

THERAPIST HANDOUT 5.2

**Objectives, Procedures, Client Handouts, Pregroup Planning,
and Sample Round-Robin Discussions**
Group Session 2

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Review members' progress.
- Identify high-risk situations for members based on homework and BSCQ.
- Give homework and instructions for Session 3.

SESSION PROCEDURES

- Introduce session.
- Review and discuss members' completed self-monitoring logs; copy or record data.
- Review and discuss members' answers to Identifying Triggers homework exercise.
- Give members BSCQ feedback profiles and discuss relationship to Identifying Triggers homework answers.
- Have members complete Where Are You Now Scale (Client Handout 3.6) and compare their answers with their answers at the assessment.
- End session: Ask what stood out about session; remind members to do their homework.

CLIENT HANDOUTS

- Exercise: Developing Options and Action Plans (Client Handout 4.8)
- Have the group members' Where Are You Now Scale for them to check where they are at this session.

PREGROUP PLANNING

- Group leaders review what happened at the last group.
- Group leaders decide who will take the lead on which discussion topics (e.g., self-monitoring, homework).
- Prepare and have BSCQ personalized feedback profiles for members based on assessment interview.
- Have new homework for members (Client Handout 4.8).
- Have group members complete Where Are You Now Scale.

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ROUND-ROBIN DISCUSSION

Topic: Review Members' Completed Self-Monitoring Logs for Their Alcohol or Drug Use since Session 1 (Alcohol: Client Handout 3.2; Drug: Client Handout 3.3)

Discussion Focus

- The discussion can start with a group leader saying, "Let's go over the self-monitoring logs and look at everybody's alcohol and drug use in the past week." Follow up by asking a member to begin the discussion, "[Insert client name], give us a general picture of what your alcohol or drug use was like this past week."
- **Note to Group Leaders:** Unless relevant, avoid specific details of a client's drinking or drug use (i.e., do not have members present a day-by-day description, as this takes too much time and usually is not that informative).
- If major changes have occurred or if a member handled a difficult situation and did not use, the group leaders can ask the group how they feel about the group member's change.

ROUND-ROBIN DISCUSSION

Topic: Identification of High-Risk Trigger Situations for Alcohol or Drug Use (Reading: Client Handout 4.5; Exercise: Client Handout 4.6)

Discussion Focus

- Discuss the reading and exercise on identification of high-risk trigger situations for alcohol and drug use, including taking a realistic perspective on change (i.e., Mt. Change) and viewing slips as learning experiences.
- Probe group members' understanding of the reading on identifying triggers of alcohol and drug use (Client Handout 4.5). There are two parts to this exercise: (1) identifying and evaluating personal high-risk triggers to alcohol or drug use and (2) a relapse prevention approach to change and taking a realistic perspective on change.
- A good question leaders can ask about the reading is, "The reading talks about taking a long-term view of change and that there might be some bumps in the road. What do you think is meant by this?"
- Another topic for members is to have them discuss the Mt. Change diagram (see picture in Client Handout 4.5). For example, the leaders could say, "What would you say is the major message of Mt. Change in terms of dealing with your alcohol or drug use?"
- Have clients select and discuss one of their two identified triggers from the exercise: "Let's go around and have each member tell us about one of the high-risk trigger situations they described for their alcohol or drug use."
- **Note to Group Leaders:** As part of this discussion, look for and acknowledge commonalities among members in terms of high-risk situations. Leaders can recognize commonalities with reflections: "So it looks like a high-risk situation for both Bill and Mary is when they are angry. Who else feels at risk when they experience strong emotions?"

Note to Group Leaders: With regard to the reading, members should recognize that for many people change might be associated with slips but that the important thing if a slip occurs is to continue up the mountain. However, it is also essential that the leaders not convey a self-fulfilling prophecy to the group (i.e., that they will have slips). A good way of presenting the concept is to have one of the group leaders ask, "Why do schools have fire drills?" Most members come up with the obvious response,

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“So you’re better prepared if a fire occurs.” The leaders can follow this with, *“That’s the same idea here. Hopefully you won’t have any slips, but it makes sense to be prepared in case they occur.”*

It is also important for group members to recognize that, if slips occur, they should interrupt them early and learn from them. If a group member brings up a slip in group, one of the leaders can say:

- *“Mary, can you tell the group what you think triggered the slip that occurred last Wednesday. What was different about Wednesday?”*
- *“How have others in the group handled a slip?”*
- *“What is another way of looking at a slip than as a failure?”*

ROUND-ROBIN DISCUSSION

Topic: Review Brief Situational Confidence Questionnaire (BSCQ) Feedback and Relationship to High-Risk Triggers (Client Handout 4.7)

Discussion Focus

- Give members copies of their BSCQ Profiles (Client Handout 4.7) that were prepared based on the BSCQ they completed at the assessment.
- Have group members compare their BSCQ profiles with their two individual high-risk situations from the Identifying Triggers exercise. Ask how the two high-risk triggers in their homework exercise relate to their generic BSCQ profile.
- For a majority of members, their BSCQ profiles and triggers from the Identifying Triggers exercise will be similar.
- Point out for those whose BSCQ profiles and triggers are similar that the general BSCQ profile names are a shorthand that can help them more easily identify situations that could trigger future alcohol or drug use and that they should be vigilant in such situations. One of the leaders can ask, *“Why is it important to know the types of situations in which you might be at risk of heavy drinking or drug use?”*

Note to Group Leaders: In the discussion it will help members to recall their high-risk situations if the leaders label the members’ BSCQ profiles with shorthand names of the different BSCQ profiles listed in Table 4.2 (e.g., Good Time profile; Negative Affective profile; Testing Personal Control profile).

ROUND-ROBIN DISCUSSION

Topic: Review of Members’ Completed Where Are You Now Scales (Client Handout 3.6)

Discussion Focus

- Give members the Where Are You Now Scale completed at the assessment and ask them to answer the same questions again but for Session 2.
- *“When you first came in, we asked each of you to rate how serious you thought your alcohol or drug use was on a 10-point scale. How would each of you rate your alcohol or drug use today on that same scale, where 1 = the most serious concern and 10 = no longer a concern?”*
- Have members try to remember what number characterized where they were at the assessment interview on this scale.
- Ask members, *“How did you go from a [# at Assessment] to a [# now]?”*

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- This scaling question is a motivational interviewing technique that allows members to give voice to changes they have made.
 - ◆ As part of this discussion, look for and acknowledge commonalities among members, and encourage them to be supportive of changes others are making.
 - ◆ For members who have not changed, the leaders can ask, “*What would you need to do to move up a number or two?*” or “*What kinds of things have gotten in the way of your changing?*”

**DEVELOPING NEW OPTIONS AND ACTION PLANS HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT
FOR SESSION 3 (CLIENT HANDOUT 4.8)**

Discussion Focus

- Give each member Client Handout 4.8, which asks them to develop new options and action plans for the two high-risk trigger situations they described in the exercise on identifying high-risk triggers associated with their alcohol or drug use.
- Group leaders can say to members, “*This exercise is intended to help you learn how to handle those situations you identified as high-risk triggers by doing things other than using alcohol or drugs. This exercise will ask you not only to come up with some new options you could implement but also to evaluate how well they might work to help you resist using alcohol or drugs. Then you decide which are your best options and develop plans for how to put them into action. The exercise should take about 10 minutes to complete.*”
- Finally, ask group members to complete the exercise at home and bring it to Session 3. Tell them that next week each member will be asked to talk about the options and action plans he or she developed for one of their two high-risk trigger situations.

ROUND-ROBIN DISCUSSION

Topic: End of Session, Wrap-Up, and What Stood Out

Discussion Focus

- **What Stood Out?:** Have each group member and the leaders comment on one thing that stood out in the group: “*We have talked about a lot of things in group today. What one thing stood out?*”
- **Remind Group Members:** (1) to attend all group sessions, (2) to call if they cannot make a session, (3) to continue to use the self-monitoring logs and bring them and the homework exercise to the next session, and (4) that one of the leaders will call the day before group to remind everyone about the next group.

Postgroup Discussion

- The postgroup discussion typically takes about 5–10 minutes.
- Discuss what happened in the group, both the good things and less good things.
- Group leaders should make notes about what they want to highlight in the next session and about anything notable about the behavior of group members.