you focus, and infuse the practice with positivity.
- Try meditating first thing in the morning. This sets a wonderful tone for the rest of your waking hours and also takes advantage of the receptive state of your mind before the rush of the day begins.
- If you can't relax into your meditation, try counting your breaths for a while. This will calm your thoughts, guiding the brain into a more focused state.
- Let thoughts drift by, rather than trying to stop them. It is natural to get distracted; the important thing is to gently refocus your mind as soon as you notice that it has wandered.
- Meditate in silence if at all possible, in a quiet room. If there are background noises, try listening to some quiet instrumental music.
- Commit to meditating for at least a month. This will allow you to acquire the basic skills, and begin to see the real benefits it can bring.



Step-By-Step Meditation for Beginners: How to Meditate in 5 Steps

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:

Self-Care Curriculum

Week 2: Equal breathing Exercise

by Emily Cronkleton



Equal breathing is known as Sama Vritti in Sanskrit. This breathing technique focuses on making your inhales and exhales the same length. Making your breath smooth and steady can help bring about balance and equanimity.

Research on older adults with high blood pressure showed that this technique may help improve mental well-being and increase the oxygen supply to the brain and lungs.

You should find a breath length that is not too easy and not too difficult. You also don't want it to be too fast in order to maintain it throughout the practice. Usually, this is between 3 and 5 counts.

Once you get used to equal breathing while seated, you can do it during your yoga practice or other daily activities.

To do it:

1. Choose a comfortable seated position.
2. Breathe in and out through your nose.
3. Count during each inhale and exhale to make sure they are even in duration. Alternatively, choose a word or short phrase to repeat during each inhale and exhale.
4. You can add a slight pause for breath retention after each inhale and exhale if you feel comfortable. (Normal breathing involves a natural pause.)
5. Continue practicing this breath for at least 5 minutes.



Equal Breathing Exercise

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Self-Care Curriculum

Week 3: 14 LIFE-CHANGING JOURNALING TECHNIQUES

from Vanilla Papers

1. Free writing

Free writing means setting a timer and letting your thoughts flow, unedited and unscripted, onto the page. Or you can set a goal to write continuously for a specified amount of pages.

Free writing is all about keeping your hand moving and not pausing to go back and edit or construct a perfect phrase. If you run out of ideas, you just keep writing whatever comes to mind.

Whether that's describing your surroundings, thinking about your grocery list or brainstorming a brilliant new idea, free writing is a journaling technique that's all about letting whatever emerges in your head flow onto the page without letting your inner critic silence you.

What's the point? Won't it all turn into an inconsequential ramble? Some of it will.

The power of free writing

But free writing is incredibly powerful to unpack a confusing dilemma or make sense of your mixed emotions. It also helps you unlock suppressed emotions you'd otherwise abashedly skip quickly over. But when you're just looking to fill those pages, you'll grab on to anything – including those pesky feelings you'd normally try to stash away.

Getting things down on paper puts you in touch with your honest, uncensored self.

It also helps with self-acceptance. The more you free write, the more accepting you'll become of your own thoughts and let them spill out without judgment.

Free writing is all about getting things out – not about making yourself sound acceptable or polished.

2. Morning Pages

That being said, there are good reasons to write in the morning. You've got a limited amount of willpower to work with during the day, and writing first thing lets you take



advantage of it before it shrivels up as you perform demanding tasks throughout the day.

There's evidence that the prefrontal cortex is most active in the morning. This means you're more creative and your ego is still laying low. You're likely in a better mood because the world hasn't yet had any opportunities to vex you.

So what exactly is Morning Pages?

Morning Pages is a free writing practice made popular by Julie Cameron in her 1992 book *The Artist's Way*, a perennial cult favorite about unleashing your creativity. It was originally meant to help artists break through their blocks to unleash their creativity.

"Morning Pages are three pages of longhand, stream of consciousness writing, done first thing in the morning. There is no wrong way to do Morning Pages – they are not high art. They are not even 'writing,'" Cameron writes on her website about this bedrock writing tool. "They are about anything and everything that crosses your mind– and they are for your eyes only. Morning Pages provoke, clarify, comfort, cajole, prioritize and synchronize the day at hand. Do not overthink Morning Pages: just put three pages of anything on the page...and then do three more pages tomorrow."

If you're a night owl, you're likely thinking it's impossible to write so much that early. But Morning Pages might surprise you. They're great for clearing early morning brain fog and gaining some clarity over your cups of coffee.

Proponents of Morning Pages have called the practice "life changing" with anything from coming up with ideas that have changed their businesses to beating procrastination.

And although it takes about a half hour for most people to fill up three pages, Morning Pages actually makes your day more productive. In the end, that means you're saving time.

TIPS FOR MORNING PAGES:

- **don't look back on what you've written to edit or second-guess yourself**
- **clarifying your thoughts as you go along**
- **write by hand: the slowness of the writing process makes Morning Pages more effectiveness**
- **the recommended page size is 8.5" x 11" (or A4 paper)**
- **get a separate notebook for Morning Pages for easy and organized access**
- **experiment and shift your morning routine to make extra time for writing**

3. Lists

Lists are great to write when you find free writing too daunting. They're also an incredible journaling technique to organize, track and record anything related to your career, personal life, relationships, hobbies and more.

Lists can be written as a one-time session or maintained regularly like a log.

Lists are quicker to write than long-form journal entries, but they're still a great record of your life.

Whether you're listing quilting patterns or start-up funding ideas, lists challenge you to dive deeper into a topic and let you to focus your attention on a particular area.

IDEAS FOR WRITING LISTS:

- **your favorite books and your current reads, reviews and list of recommendations**
- **favorite films and Netflix series, what you're watching now and your to-watch list**
- **favorite meals, recipes, foods you'd like to try, reviews of restaurants you've visited**
- **your favorite affirmations**
- **clothes you love, a log of daily outfits, what feels comfortable and what you're thinking of donating**
- **ways to relax each day and a self-care log**
- **newsworthy items or thought-provoking stories that sparked your interest**
- **a log of your children's daily life: what they did that day, funny things they've said, first words, their interests, friends they're making, what they're reading**
- **fitness routine and tracker**
- **a budget tracker, where you're spending money and ways to increase your savings**
- **home improvement log, what needs to be done, supplies to buy**
- **vacation planner of places to visit, restaurants to try, museums to visit, what to pack**

4. Art journal

If your thoughts flow easier in a visual format, then why not try an art journal for sketches, collages, doodles, inspirations and experiments?



There aren't many rules to art journaling and no single way to "do it right." Your art journal can be a mix of images and sketches along with writing, or it can be purely visual. Or it can depend on the day.

Your art journal is your platform to explore your creativity, keep track of your ideas and work through challenges. It's a ground to plan and explore new ideas, whether that's settings for your next dinner party or visual branding for your company.

An art journal helps you get in touch with your creativity (and we're all creative) especially if you've always loved art but never considered yourself an "artist."

If the idea of a high-end sketchbook is too intimidating, then start with some doodles in an old notebook and take it from there.

An art journal can be a great place to express your feelings, whether you had a terrible day or want to celebrate happy moments.

This artsy journaling technique boosts your creativity and gives you a judgment-free space to create without worrying about public reception or Instagram likes.

Journaling has many other benefits that can change your life. Read [18 Incredible Benefits of Journaling](#) for how journaling boosts creativity, and improves your mental and physical health.

5. Unsent letter

An unsent letter is written for catharsis and never meant to be mailed. It's an incredible journaling technique to help you get closure or foster forgiveness and peace of mind.

Whether it's an ex-boyfriend that you're still fuming over or a loved one who's passed away, writing an unsent letter can give voice to everything you've left unsaid.

Unsent letters can also help you manage anger if you write everything you appreciate about that person.

Unsent letters written to people currently in your life can help you clarify your emotions and make it easier to express yourself to that person in real life.

An unsent letter can also be a powerful tool if you're recovering from addiction and writing to people you've wronged.

For an incredible boost of confidence, try writing a letter from your future and wiser self to your current self. This lets you tap into stores of wisdom that you didn't know you had and gets you in touch with your intuition especially when you're facing tough decisions.



Thank you letters can be a great way to express gratitude to those who'd made a difference in your life, past and present.

6. Dream journaling

Keeping a dream journal may sound outlandish and mystical, but there's plenty of evidence on how this journaling technique helps you understand your emotions.

Start by writing down whatever you remember from your dream. The more your journal, the better your memory will get.

And when you become aware of your dreams, you understand how a good dream or a nightmare can subconsciously impact your day.

It helps you with new ideas or solutions – Einstein used his dreams to develop some of his formulas and theories.

Write about your dream as soon as you wake up because dreams become more difficult to remember as the day goes on. Write in detail and make illustrations if needed for those strange, indescribable images that often occur in dreams.

Once you pick out patterns or reoccurring dreams, you can reflect on their interpretation and meaning.

Recording your dreams also improves your overall memory and exercises your brain.

It helps you explore your subconscious and boosts your creativity. Many incredible ideas reportedly came from dreams, from Mary Shelley's Frankenstein's monster to the Beatles song Yesterday.

7. Bullet Journaling

Fondly known as BuJo, bullet journaling is an organization tool developed by a digital designer Ryder Carroll who first used it at university to manage his ADD. It's exploded in popularity since then and is even credited with boosting sales of stationery supplies.

A bullet journal includes brainstorming, to-do lists, reminders and schedules all in one convenient place. It's a relatively new journaling technique premiered in 2013 that took off in millions of Instagram flatlays.

It's brilliant for students to keep notes and stay organized. For work, it keeps track of multiple streams of tasks whether that's upcoming meetings and daily tasks to quarterly goals.



Any blank notebook will do to start, though there's a slew of bullet journals available with templates and supplies like washi tape and markers made for BuJos. A bullet journal can be minimal and practical or wildly colorful and creative – or anywhere in between.

Here's the official overview on bullet journaling.

How to use a bullet journal

It's used to plan and reflect, and has its own set of shorthand symbols to indicate notes, events and tasks, and symbols for tasks that have either been completed, scheduled, moved or marked irrelevant. Complete sentences are traded in for short phrases, keywords and notations that are easily understood by the owner.

Whether you use it as a fertility tracker or a gratitude log, a bullet journal keeps track of whatever's important in your life.

Carroll's method typically includes a log of future and long-term goals, along with a monthly log and a more detailed daily log that's basically a to-do list. Tasks get a bullet point, while priorities get an asterisk and completed tasks get an x.

Whether you stick to Carroll's method or concoct your own shorthand, a bullet journal is great to track habits, reflect on what's working and plan for the future.

8. Plan your day

A journal can help you plan your day, whether that's a detailed to-do list or reflections on upcoming challenges.

Writing down your goals makes you more likely to achieve them and helps you identify your priorities.

What's getting in the way, and what are you making good progress with?

Here's how to gain perspective on your day:

- write down 3 goals that you're working toward
- list 3 things you're letting go of
- name 3 things you're grateful for

This short exercise gives you focus on your priorities, infuses some positivity into your day and releases any negative emotions or anxieties.



This journaling technique can help you divide lofty goals into smaller tasks. You can also reflect back on the previous day and identify what went well and what you'd do better.

Ask yourself if you're feeling stressed during your day or calm and inspired? Are you taking too much on, or spending too much time on tasks that don't make much impact?

9. Reflection journal

A reflection journal can be a safe place to look back on your day. It can help you process complex events and analyse why things happened a certain way.

You can look back on previous entries and see how you've grown. Or write about your relationships and how communication can be improved. This journaling technique lets you track your goals or any healthy habits you're trying to establish. Being honest with yourself can lead to powerful insights that move you towards change.

To reflect back on events, describe the event in detail then reflect and interpret what happened. Conclude with any learning experiences that can be applied in the future.

Lists are a great way for quicker reflection: you can list the best and worst things that happened, or what you'll improve tomorrow. Writing out a to-do list before bed is a great way to declutter your mind and is proven to help you sleep better.

There are dozens of beautiful ready-made journals full of prompts. Here's a couple of my favorites:

The Daily Stoic Journal is packed with quotes from the great Stoics and includes a daily question to focus on. It's a great tool to manage bad habits like procrastination or anger, and an inspiring source for a more courageous life.

Instant Happy Journal is a compact and colorful journal with daily prompts and motivational quotes.

Or start your own reflection journal with these prompts:

- **things you're grateful for**
- **things that make you smile**
- **the happiest moments in your life**
- **people who've had a big positive impact on your life**
- **regrets and what you'd do differently**

10. Reading journal

A reading journal helps you get more from the books, articles or blog posts you read.



Just writing something down makes you more likely to remember it.

And a reading journal can be your record of inspiring quotes, insights and more technical info that you come across in your reading.

You can track your reading if you hope to read more books, or record quotes, tips, or beautiful passages from literary novels. Or use it for lists of books you'd like to read, books to re-read, books to buy as gifts, etc.

If you're studying a subject, like art history, a reading journal can be a great place to record your observations.

But don't just jot down quotes and notes. Interact with the information – respond, reflect and analyse – and this will help you learn better.

11. One line a day journaling

Writing just a single line a day helps preserve your memory, makes you a wittier writer and lets you notice patterns. It's especially sweet for parents to track their children's growth and remember everyday moments in those baby years when time flies so quickly.

Don't try to capture everything. Just capture the key moments and record even the mundane. What seems ordinary now will soon be a memory you'll love to reminisce about.

One line a day journaling can help you get into the habit of writing everyday. It's not too overwhelming to jot down a sentence, so you'll be more likely to keep at it.

"The primary advantage of journaling one sentence each day is that it makes journaling fun," writes James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*, on the power of writing a single sentence daily. "It's easy to do. It's easy to feel successful. And if you feel good each time you finish journaling, then you'll keep coming back to it ... A habit does not have to be impressive for it to be useful."

Prompts for one line a day journaling:

- **What's the best thing that happened to you today?**
- **What are you thankful for today?**
- **What lesson did you learn today?**
- **Name your biggest task/greatest challenge for tomorrow**

One Line A Day: A Five-Year Memory Book is an accessible intro to journaling that also lets you store memories from the past 5 years. There are five spaces for each day of



the year, and if you write for years you can also see what you wrote on that same day in previous years.

12. Gratitude journal

From fighting depression to improving relationships and boosting your self-confidence, there are numerous benefits to writing down everything you're thankful for.

This is one of the most powerful journaling techniques with life-changing possibilities that's proven in studies to make you a happier and more productive person. It also lowers your stress and calms you at night.

A gratitude journal reminds us to stop always striving for more and just appreciate the present.

But don't rush through it. Write in detail about what you're thankful for and let yourself feel those emotions and experience the sensation. Diving deep into a few things you're grateful for is more beneficial than listing off all the blessings you can think of.

Write in depth about the people (past and present) that you're grateful to have in your life.

Don't make your gratitude journal another thing to tick off your to-do list. Savour the experience and take your time. Studies suggest that writing a gratitude journal once or twice a week makes a bigger impact than hurried everyday journaling.

Lifestyle guru Tim Ferriss lists these gratefulness prompts:

- **write about an old relationship that helped a lot**
- **an opportunity you have today**
- **something good/great that happened yesterday**
- **something simple near you**

13. Worst case scenario journaling

Mark Twain once said: "I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened."

We all have fears, worries and anxieties that seldom transpire in real life. Although that doesn't stop us from anxiously replaying the worst-case scenarios in our heads.

Journaling about the worst-case scenario helps you come to grips with your fears and realize that many anxieties are irrational.

Write about the worst that could happen, how likely that scenario actually is, and how you'd react and handle that worst-case scenario. This practice will reassure you that things aren't as bad as you imagine.



You can also look back on previous entries and compare your worst fears to what actually happened. How often do your fears actually come true? As you keep writing, you'll understand the consequences aren't as bad as you imagine even if some of your worst imaginings come true.

Worst case scenario journaling also helps you identify sabotaging thought patterns like catastrophic thinking (ruminating about irrational worst-case outcomes) or overgeneralization ("*things never work out for me*") Writing about your strengths and coping strategies for your worst fears empowers you to face them.

Ask yourself what you're worried about. Then write down your fears. Follow that up with the question: *If that happens then what?* Keep asking yourself that question until your anxieties allay.

Or try the “fear-setting” method from this powerful TED Talk on defining and conquering your fears:

- Define your fear
- list how you can prevent the worst-case scenario
- list ways you can repair any damage
- name the benefits of an attempt or partial success
- describe the cost of your inaction.

14. Nature journaling

Create a nature journal to raise your awareness of the nature around you – and the seasonal changes that are often easy to overlook.

A nature journal is an incredible tool that teaches you to be more observant, to slow down and notice all of nature's breathtaking details.

Even if you live in a big city, you'll be surprised how many natural phenomena – from birds to changing colors on the leaves – you can observe when you take notice.

Use your nature journal for some simple sketches of the leaves, animals and trees around you. Make some notes about what you observe, and how the seasons change over time. Include personal reflections on how the surrounding landscape makes you feel – and how you interact with it.

If you're in the city, explore your local parks and nature reserves. Take along your journal to make quick sketches and study the flora and fauna native to your area.

With all these powerful journaling techniques, you won't likely return to your teenage journaling in quite the same way again.



Reflective Journal Exercise

*Complete journal exercise after reading 14 Life-Changing Journaling Techniques.
Choose one of the journaling techniques described in the article to practice journaling. A
journal prompt is provided but not required to use.*

What things make you smile?

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Self-Care Curriculum

Week 4: The Gratitude List

BY KATHERINE HURST

Call me unoriginal, but gratitude is probably my most common form of journaling, because it's so damn easy, yet so effective.

1. Turn to a clean page in your journal or notebook.
2. Write the date & day at the top of the page (so you'll be able to remember where you were when you made it.)
3. Make a list of everything you're grateful for, in bullet points. They can be as silly, small or seemingly insignificant as you like. They could be things that happened that day – or just things going well in your life right now ...anything that made you feel good.
4. Repeat as often as you can.
5. Read back old lists whenever you're feeling low.

Though it may seem nonsensical to show gratitude for one's situation when you're currently feeling bad, it can actually have a transformative effect. There are actually so many things to be grateful for in life – from the simple things like clean water, food and somewhere to live; to the grander things like a car, friends that love us, our favorite clothes and maybe a good job that allows us to spend money on the things we enjoy.

You might be in a dire situation where something big in your life has gone disastrously wrong...and yet there'll still be something to be grateful for. If you're reeling from the death of a loved one, for example, you might be grateful for having friends and family there to support you. Or if your relationship just ended, you might feel grateful for getting the chance to know that person, and for the opportunity to embark on a new chapter in your life (as scary as it might seem).

Of course, it doesn't need something big to go wrong for us to feel a bit down, and it's why making a gratitude list daily or at least weekly, can be so helpful. If you're going through a difficult time, it can really help to know that there are still plenty of other reasons to be happy.

But even if you're feeling pretty upbeat and nothing is wrong, making a gratitude list can act as 'momentum' that you build upon, making it harder for negative events to drag you down. Plus, it provides great material to read back later on, when you do need a lift.



Gratitude List

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Self-Care Curriculum

Week 5: Five Ways to Improve Your Self-Care

Often, we can get into the habit of believing that if others are taken care of than we are too. This mind set can be harmful for our wellbeing and those around us. In order to ensure a balanced lifestyle taking care of oneself is essential. The question some may be asking is what is self-care? and what can I do? Raphaelailia Micheal describes self-care as “[...] any activity we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health”. Some areas of importance with regard to your self-care are: Eating, Sleeping, Hydrate, Moving, Loving.

Eating – We All eat, but do we eat well? Sometimes food is the last thing on our mind, but it is the fuel that drives us since we are what we eat. There is no prescribed diet that will suit everyone, but it is likely that all of us can benefit from proper portions and adding in a few more fruits and veggies. Whatever choice we make affect our physical well-being and will have an impact on our daily performance.

Love – Often when we hear the term “love” we think of romantic relationships, but the basic idea of love is simply to care for one another. In the larger sense, love is maintaining and establishing supportive relationships and cultivating new ones. It is connecting with friends; it is caring for a child; it is showing kindness to a stranger; it is bonding with an animal. Love is about building community. Throughout our day, we have opportunities to make simple connections and all of those positive connection are beneficial to our well-being.

Play – It’s important for all of us. We all can benefit from taking a break to do something fun or relaxing or energizing. The version of play we choose will be different for each of us. Whether it be hiking, yoga, gardening or just kicking the ball around with the kids, get out and have fun. Let’s start thinking about play as a priority, even if it’s only a few minutes a day, do something that makes you feel good.

Work – Each day we have a job to do; it could be work, school, a volunteer activity or helping a neighbor. Any type of work can add to our lives. Being industrious can be satisfying and even invigorating. Work can give us a sense of purpose and remind us that we all matter. Our active participation can make a difference in our professional and personal lives.

Sleeping – Even the best motors, need a break. Take time to get enough rest for you to function well. We can give you guidelines for how many hours of sleep you should get a night, but if you’re not feeling your best it may help to try turning in a little earlier. If you have trouble sleeping, remember that some restful quiet time or meditation can also be a helpful way to refuel.

While these may seem difficult to achieve they are not impossible. Even focusing on one or two areas can improve your health and enable one to better live a fulfilled life. You can start with what’s your favorite forms of self-care right now? **By WCCS CCP Team**





My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
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| Wednesday | | | |
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| Thursday | | | |
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Financial Literacy Curriculum

Week 1: Introduction to Finances

Financial literacy may seem like a complicated idea, but really all it means is a set of skills and knowledge that allows you to make the best decisions with all of your money. Just like learning how to read, we can learn how to manage our money. What is your history with money? What comes to mind when you think about it?

How have you learned about money? Family? Classes? Personal Experience?

What is your biggest challenge when it comes to money?

Managing money is not something that comes naturally to most people. It's a skill that we need to learn. Otherwise, we can end up wondering where all our money went. Do you have a plan for your money? Why or why not?

One important thing about managing money is to pay our bills on time. Why do you think this is important?

There are two basic things you can do with money: spend it or save it. We need to spend money to take care of our needs, like food, shelter, transportation, etc. Why do you think saving money could be important?

Is saving money easy or difficult for you? Why?



One of the things that is difficult for most people is to avoid “impulse buys” on items that we don’t need but we really want. It is helpful to understand the difference between a need and a want. What are some things that you “need” to buy?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are some things that you “want” to buy?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Why do we buy things that we don’t need?

Advertisers spend billions of dollars working to convince us to buy things that we don’t need. Most of our “impulse” buys are less than \$20 each but they add up to an average of \$250 per month. Have you ever bought something and regretted it later? What could you do with \$250 per month if you didn’t spend it impulsively?

Next week we’ll look at how to plan our spending.



Financial Literacy Curriculum

Week 2: Budgeting

Probably the most important tool in managing money is to make and keep a budget. What comes to mind when you hear the word “budget”?

A budget can seem like a lot of work, but it can be very basic. It is just a list of things that you buy and a list of the money you have available to buy them. Have you ever used a budget? If so, how did it work for you? If not, why not?

What are some monthly expenses that should be included in your budget?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Some expenses don’t happen every month, but they still need to be included. What are some examples of these types of expenses?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Here is an example of a simple budget:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Rent | \$1100 |
| Food | \$975 |
| Gas | \$100 |
| Student Loans | \$180 |
| Savings | \$150 |
| Car Insurance | \$150 |
| Phone | \$80 |
| Dog Food | \$45 |
| YouTube | \$20 |
| Car Registration | \$15 |
| Haircut | \$35 (6x per year) 20 |
| Recreation/Activities | \$100 |
| Oil Changes | \$15 |

Total: \$2950/mo.



Let's make a simple budget for your expenses:

| Expense | Amount |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |
| 4. _____ | _____ |
| 5. _____ | _____ |
| 6. _____ | _____ |
| 7. _____ | _____ |
| 8. _____ | _____ |
| 9. _____ | _____ |
| 10. _____ | _____ |
| 11. _____ | _____ |
| 12. _____ | _____ |
| 13. _____ | _____ |
| 14. _____ | _____ |
| 15. _____ | _____ |
| | Total: _____ |

Knowing what you have to spend is very important. Notice that we include a line for recreation and activities to make sure to account for that money. What are some of the things you like to do for fun?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

It's important to take time to do fun things. Since some activities are expensive, it's good to think of fun activities that are free or don't cost a lot of money. What are some things you like to do that are free or low cost?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



The other important part of budgeting is income. You can't spend money that you don't have, so you need to make sure you are bringing in enough money to cover all of the expenses you listed. What are some sources of income?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What can you do if you don't have enough money to cover your expenses?

Can you think of some other ways to increase your income?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

A budget gives us a picture of what we need to spend (expenses), what money we have (income) and if there is a difference between these two amounts. What questions do you have about creating a budget, expenses or income?



Financial Literacy Curriculum

Week 3: Debt Management

Debt is a subject that can bring up some bad thoughts or emotions. What comes to mind when you hear the word “debt”?

Almost everyone has some debt and most people have a lot of it. The average debt per person in America, not including mortgage debt, is over \$16,000. What are some sources of debt?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

It is sometimes necessary to borrow money for certain things, such as a car, furniture, a computer or other expensive items. Most people, however, get into debt by buying things on a credit card instead of paying cash. Why do you think people often use credit cards rather than paying cash?

Do you think using credit cards is a good idea or not? Why do you think that?

The average interest rate on credit cards is over 15%. That means you pay up to 15% more every year for everything you buy, if you don't pay off the balance each month. That can add up to thousands of dollars more in a year than if you paid cash for the same things. What would you buy at the end of the year, if you had an extra \$1000?



Many people also take out loans from “payday lenders.” Interest on these are often much higher than credit cards, so you end up paying even more. Do you know anyone who has ever had difficulty paying their credit card or payday loan balances? If so, what happened?

What are some ways you can avoid going into debt with credit cards or loans?

1.

2.

3.

It’s best to avoid going into debt if possible. If you do have debt, however, there are some resources to help:

1. Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace: <https://www.daveramsey.com/>
2. Suze Orman: <https://www.suzeorman.com/>
3. National Foundation for Credit Counseling: <https://www.nfcc.org/>
4. FTC: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0150-coping-debt>

What questions do you have about debt management?

Remember: Paying with cash or debit is the best way to avoid going into debt.



Financial Literacy Curriculum

Week 4: Saving

This week, we will talk about saving money, including why it's important and some ideas about how to save. What are your thoughts about saving money?

What are some things that make it difficult to save money?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

As we talked about in a previous lesson, it is important to save money to pay for our future needs. What are some things for which people save money?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

It is a good idea to save as much each month as possible. Saving even a little adds up. Many people spend at least \$3 per day buying coffee, soda and/or snacks. Can you guess how much that would be in 10 years? \$_____

\$3 per day x 365 days per year x 10 years = \$10,950! That coffee or soda and bag of chips could buy you a car instead.

Most people save what's left at the end of the month. A better idea is to save a fixed amount every month before spending any money. Having a budget helps us to know what we need to spend, and the rest should go into savings.

In addition to not spending money on coffee or snacks, what are some other ways you can save money on your expenses?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



5. _____

Here are some other ideas:

1. Cut down on groceries
2. Cancel automatic subscriptions like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, etc.
3. Buy generic products instead of name brand
4. Cut ties with cable and save up to over \$1,200 a year!
5. Spend extra or unexpected income wisely, like a tax refund.
6. Reduce energy costs by taking shorter showers, fixing leaky pipes, washing clothes in cold water, and installing LED light bulbs.
7. Unsubscribe from emails: Advertisers use these to get you to spend money.
8. Check your insurance rates to make sure you're getting the best rate.
9. Pack lunch and make meals at home: The average household spends approximately \$288 per month on food outside of the home.
10. Lower your cell bill by getting rid of extra features.
11. Try a spending freeze for a week to avoid unnecessary purchases.

(<https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/the-secret-to-saving-money>)

Which of these ideas can you do this week?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What other questions do you have about saving money?



Financial Literacy Curriculum

Week 5: Opening Accounts Glossary of Terms

Debt:

Income:

Interest Rates:

Credit vs. Debit:

Pay-Day Lenders:

Revolving Loans/Debt:

Installment Loans/Debt:

Expenses:

FICO Score:

Compound vs Simple Interest:

Asset: Debt Management:

Short Term vs Long Term Loans:

Things credit is used for:

Car Loans

Rental Applications

Increased Credit Limits

Cell Phones

Utilities

Employment

Credit Cards

Car Insurance

Bank Accounts

Overdraft Protection

PHASE 3



PHASE OBJECTIVE:

DEVELOP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This phase of the program is where the Participant and Peer Support Specialist focus on skills for stabilizing housing.



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
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| Friday | | | |
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| Saturday | | | |
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| | | | |
| Sunday | | | |
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Being a Successful Tenant

Week 1: First Impressions

Welcome to our class on being a successful tenant and developing a good relationship with your landlord. Developing a good record as a tenant will help you now and, in the future, when you are looking for other places to rent.

Landlords have a lot of choices in who they rent to, so it's important to do what you can to make a good impression. They are trusting you with a very expensive piece of property, so they want to make sure you will take care of it.

Have you ever met someone who made a bad first impression? What did they do that gave you that impression? How did you feel after meeting them?

When you think about making a good first impression, what comes to mind?

If you owned a rental property, what qualities would you look for in a tenant?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Here are some things that landlords see as “red flags” when looking at potential tenants for their property:

1. Been Evicted
2. Show up drunk/high
3. Domestic Violence History
4. Picky/Complaining
5. Asking for Rent Exchange
6. Felony History
7. Facial Tattoos



8. Multiple Pets
9. Always Negotiating
10. Unreported/Unexplained Income
11. Wanting to Move in ASAP
12. Faking or Holding Previous Landlord's Info
13. Shows Up Late for Appointments
14. Delaying Payment of Deposit
15. Complains About Previous Landlord
16. Social Media Accounts

We need to avoid as many of these as possible. If some apply, then we need to be honest about them and help the landlord see that we are working to overcome the challenges of our past. What are some ways we can do that?

Here are some things that landlords look for in a tenant:

1. Speaks on the Phone (instead of email or text)
2. Clear Background
3. Good Credit Check
4. Good References
5. Stable Employment/Income verifiable
6. Pays On-time
7. Treats Property with Respect/Keep it Clean
8. Responsible
9. Provide Bank Statements
10. Law-Abiding
11. Plan to Stay for a Long Time (At least 1 year)
12. Clean Car
13. Be Honest
14. Communicate Effectively

Which of these apply to you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



There are several questions that a potential landlord will ask you when you are looking to rent from them:

1. Why are You Moving?
2. Who Will be Living on the Property?
3. How Long Will You Stay?
4. What Pets Do You Have?
5. Where Do You Work?
6. When are You Looking to Move?
7. Where are You Living Now?
8. Rental History for Previous 5 to 7 Years
9. How Many and Type of Vehicles
10. Have You Ever Broken a Rental Agreement?
11. Any Sex Offender Crimes/On the Sex Registry?
12. Have You Ever Used or been Convicted of Using Controlled Substances?

Having the answer to these questions prepared will help you feel more confident and leave a great impression.



Being a Successful Tenant

Week 2: Rental Application Process

Welcome to Week 2 where we will talk about how to be prepared in order to provide all the necessary information when we are applying for a rental. There is some information that all landlords want to know, so being prepared with that will help make our application process easier.

Is there some information that you don't have or are afraid to give to a landlord? If so, what?

What are some ideas of how you can provide this information in a way that will help you get the rental?

One way to help be prepared, is to bring a sample rental application that you have already filled out. That way you will have most of the information that you will need. So, let's fill out this application together for you to have in the future.

RENTAL/LEASE APPLICATION

Date of Application: _____

Property Address: _____ Unit No.: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Applicant

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Social Security Number _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____



Driver's License No. _____ Driver's License State of Issue _____

Applicant

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Social Security Number _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Driver's License No. _____ Driver's License State of Issue _____

Residence History

Provide at least _____ years of history.

Current Address _____ Unit No. _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Dates of Residence: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____ Monthly Rent
\$ _____

Reason For Moving _____

Check one: ☐ Own ☐ Rent ☐ Other (specify) _____

If Rent, Name of Landlord _____ Landlord Phone No. _____

Previous Address _____ Unit No. _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Dates of Residence: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____ Monthly Rent \$ _____

Reason For Moving _____

Check one: ☐ Own ☐ Rent ☐ Other (specify) _____

If Rent, Name of Landlord _____ Landlord Phone No. _____

Have you ever been evicted? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide explanation _____

Have you ever broken a lease? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No



If yes, provide explanation _____

Employment / Financial

Provide at least _____ years of history.

Current Employer _____ Position/Title _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Name of Supervisor _____ Phone Number _____

Dates of Employment: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____

Monthly Income \$ _____

Previous Employer _____ Position/Title _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Name of Supervisor _____ Phone Number _____

Dates of Employment: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____

Monthly Income \$ _____

Previous Employer _____ Position/Title _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Name of Supervisor _____ Phone Number _____

Dates of Employment: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____

Monthly Income \$ _____

Other Sources of Income

(Provide any other sources of income that you want the Landlord to consider.)

Source of Income _____ Amount of Income \$ _____

Source of Income _____ Amount of Income \$ _____

Source of Income _____ Amount of Income \$ _____

Financial Accounts

(Examples include Savings Account, Checking Account, Credit Account)

Name _____ Account Type _____

Account Number _____



Name _____ Account Type _____

Account Number _____

Name _____ Account Type _____

Account Number _____

Name _____ Account Type _____

Account Number _____

Name _____ Account Type _____

Account Number _____

List All Other Occupants at the Property

Name _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Vehicles to be Parked at Property

Vehicle Make _____ Model _____ Year _____

Color _____ License Plate Number _____ State _____

Vehicle Make _____ Model _____ Year _____

Color _____ License Plate Number _____ State _____

Pets

Do you have any pets? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, Type _____ Breed _____ Weight _____

Smoking

Do any of the occupants' smoke? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Other

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide explanation _____



Have you ever declared bankruptcy? (Check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide explanation _____

Emergency Contact

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Relationship _____ Phone Number _____

Personal References

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Relationship _____ Phone Number _____

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Relationship _____ Phone Number _____

It is against the law to discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions or privileges or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection with such dwelling, because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin. State and local laws may protect additional classes from housing discrimination.

Applicant authorizes the verification of all statements and information provided in this application including rental history, current and previous employment and income, bank and credit account details and any other relevant information necessary for the Landlord to evaluate this application. If Applicant has provided any false or incomplete information in this application, Landlord may reject this application and/or terminate the lease agreement.

Application Fee (Check one)

☐ There is NO application fee.

☐ Applicant will pay a non-refundable application fee in the amount of \$_____ for Landlord's review and verification of the statements and information contained in this application.

Applicant certifies that all statements provided in this Lease Application are true, correct and complete.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Landlord Signature _____ Date _____



Being a Successful Tenant

Week 3: Lease Agreement and Good Relations

This week, we will talk about other ways to improve your chances to get a rental and the process of signing a lease. Also, we'll talk about how to keep a good relationship with the landlord during your time in the rental.

In addition to being prepared to answer all of these questions, there are several ways that you can make yourself stand out and impress a potential landlord when you meet them:

1. Dress Appropriately
2. Be on Time
3. Offer to Take Off Your Shoes
4. Bring Necessary Documents
 - a. Credit Report
 - b. Resume
 - c. References
5. Make a Cover Letter for the Application
 - a. Include Explanations for Lapses in Work History or Poor Credit
6. Create a Short Biography of Yourself

Which of these will be the easiest for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of these seem more difficult?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Once the landlord offers you the place to rent, they will prepare the lease or rental agreement for you to sign.

If you've signed a lease before, were there things that you had trouble with? If so, what?
If you've never signed a lease, what questions do you have about it?



Before you sign a lease, it is very important that you read through all of it. You want to make sure that you understand and agree to everything, because you will be responsible for all of it.

If there are any parts that you don't understand ASK QUESTIONS! It's better to be sure and it will show the landlord that you are responsible.

Once you've signed the lease and are ready to move in, it is very important that you do a walkthrough with the landlord before you get the keys. Why do you think this is important?

It is a good idea to take pictures on your phone of all the rooms before you move in. That way you have a record of what it looks like in case there are any questions when you are ready to move out.

Also, make a list of any damage and have it noted in the lease, so you aren't responsible for it when you move out. These things can be difficult to do, but they will protect you from having to pay for damage that existed before you moved in.

Other thoughts or questions about the lease process?

Once you're in the rental, you want to make sure to keep a good relationship with the landlord. It will help keep you in your home now and ensure that they will be a good reference for you when you look for your next place to live, so it's important to do everything you can to build that relationship.

Have you had issues with previous landlords? If so, what? If not, what things do you think could become an issue with a landlord?

There are several things you can do to build and maintain a good relationship with the landlord, which will make your life easier:

1. Pay rent on time, or a few days early if possible
2. Keep the property clean on the inside and outside
3. Be friendly with the neighbors



4. Notify the landlord of any maintenance issues as soon as possible
5. Cooperate with reasonable requests, such as making upgrades or semi-annual property inspections

What other things can you think of that will help keep a good relationship with your landlord?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Doing everything you can do to be a successful tenant will make it easier for you while you're there and in the future!

RENTAL AGREEMENT AND/OR LEASE

1. This Rental Agreement and/or Lease shall evidence the complete terms and conditions under which the parties whose signatures appear below have agreed. Landlord/Lessor/Agent shall be referred to as "OWNER" and Tenant(s)/Lessee(s) shall be referred to as "RESIDENT." As consideration for this agreement, OWNER agrees to rent/lease to RESIDENT and RESIDENT agrees to rent/lease from OWNER for use SOLELY AS A PRIVATE RESIDENCE, the premises listed above. RESIDENT acknowledges that any false statements found in RESIDENT'S application shall constitute a non-curable breach of this agreement. RESIDENT hereby agrees to complete an updated application, including a census as to the occupants in the unit upon seven days request of OWNER.

2. PAYMENTS: Rent and/or other charges are to be paid at the office or apartment of the manager of the building or at such other place designated in writing by OWNER. For the safety of the manager, all payments are to be made by check or money order and no cash shall be acceptable. OWNER acknowledges receipt of the First month's rent of: \$_____, and a Security Deposit of \$_____, for a total payment of \$_____. All payments are to be made payable to: _____ and delivered to: _____ Telephone Number _____ who is usually available on the following days: _____ during the following hours: _____.

3. LATE CHARGE/RETURNED CHECKS: Resident acknowledges that Owner will incur certain administrative costs in connection with a late Rental payment, and that the amount of such administrative costs would be extremely difficult or impractical to ascertain. Therefore, Parties agree that if Resident fails to pay the rent in full by the end of the _____ day after it is due,



Resident shall pay a late charge of \$ _____ per day and the parties agree that that amount is a reasonable amount for such administrative costs. Resident further agrees that such administrative costs are deemed additional rent. If Owner elects to accept rent after the tenth day after it is due, payment in a form other than by personal check may be required. Owner does not waive the right to insist on payment of rent in full on the day it is due. In the event Resident's check is dishonored by the bank for any reason, Resident shall pay a returned check charge of \$25 as additional rent for the first returned check and \$35 for each returned check thereafter. The same late charge stated above will be imposed as additional rent if the returned check causes the rent to be late. Owner may require future payments to be in a form other than a personal check in the event of a returned check. A fee of \$50.00 will be incurred each time the OWNER is required to serve a 3-Day Notice to Pay the Rent due to the Resident's failure to pay rent on the day rent is due.

4. SECURITY DEPOSITS: The Security Deposit shall not exceed two times the monthly rent for unfurnished apartments or three times the monthly rent for furnished apartments. The total of the above deposits shall secure compliance with the terms and conditions of this agreement and shall be refunded to RESIDENT within 21 days after the premises have been completely vacated less any amount necessary to pay OWNER: a) any unpaid rent, b) cleaning costs, c) key replacement costs, d) costs for repair of damages to apartment and/or common areas above ordinary wear and tear, and e) any other amount legally allowable under the terms of this agreement. A written accounting of said charges shall be presented to RESIDENT within 21 days of move-out. If deposits do not cover such costs and damages, the RESIDENT shall immediately pay said additional costs for damages to OWNER. During the term of tenancy, RESIDENT agrees to increase the deposit upon 30 days written notice by an amount equal to any future increases in rent and/or an amount necessary to cover the cost of rectifying any damage or expense for which RESIDENT is responsible. Security deposit is not to be used as last month's rent.

5. UTILITIES: RESIDENT agrees to pay for all utilities and/or services based upon occupancy of the premises except _____. Resident agrees to convert those utilities to RESIDENT'S name immediately upon move-in.

6. OCCUPANTS: Guest(s) staying over 14 days cumulative or longer during any 12-month period, without the OWNER'S written consent, shall be considered a breach of this agreement. ONLY the following listed individuals and/or animals, AND NO OTHERS shall occupy the subject apartment for more than 14 days unless the expressed written consent of OWNER is obtained in advance, (the 14 day period may be extended by local Rent Control Laws):

_____. RESIDENT shall pay additional rent at the rate of \$100.00 per month or 25% (or the amount allowed under rent control) of the current monthly rent; whichever amount is greater, for the period of time that each additional guest in excess of the above named shall occupy the premises. RESIDENT shall pay the same additional monthly rent for each additional animal in excess of the above-named animal(s), which shall occupy the premises. Acceptance of additional rent or approval of a guest shall not waive any requirement of this agreement or convert the status of any "guest" into a RESIDENT.



7. PETS AND FURNISHINGS: Furnishings - No liquid-filled furniture of any kind may be kept on the premises. If the structure was built in 1973 or later RESIDENT may possess a waterbed if he maintains waterbed insurance valued at \$100,000.00 or more. RESIDENT must furnish OWNER with proof of said insurance. RESIDENT must also comply with Civil Code Section 1940.5. Resident shall not keep on premises a receptacle containing more than ten gallons of liquid, highly combustible materials or other items which may cause a hazard or affect insurance rates such as, musical instruments or other item(s) of unusual weight or dimension. RESIDENT also agrees to carry insurance deemed appropriate by OWNER to cover possible losses caused by using said items. Pets – No animal, fowl, fish, reptile, and/or pet of any kind shall be kept on or about the premises, for any amount of time, without obtaining the prior written consent and meeting the requirements of the OWNER. Said consent, if granted, shall be revocable at OWNER'S option upon giving a 30-day written notice. In the event laws are passed or permission is granted to have any item prohibited by this agreement or if for any reason such item exists on the premises, there shall be minimum additional rent of \$25.00 a month for each such item if another amount is not stated in this agreement. In the event laws are passed or permission is granted to have a pet and/or animal of any kind, an additional deposit in the amount of \$_____ shall be required along with the signing of OWNER'S "PET AGREEMENT."

Landlord/Lessor/Agent: _____

Tenant(s)/Lessee: _____

Tenant(s)/Lessee: _____

Address: _____ City: _____, State _____,

Zip _____

Monthly Rental Rate: \$ _____

This agreement shall commence on _____, and continue: (check one below) Rental Due Date: _____

A. Month- to-Month Agreement Security Deposit: \$ _____ B. Until

_____ at which time thereafter shall become a month to Late Charge: \$ _____ month tenancy upon written approval of the landlord. If Tenant should move from premises prior to the expiration date, he shall be liable for all the rent due until such time the apartment is occupied by a Landlord-approved resident and/or expiration of said time period, whichever is shorter. Resident's Initials _____

8. PARKING/STORAGE: When and if RESIDENT is assigned a parking space on OWNER'S property, the parking space shall be used exclusively for parking of passenger automobiles and/or those approved vehicles listed on RESIDENT'S "Application to Rent/Lease" or attached hereto. RESIDENT may not wash, repair, or paint in this parking space or at any other common areas on the premises. (RESIDENT may not assign, sublet, or allow RESIDENT'S guest(s) to use this or any other parking space.) RESIDENT is responsible for oil leaks and other vehicle discharges for which RESIDENT shall be charged for cleaning if deemed necessary by OWNER. Only vehicles that are operational may park in their assigned space.



9. **NOISE / ACTIVITY:** RESIDENT agrees not to cause or allow any noise or activity on the premises that might disturb the peace and quiet enjoyment of another RESIDENT. RESIDENT shall not violate any law or use the premises for the use, storage, possession, manufacturing or selling of illicit drugs. Said noise and/or activity shall be a breach of this Agreement.

10. **LOITERING AND PLAY:** Lounging, playing, or unnecessary loitering in the halls, on the front steps, or in the common areas in such a way as to interfere with the free use and enjoyment, passage or convenience of another RESIDENT is prohibited.

11. **DESTRUCTION OF PREMISES:** If the premises become totally or partially destroyed during the term of this Agreement so that RESIDENT'S use is seriously impaired, RESIDENT or OWNER may terminate this Agreement immediately upon three-day written notice to the other.

12. **CONDITION OF PREMISES:** RESIDENT acknowledges that he has examined the premises and that said premises, all furnishings, fixtures, furniture, plumbing, heating, electrical facilities, all items listed on the attached inventory sheet, if any, and/or all other items provided by OWNER are all clean, and in good satisfactory condition except as may be indicated elsewhere in this Agreement. RESIDENT agrees to keep the premises and all items in good order and condition and to immediately pay for costs to repair and/or replace any portion of the above damaged by RESIDENT, his guests and/or invitees, except as provided by law. At the termination of this Agreement, all of the above-enumerated items in this provision shall be returned to OWNER in clean and good condition except for reasonable wear and tear; the premises shall be free of all personal property and trash not belonging to OWNER. It is agreed that all dirt, holes, tears, burns, or stains of any size or amount in the carpets, drapes, walls, fixtures, and/or any other part of the premises, do not constitute reasonable wear and tear.

13. **MAINTENANCE AND ALTERATIONS:** RESIDENT shall not paint, wallpaper, alter or redecorate, change or install locks, install antenna or other equipment, screws, fastening devices, excessively large nails, or adhesive materials, place signs, displays, or other exhibits, on or in any portion of the premises without the written consent of the OWNER except as may be provided by law. RESIDENT shall deposit all garbage and waste in a clean and sanitary manner into the proper receptacles as provided and shall cooperate in keeping the garbage area neat and clean. RESIDENT shall be responsible for disposing of items of such size or nature as is not normally acceptable by the garbage hauler for the building. RESIDENT shall be responsible for keeping the garbage disposal clean of chicken bones, toothpicks, match sticks, celery, pits, grease, metal vegetable ties, and all other items that may tend to cause stoppage of the mechanism. RESIDENT shall pay for the cleaning out of any plumbing fixture that may need to be cleared of stoppage and for the expense or damage caused by the stopping of waste pipes or overflow from bathtubs, washbasins, toilets, or sinks, if caused by negligence or misuse by RESIDENT or their guests. Tenants must notify the landlord with a written notice stating what item(s) need service or repair and give the landlord a reasonable opportunity to service or repair that item(s). Should any charges be incurred by the City as a result of not notifying the Landlord in writing of such needed service or repairs, tenant shall be responsible for a minimum of \$201.50 for each occurrence plus any additional fines or inspection fees imposed by a



government office as a result of RESIDENT not notifying OWNER in writing of any deficiencies with the residence.

14. SMOKE/CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS: The rental unit is equipped with properly functioning smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Residents agree to test the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the rental unit monthly for proper function. Resident agrees not to interfere with their normal function or disable any detectors in any manner and agrees to immediately notify the OWNER of any malfunction.

15. HOUSE, POOL, AND LAUNDRY RULES: RESIDENT shall comply with all house, pool, pet, and laundry rules attached to this agreement which may be changed from time to time. These rules shall apply to, but are not limited to, noise, odors, disposal of trash, pets, parking, use of common areas, and storage of toys, bicycles, tools, and other personal items (including signs and laundry), which must be kept inside and out of view. OWNER shall not be liable to RESIDENT for any violation of such rules by any other RESIDENTS or persons. Rights of usage and maintenance of the laundry room and/or pool and pool area are gratuitous and subject to revocation by OWNER at any time.

16. CHANGE OF TERMS: The terms and conditions of this agreement are subject to future change by OWNER after the expiration of the agreed lease period upon 30 days written notice setting forth such change and delivered to RESIDENT. Any changes are subject to laws in existence at the time of the Notice of Change of Terms.

17. TERMINATION: After expiration of the leasing period, this agreement is automatically renewed from month-to-month upon written approval of the landlord but may be terminated by either party with a written 30-day notice of intention to terminate. If tenancy exceeds one year, the owner shall give a written 60-day notice to terminate. Where laws require "just cause," such just cause shall be so stated on said notice. The premises shall be considered vacated only after all areas including storage areas are clear of all RESIDENTS belongings, and keys and other property furnished for RESIDENT'S use are returned to OWNER. Should the RESIDENT hold over beyond the termination date or fail to vacate all possessions on or before the termination date, RESIDENT shall be liable for additional rent and damages, which may include damages due to OWNER'S loss of prospective new RENTERS.

18. POSSESSION: If OWNER is unable to deliver possession of the Apartment to RESIDENT on the agreed date, because of the loss or destruction of the Apartment or because of the failure of the prior RESIDENT to vacate or for any other reason, the RESIDENT and/or OWNER may immediately cancel and terminate this agreement upon written notice to the other party at their last known address, whereupon neither party shall have liability to the other, and any sums paid under this Agreement shall be refunded in full. If neither party cancels, this Agreement shall be prorated and begin on the date of actual possession.

19. INSURANCE: RESIDENT acknowledges that OWNER'S insurance does not cover personal property damage caused by fire, theft, rain, war, acts of God, acts of others, and/or any other causes, nor shall OWNER be held liable for such losses. RESIDENT HEREBY AGREES TO OBTAIN HIS OWN INSURANCE POLICY TO COVER ANY PERSONAL LOSSES. This does



not waive OWNER'S duty to prevent personal injury or property damage where that duty is imposed by law, however, RESIDENT'S failure to maintain said policy shall be a complete waiver of RESIDENT'S rights to seek damages against OWNER for above stated losses.

20. RIGHT OF ENTRY AND INSPECTION: OWNER or OWNER'S Agent by themselves or with others, may enter, inspect and/or repair the premises at any time in case of emergency or suspected abandonment. OWNER shall give 24 hours advance notice and may enter for the purpose of showing the premises during normal business hours to prospective renters, buyers, lenders, for smoke alarm inspections, and/or for normal inspection and repairs. OWNER is permitted to make all alterations, repairs and maintenance that in OWNER'S judgment is necessary to perform. In addition, OWNER has the right to enter pursuant to Civil Code Section 1954. If the work performed requires that RESIDENT temporarily vacate the unit, then RESIDENT shall vacate for this temporary period upon being served a 7-day notice by OWNER. RESIDENT agrees that in such an event RESIDENT will be solely compensated by a corresponding reduction in the rent for those many days that RESIDENT was temporarily displaced. No other compensation shall be due to the RESIDENT. If the work to be performed requires the cooperation of the RESIDENT to perform certain tasks, then RESIDENT shall perform those tasks upon receiving a 24-hour written notice. (EXAMPLE: removing food items from cabinets so that the unit may be sprayed for pests.) Upon 24 hours' notice, RESIDENT hereby agrees to lend OWNER the keys to the premises for the purpose of having a duplicate made for OWNER'S use.

21. ASSIGNMENT: RESIDENT agrees not to transfer, assign or sublet the premises or any part thereof and hereby appoints and authorizes the OWNER as his agent and/or by OWNER'S own authority to evict any person claiming possession by way of any alleged assignment or subletting.

22. PARTIAL INVALIDITY: Nothing contained in this Agreement shall be construed as waiving any of RESIDENT'S or OWNER'S rights under the law. If any part of this Agreement shall be in conflict with the law, that part shall be void to the extent that it is in conflict, but shall not invalidate this Agreement nor shall it affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of this Agreement. Resident's Initials _____

23. NO WAIVER: OWNER'S acceptance of rent with knowledge of any default by RESIDENT or waiver by OWNER of any breach of any term or condition of this Agreement shall not constitute a waiver of subsequent breaches. Failure to require compliance or to exercise any right shall not be construed as a waiver by OWNER of said term, condition, and/or right, and shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of this Agreement.

24. ATTORNEY'S FEES: If any legal action or proceeding be brought by either party to this agreement, the prevailing party shall be reimbursed for all reasonable attorneys' fees up to but not more than \$500 in addition to other damages awarded.

25. ABANDONMENT: California Civil Code Section 1951.2 shall govern Abandonment. If any rent has remained unpaid for 14 or more consecutive days and the OWNER has a reasonable belief of abandonment of the premises, OWNER shall give 18 days written notice to RESIDENT



at any place (including the rented premises) that OWNER has reason to believe RESIDENT may receive said notice of OWNER'S intention to declare the premises abandoned. RESIDENT'S failure to respond to said notice as required by law shall allow OWNER to reclaim the premises.

26. LIABILITY: The undersigned RESIDENTS are jointly and severally responsible and liable for all obligations under this agreement and shall indemnify OWNER for liability caused by the actions (omission or commission) of RESIDENTS, their guests and invitees.

27. NOTICE TO RESIDENT: Pursuant to Section 1785.26 of the California Civil Code, as required by law, you are hereby notified that a negative credit report reflecting on your credit history may be submitted to a credit reporting agency, if you fail to fulfill the terms of your credit obligation. RESIDENT expressly authorizes OWNER/AGENT (including a collection agency) to obtain Resident's consumer credit report, which OWNER/AGENT may use if attempting to collect past due rent payments, late fees, or other charges from Resident, both during the term of the Agreement and thereafter.

28. Lead Warning Statement: Housing built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint. Lead from paint, paint chips and dust pose health hazards if not managed properly. Lead exposure is especially harmful to young children and pregnant women. Before renting pre-1978 housing, OWNERS must disclose the presence of known lead-based paint hazards in the dwelling. RESIDENTS must also receive a federally approved pamphlet on lead poisoning prevention.

29. OWNER/AGENT DISCLOSURE (Initial) _____ OWNER'S initials (on left) mean OWNER has no knowledge of lead-based paint and/or lead-based hazards in or on the Premises and OWNER has no reports or records pertaining to lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in or on the Premises, and _____ RESIDENT'S initial (on left) indicate that RENTER has received a copy of a "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home", and that RENTER shall notify OWNER promptly in writing of any deteriorating and/or peeling paint.

30. MOLD: The OWNER/AGENT has inspected the unit prior to lease and knows of no damp or wet building materials and knows of no mold contamination. Residents agree to accept full responsibility and maintain the premises in a manner that prevents the occurrence of an infestation of mold in the premises. Residents also agree to immediately report to the OWNER/AGENT any evidence of water leaks, excessive moisture or lack of proper ventilation and evidence of mold that cannot be removed by cleaning.

31. ADDITIONS AND EXCEPTIONS:

32. NOTICES / REQUESTS FOR REPAIR: All notices to RESIDENT shall be served at RESIDENT'S apartment / house whether or not RESIDENT is present at the time of delivery and all repair requests or other notices to OWNER / AUTHORIZED PERSON MUST BE IN WRITING and shall be served by first class mailing to: Person Authorized to Manage Property: Name _____

Address: _____ Phone Number _____ Owner of



property or a person who is authorized to act for and on behalf of the owner for the purpose of service of process and for the purpose of receiving and receipting for all notices and demands.

Name_____ Address:_____ Phone
Number_____ Person or Entity Authorized to Receive Payment of Rent:
Name_____ Address _____ Phone
Number_____

33. INVENTORY: The Apartment contains the following items for use by Resident:

RESIDENT further acknowledges that the subject premises are furnished with the additional furnishings listed on the attached inventory and that said attached inventory is hereby made part of this agreement.

34. RESIDENT acknowledges receipt of the following, which shall be deemed a part of this Agreement: (Please check all that apply). Information About Bed Bugs Pest Control/Bed Bug Addendum Mold Addendum Apartment Keys Flood Disclosure Addendum Move-in/Move-out Inspection Smoke-Free Addendum Mailbox Keys Lead-Based Paint Disclosure Pet Agreement/Comfort Animal Addendum Parking Agreement Common Area Keys House Rules Satellite Dish Addendum Statewide Rent Control Addendum Garage Remotes Pool Rules Smoke Detector Addendum Other: Other:

35. ENTIRE AGREEMENT: This Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement between OWNER and RESIDENT. No oral agreements have been entered into, and all modifications or notices shall be in writing to be valid. The undersigned Residents are jointly and severally responsible for all obligations under this agreement and shall indemnify Owner for liability caused by the actions (omission or commission) of residents, their guests and invitees. Renter has relied on his own judgment in entering into this agreement. Resident's Initials

36. NOTICE: Pursuant to Section 290.46 of the Penal Code, information about specified registered sex offenders is made available to the public via an Internet Web site maintained by the Department of Justice at www.meganslaw.ca.gov. Depending on an offender's criminal history, this information will include either the address at which the offender resides or the community of residence and ZIP Code in which he or she resides.

37. RECEIPT OF AGREEMENT: The undersigned RESIDENT hereby certifies that he/she is fluent in the English language and has read and completely understands this Agreement and hereby acknowledges receipt of a copy of this "Rental Agreement and/or Lease." (_____) RESIDENT'S initials: OR Pursuant to California Civil Code 1632, which requires translation of specified contracts or agreements that are negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog or Korean: (_____) Resident's initials on left hereby acknowledge that this agreement was translated and interpreted in their foreign language of: _____.

Printed Name of Interpreter

Signature of Interpreter

Date



38. TEXT AND EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS: Check: OWNER/AGENT and RESIDENT agree that communication by text or email shall serve as legal notice in the following circumstances only: Repair requests, Owner's Notice to Enter and reminders of repairs being made, emergency repairs, and or warnings of suspicious activity on the premises.

OWNER/AGENT'S Text Number: _____

RESIDENT'S Text Number: _____

OWNER/AGENT'S Email Address: _____

RESIDENT'S Email Address: _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Owner/Agent _____ Date _____



Being a Successful Tenant

Week 4: Leaving on Good Terms

Hopefully you'll stay in your new place for a long time. Eventually, however, you will probably want to move to a different place. When that time comes, there are a few things you want to do to make the moving out process go well.

Take a look at the cartoon above. How would you feel if you were the landlord?

The security deposit is *not* for the last month's rent. It is to be used for any potential damage that is done, so you still have to pay the last month's rent.

When you decide to move, you will need to give at least 30 days' notice to the landlord. Why do you think you are required to give the landlord notice?

If you don't give 30 days' notice, you might have to give up part or all of your deposit. It will also help ensure that the landlord gives you a good reference, so be sure that you notify them in writing at least 30 days before you move out.

What are some other things that need to happen during the move out process?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Before you move out, make sure you leave enough time to clean the property *thoroughly*. Having pictures from when you moved in will help you to make sure you leave it in at least as good of condition as you received it.

Never leave any of your belongings, possessions, trash or anything else at the property when you move out.

After you have moved everything out and cleaned the property, go through each room and take pictures, just like you did when you moved in. This will give you a record to compare, in case there are any questions later.

Next, you will need to do a final walkthrough with the landlord.



Why do you think it's important to do a final walkthrough with the landlord?

At the end of the walkthrough, get a list from the landlord of anything that they plan to keep money from the deposit for along with the amount they intend to keep. Have them sign and date the list.

In California, here is the law about returning your security deposit:

“After a tenant moves out, a landlord has 21 days to:

1. Return the tenant's deposit in full, or
2. Mail or personally give to the tenant:
 - a. A written letter with why he/she is keeping all or part of the deposit,
 - b. An itemized list of each of the deductions,
 - c. Any remaining refund of the tenant's deposit, and
 - d. Copies of receipts for the charges/deductions, unless repairs cost less than \$126 or the tenant waived (gave up) his or her right to get the receipts. If the repairs cannot be finished within the 21-day period, the landlord can send the tenant a good faith estimate of the cost of repairs. Then within 14 days of the repairs being done, the landlord must send the tenant the receipts.”
(<https://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-eviction-security-deposits.htm?rdeLocaleAttr=en>)

What other questions do you have about being a tenant?

Congratulations on completing the course!



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
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Being a Successful Roommate

Week 1: Foundations

At first it might seem silly to even have a class on how to be a good roommate. Often people think that it's just common sense. Be nice and show respect and everything should work out, right? If only it were that easy...

The truth is, it's difficult to live with others, even when we like them or even love them. Even if we've known each other for a long time, been friends or shared lots of time and experiences together, sharing the same space often brings up some challenges that we don't always expect or know how to deal with.

That's why we put together this class. We want to provide a chance to think about how we can be the best roommates we can be and also to choose, when we can, others who will be good roommates for us.

To start, what are the first three things that come to mind when you think of a good roommate?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Who have you lived with in the past?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What were your experiences living with these individuals? What was good? What was challenging? What did you like? What would you change?

7 Habits of Happy Roommates: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNl1fWTIGwY>



Thoughts about these 7 tips? Do you agree? Disagree? What would you add?

What are some of the benefits of setting the rules early on?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do you think she recommends having a monthly roommate meeting?

Have you ever thought you knew someone, but then they did something that surprised you? How do you think that applies to being a roommate?

Why do you think she says to prepare for the possibility of parting ways with your roommate before you even move in with them? How could this help in living together?

Review the two articles provided. Which of these ideas are most important to you and why? Which ones do you think will be challenging for you to do?

What can you do to help make sure that you are able to follow these guidelines, so you can have a good roommate experience?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Any other thoughts? _____



Being a Successful Roommate

Week 2: Communication

What comes to mind for you when you hear the word “communication”?

What are some things that you are able to communicate easily?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are some things that are harder for you to communicate?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do you think some things are harder to communicate than others?

What are some of the different ways that we communicate with other people?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are some things you think are important for roommates to talk about?

1. _____
2. _____



3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Notes:

Thoughts about these tips? Do you agree? Disagree? What would you add?

Review “Living with a Roommate: A Practical Guide. Which of these do you think are most important to talk about to ensure you keep a good relationship with your roommate?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The bottom line is that there are a lot of things that go with being a roommate and they need to be discussed either before you move in or as they come up. Good communication will be a great help in creating a peaceful and enjoyable living environment for everyone. So take the time to talk about what’s important.



Being a Successful Roommate

Week 3: Making a Roommate Agreement

When sharing housing with someone, it is always a good idea to talk about the things that are important to you ahead of time. A Roommate Agreement is different from a lease.

A lease is between you and the Landlord and is a legal document. A Roommate Agreement is between you and those who you are sharing housing with. It is not a legal document, but it helps to set out the guidelines for how you will live together.

Have you ever had a Roommate Agreement before? Why or why not?

What are some benefits to having an agreement in place when you move in with someone?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are some things that you think would be good to include in the agreement?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Here is a list of some things that are good to put in the agreement:

- Are there quiet hours, and, when are they?
- Who cooks and who does the dishes?
- What temperature do we keep the thermostat on?
- Are you okay sharing some foods or not? For example: Butter, condiments, cooking oil, etc. If so, who buys them or replaces them?



- What do you do if someone forgets or loses their keys? Do you have a “hide-a-key”?
- Who is going to do what chores? Vacuuming, cleaning the bathroom, dusting, taking out the trash, etc.
- What are the consequences if someone doesn’t do their chores? Do they do more next week, do they pay more for utilities, etc.?
- What space does each person get in the kitchen cabinets, in the refrigerator, in the bathroom or in other shared space?
- Is it okay to have friends or significant others spend the night? If so, how often?

What thoughts come to mind when you read this list?

In addition to this list and to what you wrote earlier, are there other things that you think should be in the agreement?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



CALIFORNIA ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

On _____, 20____, [date of agreement] we, the tenants named below, signed a lease agreement for the residential property at the address listed below. By entering into this roommate agreement, we hope to ensure that rental responsibilities will be understood and shared by all roommates as described in this agreement.

This Roommate Agreement (the "agreement") is made by and between _____, _____, and _____, [the roommates] for the residential property at:

_____ [property address].

We are entering into this agreement in order to identify the rights and responsibilities of each tenant during the course of the lease agreement.

This agreement runs concurrently with the lease agreement for the residential property, which is effective from _____, 20__ to _____, 20__.

1. SECURITY DEPOSIT: The total security deposit amount that we paid the landlord for the residence as required by the lease agreement is \$_____ [security deposit in lease], which was paid to _____ ["the landlord" or roommate] on _____, 20__ [date of security deposit payment]. Individually, we each paid a portion of the security deposit as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| _____ | \$ _____ |
| [roommate's name] | [amount paid] |
| _____ | \$ _____ |
| [roommate's name] | [amount paid] |
| _____ | \$ _____ |
| [roommate's name] | [amount paid] |

Each roommate will receive his/her share of the security deposit if and when the landlord returns it after the lease term ends. Any deduction(s) from the deposit by the landlord shall be withheld from all of the roommates in proportion to the amount of deposit that he/she paid. However, any damage to the residence caused by a particular



roommate or roommates shall be charged only to the roommate(s) who caused the damage.

2. RENT: Under the terms of the lease agreement, the total rental amount due each month to the landlord is \$_____ [monthly rental amount due for each roommate].

Each roommate shall pay the following amount:

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| _____ | \$_____ |
| [tenant name] | [amount] |
| _____ | \$_____ |
| [tenant name] | [amount] |
| _____ | \$_____ |
| [tenant name] | [amount] |

Rent must be paid in the form of _____ (indicate form, e.g., “cash/check/cashier’s check) to _____ [ex: “landlord” or name of roommate]. The rent is due on the _____ (e.g., “first”) day of each month.

3. HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES: A single ledger (with item description, cost, and date of purchase) will be kept listing all household supplies purchased by each roommate. The supplies may include such things as paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning fluids, dish detergent, foil, plastic trash bags, scrub brushes, and any other goods needed for the home which will be shared by all roommates. The purchaser of household supplies will be entitled to reimbursement from the other roommates.

4. KITCHEN USE AND CLEAN-UP:

☐ - Food expenses will be shared equally by all roommates.

☐ - Food will be purchased by each roommate individually.



Food may not be borrowed without the purchaser's approval. Each roommate will have _____ ["separate" if available] storage space for his/her groceries.

Roommates may choose to share in meal preparation and clean up. Each roommate will clean up the kitchen after his/her use.

5. **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** All roommates agree to not use or borrow other roommates' personal item(s) without the approval of the roommate who owns the property. Any exception(s) to this rule will be clearly stated and agreed upon, and the roommate who owns the property retains the right to change his/her mind about sharing his/her property. Any personal property that is borrowed will be used respectfully and returned in the same condition. If any damage is done to a roommate's personal property, the roommate(s) responsible for causing the damage will compensate the roommate who owns the personal property for his/her loss.

6. **CLEANING:**

☐ - Each roommate agrees to share the responsibilities of cleaning and maintaining the residence, which may include dusting, vacuuming, emptying trash, mopping/sweeping floors, cleaning bathrooms, and other duties.

a.) Cleaning Schedule: (check one)

☐ - Each roommate agrees to the attached cleaning schedule (attach cleaning schedule). The schedule indicates when each roommate will complete his/her assigned cleaning and maintenance duties.

☐ - All roommates will work together ["at a designated time"] to clean/maintain the residence.

☐ - A house-cleaner will be hired by the roommates and the costs shall be shared equally.



7. GENERAL TERMS: (The following items have been known to occasionally cause conflict between roommates. If any of the following might become an issue, present a problem, write out any needed additional agreements and attach.)

☐ - Smoking/alcohol/drugs:

☐ - Parking:

☐ - Overnight guests:

☐ - Cleanup after parties/guests:

☐ - Music/Sound:

☐ - Behavior of guests:

☐ - Keys:

☐ - Shared areas (bathrooms):

☐ - Quiet hours for studying and sleeping:

8. GOVERNING LAW: This Agreement shall be governed under the laws in the State of California.

9. UTILITIES:

The following services have been arranged and paid for as follows:



| Item | Account in Name of | Amount of Deposit | Deposit Paid By | How Bill Shared | Name Roommates Responsible for payment |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| Gas | | | | | |
| Water | | | | | |
| Electricity | | | | | |
| Garbage | | | | | |
| Cable TV | | | | | |
| Internet | | | | | |

10. ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

This Agreement represents the complete and final understanding of the roommates' intent. All preliminary discussions and negotiations by the roommates are merged into



and superseded by this Agreement. Any modification to this Agreement must be in writing, signed by all roommates.

We, the undersigned, agree to the above terms:

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____



Being a Successful Roommate

Week 4: Working it Out

What do you think of when you hear the word “conflict”?

What conflicts do you think might come up with a roommate?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

There are three ways people usually react to conflict:

1. Fight: React aggressively and attack the other person, either verbally or physically
2. Flight: Leave the situation and avoid dealing with the conflict
3. Freeze: Do not engage in the conflict but stay in the situation

Which of these ways do you use when a conflict comes up?

What are usually the results of this type of reaction?

React or Respond?

Responding considers the outcome of the interaction. *Reaction* is usually immediate and does not consider the outcome. A response is thought through in order to produce a desired outcome. Reacting is emotional, responding is thoughtful. (<https://kgdiversity.com/a-blueprint-for-transforming-reactions-vs-responses/>)



Do you think there could be any benefits to *responding* instead of *reacting*? If so, what?

Read through “Fair Fight Rules”

Why do you think they recommend planning a discussion rather than dealing with it in the heat of the moment?

What does it mean to use “I” statements? What are the benefits of doing this?

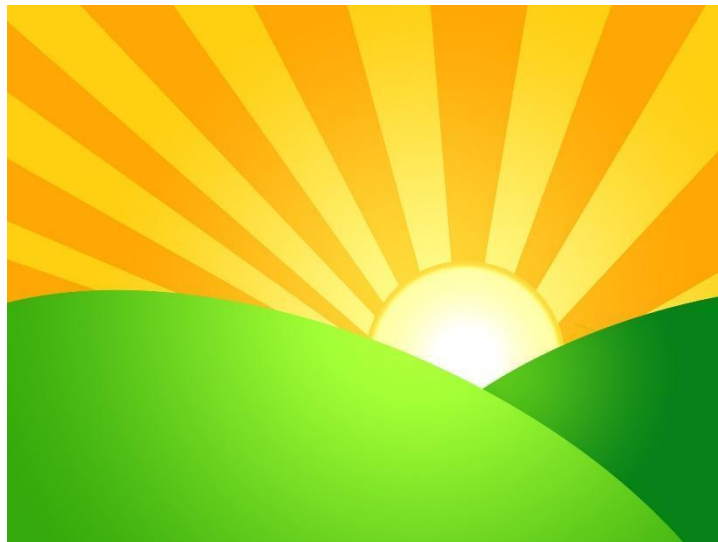
How do you feel when someone interrupts you?

Which of the “Fair Fight” suggestions do you think are hardest for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What can you do to get better at dealing with conflict?

PHASE 4



PHASE OBJECTIVE:

PREPARING FOR COMPLETION

This phase of the program is where the Participant and Peer Support Specialist focus on employment and communication skills



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
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Communication Fundamentals

Week 1: Fair Fighting Rules

Woody Schuldt, LMHC

Every relationship has disagreements. It's how we handle those disagreements that counts. A bad argument can turn even a little problem into a big one, making it emotionally charged and painful.

This is where fair fighting rules come in. Fair fighting rules don't tell us we can't argue. Instead, they tell us how to do it safely. They tell us what's okay—and what's crossing the line—in an argument.

1

Before you begin, ask yourself why you feel upset.

Are you angry because your partner left the mustard on the counter? Or are you angry because you feel like you're doing an uneven share of the housework, and this is just one more piece of evidence? Take time to think about your own feelings before starting an argument.

2

Discuss one topic at a time.

Don't let "You left dishes in the sink" turn into "You watch too much TV." Discussions that get off-topic are more likely to get heated, and less likely to solve the original problem. Choose one topic and stick to it.

3

No degrading language.

Discuss the issue, not the person. No put-downs, swearing, or name-calling. Degrading language is an attempt to express negative feelings while making sure your partner feels just as bad. Doing so leads to more character attacks while the original issue is forgotten.

4

Express your feelings with words.

“I feel hurt when you ignore my phone calls.” “I feel scared when you yell.” Structure your sentences as “I” statements (“I feel emotion when an event”) to express how you feel while taking responsibility for your emotions. However, starting with “I” does not give a license to ignore the other fair fighting rules.

5.

Give your full attention while your partner speaks. Avoid making corrections or thinking about what you want to say. Your only job is to understand their point of view, even if you disagree. If you find it difficult to not interrupt, try setting a timer allowing 1-2 minutes for each person to speak without interruption.

6

No stonewalling.

Sometimes, the easiest way to respond to an argument is to retreat into your shell and refuse to speak. This is called stonewalling. You might feel better temporarily, but the original issue will remain unresolved and your partner will feel more upset. If you absolutely cannot go on, tell your partner you need to take a time-out. Agree to resume the discussion later.

7

No yelling.

Yelling does not help anyone see your point of view. Instead, it sends the message that only your words matter. Even if yelling intimidates your partner into giving up, the underlying problem only grows worse.

8

Take a time-out if things get too heated.



In a perfect world, we would all follow these rules 100% of the time... but it just doesn't work like that. If an argument starts to become personal or heated, take a time-out. Agree on a time to come back and discuss the problem after everyone has cooled down.

9

Attempt to come to a compromise or an understanding.

There isn't always a perfect answer to an argument. Life is too messy for that. Do your best to come to a compromise (this means some give and take from both sides). If you can't come to a compromise, simply taking the time to understand your partner's perspective can help soothe negative feelings.



Fighting Fair Rules

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Communication Fundamentals

Week 2: How to Improve Communication Skills

10 Sep 2021 by Nicole Celestine, Ph.D.

Whether you're delivering a presentation to a room full of conference attendees or hashing out a disagreement with your partner, many of the skills you need to achieve your goals in these different scenarios will be the same.

To improve your communication techniques, scholars recommend training in the following skills.

Perspective taking

Defined as a cognitive attempt to consider another's viewpoint (Longmire & Harrison, 2018), perspective taking enables us to communicate in a way that is likely to resonate with others in the way we intended.

Perspective taking is often referred to as putting yourself in another's shoes.

For instance, when preparing a presentation, we can take the perspective of our audience by considering their background knowledge on the subject of our talk. By doing so, we can communicate in a way that will match the listeners' level of background knowledge, rather than leaving them in the dust.

Likewise, we can be intentional about trying to take our partner's perspective during a disagreement by imagining how our actions might make them feel or by imagining how we would feel if the roles in the conflict were reversed.

Usually, this involves showing empathy to the person you are speaking to and creating space for their emotions.

Self-awareness

Self-awareness involves being able to see yourself clearly and objectively through reflection and introspection. It requires you to separate your sense of identity from your thoughts and emotions.

But why is this important?



According to organizational psychologist Tasha Eurich (Workforce.com, 2020), we can only be as good at influence or collaboration (and a range of other skills) as we are at self-awareness. That is to say, if we work to develop our self-awareness, it can have a ripple effect on our ability to communicate, engage, and empathize with others.

In the example of delivering a conference presentation, self-awareness may help us recognize that we appear withdrawn when speaking to a crowd. This awareness then enables us to amend our behavior and style of communication.

Likewise, in the example of the disagreement with a partner, self-awareness might help us recognize our tendency to grow defensive to perceived criticism in a particular area. Self-awareness can counter this, allowing us to remain open minded and curious in such discussions.

In sum, good communication involves balancing our own perspective with that of others to convey a message successfully and accept feedback.



How to Improve Communication Skills

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



Communication Fundamentals

Week 3: Setting Boundaries



Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. A person with healthy boundaries can say “no” to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

Know Your Boundaries

Boundaries should be based on your values, or the things that are important to you. For example, if you value spending time with family, set firm boundaries about working late.

Your boundaries are yours, and yours alone. Many of your boundaries might align with those who are close to you, but others will be unique.

Know your boundaries *before* entering a situation. This will make it less likely you’ll do something you’re not comfortable with.

What to Say

You always have the right to say “no”. When doing so, express yourself clearly and without ambiguity so there is no doubt about what you want.

“I’m not comfortable with this” “Please don’t do that” “Not at this time” “I can’t do that for you” “This doesn’t work for me” “I’ve decided not to” “This is not acceptable” “I’m drawing the line at ____” “I don’t want to do that”

What to Do

Use Confident Body Language

Face the other person, make eye contact, and use a steady tone of voice at an appropriate volume (not too quiet, and not too loud).

Plan Ahead

Think about what you want to say, and how you will say it, before entering a difficult discussion. This can help you feel more confident about your

Be Respectful

Avoid yelling, using put-downs, or giving the silent treatment. It’s okay to be firm, but your message will be better received if you are respectful.

Compromise

When appropriate, listen and consider the needs of the other person. You never *have* to compromise, but give-and-take is part of any healthy relationship.



Setting Boundaries

Instructions: Respond to the following practice questions as if you were really in each situation. Think about the language *you* would use to firmly state your boundary.

✓ Examples

Situation: You notice your roommate has been eating your food in the fridge. You never discussed plans to share food, and don't want them eating what you bought.

Response: "I'd like to keep our food separate. If there's something of mine that you want, please ask me before taking it."

Situation: Your friend calls you at 11 pm to discuss issues she is having with her boyfriend. You need to wake up at 6 am.

Response: "I can tell you're upset. I want to talk to you, but I need to go to bed. Maybe we can talk tomorrow afternoon."

🎯 Practice

Situation: You invited a friend over for the evening, but now it's getting late. You would like to get ready for bed, but your friend seems unaware of how late it is.

Response:

Situation: A good friend asks you out on a date. You are not interested in being more than friends. You would like to let them down clearly, but gently.

Response:



Setting Boundaries

Situation: You missed several days of work due to a medical condition. When you get back, a coworker asks what happened. You feel this information is personal, and do not want to share.

Response:

Situation: Your brother asks if you can watch his two young children on Saturday morning. You already have plans.

Response:

Situation: Your coworker is upset about their recent performance review. They start yelling and slamming their fist on their desk. This is making you very uncomfortable.

Response:

Situation: A salesperson comes to your door during dinner. You try to politely show disinterest, but they keep giving their sales pitch. You want to get back to dinner.

Response:



Communication Fundamentals

Week 3: 16 Fair Fighting Rules

By Davina Tiwari

Rules or guidelines for fighting fair may help you come away from an argument or conflict with a better understanding of yourself, the other person, and both of your goals and needs. Rules include things like being open, staying focused, and sharing your emotions.

Here are sixteen rules for fair fighting:^{2,3,4}

1. Stay Focused on the Issue at Hand

When an issue is escalating, try to keep your discussion streamlined. Doing so minimizes the likelihood that you will bring non-related issues into the conversation, which can only lead to further distress and irritation. By not bringing up past hurts and conflicts, you give yourself a better chance at resolving the current issue and moving forward with your future.

2. Talk Openly About the Problem

Shutting down, not fully engaging with the other person, and not devoting sufficient time to the matter won't lead to a resolution. Make sure you give each other enough time and space to talk through the problem so everyone feels heard, respected, valued, and supported.

3. Share Your Feelings & Emotions

Are you angry? Sad? Scared? Frustrated? Lonely? Tell the other person how you are feeling. This promotes emotional intimacy and bonding. Showing vulnerability will keep you from becoming closed off from one another.

4. Listen to Each Other Without Interrupting & Pay Attention to Body Language

Listening to each other without interruption allows both people to get their points across clearly and demonstrates mutual appreciation. Also, notice the other person's facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, speed of speech, and body positioning. Similarly, pay attention to your own body language in a tense situation.

5. Respect the Other Person's Perspective

Even if you don't agree with the other person, respect their thoughts, opinions, feelings, and ideas about how to move forward. Getting outside of your own mindset will help you see things from another point of view and can help you both take that first step toward positive change.



6. Reach a Compromise or Problem-solve to Find a Solution Together

You both might start to dig your heels into the ground about being “right.” Remember, there is no right or wrong, and insisting there is only further drives a wedge between you. Focus on reaching a mutually agreed upon compromise or solution that you can both feel good about.

7. Be Open About Your Needs, Expectations, Hopes, & Goals

Try being open about what you need in the relationship, your expectations, and your hopes and goals for the future (e.g., living situation, travel, family composition, career aspirations, financial goals, retirement, etc.). These are all things that you will want to get on the same page about to reduce the likelihood of future arguments and misunderstandings.

8. Focus on Issues That Are a Priority for You Both & Leave the Rest

Let go of matters that aren’t a huge priority for you; instead, devote more time to the core concerns that you both feel need to be addressed.

9. Be Mindful of the Time You Choose to Discuss a Problem

Starting an important discussion at the end of the day or early in the morning may not be the best idea. Consider discussing the problem at a time of day when you both feel like you can discuss the matter without too much interruption, a time when your focus, attention, and energy levels are ideal.

10. Take a Break if Needed to Calm Down & Commit to Resuming Later

Go to a different room or space in the home to give yourself space to relax. Make a plan to return to the discussion when you both feel more at ease. This could be later the same day or perhaps another day or evening after you have some time to think about the issue. To fully resolve the issue, you must devote a sufficient amount of time.

11. Don’t Stonewall Your Partner

Stonewalling, shutting down and refusing to talk to your partner, is a really harsh way of existing in conflict. Shutting your partner out sends a message that you do not value their opinion and in a time of conflict, that can do much more damage and make the conflict worse. It’s important to refrain from stonewalling as it also leaves your partner feeling isolated and alone in conflict, which doesn’t help anyone.

12. Set Clear Boundaries: Do Not Yell, Degrade, Threaten, or Curse

Raising your voice, threatening to leave or end the relationship, or swearing at the other person can only cause further divide and distress. Depending on the severity of the issue, responding this way can eventually lead to a point of no return. It is best to set healthy boundaries, stay calm, and focus on the key issue at hand to avoid the risk of saying something you’ll regret.



13. Take Responsibility for Your Role in the Disagreement

This helps maintain accountability and allows you both to see where your own biases, struggles, and expectations come into play. By owning your challenges, it shows that you recognize that you may also need to make some adjustments. Both people need to work on the areas where they would like to improve.

14. Manage Feelings of Resentment

Holding grudges and [resentment](#) can be detrimental to your relationship. Try to proactively deal with the issue and then move on. Circling back to past issues and challenges can have a negative effect on your relationship.

15. Don't Make Assumptions

Sometimes, we try to fill in the gaps based on what we assume the other person is thinking or feeling. However, our assumptions stem from our own personal experiences, beliefs, and values, which may greatly differ from someone else's. Rather than making assumptions or trying to "mind read," which can further increase our [frustration](#) and anger, ask the other person about their viewpoints, concerns, and needs.

16. Move on After Resolving a Problem

Try not to dwell on the issue once you've reached a resolution. Moving on from it allows you and the other person to focus on your future relationship goals while also growing and deepening your connection.



16 Fair Fighting Rules

Self - Reflection sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WHAT I LEARNED:

WHAT I LIKED:

WHAT I WILL PUT INTO PRACTICE:



My Weekly Check-In

This week my body has been telling me:

My mood this week has been:



My priorities with week are:

This week I am especially grateful for:

Ways I have shown myself care this week:



Weekly Schedule

powered by
GeneralBlue

Start Date _____

End Date: _____

| | MORNING | AFTERNOON | EVENING |
|------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| | | | |
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| Wednesday | | | |
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| Thursday | | | |
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| Saturday | | | |
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| Sunday | | | |
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Being a Successful Employee

Week 1: Job Search and Application

Welcome to Being a Successful Employee. In this course, we will look at some of the best ways to find a job, the application process, building and maintaining good relationships at work and continuing to grow in your skills to make yourself more valuable to your employer.

What comes to mind when you think about looking for a job?

What was the best job you ever had? What did you like about it?

What was the worst job you ever had? What didn't you like about it?

We all have different skills, talents and preferences when it comes to jobs, so finding one that is a good fit for you will help to make going to work more enjoyable and more rewarding.

If you could choose any job, what would it be? What about it is appealing?

What job would you *never* want to do? What would you not like about it?

Knowing your preferences can help you to understand the types of jobs that could be the best fit for you. Finding the right job, however, takes some work.

Where do you usually look for jobs?



Can you think of other ways or places that might be good ways?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Two of the biggest sources for finding jobs are Craigslist and Indeed. Have you used either of these? If so, did you find a job with them?

Let's take a look at each of these and see what jobs are available right now.

(Go to Craigslist.org and Indeed.com)

What do you think about these sites? What questions do you have?



Being a Successful Employee

Week 2: The Application Process

This week we will look at applying for a job and the things that are important for that process.

If you were an employer, what qualities would you want in an employee?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Which of these qualities are you best at?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of these qualities can you improve on?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Most employment applications will ask for the same information, so it is good to have that before you apply. This will save you time, frustration and help you look more professional to the employer.

Besides your basic personal information, such as name and address, what are some of the questions that you expect on an application?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Is there any information you are worried about providing? If so, what?

Employment history and references are two of the most important items that a potential employer will want to know. They want to know that you have had jobs in the past, and they want to know that you did a good job.

If you haven't worked before, if it's been a long time since you had a job or if your job references are not the best, it is important that you address it in some way.

Ex: Explaining gaps in employment with education, medical leave, etc.

What are some ways you can make your application look good to an employer?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

To make sure you have a chance to gather the information you need, let's fill out an application together.



Being a Successful Employee

Week 3: Good Relationships at Work

One of the most important skills at work is to create and maintain good relationships with your supervisor and your coworkers. Having these good relationships will make work much more enjoyable and help you advance more quickly.

You will spend a lot of time with the people you work with, so finding ways to get along with them is essential.

What are some things you can do to create good relationships with your coworkers?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What things can make it harder to get along with others at work?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of these are you best at?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do you have difficulty with any of these? If so, what can you do to improve?



Here are some other ways to create good relationships with your supervisor and coworkers:

1. Be Helpful
2. Work Without Supervision
3. Be Thorough
4. Follow Procedures
5. Give Credit to Others
6. Follow Directions
7. Be Dependable
8. Keep a Sense of Humor
9. Be Honest and Accurate

Have you ever had a problem with a coworker in your past? If so, how did you handle it? What was the result?

Is there anything you would do differently next time?

Working with others sometimes can be difficult and problems are likely to happen. The most important thing is to remain calm, be respectful and find a way to work it out.

You don't have to be friends with everyone you work with, but it will make everything easier for you if you are able to get along with them.



Being a Successful Employee

Week 4: Continuing to Learn and Grow

No matter what job you have, there is always the opportunity to learn more and to grow in your skills and knowledge. By doing this, you make yourself a more valuable employee, and you will be more likely to receive raises.

The picture above shows several characteristics that an employer values in their employees. Which of these do you think most apply to you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of these are the biggest challenges for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

No one is great at all of these, but we can find ways to be better at them as time goes on. Committing to work on one or more of these will not only impress your supervisor, but it will also give you a greater sense of pride.

Which of these would you most like to improve? What are some ideas of how you can improve in that area?

After being at a job for six months or so and having learned the basics of your position, it is a good idea to meet with your supervisor and let them know you are interested in getting more training.

What are some benefits to continuing to get more training?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Even with these potential benefits, most employees don't look for additional training. Why do you think that is?

As you continue to learn and grow, you will probably want to seek other employment opportunities eventually. When you do, it is important that you give your employer at least 2 weeks' notice, because they will need time to hire someone to take your place.

By doing your best, building good relationships and continuing to learn and grow, you will enjoy your work more and build great references for future job opportunities.

What additional questions do you have about employment?