**Feeling Sad/Depressed Small Group Session 2: Recognizing Depression**

**School Counselor:** Riverside Brookfield High School Counselor

**Date:** 2013-2014 School Year **Grade:** 10th Grade

**ASCA Student Standards (Domains/Standards/Competencies):**

**Academic:**

Standard B: Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college.

A:B1 Improve Learning

A:B1.1 Demonstrate the motivation to achieve individual potential

**Personal/Social:**

Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

PS:A1 Acquire Self-knowledge

PS:A1.1 Develop positive attitudes toward self as a unique and worthy person

PS:A1.5 Identify and express feelings

PS:A2 Acquire Interpersonal Skills

PS:A2.3 Recognize, accept, respect and appreciate individual differences

Standard B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals

PS:B1 Self-knowledge Application

PS:B1.4 Develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems

PS:C1.10 Learn techniques for managing stress and conflict

PS:C1.11 Learn coping skills for managing life events

**Learning Objectives:**

* Students will be able to identify what they are hoping to get out of the group, as well as acknowledge their fears regarding group.
* Students will be able to describe their depressed feelings to the group
* Students will be able to demonstrate one method of dealing with stress

**Materials:**

Notecards

Pens/Pencils

Sentence Stems Handout

White Board

Dry Erase Markers

**Procedures: (Total time needed:** 60 minutes**)**

1. Begin the session by reviewing the materials/information covered last week. Allow students to ask questions and discuss any issues/feelings that may have come up since the last session.
2. Have group members sit in a circle. To start the exercise, give each group member a notecard and have them write any hopes/expectations that they may have for themselves or the group, as well as any fears involved with participating in this group. Encourage students to write at least three items in each category.
3. Collect the cards, shuffle them, and redistribute them to the students. Have students read the card they received out loud to the group. Record any similarities among the cards read aloud. Have students recognize similarities and discuss how it feels for them to know that others feel similarly. Address any concerns that may have come up within the exercise. Write down any concerns that would not be addressed.
4. Next, hand out the Sentence Stems worksheet. Have students complete the handout. Once completed, have students share their answers. Record all responses on the white board. This activity allows group members to learn that others share their symptoms and that they are not alone. This activity can also allow students to help each other through rough times.
5. Using the knowledge obtained from the last group meeting, have students discuss the different aspects of depression that were noted in the activity. Open the discussion to how students can begin to deal with feelings of sadness or hopelessness.
6. Now that students are aware of their feelings, end the session with a relaxation technique. Instruct students to sit comfortably in their chairs, on the floor, or even lay down. Speak in a calm, soothing tone. Have students close their eyes and eliminate all thoughts from their mind. Instruct students to tighten the part of their body that is tense when they are stressed, or sad. Help them to release all negative energy by having them picture a bright color, such as yellow, when they inhale. This color is bright and represents positive thoughts. When students exhale, have them imagine the color blue to help release the sad, helplessness feelings they may be experiencing. Then have students picture a place in their mind that makes them happy. Keep the students in this happy place for a few moments before bringing them back to reality.
7. Discuss the benefits of relaxed breathing and how this technique may help them to confront their depression.

**Follow Up:**

The school counselor will take any group expectations and try to apply them to future group sessions to accommodate all students in the group.

**References:**

Kamphuis, J. & Kristine, J. (1995). *A treatment group for overcoming depression*. Austin, Texas:

Clearinghouse Editor. <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/clearinghouse/files/TI069.pdf>