

Section I

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Develop a better understanding of one's own needs and ways to meet them.
2. Recognize your own behaviors and thoughts that create inner conflicts and that interfere in relationships.
3. Replace negative, self-defeating thoughts and behaviors with more positive self-adaptive thoughts and behaviors.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO CLIENTS WHO ARE CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | Beating Self-Defeating Beliefs | Page 42 |
| • Codependence | I'm Not in Kansas Anymore | Page 114 |
| • Depression | There's Always a Sunrise | Page 130 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Codependence

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

When children grow up in an alcoholic home, they tend to learn to fear emotional abandonment, have trouble trusting others, and are unable to express their own feelings, wishes, or needs. As a result, they will learn to identify with a particular role. This role, frequently, follows them into adulthood. In a group setting, members can be extremely helpful in pointing out when others are acting out their assigned roles. The goal, however, is for individual members to improve their self-monitoring skills and recognize it themselves. They then need to learn ways to change. The following exercise is designed to help group members identify and recognize when they are engaging in such roles, as well as what to do about it.

Exercise I.A

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

The following exercise is designed to help you identify when you are acting out a role and what you can do to change.

1. Describe the characteristics of many adult children of alcoholics.

2. Pick out characteristics with which you tend to identify most.

3. Are you more like the *placater*, *adjuster*, *responsible one*, or the *acting-out child*? Why do you think so?

4. Describe times when you have engaged in these behaviors.

Exercise I.A

5. Keep track this week of times when you engage in such role behavior and the thoughts and feelings that occur during such times.

Behavior	Day/Time	Thought	Feeling

6. Pick two or three of the situations in no. 5 and describe what you wanted to do or say but didn't.

7. Review the "Thoughts" column in no. 5. For each negative thought, write a more adaptive and positive thought.

Negative/self-defeating thought	Positive thought

WHAT CAN I CONTROL? WHAT DO I NEED?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Recognize situations in which you do have control and those in which you do not.
2. Identify feelings associated with situations in which you do have control and those in which you do not.
3. Develop a sense of boundaries and ways to take care of oneself.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO CLIENTS WHO ARE CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | Beating Self-Defeating Beliefs | Page 42 |
| • Codependence | I'm Not in Kansas Anymore | Page 114 |
| • Depression | There's Always a Sunrise | Page 130 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Codependence

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

This exercise is designed to help individuals break away from the pattern of trying to please others so much that they have forgotten about themselves and their own needs. Control is a central issue with this problem. By helping individuals figure out the process of how they end up doing so much for others, they can also learn how to start accepting what they can control and what they don't have to try to control.

Exercise I.B

WHAT CAN I CONTROL? WHAT DO I NEED?

If you are tired of trying to please others so much that you have forgotten about who you are, this exercise can help. Learning what you can control and what you cannot is a key ingredient to changing this pattern.

1. Make a list of at least 10 activities that you do for yourself (e.g., take a bubble bath, get your nails done, go out to dinner, etc.).

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____

2. Keep track of what you do. Was that for me or for someone else? Ask yourself if you were in control.

Behavior	Me or someone else?	Was I in control?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Exercise I.B

3. Review your list and describe how you felt in each situation.

Often, it is helpful to evaluate our behavior to see if we are being true to ourselves. Sometimes, we find that we do things either out of habit or a need to avoid conflict. For this next part, the goal is to begin challenging the reasons for your behavior.

4. Keep track of times when others ask you to do something and you do it despite really not wanting to. Be as honest with yourself as you can.

Behavior	If I did not do this, what would happen?
<hr/>	<hr/>

5. Ask two or three others if they agree with your answer to “what would happen?”
6. In each of the preceding situations, describe what you were hoping to control (e.g., “I didn’t want them to think badly of me”).

7. Try turning someone down the next time they ask you to do something. Describe what happens.

WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT THAT!

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Members give voice to the feelings and thoughts that they've held in because of the "Don't talk" rule in the family.
2. Members acknowledge the feelings that are associated with the times when they kept quiet or broke the rule.
3. Members recognize how they continue the "Don't talk" rule nowadays.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO CLIENTS WHO ARE CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | Beating Self-Defeating Beliefs | Page 42 |
| • Codependence | I'm Not in Kansas Anymore | Page 114 |
| • Depression | There's Always a Sunrise | Page 130 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Codependence
- Incest

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

In most situations, children of alcoholics grew up with the family rule of "Don't talk about it." Secrecy is a key factor to any kind of abuse continuing, whether it be alcoholism, drug abuse, or child abuse. Living by this rule teaches children to disregard feelings of uncomfortableness ("This doesn't feel right but no one talks about it. I guess I shouldn't feel this way"). This can continue into adulthood and lead to many adults having difficulty with speaking up for themselves and taking care of having their own needs met.

Exercise I.C

WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT THAT!

How many times have you swallowed your feelings and thoughts? Want to stop? Complete the following exercise as a way of learning to have a voice for your thoughts and feelings. P.S.—You can talk about it!

1. Recall and record times when you felt uneasy in your family.

2. What feelings did you have back then? What feelings do you have now as you are thinking about it?

3. Write down what you were saying to yourself but rarely, if ever, said out loud. Or think about what you would say now.

4. During this week, pay attention to times when you feel as if “I can’t or shouldn’t talk.” Write about these situations, and your fears or other feelings.

5. In your next group session, discuss your experiences, thoughts, and feelings.

Section II

AGORAPHOBIA/PANIC

WHEN IS THIS GOING TO HAPPEN?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. To learn what happens when panic strikes.
2. To develop more control over the fear of panic attacks.
3. To reduce the incidence of panic attacks.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO AGORAPHOBIA/PANIC

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | What Happens When I Feel Anxious? | Page 36 |
| • Depression | My Feelings Journal | Page 123 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | Let's Float with It | Page 212 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Phobias—Specific/Social

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Agoraphobia and panic attacks can be devastating. The fear of being panic-stricken is overwhelming. Individuals need to learn the triggers to panic and how to regain control of their lives. Explain to the group the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and the role of avoidance as a maintenance factor. The following exercise will help group members become familiar with their pattern of avoidance based on their fears. Before giving this exercise, you may want to introduce or review diaphragmatic breathing.

Exercise II.A**WHEN IS THIS GOING TO HAPPEN?**

Wouldn't it be great to be able to predict and change the circumstances around when a panic attack is going to occur? You will be able to do this soon. One of the first steps, however, is being able to identify when it has happened in the past and what the circumstances were at that time. This exercise will help you to identify those circumstances.

Think of the last time when you had a panic attack or feared that you were going to have one.

1. Where were you?

2. Who was nearby?

3. Describe what was happening before you started feeling anxious.

4. Were you breathing up in your chest and throat or down in your belly?

5. How fast were you breathing? ____ A little fast ____ Somewhat fast ____ Very fast
6. List any other physical sensations you felt (e.g., sweating, dizziness, shakiness, nausea).

7. What were some of your thoughts (e.g., "I'm going to panic," "I can't _____," "I'm going to have a heart attack")?

8. What did you do (e.g., sat on the couch and turned on the television, had a cigarette)?

BREAKING MY PANIC CYCLE

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Reduce the incidence of panic attacks.
2. Take control over panic symptoms and learn ways to redirect and eliminate them.
3. Replace anxiety-provoking thoughts with more adaptive and self-affirming thoughts.
4. Replace avoidant and anxiety-reinforcing behaviors with assertive and anxiety-reducing behaviors.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO AGORAPHOBIA/PANIC

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | What Happens When I Feel Anxious? | Page 36 |
| • Depression | My Feelings Journal | Page 123 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | Let's Float with It | Page 212 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Phobias—Specific/Social

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

This exercise should follow the “When Is This Going to Happen?” assignment, in which each group member learned the surrounding circumstances to when he/she experiences panic. In the current exercise, each group member will be applying the information from that exercise to understand what his/her panic cycle is. The member will then be able to change and break that cycle.

Exercise II.B

BREAKING MY PANIC CYCLE

Apply the information that you learned from the exercise, “When Is This Going to Happen?,” to determine your panic cycle. The panic cycle essentially involves three steps that follow an emotional or physical trigger to anxiety/stress. When you experience stress or are faced with having to do something with which you are uncomfortable, anxiety results. This is when the panic cycle begins. Step 1 develops after the experience of a stressor. This step involves the physical sensations (e.g., shortness of breath, trembling) that you experience. Step 2 is the negative and catastrophic thoughts that go through your mind. Step 3 is the avoidance behavior you engage in to decrease the physical symptoms and negative thoughts or the panic attack that result. This exercise is designed to help you break that panic cycle.

1. List the emotional or physical trigger(s) that lead you to feel stress/anxiety.

Over the next week, when these or other emotional/physical triggers occur, use the following chart to keep track of what you do (physically and cognitively) and what you can do differently.

2.

Physical sensations of anxiety (e.g., dizziness, trembling, shortness of breath)	What I can do (e.g., deep breathing, visualization, journal)
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Exercise II.B

3. Negative thought (e.g., "I'm going to have a heart attack")

Alternative thought (e.g., "I've survived this before, I will survive it now")

4. Avoidance behavior (e.g., Sat on couch and smoked a cigarette)

Challenging behavior (e.g., review list of "What I can do")

5. Result (e.g., "I stayed home alone, and my friends went on without me")

Result (e.g., "I took charge and reduced my anxiety")

FACING FEARS—PART ONE

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Increase feelings of power over anxiety and fears.
2. Develop a plan of desensitizing yourself to your fears.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO AGORAPHOBIA/PANIC

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | What Happens When I Feel Anxious? | Page 36 |
| • Depression | My Feelings Journal | Page 123 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | I Can Picture It | Page 207 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | Let's Float with It | Page 212 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Anxiety
- Phobias—Specific/Social
- Shyness

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Group members need to be able to apply the strategies that they have learned from the previous exercises to any other anxiety-provoking situation or experience. Talk to them first about the top 5 to 10 situations that create anxiety for them. Have them rate each situation on a personal anxiety rating scale (0 to 10). Ask them to list the situations from lowest to highest and explain that this is their anxiety hierarchy. Explain that they will need to utilize their skills of deep breathing and visualization to face each situation and reduce the anxiety rating level. Review with them the concepts and principles of systematic desensitization. After practicing this in the group, assign them the following exercise.

Exercise II.C**FACING FEARS—PART ONE**

In certain situations, anxiety is a very positive emotion. For example, anxiety keeps you aware of when you need to pay your bills, or to dress nice, or to study so that you can do well on a test. When you experience too much anxiety, you can begin to feel trapped. To set yourself free of anxiety, you must learn to face your fears. With the help of your support network and the skills that you have learned in your group sessions (i.e., deep breathing and visualization), you cannot only face your fears, but also overcome them. The following exercise is designed to help you get started.

1. Construct a hierarchy of situations and experiences from least to most anxiety provoking. Rate each situation or experience on a personal anxiety scale (0 to 10). Each situation or experience may need to be broken down into steps. For example, one anxiety situation might be walking around the block. The first step may be picturing yourself opening the front door. Step 2 would be picturing yourself spending a few minutes outside on the front step. Step 3 could be imagining yourself walking to the sidewalk. Step 4 could be imagining yourself walking to the corner. Step 5 could be imagining yourself walking halfway around the block. Step 6 could be picturing yourself walking all the way around the block. Constructing your hierarchy should be done in-group and reviewed by your therapist before you try it at home.

Anxiety-provoking situation	Rating
10. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
1. _____	_____

Exercise II.C

2. Picture level 1 of your hierarchy. Describe the situation to yourself. Imagine it as vividly as you can. What are you thinking, doing, and feeling? Who is with you? What are they doing? Once you have the picture in your mind and can fully imagine the situation, start to practice your coping skills of deep breathing, visualization, and positive self-talk. Continue this until your rating of this situation decreases to zero or to no higher than one.
3. Do this every day, and do not move on to the next level in the hierarchy until the lower level no longer produces a personal anxiety rating above one.
4. Journal about your attempts each day and discuss in your next group session.

FACING FEARS—PART TWO

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Increase feelings of power over anxiety and fears.
2. Be able to confront and overcome your fears.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO AGORAPHOBIA/PANIC

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | What Happens When I Feel Anxious? | Page 36 |
| • Depression | My Feelings Journal | Page 123 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | I Can Picture It | Page 207 |
| • Phobias—Specific/Social | Let's Float with It | Page 212 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Phobias—Specific/Social
- Shyness

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

This exercise is an extension of the previous one. The difference is that this exercise is asking the group members to apply the skills of deep breathing, positive self-talk, visualization, and so forth to face and overcome their fears.

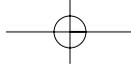
Exercise II.D**FACING FEARS—PART TWO**

This exercise is an extension of “Facing Fears—Part I.” Instead of imagining the fears in your hierarchy, this time you will be facing and confronting each fear directly. Take a deep breath, you can do this. Remember the skills you have learned (e.g., deep breathing, positive self-talk, and visualization).

1. Review the hierarchy of situations and experiences from least to most anxiety provoking that you constructed in the exercise “Facing Fears—Part I.”
2. Break each level down into steps like before. Make a chart like the one that follows to help you.

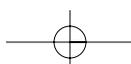
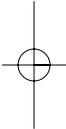
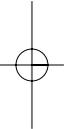
Level 1	Be able to walk around the block.
Step 1	Open door and look outside for five minutes.
Step 2	Walk out to the curb.
Step 3	Walk to the corner.
Step 4	Walk halfway around the block.
Step 5	Walk all the way around the block.

Level 1	
Step 1	
Step 2	
Step 3	
Step 4	
Step 5	



Exercise II.D

3. Remember to use the coping skills of deep breathing, visualization, and positive self-talk.
4. Continue to face each fear until your rating of this situation decreases to zero or no higher than three.
5. Journal about your attempts each day and discuss in your next group session.



Section III

ANGER CONTROL PROBLEMS

ANGER LOG

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Identify the physiological, cognitive, and behavioral signs of anger.
2. Get a sense of how often you become angry.
3. Get a sense of what situations trigger feelings of anger.
4. Begin to develop a sense of how others perceive your anger.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANGER

- Assertiveness Deficit Is It Passive, Aggressive, or Assertive? Page 46
- Domestic Violence Offenders When Do I Need a Break? Page 133

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anxiety

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

When people become angry, it is important for them to become aware of their bodily reactions, thought patterns, and actual behaviors. By increasing their awareness of these factors, group members can begin to take control and reduce them. The following exercise will help group members keep track of what triggers their anger, as well as what they think about and do when they become angry.

Exercise III.A

ANGER LOG

For you to change what happens when you become angry, you first need to get in tune with your bodily reactions and thoughts, as well as what you actually do when you become angry. Once you get a handle on these three factors, how you want to change can then be planned. The following exercise will help guide you through what happens when you become angry.

1. During the next week or so, think about the times you become angry, and answer the following questions with a *yes* or *no*.

When I was angry, I noticed that my heart was pounding harder, faster, or louder.

When I was angry, I noticed that my muscles felt tense or tight.

This was especially true for my (indicate the part of your body).

When I was angry, I noticed that my skin felt hotter or became red.

When I was angry, I could feel the adrenaline rushing through my body.

Describe any other physiological reaction when you were angry.

Exercise III.A

2. Use the following charts to log the times that you become angry.

Date	Time	Situation (describe what was going on)

Rating of anger	Anger-triggering thoughts (describe what was going through your mind)	Angry behavior (describe what you did)

IS IT ANGER OR AGGRESSION?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Identify your anger cycle.
2. Develop an understanding of the difference between feeling angry and acting aggressively.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANGER

- Assertiveness Deficit Is It Passive, Aggressive, or Assertive? Page 46
- Domestic Violence Offenders When Do I Need a Break? Page 133

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anxiety

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

A key issue in helping individuals to control their anger is helping them to understand the difference between feeling angry and acting aggressive. Many individuals who are confronted about their anger misperceive or misunderstand that the problem is not that they feel angry, but that they are aggressive. It is important to explain that all feelings, including anger, are okay. However, how we express our feelings needs to be appropriate. This exercise is designed to help individuals get a clearer understanding of how to appropriately express anger. Individuals will need to complete the previous homework (Exercise III.A, "Anger Log") in order to complete this assignment. Before giving this homework, be sure to explain that anger is an emotion or feeling, and aggression is a behavior.

Exercise III.B

IS IT ANGER OR AGGRESSION?

All of us experience feelings of anger; however, we don't all express anger the same way. A common problem is deciphering our angry feelings from our angry behavior. Although feelings are neither right nor wrong, behaviors certainly are. The following exercise will help you develop a clearer sense of whether you express your angry feelings or behave aggressively. Review your anger log to complete the following.

1. Anger results from being or feeling hurt. This can be physical and/or emotional hurt. In reviewing your anger log, complete the following sentence for each time that you became angry.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

Exercise III.B

When I became angry, I felt hurt because _____
_____.

2. Review your anger log and what you did (your behavior) each time you became angry. Answer the following for each time you became angry and describe why it was or was not aggressive behavior.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

Exercise III.B

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

When I became angry I (describe your behavior after becoming angry) _____
_____.

This was aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

This was not aggressive behavior because _____
_____.

Review this assignment with your group.

GO BLOW OUT SOME CANDLES*

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Begin to develop control over your anger.
2. Learn a way to relax more.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANGER

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| • Assertiveness Deficit | Is It Passive, Aggressive, or Assertive? | Page 46 |
| • Domestic Violence Offenders | When Do I Need a Break? | Page 133 |
| • Domestic Violence Survivors | What If . . . ? | Page 144 |
| • Type-A Stress | Where's My Tension? | Page 263 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anxiety

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Because anger can be physically dangerous and can lead to problems in many areas of one's life, it is important for individuals to learn how to redirect and reduce such feelings. Once individuals have learned some of the triggers to their anger and the physiological, cognitive, and behavioral responses to anger, it is important for them to learn how to redirect and prevent themselves from losing control.

*This exercise was first described by Bevilacqua, L., & Dattilio, F. (2001) *Brief Family Therapy Homework Planner*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Exercise III.C**GO BLOW OUT SOME CANDLES****PRACTICE THE EXERCISE AT LEAST ONCE A DAY FOR THE NEXT WEEK**

When feeling the initial signs of anger, practice taking a deep breath. To do so, breathe in through your nose. When you do, picture a balloon in your belly that you are trying to blow up. As you exhale through your mouth, count to three. You can also picture blowing out a candle. Try to blow up 8 to 10 balloons and blow out 8 to 10 candles. If you are still feeling angry and tense after the 10th balloon or candle, practice doing deep muscle relaxation for every muscle group in your body.

Report back to your group on your success in using this relaxation and visualization technique.

MY SAFE PLACE*

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Develop a sense of security and comfort no matter where you are or what time it is.
2. Be able to focus and reassure yourself that you are okay.
3. Be able to access that safe place whenever you feel frightened or insecure.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANGER CONTROL PROBLEMS

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Facing Fears—Part One | Page 17 |
| • Assertiveness Deficit | Is It Passive, Aggressive, or Assertive? | Page 46 |
| • Domestic Violence Offenders | When Do I Need a Break? | Page 133 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anxiety
- Depression

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

When people feel overly angry, they can also feel out of control. To help reduce such feelings, which tend to be circular and self-reinforcing, have them discover a safe place. This safe place will be theirs alone. They can go there anytime they want as often as they like or need. Explain to them that through the use of imagery and visualization, a person can ideally access their safe place anytime, day or night, no matter where they are or whom they are with. This safe place can be a literal or figurative place and represents a place where a person feels protected and able to truly relax without worrying. The following exercise provides a pathway to creating a safe place. Before this task can be assigned, be sure to review deep breathing and basic relaxation skills.

*This exercise was first described by Bevilacqua, L., & Dattilio, F. (2001) *Brief Family Therapy Homework Planner*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Exercise III.D

MY SAFE PLACE

Creating a safe place is ideal anytime you want to escape feeling tense, irritable, anxious, angry, and so forth. It can be a literal place that you have been to or a figurative place that you can imagine. This safe place is yours alone and you have control over when you go there and how long you stay.

Once you have identified a safe place, describe and record as many details as you can.

My special safe place is _____

Describe your safe place. (What does it look like? What does it smell like? How big is it? What is in your safe place? What color is it?)

I feel safe there because _____

When I visit my safe place I feel _____ because _____

Practice visualizing and experiencing your safe place at least once a day over the next week and whenever you feel stressed. Report your experiences in the next group meeting.

Section IV

ANXIETY

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FEEL ANXIOUS?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Externalize feelings of anxiety by recording the contributing factors to being anxious.
2. Be able to identify negative/anxious self-talk.
3. Be able to identify negative/anxious behavior.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANXIETY

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Breaking My Panic Cycle | Page 14 |
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Facing Fears—Part One | Page 17 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Depression

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Anxiety can become a debilitating life experience. Individuals need to understand what happens when they are feeling anxious from a physiological, cognitive, and behavioral viewpoint. In group, review the physiological signs such as shortness of breath, increased heart and/or pulse rate, dizziness, nausea, shakiness, and so forth. Group members should be aware of such symptoms and when they are experiencing them. If they are such, the following exercise will help them identify typical triggers to anxiety as well as their accompanying thoughts and behaviors.

Exercise IV.A**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FEEL ANXIOUS?**

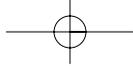
This exercise will help you to recognize the triggers when you feel anxious, as well as your typical thoughts and behaviors. Complete each chart and rate your level of anxiety (0 represents no anxiety, and 10 represents extreme and unbearable anxiety). Once you have completed this exercise, you will be on your way to creating a game plan of how to reduce and conquer your anxiety. Over the next week, use the following chart to record each time that you feel anxious.

Date/time	Describe the situation	Rate anxiety (0 to 10)

When a person has a problem with anxiety, it is very common for him/her to think the worst (e.g., I'll never be able to overcome this). It is also common for him/her to react by withdrawing and isolating (e.g., staying home and not going out with friends) or by engaging in activities that are not healthy (e.g., drinking or smoking).

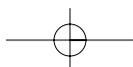
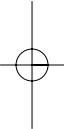
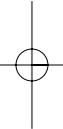
For each of the previous situations described, complete the following two charts.

Describe what was going through your mind when you felt anxious.



Exercise IV.A

Describe what you did when you felt anxious.



WHAT ELSE CAN I SAY OR DO?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Be able to change negative/anxious self-talk to more self-adaptive and positive self-talk.
2. Be able to change negative/anxious behavior to more self-adaptive and positive behavior.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANXIETY

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Breaking My Panic Cycle | Page 14 |
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Facing Fears—Part One | Page 17 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Agoraphobia/Panic
- Anger Control Problems
- Bulimia
- Depression
- Phobias—Specific/Social

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

This exercise is to follow the exercise “When Is This Going to Happen?” (see Section II). Review that exercise with the group, and brainstorm a list of alternative thoughts and behaviors that each person can rely on when they feel anxious. Have group members complete the chart in this exercise and use it throughout the week whenever they feel anxious. When they use it, instruct them to rate the effectiveness of each alternative thought and/or behavior they try.

Exercise IV.B**WHAT ELSE CAN I SAY OR DO?**

During your session, you should use the first chart to identify a list of alternative thoughts, which you can try out the next time you feel anxious. After each one that you try, rate how effective you felt it to be on a scale of 0 (representing no anxiety) to 10 (representing uncontrollable and overwhelming anxiety). Repeat this same process as it applies to anxious behaviors.

List of alternative thoughts to say to myself:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Use the following chart to record the thoughts that go through your mind when feeling anxious and a rating of how anxious you feel. Also, record an alternative thought that is more adaptive and positive, and rate your level of anxiety again.

These were my negative/anxious thoughts.	Rating (0 to 10)	This is what I will say to myself instead.	Rating (0 to 10)

Exercise IV.B

List of alternative behaviors that I can do when feeling anxious:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Use the following chart to record the behaviors in which you engage when feeling anxious and a rating of how anxious you feel. Also, record an alternative behavior, which is more adaptive and positive, and rate your level of anxiety again.

These are the negative/anxious behaviors I usually do (or did).	Rating (0 to 10)	This is what I will do instead.	Rating (0 to 10)

These charts can be used whenever you are feeling anxious and want to regain control of your life. In your next group meeting, discuss your experiences in trying the alternative thoughts and behaviors.

BEATING SELF-DEFEATING BELIEFS

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Identify when self-defeating beliefs are interfering and fueling anxiety-provoking thinking.
2. Learn ways to challenge self-defeating beliefs, and replace them with positive self-affirmations.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ANXIETY

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Breaking My Panic Cycle | Page 14 |
| • Agoraphobia/Panic | Facing Fears—Part One | Page 17 |
| • Depression | Taking Charge of Your Thoughts | Page 126 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Bulimia
- Codependency
- Depression

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Individuals dealing with anxiety are often faced with negative and self-defeating beliefs (e.g., “If people see who I really am, they won’t be my friend/won’t like me,” or “I don’t deserve to be happy,” or “I could never travel by plane, it’s not safe”). These beliefs often lead to and fuel other anxiety-provoking cognitions (e.g., “Things will never get any better”). It would be helpful for group members to review and make a list of the common cognitive distortions in which they engage. Individuals also need to learn how these beliefs and thoughts prevent them from living satisfying and healthy lives. The following exercise is designed to help them challenge such distorted thinking and beliefs by replacing them with positive self-affirming thoughts.

Exercise IV.C**BEATING SELF-DEFEATING BELIEFS**

This exercise is designed to help you challenge the negative types of thoughts and beliefs you have that fuel feelings of anxiety. After you have reviewed and made a list of the various types of negative and self-defeating beliefs you think about, complete the following exercise to learn how to challenge and beat them.

Over the next week or so, record times you catch yourself thinking about your negative and self-defeating beliefs. Use the following chart to describe the situation in which you were thinking this way. Record the belief and rate the level to which you agree and believe in that particular thought or belief. A rating of 0 represents that you do not believe in that belief at all, and a rating of 10 represents that you totally and completely agree with and believe in that belief.

Describe the situation	Record your self-defeating belief	Rating

Use the following chart to practice replacing the negative self-defeating belief or cognition with a self-affirming statement. Once you have recorded this more positive and self-adaptive statement, rate your belief in it. A rating of 0 represents no belief in that statement, and a rating of 10 represents 100 percent agreement and belief in that statement.

Exercise IV.C

Positive self-affirming statement	Rating

The more you practice this exercise, you should notice greater and greater agreement in the positive self-affirming statements and less belief in the negative self-defeating beliefs. Share your experiences and struggles in doing this exercise with the other group members.

Section V

ASSERTIVENESS DEFICIT

IS IT PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE, OR ASSERTIVE?

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Develop a clearer understanding of what it means to be assertive, passive, and aggressive.
2. Be able to cite examples that depict assertive, passive, and aggressive behaviors.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ASSERTIVENESS DEFICIT

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | Beating Self-Defeating Beliefs | Page 42 |
| • Codependence | I Feel . . . | Page 117 |
| • Shyness | What Comes after Hi? | Page 242 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Anger Control Problems
- Codependency

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

Individuals who lack assertiveness will respond to situations either passively or aggressively. Usually, aggressive behavior occurs after being passive for a long while and then no longer being able to “take it.” Individuals who lack assertiveness need to understand not only what it means to be assertive but also what it means to be passive or aggressive. In a group session, process the differences of each behavior by defining and acting it out (e.g., role-play or model). Once each member has a clear understanding of the differences, suggest the following exercise, which will help them to recognize these behaviors in their daily life.

Exercise V.A

IS IT PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE, OR ASSERTIVE?

For you to develop assertiveness, it is important to understand not only what it means to be assertive but also what it means to be passive or aggressive. After you have discussed such differences in treatment, complete the following exercise.

Define each of the following:

To be passive means to _____

An example of someone being passive is _____

To be aggressive means to _____

An example of someone being aggressive is _____

To be assertive means to _____

An example of someone being assertive is _____

Over the next week, use the following format to track your behavior. Record the date and describe the situation surrounding your behavior first, and then describe how you responded or acted. Tell whether you were passive, aggressive, or assertive and why you think so. If you did not respond in an assertive manner, describe why and how you could next time.

Exercise V.A

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Exercise V.A

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Exercise V.A

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Date: _____

Situation: _____

What I did in this situation: _____

This was _____ because _____

If this was not an assertive response, describe what prevented you from being assertive (e.g., thoughts, fears such as "he or she would get mad at me," or "he or she would not like me," or "it wouldn't have made a difference"). _____

Describe how you could have responded in an assertive manner if you did not have those negative thoughts or fears. _____

Review this with your group.

IT'S OKAY TO BE ASSERTIVE

GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Identify the fears that individuals have when it comes to being assertive.
2. Learn ways that individuals can overcome their fears of being assertive.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO ASSERTIVENESS DEFICIT

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| • Anxiety | Beating Self-Defeating Thoughts | Page 42 |
| • Codependence | I Feel . . . | Page 117 |
| • Shyness | What Comes after Hi? | Page 242 |

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN WHICH THIS EXERCISE MAY BE USEFUL

- Codependence
- Shyness
- Vocational Stress

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCESSING THIS EXERCISE WITH THE CLIENT

This exercise is designed to help individuals begin to recognize what prevents them from being assertive, as well as what they can do about it. In a group session, review some of the common reasons given by individuals to not be assertive (e.g., fear of failure or fear of rejection). Help individuals to identify a list of self-talk statements, which can challenge such fears. Have them also construct a list of responses and/or techniques to demonstrate assertiveness (e.g., broken-record, acknowledgment technique, clouding, slowing the conversation down). Have them discuss and record a description of each type of assertiveness response. Once they have these lists, have them complete the following exercise.

IT'S OKAY TO BE ASSERTIVE

This exercise will help you to challenge the obstacles that keep you from being assertive. Be sure to review your lists of positive self-talk statements and assertiveness responses on a daily basis. Some assertiveness response are as follows:

- *Broken-record response.* A short, clear statement that you repeat continually (e.g., "I need to leave now.").
- *Acknowledgment response.* You recognize and acknowledge accurate and constructive feedback (e.g., "You're right, I forgot to bring home some milk.").
- *Slowing-the-conversation-down response.* This helps you to reduce the pressure of feeling like you have to react (e.g., "That's important and I want to understand what you mean, could you say that again?").

Try a positive self-talk statement and an assertiveness response at least three times over the next week. Use the following format to track situations in which you practiced being assertive and which self-talk statements and assertiveness response you tried. Afterward, rate how effective this was for you.

Describe a situation in which you responded assertively.

What self-talk statement did you use?

Describe your assertive response.

Rate how effective you felt this technique to be.

___ Not effective ___ Somewhat effective ___ Very effective ___ Excellent

Describe a situation in which you responded assertively.

Exercise V.B

What self-talk statement did you use?

Describe your assertive response.

Rate how effective you felt this technique to be.

____ Not effective ____ Somewhat effective ____ Very effective ____ Excellent

Describe a situation in which you responded assertively.

What self-talk statement did you use?

Describe your assertive response.

Rate how effective you felt this technique to be.

____ Not effective ____ Somewhat effective ____ Very effective ____ Excellent

Describe a situation in which you responded assertively.

What self-talk statement did you use?

Describe your assertive response.

Rate how effective you felt this technique to be.

____ Not effective ____ Somewhat effective ____ Very effective ____ Excellent

Share your experience with the group.