



THE TEMPLE UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE ON
COMMUNITY INCLUSION
of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities

Adding Recreation to your Coping Toolbox

An 8-Week Protocol

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The majority of efforts to promote community participation are targeted towards consumers and providers employed through community mental health centers. However, encouraging community participation should occur across all levels of service delivery. Inpatient, day programming, recovery centers, and all other levels of care should be developing strategies and facilitating interventions to support consumers to independently participate in the community, particularly in personally meaningful activities.

During the Spring 2016 school semester, two Recreation Therapy Interns worked with The Temple University Collaborative to develop and facilitate programming aimed at increasing community participation for consumers of local mental health agencies. Each intern developed an 8-week protocol with a focus on encouraging participation in community-based recreation. Interns were encouraged to create group sessions that would work either as stand-alone sessions or as 8 consecutive weekly sessions. This project was done under the supervision of a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) at the Collaborative and staff at the sites where the sessions were delivered.

Promoting independent community participation also connects to other goal areas. It was important for the partnering agencies that the developed interventions complemented other agency and consumer goals. The partnering agencies included a short-stay inpatient facility and a Community Integrated Recovery Center (CIRC). The inpatient program focused on supporting consumers to identify coping skills and how recreation can be used as a coping skill. The CIRC program supported consumers to increase physical activity and using the community as a physical activity resource.

Coping Skills

The best coping skills are individual to the person. These series of groups encourage participants to identify personal coping strategies and community-based resources needed to engage in the identified coping strategy. The protocol was intended to help consumers identify coping strategies that would minimize stress and conflict. Due to the nature of the setting (short-stay, inpatient facility) it was important that sessions could be facilitated independently.

Rationale

Unfortunately and unfairly, people with mental illness are still perceived as incompetent and/or hostile (Sadler, Meagor & Kaye, 2012). Without adequate coping skills, these individuals are susceptible to internalizing these negative attitudes, which can hinder feelings of hope and participation in recovery programs (Yanos, Roe, & Lysaker, 2010). Ultimately, these individuals may experience decreased self-esteem and lower levels of social engagement (Lysaker, Roe, & Yanos, 2007).

Coping is associated with resilience (Campbell-Sills, Cohan, & Stein, 2006), which is defined as “a dynamic process wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity or trauma” (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). Higher levels of resilience can decrease the vulnerability to succumb to society’s expectations, allowing individuals to define themselves and to determine for themselves, what their diagnoses mean. This freedom from limiting beliefs can allow those with mental

illness diagnoses to challenge stereotypes and approach new situations with a greater understanding of their strengths and belief in their ability to be successful.

About this program

This program was developed for and facilitated in an inpatient psychiatric hospital, but is thought to be adaptable for various populations and settings. The 8 sessions can be facilitated consecutively or as stand-alone therapeutic activity groups. During each session, group participants were encouraged to share their experiences and the techniques they used to overcome and adapt to struggles in an effort to help other members. Facilitators respected group participants as experts in themselves and their situations. It was the role of the facilitator to elicit coping strategies from participants rather than to teach. Group participants were encouraged to consider the challenges they would face upon release from inpatient treatment and how they would use their coping strategies.

In an effort to help others facilitate the sessions for various populations, suggested modifications are included throughout the protocols.

Following the sessions

Take note! In many of these sessions, consumers either identify their own coping strategies or are exposed to potentially new coping strategies. Pay attention when consumers express interest. These can be integrated into a treatment plan, focusing on developing strategies for individuals to independently access or engage in these in the community. The final resource guide may help you to support consumers to integrate identified coping skills into their treatment and/or discharge plan.

References

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Leisure Brochure

Objective: Participants explore leisure interests, activity participation, and personal leisure lifestyle and discuss how leisure functions as a coping skill.

Staff: 1 staff member to lead the group

Group size: 1-15

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: Paper, colored markers/crayons/pencils

Modification: create the brochures ahead of time - label each section; **Past, Present, Future*

Setting: Group style room with chairs around a table so participants are able to write

Procedure:

1. Invite participants into group room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Have participants introduce themselves, starting with the facilitator
3. Explain the goal of the activity. *"Today we are going to explore your leisure interests, and how they can function as a coping skill."* To do this we are going to create a leisure brochure. (ask if anybody knows what a brochure is).
4. Explain that the brochure they're creating will be based off of past, present and future leisure activities that they enjoy
5. Prompt participants to draw or write what the activity is and why they enjoy it
6. Upon completion, allow time for sharing so that other participants can get new ideas or find things in common with each other

Discussion Prompts:

These questions can be used during or after the activity to initiate conversation

1. Are there any activities that you thought of that you haven't done in a while but would like to do again? Why don't you?
2. How could any of the activities you listed help you to cope with your problems?
3. Do you use these activities? If not, why?
4. How can you find a way to do them more often?
5. Did you like any of the ideas someone else listed? If so, how can you pursue any of these?

Scattergories

Objective: Participants identify emotions they experience when in certain situations and ways to cope with these emotions.

Staff: 1 staff member to lead the group (if available another staff member/aid may be present to help with confusion and difficulty)

Group size: 4-20

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: Paper, pencil/pen, stopwatch or some sort of timer

Setting: Group style room with tables and chairs. 2 tables with chairs, one table for each team.

**Modification: For bigger groups more than two teams may be necessary*

Procedure:

Invite participants into room and prompt them to sit at one of the two tables. Be sure to monitor where participants are sitting so that the teams are divided evenly.

Have the participants introduce themselves and say their favorite TV show, start with the facilitator

Explain the goal of the activity. *“Today we are going to identify certain emotions that are felt in different situations and find ways to cope with these emotions”* To do that we are going to play a version of scattergories.

This version of scattergories is going to be played like this:

The facilitator is going to provide a situation that will create an emotion, the two teams will then list as many (appropriate) ways to cope with this emotion as they can think of.

**Modification: The facilitator should create the situations based on what they know about their clients. The object is NOT to trigger any unwanted emotions/create feelings that cannot be handled in a group session.*

Ex: If the emotion is sadness - coping skills could be: listening to a happy song, taking a walk outside, talking to a friend, writing in a journal, exercising.

The rules of the game are as follows:

Each team will have 2 minutes to come up with as many coping skills as possible for the emotion they decided on. At the end of the round, one team will read off their list (rotate who reads first each round).

When one team reads their answers and the opposite team has the same thing listed, they must both cross off that answer. *(This is solely for scoring purposes, not because it is a bad answer).* At the end of the round whichever team has the most answers remaining will win that round.

After reading the situation to the participants the facilitator should write the emotion on the board so that they have something to refer to during their two minutes.

Emotions that will be prompted in the situations: anger, frustration, sadness, surprised, disgusted, anxious, stupid, jealous, bored, hate

During the game be sure to capitalize on good answers and prompt participants to elaborate on things they listed. Perhaps have them give examples of when they used one of the coping skills.

Discussion Prompts:

1. Have you found yourself in any of these situations or similar situations before? Did the coping skills provided for each situation make sense?
2. Were any of these skills new to you? Can you see yourself using them in your daily life after you leave here?

Luck of the Draw

Objective: Participants will increase social interaction and appropriately interact in group situations by answering questions that correlate to the chosen card

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate

Group size: 2-10

**Modification If you have a larger group, this can be done with partners or small groups.*

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: Deck of cards, whiteboard & marker

**Modification: If a whiteboard is not available, the facilitator can print out a list of questions for everybody to have so they can reference it throughout the activity*

**Modification: If your group is larger and you're using partners or small groups you will need a few decks of cards.*

Setting: Table and chairs facing a white board

**Modification: If you're doing small groups, tables aren't necessary; you may have participants form groups in chairs.*

Procedure:

1. Invite participants into the room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Have participants introduce themselves and their favorite movie, starting with the facilitator
3. Explain the goal of the activity. *"Today we are going to work on increasing our social skills and take a break from the stress in our lives by having a little bit of fun. To do that, we're going to play a card game."*
4. Each person will choose a card and then answer the question on the board with that same number and color
5. Provide an example - the facilitator will draw a card from the deck, hold it up to show the group, find the related question on the board, read the question out loud and then proceed to answer.

**Modification: Questions can be changed based on the focus of the program*

The game will continue until the facilitator runs out of cards or time

Discussion Prompts

1. How comfortable did you feel answering these questions in front of the group?
2. What did you enjoy about this activity?
3. Why is taking a break in your life a good idea?

4. What are some ways you can work taking breaks into your life?

Questions:

- 2: RED Name every person in the room.
BLK What is the name of your favorite pet
- 3: RED Tell us a goal you have for yourself.
BLK Tell us about a goal you have achieved in your life
- 4: RED Pat your head and rub your stomach at the same time.
BLK Pick a group member to pat their head and rub their stomach
- 5: RED Describe yourself using 5 positive words.
BLK Tell us 5 things you are proud of
- 6: RED Tell us about a time you were really happy.
BLK Tell us what your favorite thing to do to make you happy is
- 7: RED Name your favorite song and explain why.
BLK Tell us your favorite type of music
- 8: RED Give 3 people a compliment.
BLK Give yourself a compliment
- 9: RED Name your favorite food.
BLK Name your favorite dessert
- 10: RED Name 3 things you are grateful for.
BLK Name 3 things that make you laugh
- Jack: RED Share a favorite memory with the group.
BLK Share your role model with the group
- Queen: RED Tell us about a time when you felt happy.
BLK Tell us about a time you made someone else happy
- King: RED Try to make your tongue touch your nose.
BLK Make the funniest face you can
- Ace: Pass! You don't have to do anything this time around.

Leisure and Feelings

Objective: Participants will identify leisure activities as being effective coping skills

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate

Group size: 4-10

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: Paper, pens, whiteboard, basket or bag to put slips of paper in

Setting: Table and chairs facing a white board

Procedure:

**Modification - all of the numbers can be altered for group size. For example, in step 4, with a smaller group you can have the participants come up with 5-6 leisure activities. Or in step 6 with a smaller group have the participants come up with 6 emotions.*

1. Invite participants into the room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Have participants introduce themselves and favorite activity, starting with the facilitator
3. Facilitator then introduces the goal and activity. *For example: "Today we are going to work on identifying leisure activities and the positive emotions that we receive from them."*
4. Each participant will have 2-3 slips of paper. The facilitator will instruct the participants to write three of their favorite leisure activities. One on each slip of paper.
5. The facilitator will then collect the slips of paper and set them aside.
6. Next, ask participants to brainstorm feelings or emotions they like to feel. For example: happiness, love, sense of belonging, accomplishment etc. (try to have participants come up with about 8-10 as a group)
7. The facilitator will write these emotions on the board leaving space below them.
8. Next, the facilitator will retrieve the slips of paper from step 4 and have the participants draw one, one at a time.
9. The participants will read the chosen slip of paper out loud describe the feelings on the board that that activity makes them feel.

Discussion Prompts

1. How many of you have felt these emotions at one point in your life?
2. Have you used any of these leisure activities before to feel these emotions?
3. Did you find any new leisure activities to use?
4. When is it important for you to feel these emotions again?

Stress Management

Objective: Participants will identify stressors, emotions and at least two coping skills to help manage this stress.

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate the group.

Group Size: 4-15

**Modification: Can be done individually too.*

Duration: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Materials: Construction paper to represent pizza toppings (pepperoni, green peppers, onions, bacon, ham, mushrooms, pineapple), whiteboard and markers

**Modification: If being done individually, each participant will need a blank pizza handout, pen/pencil*

Setting: Tables with enough chairs for each participant

Procedure:

1. Invite the participants into the room and prompt them to sit at a table
2. Have the participants introduce themselves and state their favorite food, starting with the facilitator
3. State the goal of the activity *“Today we are going to identify stressors, emotions and coping skills to manage these feelings. We are going to do this by making a ‘pizza’.”*
4. Connect the idea of stress being like pizza by stating something like this: *“How many of you like pizza? How many of you have eaten a whole pizza at once? Just like eating a whole pizza at once is hard; trying to manage all of the stress in our lives at once can be hard too. And just like pizza, stress can be cut into pieces.”*

For sessions doing this individually, use handout attached and follow these instructions.

1. Explain to the participants that this worksheet represents their pizza.
2. Start with the crust. In the crust, they are going to list 4-6 things that cause them stress.
3. Next is the cheese. In the cheese area of each slice they are going to list a few emotions that come from this stressor.
4. Last is the toppings. Hand out the toppings and explain that they will represent a way they can eliminate this emotion and manage their stress.

For sessions doing this as a group follow these instructions

1. Hand out toppings (construction paper that has been cut to represent toppings)
2. Draw a circle on the board (to represent your pizza)
3. “Cut” the pizza so there are 6 slices

4. Start with the crust. In the crust, ask them as a group to come up with 4-6 things that have caused them stress.
5. Next is cheese. In the cheese area of each slice, have the group come up with different emotions that they have felt when that stressor is present in their life.
6. Last is the toppings. For this part they will need pencils. Each participant should have 6 toppings. On each topping they will write one thing that they can do to cope with this emotion and manage their stress.
7. After everybody has written on their toppings, have them come up and the facilitator will tape their toppings on the pizza
8. After everybody has handed in their toppings the facilitator will read and discuss some of the coping skills that are listed on the toppings.

Discussion points:

Relate back to the fact that stress can be broken down and by identifying what emotion we're feeling we can address the emotion to eliminate the stress

Family Feud

Objective: Participants will identify coping skills

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate

Group size: 4-20

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: List of questions, whiteboard to keep score

**Modification: the facilitator can make up questions or use the questions attached based on the goal of the group*

Setting: Table and chairs for each team, preferably facing each other

Procedure:

1. Invite participants into the room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Facilitator to go around the room asking for participants name and favorite ice cream flavor
3. Facilitator then introduces the goal and activity. *For example: "Today we are going to work on identifying coping skills we can use in certain situations by participating in a version of Family Feud."*
4. The room should be set up so that there is a table for each team and they should be facing each other, the facilitator can stand in the middle.
5. The game will begin with one question (a silly, unrelated one) and whichever team answers first with one of the correct answers will be the team that gets to go first.
6. The facilitator will then provides the winning team with a question and go down the line asking each team member to provide an answer. *(Ask 4 at a time. Then the next round ask the next 4 etc.)*
7. The team members will get points for each answer by guessing selections that the facilitator has on their sheet. *Be sure that participants know that just because their answers are not on the facilitator's sheet does NOT mean they are wrong.*
8. For the next question it will go automatically to the other team and the facilitator will repeat steps 6&7 for them.
9. After each team has gone that means one round is complete. To start off the next round repeat step #5.
10. The game will last as many rounds as the group has time to do.

Discussion Points:

1. You all listed a lot of great coping skills to handle these situations, have any of you used them before in your life?
2. Have you learned some new coping skills you might like to try?

3. Did you find this activity difficult or did you enjoy coming up with new ideas?

QUESTIONS:

Face Off Questions:

(These questions will be asked at the beginning of each round. The team that “buzzes” in first and gets one of the answers on the list will go first. If neither team gets an answer on the list, call two more people up and ask the same question. These questions do not have point values, the team member just needs to answer with one on the list.)

Name a fruit you don’t buy just 1 of:

Grapes: 2 Bananas: 4 Cherries: 6 Strawberries: 8

Past or present, name a famous New York Yankee:

Derek Jeter: 2 Babe Ruth: 4 Lou Gehrig: 6 Yogi Berra: 8

Name a sport that does not use a ball:

Hockey: 2 Swimming: 4 Biking: 6 Skiing: 8

Name something that people might be afraid of at the ocean:

Sharks: 2 Jellyfish: 4 Sunburn: 6 Drowning: 8

Name a Spanish word that most everyone knows:

Hola: Si: Adios: Buenos dias:

Round 1 Questions:

Explain that these questions are going to be focused on coping strategies. Tell the participants they will be given situations or questions and the answer will involve something that can be used as a coping strategy.

This is something that we can participate in indoors or outdoors

Running: 2 Swimming: 4 Volleyball: 6 Basketball: 8

This is a sport/activity that can be done alone or with a group

Biking: 2 Swimming: 4 Tennis: 6 Hiking: 8

Round 2 Questions:

(For situational questions, be sure to let participants know that their answers aren't wrong just because they're not on the list. Feel free to assign points to well thought-out responses that participants provide even if they aren't on the list)

1. You only slept for a few hours last night and you're really tired. Someone around you is making "mean comments" and you feel yourself getting very frustrated. What are some things you can do to relieve this frustration?

Take a walk: 2 Journal: 4 Excuse: 6 Talk to a friend: 8

You have recently gotten into an argument with a close friend and you're feeling really sad, what are some ways you can help yourself feel better?

Write about it: 2 Call a friend: 4 Meditate: 6 Exercise: 8

Round 3 Questions

What are some free resources in the community available to you when you're feeling like you need to take a break from the stress in your life?

Parks: 2 Libraries: 4 Yoga Classes: 6 Friends: 8

What are some things we can do inside when it's cold and snowy outside to be sure we're keeping our minds and body healthy?

Puzzles: 2 Board games: 4 Exercise video: 6 Read: 8

Round 4 Questions

You have a big interview coming up and you're feeling nervous and anxious. How can you calm these feelings?

Walk: 2 Practice interview w/ a friend: 4

Journal: 6 Meditate/Pray/Spirituality: 8

Nothing seems to be going right for you today and it's only 10am, what are some things you can do to be sure the rest of your day will be better.

Walk: 2 Run: 4 Journal: 6 Deep breathing: 8

Round 5 Questions:

This is an activity/something you can do outside during the winter

Ice skate: 2 Hockey: 4 Running: 6 Snowboarding: 8

This is an activity/something you can do outside during the summer

Swimming: 2 Biking: 4 Hiking: 6 Walking: 8

**Modification: Questions can be changed according to the theme of your program and the likes/dislikes of your participants.*

Group Coping Skills

Objective: Participants will choose coping skills that relate to them

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate

Group size: 4-20

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: paper, pencils, tape

Setting: One table with enough chairs for each participant

Procedure:

1. Invite participants into the room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Facilitator to go around the room asking for participants name and favorite candy bar
3. Facilitator then introduces the goal and activity. *For example: "Today we are going to work on identifying coping skills that are relevant to you as a person"*
4. The facilitator will hand each participant in the group a piece of paper and prompt them to write down one positive coping skill (in big letters, large enough for other participants to read). Each participant needs to come up with a different skill so none are repeated.
5. The facilitator will then ask the participants to tape their piece of paper to the wall in a different area around the room
6. The facilitator will then go around the room and read the positive coping skills out loud for everyone to hear
7. Next, the group stands in the middle of the room and the leader announces a stressful scenario that the participants can relate to. Participants move near the coping skills they would utilize in each situation.
8. The facilitator announces approximately ten scenarios and encourages members to choose a different skill each time.

It is important for the group leader to know the population and be aware of stressful situations they frequently encounter or are likely to encounter.

The activity will continue until the scenarios are completed or the group runs out of time

Discussion Points:

1. Did you feel like there were enough options for you to choose from?
2. Were any of the coping skills listed today ones you've used before (besides the ones that you wrote)?
3. Did any of the coping skills seem unhelpful to you personally? What else could you have done instead?

Coping Skills A-Z

Objective: Participants will identify coping skills and areas to find them

Staff: 1 staff member to facilitate

Group size: 4-20

Duration: 45 minutes -1 hour sessions

Materials: white board, paper to write down participants' information

***Modification: For this program, having a handout already available with common interests is beneficial. Then the facilitator only has to write down and find information for new ideas.*

***Modification: Provide the participants with a piece of paper to write down things that are mentioned that interest them so they can look up on their own time/ask for help*

Setting: One table with enough chairs for each participant

Procedure:

1. Invite participants into the room and prompt them to sit among each other
2. Have participants around the room introduce themselves and favorite thing to do in Philadelphia, starting with the facilitator
3. Facilitator then introduces the goal and activity. *For example: "Today we are going to work on identifying coping skills and where you can find different activities in your community"*
4. Facilitator explains the directions for the activity. *"We are going to be creating a list of coping skills using each letter of the alphabet. While doing this I'd like to discuss different places in the community that you can do these activities so that you have some more information and can complete these things on your own when you leave here."*
5. On the board the facilitator will write the letters A-Z. The participants will come up with at least 2 coping skills for each letter.
6. Throughout the activity as participants are giving answers the facilitator should continue to ask, *"Where in the community can you do this activity, can you share a place where you've done this before?"*
7. The facilitator can then also provide areas in the community that offer certain activities (it is best for the facilitator to either know the area very well or do some research beforehand)

Discussion Points:

1. Have you been to any of these areas in the community?
2. Do you think you'd like to try any of them out?
3. Did someone mention something/somewhere you've never heard of?
4. Does anybody want more information on any of the activities/areas listed above?

Coping Skills: Treatment Planning Form**Consumer ID:** _____

Coping Interest Area	Has used before
	Y/N
Resources needed	Has required resources
	Y/N
Who can I share this information with?	If needed, they would remind me of my coping interests
	Y/N
Places in my community where I could engage in this activity	Knows how to get here
	Y/N
Personal strategy to engage in coping skill	Can independently report plan
	Y/N
Summary to include in discharge plan:	