

## ADJUSTMENT SKILLS GROUP OVERVIEW

Group Description: The Adjusting to Incarceration psychoeducational group provides information about ways inmates can address mood changes, irritability, anxiety and sleep problems that occur as part of the normal process of adjusting to incarceration. This group is designed for inmates who are new to prisons and jails. The primary purpose of this group is to provide non-pharmacological interventions for inmates experiencing stress and emotional adjustment problems. Building adjustment skills rather than relying on psychotropic medication is a major goal for this group.

Objectives:

- To provide general information about adjusting to incarceration
- To learn and practice coping skills that can help in adjusting to changes, including to living in jail/prison
- To address problems of moodiness, irritability, anxiety and sleep disturbance through non-medical interventions

Group Structure: Modules are designed for sessions to be conducted once a week, with participation by 6 to 15 inmates at a time. Because the modules build on each other, it is preferable for participants to join the group at the beginning rather than later in the module series. This group is psychoeducational in nature. It may not be the best forum for inmates to disclose personal issues or information. In some facilities, guided relaxation exercises are gathered in a binder, and the group leader chooses one of these exercises for each module, starting with Module 3. Sources for relaxation exercises include the following:

- Bourne, E. J. (2005). *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed.* New Harbinger Publications.
- Davis, M., Robbins-Eshelman, E., & McKay, M. (2000). *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook.* New Harbinger Publications.
- Leahy, R. L. & Holland, S. J. (2000). *Treatment Plans and Interventions for Depression and Anxiety Disorders.* Guilford Press.

Many other books and CDs are commercially available for these exercises, and it is helpful to develop a library from which exercises can be selected based upon the group leader's preferences. The Beck Depression and Beck Anxiety Inventories can be utilized as pre-/post-group evaluation to track program effectiveness. These copyrighted materials are not included in the Resource Manual and must be purchased through your contract if you use them.

Module 1: Orientation and Seeing Where You Are

Module 2: Stress and Stress Management

Module 3: Relaxation and Sleep Skills

Module 4: Positive Behaviors and Self-Talk

Module 5: Mistaken Beliefs and Affirmations

Module 6: Anger Management

Module 7: Nonviolence, Assertive Communication and Wrap Up

*Special Note:* If there is a need to complete this Adjustment Skills Group in less than seven weeks (e.g., at reception centers or jails), it possible is to combine Modules 2 and 3 and to combine Modules 6 and 7. When making these combinations, the group leader must be comfortable passing out a good deal of written material as homework rather than completing it in session.

Materials to Facilitate Group Process:

Module 1 Handout:	Participation Agreement
Module 1 Handout:	Group Goals and Content
Module 1 Handout:	Initial Questions
Module 1 Handout:	Beck Anxiety Inventory (optional; not included in Clinical Operations Resource Manual)
Module 1 Handout:	Beck Depression Inventory (optional; not included in Clinical Operations Resource Manual)
Module 1 Handout:	Pre-Test & Self-Assessment
Module 2 Handout:	Principles of Stress
Module 2 Handout:	How Do You Manage Stress?
Module 3 Handout:	Sleep Education Sheet
Module 3 Handout:	12 Steps to Better Sleep
Module 3 Handout:	Sleep Log
Module 3 Handout:	Learning to Relax through Deep Breathing
Module 3 Handout:	Learning to Relax through Progressive Muscle Relaxation
Module 4 Handout:	Daily Schedule
Module 4 Handout:	Self-Talk
Module 4 Handout:	Five Kinds of Negative Self-Talk
Module 4 Handout:	Positive Self-Talk – Coping Statements
Module 5 Handout:	Mistaken Beliefs
Module 5 Handout:	Challenging Mistaken Beliefs
Module 5 Handout:	Affirmations
Module 6 Handout:	Anger Management
Module 6 Handout:	Handling Anger
Module 6 Handout:	The Anger Process
Module 6 Handout:	Anger Cues
Module 6 Handout:	Seven Common Thinking Errors When Angry
Module 6 Handout:	Pre-Test & Self-Assessment
Module 7 Handout:	More Anger Management Skills
Module 7 Handout:	Assertive Communication
Module 7 Handout:	Two Quotations
Module 7 Handout:	Beck Anxiety Inventory (optional; not included in Clinical Operations Resource Manual)
Module 7 Handout:	Beck Depression Inventory (optional; not included in Clinical Operations Resource Manual)
Module 7 Handout:	Certificate of Completion!

Remember that interactions and social support are important to well-being. Giving participants time to interact with one another and share their thoughts and experiencing is treatment in and of itself. Encourage interaction and mutual support throughout all group sessions.