



GRAB BAG

GUIDANCE

&

OTHER SMALL-GROUP
COUNSELING TOPICS
FOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Mar:co

WRITTEN BY
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Grab Bag Guidance & Other Small-Group Counseling Topics For Middle School Students

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| USING THE GROUP OPENING AND GROUP RULES IN GROUP SESSIONS | 8 |
| GROUP OPENING..... | 9 |
| GROUP RULES | 10 |
| ENERGIZERS & EXTRAS | 11 |
| USING THE ENERGIZERS IN GROUP SESSIONS | 12 |
| ENERGIZER 1: INTRODUCTION..... | 13 |
| ENERGIZER 2: LISTENING GAME..... | 14 |
| ENERGIZER 3: TELLING ABOUT YOURSELF | 22 |
| ENERGIZER 4: FEELINGS CUBE..... | 23 |
| ENERGIZER 5: SENTENCE STRIPS..... | 24 |
| ENERGIZER 6: FEELING CARDS | 25 |
| ENERGIZER 7: SNOWBALL FUN | 30 |
| ENERGIZER 8: YARN BALL REVIEW..... | 31 |
| ENERGIZER 9: TRUTH OR LIE? | 31 |
| ENERGIZER 10: SOMETHING I LIKED | 32 |
| ENERGIZER 11: STRENGTHS | 32 |
| ENERGIZER 12: DECISION-MAKING..... | 33 |
| ENERGIZER 13: LIKENESS LETTER..... | 33 |
| ENERGIZER 14: A BROKEN HEART | 34 |
| ENERGIZER 15: ESCALATOR..... | 34 |
| ENERGIZER 16: A TO Z STORY..... | 35 |
| ENERGIZER 17: PEOPLE/POSSESSIONS..... | 35 |
| ENERGIZER 18: BLOW AWAY STRESS..... | 36 |
| PARENTAL PERMISSION LETTER..... | 37 |
| INVITATION TO JOIN GROUP | 38 |
| STUDENT PASSES | 39 |
| SURVEY FOR SMALL-GROUP SESSIONS..... | 40 |
| EVALUATION OF GROUP SESSIONS..... | 41 |
| BINGO NUMBERS..... | 42 |
| ANGER-MANAGEMENT | 45 |
| SESSION 1: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 46 |
| SESSION 2: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 47 |
| SESSION 3: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 49 |
| ANGER..... | 51 |
| SESSION 4: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 52 |
| KNOWING WHEN OTHERS ARE ANGRY..... | 54 |
| SESSION 5: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 55 |
| TRIGGERS AND HOT BUTTONS..... | 57 |
| STOP | 58 |
| SESSION 6: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 59 |
| SESSION 7: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 61 |
| ANGER THERMOMETER..... | 62 |
| SESSION 8: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 63 |
| ANGER BINGO..... | 65 |
| SESSION 9: ANGER-MANAGEMENT..... | 66 |
| BULLYING | 67 |
| SESSION 1: BULLYING..... | 68 |
| SESSION 2: BULLYING..... | 69 |
| SESSION 3: BULLYING..... | 70 |
| SESSION 4: BULLYING..... | 72 |
| BULLYING OR TEASING | 73 |
| SESSION 5: BULLYING..... | 74 |
| THE ROLES IN BULLYING SITUATIONS | 75 |
| SESSION 6: BULLYING..... | 76 |
| BULLYING STRATEGIES | 78 |
| SESSION 7: BULLYING..... | 79 |
| BULLY BINGO | 81 |
| COPING SKILLS | 83 |
| SESSION 1: COPING SKILLS | 84 |
| SESSION 2: COPING SKILLS | 85 |
| FORMULA TO HELP YOU COPE..... | 87 |
| SESSION 3: COPING SKILLS | 88 |
| ME..... | 89 |
| OTHERS | 90 |
| SESSION 4: COPING SKILLS..... | 91 |
| "I" MESSAGE/BLAMING MESSAGE..... | 93 |
| SESSION 5: COPING SKILLS..... | 94 |
| COMMUNICATION ROLE-PLAYS | 96 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| SESSION 6: COPING SKILLS..... | 97 |
| NEGATIVE THOUGHTS → POSITIVE THOUGHTS | 99 |
| WAYS TO RAISE SELF-ESTEEM | 100 |
| SESSION 7: COPING SKILLS | 101 |
| FEELINGS SENTENCE COMPLETION..... | 102 |
| SESSION 8: COPING SKILLS | 103 |
| PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT ME | 105 |
| SESSION 9: COPING SKILLS..... | 106 |
| COPE BINGO | 108 |
| DECISION-MAKING | 109 |
| SESSION 1: DECISION-MAKING..... | 110 |
| SESSION 2: DECISION-MAKING..... | 111 |
| FIVE DECISIONS | 112 |
| SESSION 3: DECISION-MAKING..... | 113 |
| 5 C'S IN DECISION-MAKING | 115 |
| SESSION 4: DECISION-MAKING..... | 116 |
| SIMPLE DECISIONS/COMPLEX DECISIONS..... | 118 |
| SESSION 5: DECISION-MAKING..... | 119 |
| WHO/WHAT INFLUENCES MY DECISIONS | 120 |
| CHOOSING THE BEST DECISION..... | 121 |
| SESSION 6: DECISION-MAKING..... | 122 |
| CAMPING TRIP | 124 |
| SESSION 7: DECISION-MAKING..... | 125 |
| DECISIONS I HAVE MADE | 126 |
| SESSION 8: DECISION-MAKING..... | 127 |
| SESSION 9: DECISION-MAKING..... | 128 |
| DECIDE BINGO | 130 |
| DIVORCE | 131 |
| SESSION 1: DIVORCE | 132 |
| SESSION 2: DIVORCE | 133 |
| SESSION 3: DIVORCE | 134 |
| INCOMPLETE SENTENCES..... | 135 |
| SESSION 4: DIVORCE | 136 |
| DIFFICULT DIVORCE CARDS..... | 137 |
| NOT DIFFICULT DIVORCE CARDS | 138 |
| DIFFICULT/NOT DIFFICULT SENTENCES | 139 |
| SESSION 5: DIVORCE | 140 |
| THINGS I WORRY ABOUT..... | 141 |
| SESSION 6: DIVORCE | 142 |
| FAMILY CHANGES | 143 |
| SESSION 7: DIVORCE | 144 |
| SECRET THOUGHTS | 145 |
| SESSION 8: DIVORCE | 146 |
| FEELINGS THERMOMETER..... | 147 |
| DIVORCE SITUATIONS..... | 148 |
| SESSION 9: DIVORCE | 149 |
| DIVORCE BINGO | 151 |
| SESSION 10: DIVORCE..... | 152 |
| GRIEF & LOSS | 153 |
| SESSION 1: GRIEF AND LOSS | 154 |
| SESSION 2: GRIEF AND LOSS | 155 |
| SESSION 3: GRIEF AND LOSS | 156 |
| SESSION 4: GRIEF AND LOSS | 157 |
| COLORS OF MY HEART..... | 158 |
| SESSION 5: GRIEF AND LOSS | 159 |
| INCOMPLETE SENTENCES FOR LOSS..... | 160 |
| SESSION 6: GRIEF AND LOSS | 161 |
| FAMILY CHANGES | 162 |
| SESSION 7: GRIEF AND LOSS | 163 |
| MEMORIES..... | 164 |
| SESSION 8: GRIEF AND LOSS | 165 |
| SESSION 9: GRIEF AND LOSS | 166 |
| THE FUNERAL | 168 |
| SESSION 10: GRIEF AND LOSS | 169 |
| MAKING MEMORIES | 170 |
| SESSION 11: GRIEF AND LOSS..... | 171 |
| GRIEF BINGO..... | 173 |
| SESSION 12: GRIEF AND LOSS | 174 |
| SELF-ESTEEM | 175 |
| SESSION 1: SELF-ESTEEM | 176 |
| SESSION 2: SELF-ESTEEM | 177 |
| SESSION 3: SELF-ESTEEM | 178 |
| MY PERSONAL CAR..... | 179 |
| WHOM DO YOU ADMIRE? | 180 |
| SESSION 4: SELF-ESTEEM | 181 |
| POSITIVE MIRROR..... | 182 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| SESSION 5: SELF-ESTEEM | 183 |
| ABOUT ME | 185 |
| SESSION 6: SELF-ESTEEM | 186 |
| HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOURSELF? | 187 |
| SESSION 7: SELF-ESTEEM | 188 |
| SELF-WORTH BINGO | 190 |
| SESSION 8: SELF-ESTEEM | 191 |
| MY DREAM | 192 |
| SESSION 9: SELF-ESTEEM | 193 |
| SESSION 10: SELF-ESTEEM | 194 |
| SKILLS FOR SUCCESS..... | 195 |
| SESSION 1: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 196 |
| SESSION 2: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 197 |
| SUCCESS..... | 198 |
| SESSION 3: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 199 |
| 5 C'S IN DECISION-MAKING | 201 |
| DECISION-MAKING | 202 |
| SESSION 4: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 203 |
| CHANGING NEGATIVE BELIEFS INTO POSITIVE BELIEFS | 204 |
| SESSION 5: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 205 |
| TRAITS I POSSESS | 206 |
| GOALS | 207 |
| SESSION 6: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 208 |
| SPECIFIC-SUBJECT GOALS..... | 210 |
| SESSION 7: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 211 |
| THINGS I BEGAN BUT DID NOT FINISH | 213 |
| PRIORITY WORKSHEET | 214 |
| SESSION 8: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 215 |
| RESPONSIBILITIES | 217 |
| SESSION 9: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 218 |
| RESPONSIBILITY AND STUDY SKILLS | 219 |
| SETTING GOALS FOR IMPROVEMENT | 220 |
| SESSION 10: SKILLS FOR SUCCESS | 221 |
| GOALS BINGO | 223 |
| STRESS-MANAGEMENT..... | 225 |
| SESSION 1: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 226 |
| SESSION 2: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 227 |
| GOOD STRESS—BAD STRESS | 228 |
| SESSION 3: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 229 |
| STRESS CHECKLIST | 230 |
| SESSION 4: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 231 |
| BODY STRESS..... | 232 |
| SESSION 5: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 233 |
| STRESS BUSTERS | 234 |
| SESSION 6: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 235 |
| SESSION 7: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 236 |
| SESSION 8: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 237 |
| STRESS BINGO | 239 |
| SESSION 9: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 240 |
| GRAB BAG GUIDANCE..... | 241 |
| GRAB BAG GUIDANCE SESSIONS | 242 |
| SESSION 1: GROUP EXPECTATIONS | 243 |
| SESSION 2: GETTING TO KNOW YOU | 244 |
| GETTING TO KNOW YOU | 245 |
| SESSION 3: ANGER-MANAGEMENT | 246 |
| ANGER | 248 |
| SESSION 4: ANGER-MANAGEMENT BINGO | 249 |
| ANGER BINGO | 251 |
| SESSION 5: GRIEF AND LOSS | 252 |
| SESSION 6: MORE ON GRIEF AND LOSS | 253 |
| COLORS OF MY HEART | 255 |
| SESSION 7: GRIEF AND LOSS BINGO | 256 |
| GRIEF BINGO..... | 257 |
| SESSION 8: BULLYING | 258 |
| SESSION 9: MORE ON BULLYING | 259 |
| SESSION 10: STRESS-MANAGEMENT | 261 |
| STRESS BUSTERS | 263 |
| SESSION 11: STRESS-MANAGEMENT BINGO | 264 |
| STRESS BINGO | 265 |
| SESSION 12: MAKE YOUR OWN STRESS BALL | 266 |
| SESSION 13: SELF-ESTEEM | 267 |
| MY PERSONAL SHIELD | 268 |
| SESSION 14: MORE ON SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-WORTH BINGO | 269 |
| SELF-WORTH BINGO | 271 |
| SESSION 15: FINAL GROUP SESSION | 272 |

INTRODUCTION

Grab Bag Guidance And Other Small-Group Counseling Topics For Middle School Students is a compilation of two types of groups:

- Specific groups focusing on a single topic
- *Grab Bag Guidance* groups that focus on several topics

The most popular of the groups is the *Grab Bag Guidance* group. In this group, students work on self-esteem, anger-management, stress-management, bullying, and loss.

Each group consists of 6-8 middle school students who meet once a week for counseling in a school setting. The students meet for approximately 7-15 weeks. The group does not meet at the same time as any academic class, but during an activity period, study hall, or non-academic class period.

Every group begins with a reading of the *Group Opening* (page 9) and the *Group Rules* (page 10). I used the ones in this book, but feel free to develop your own if they do not meet your needs. Reading the *Group Opening* and *Group Rules* at the beginning of each session reinforces what is expected of group members. Even though repeating the process at every session may seem unnecessary, it is a useful tool for keeping the group on task.

Each group begins with an *energizer*. You'll find the ones I used on pages 11-36 and identified by number within the sessions. Each group also includes a bingo game. These games are a great way to review what has been learned in previous sessions. Although the games focus on different concepts, each game requires the same numbers. Reproduce these numbers (pages 42-43) so they will be available for any group you lead from this manual.

The program also includes a sample *Parental Permission Letter* (page 37), an invitation for the students selected for the group (page 38), passes for students to use when coming to group (page 39), a *Survey For Small-Group Sessions* (page 40), and an *Evaluation Of Group Sessions* (page 41).

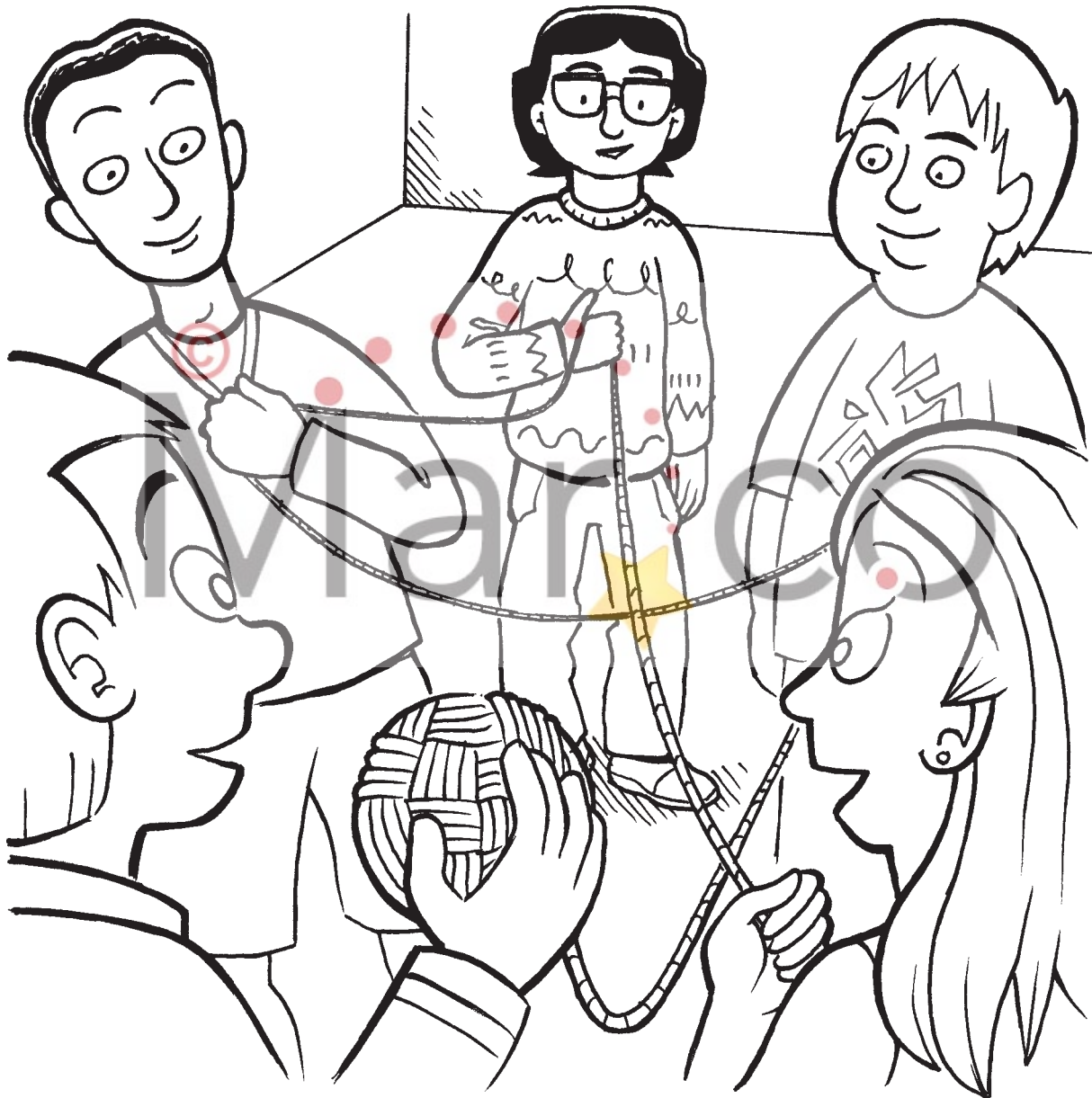
The activities used in these groups have worked for me and my groups. I hope they work for you, too. Enjoy!

Sincerely,
Becky Kirby

USING THE ENERGIZERS IN GROUP SESSIONS

Energizers are an integral part of each small-group counseling session. The energizers offered in this book have proven to work well with students. For those students who are first-time participants in a small-group counseling session, energizers are a new experience. For students who have previously participated in a small-group counseling session, the energizers may be familiar, but still effective.

In this section, you will find the energizers used with the groups. The energizers to be used in the session are identified by number.



ENERGIZER 18

BLOW AWAY STRESS

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- Soap solution for bubbles

For each student:

- Bubble wand

Preparation

None

Energizer

Have the students think about what is causing stress in their lives and pretend to put those things inside the bubbles.

As the students blow the stress-filled bubbles, tell them to think about their stresses leaving them as the bubbles float away and disappear.



SESSION 2

ANGER-MANAGEMENT

Purpose:

To identify words, physical feelings, and results associated with anger

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- Group Opening* (page 9)
- Group Rules* (page 10)
- Materials for *Energizer 4* (page 23)
- Chalkboard and chalk or dry erase board and marker
- Chart paper
- Marker
- Masking tape

For each student:

- Marker

Preparation:

Read the instructions for *Energizer 4*. Gather and prepare the necessary materials.

Label three sheets of chart paper:

1. Words Associated With Anger
2. Where You Physically Feel Anger
3. Results Of Being Angry

Attach the charts to the wall with masking tape.

Session Content:

- Select a student to read the *Group Opening*.

- Pass the *Group Rules* around. Have each student read one rule aloud until all of the rules have been read.
- Present *Energizer 4*.
- Write the letters *ANGER* on the board. Then say:

*Anger is only one letter away from **danger**.*

Add the letter *D* to the front of *ANGER* to spell *DANGER*. Then say:

Everyone gets angry. What is important is how you handle your anger. Anger is an emotion, not a behavior. Aggression is a behavior and aggression often gives anger a bad name.

- Give each student a marker. Then continue the session by saying:

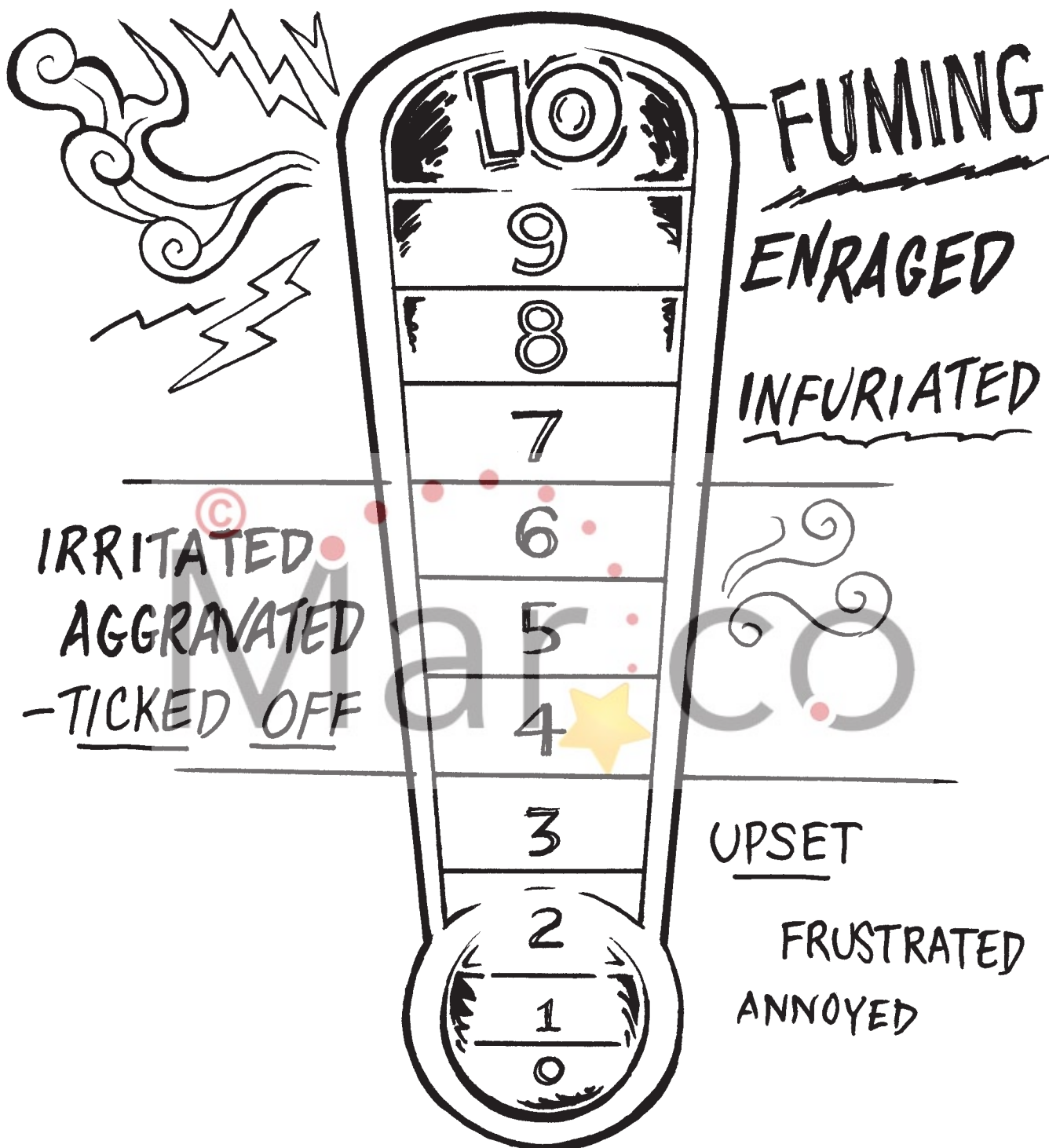
There are three pieces of chart paper hanging on the wall. Look at the chart paper labeled Words Associated With Anger. Think of all the words you associate with anger. Go to the wall and write those words on the chart paper.

Examples of words associated with anger could be:

Aggressive
Hurt
Mad
Blaming
Sad
Defiant

ANGER THERMOMETER

Directions: Think of a time that you were angry this week. Beginning at 0, fill in the thermometer to the number that indicates how angry you felt.



SESSION 3

BULLYING

Purpose:

To identify physical and emotional bullying and emphasize what needs to be done if you witness or are the victim of a bullying act

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- Group Opening* (page 9)
- Group Rules* (page 10)
- Materials for *Energizer 4* (page 23)
- Chart paper
- Masking tape
- Chart with *bullying* definition from Session #2
- Chalkboard and chalk or dry-erase board and marker

For each student:

- Pad of sticky notes
- Pencil

Preparation:

Read the instructions for *Energizer 4*. Gather and prepare the necessary materials. Follow the directions for making the *Feelings Cube*.

Label two pieces of chart paper *Physical Bullying* and *Emotional Bullying*. Hang the chart with the *bullying* definition and the two new charts on the wall.

Session Content:

- Select a student to read the *Group Opening*.
- Pass the *Group Rules* around. Have each student read one rule aloud until all of the rules have been read.
- Present *Energizer 4*.
- Review the definition of *bullying* on the chart paper. Underline the words *repeated harmful acts, imbalance of power, and hurtful to the victim*.
- Give each student a pad of sticky notes and a pencil. Then say:

Today, we are going to talk about physical bullying and emotional or psychological bullying. There are two charts on the wall. One chart has the words Physical Bullying written at the top. The other chart has the words Emotional Bullying written at the top. Using your sticky notes, write all the ways you can think of that people bully physically. Write one way on each sticky note.

- Have the students post the sticky notes on the *Physical Bullying* wall chart. Repeat the same exercise for *Emotional Bullying*.

Directions: On the lines below, write the ways that you care or have cared for others. If you need more lines, you may add them.



Something I am going to do for another person is _____

SESSION 4

DECISION-MAKING

Purpose:

To explore the differences between simple decisions and complex decisions

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- Group Opening* (page 9)
- Group Rules* (page 10)
- Materials for *Energizer 6* (page 25)
- Chart paper
- Marker
- Masking tape

For each student:

- Student's folder
- Sticky notes
- Pencil

For each pair of students:

- Simple Decisions/Complex Decisions* (page 118)

Preparation:

Read the instructions for *Energizer 6*. Gather and prepare the necessary materials.

Make a copy of *Simple Decisions/Complex Decisions* for each pair of students.

Title the chart paper *Factors That Can Influence A Decision*. Hang the chart paper on the wall in a location where it can be seen by every student.

Session Content:

- Give each student his/her folder.
- Select a student to read the *Group Opening*.
- Pass the *Group Rules* around. Have each student read one rule aloud until all of the rules have been read.
- Present *Energizer 6*.
- Ask the students:

What is the difference between a simple decision and a complex decision? (Simple decisions are easy to make. Complex decisions are more difficult to make and may affect others.)

With complex decisions, you have more alternatives to choose from.

- Have the students form pairs. Give each pair of students a copy of *Simple Decisions/Complex Decisions* and each student a pencil. Tell the students to work together and write down examples of simple decisions they have made and examples of complex decisions they have made. Have each pair of students share its completed activity sheet with the group.
- Review the *5C's In Decision-Making* by saying:

To make rational and wise decisions, you need to:

SESSION 11

GRIEF AND LOSS

Purpose:

To review what has been presented in previous lessons

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- Group Opening* (page 9)
- Group Rules* (page 10)
- Energizer 16* (page 35)
- Bingo Numbers* (pages 42-43)
- Container

For each student:

- Student's folder
- Grief Bingo* (page 173)
- Markers or pens of two different-color inks

Preparation:

Read the instructions for *Energizer 16*.

Make a copy of *Grief Bingo* for each student.

Make a copy of the *Bingo Numbers*. Cut the numbers apart and place them in the container.

Session Content:

- Give each student his/her folder.
- Select a student to read the *Group Opening*.

- Pass the *Group Rules* around. Have each student read one rule aloud until all of the rules have been read.
- Present *Energizer 16*.
- Tell the students:

We are going to play Grief Bingo. As we play this game, we will review things we have learned in the past few weeks.

- Give each student a copy of *Grief Bingo* and markers or pens of two different-color inks. Explain how the students should fill in their bingo cards by saying:

The letters G R I E F are printed at the top of the columns. Below each letter is a number range. Using one color of ink/marker, fill in each circle in each column with one of the numbers within the indicated range. For example, you may choose 3, 5, 8, 12, and 15 to fill in the circles in the column under the letter G.

- Explain how the game is played by saying:

I will draw one number at a time from this container. As I draw each number, look at your Grief Bingo card to see if you have written that number on your card. If you have that number on your card, raise your hand. I will call on you to complete the sentence written

WIN T H



#1 - #15

#16 - #30

#31 - #45

#46 - #60

#61 - #75

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone whom I admire is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> One thing I like about my best friend is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> My favorite subject is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> A trait I would like to improve is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> The best thing about my family is ... |
|--|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something I could teach someone else is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> My best trait is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> Something I can do to raise my self-esteem is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> I am good at ... | <input type="checkbox"/> The best thing about school is ... |
|---|--|---|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to compliment (GROUP MEMBER'S NAME) by saying ... | <input type="checkbox"/> Something a friend did that helped me out is ... | FREE SPACE BINGO | | <input type="checkbox"/> Something I would like to do better is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> If I could visit any place in the world, I would go ... |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> If I could spend a day with anyone, it would be ... | <input type="checkbox"/> If I had \$500.00, I would ... | <input type="checkbox"/> My idol is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> I helped a friend out by ... | <input type="checkbox"/> Some advice I would give to someone younger is ... |
|---|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something that wears me out is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> My favorite place is ... | <input type="checkbox"/> If I were older, ... | <input type="checkbox"/> If I could be anything I wanted, I would be ... | <input type="checkbox"/> I wish ... |
|--|--|--|---|--|

SESSION 6

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

Purpose:

To encourage students to set goals for academic improvement

Materials Required:

For the leader:

- ❑ *Group Opening* (page 9)
- ❑ *Group Rules* (page 10)
- ❑ Materials for *Energizer 6* (page 25)
- ❑ Chalkboard and chalk or dry-erase board and marker

For each student:

- ❑ Student's folder
- ❑ *Goals* (from Session 5)
- ❑ *Specific-Subject Goals* (page 210)
- ❑ Pencil

Preparation:

Read the instructions for *Energizer 6*. Gather and prepare the necessary materials.

Make a copy of *Specific-Subject Goals* for each student.

Session Content:

- Give each student his/her folder.
- Select a student to read the *Group Opening*.
- Pass the *Group Rules* around. Have each student read one rule aloud until all of the rules have been read.

- Present *Energizer 6*.
- Review the criteria for setting goals using the *Goals* sheet from Session 5.
- Introduce short- and long-term goals by saying:

There are short-term and long-term goals. Can you tell me the difference? (Short-term goals are ones you can achieve in the near future—in a day, a week, or a few months. Long-term goals are ones you can achieve over a longer period of time—one semester, one year, five years, or more. Long-term goals are most often our most meaningful and important goals.)

What would be an example of a short-term goal? (Getting good grade on a test, etc.)

What are some examples of long-term goals? (Making the basketball team, working toward a future career, etc.)

- Emphasize the importance of goal-setting by saying:

Setting goals helps you learn new things, acquire new skills, or improve upon existing skills.

It is important to recognize obstacles that could stand between you and your goal so that you can overcome or