

Group One

REACHING YOUR GOALS

Skills to Be Taught

- Improving Memory and Concentration
- Setting Goals
- Establishing Priorities
- Action Initiation



COUNSELOR TOOL BOX

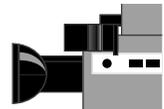
Multi-modal Presentation of Material:

Verbal Didactic presentation of material
Questioning
Group discussion



Visual Visual presentation of major points using slides
Group responses written on flipchart by counselor
Written/Pictorial handouts provided in Client Workbook

Experiential Visual/verbal memory demonstration
Identifying lifetime goals
Prioritizing lifetime goals
Getting started this week
Concentration/memory game
Post-group quiz
Stress management/relaxation technique



Materials Flipchart markers
Overhead projector and slides
Audiotape player and relaxation tape
Clock/timer
Pens/pencils
Prizes
“Loaner” Client Workbooks
Handouts:
Group Agenda
Group Quiz
Lifetime Goals Exercise
Prioritizing Lifetime Goals worksheet
Step-by-Step Planning Worksheet
Action Initiation
Sensory Modality Memory Demonstration worksheet
30 Concentration Game cards (double-sided)
Certificate of Achievement (as warranted)



Reminders Ensure that all material on quiz is covered well during group.
Quiz material is indicated by **QUIZ ITEM** in the text.
Instructions to counselors are provided in **this typeface.**



AGENDA

(Two-hour group: Adjust times based on beginning time)

- 0:00 **Begin Group** (5 mins)
 Introductions – Rules – Time keeper assignment
- 0:05 **Introduction to Topic: “Reaching Your Goals”**
 Addiction as a detour from lifetime goals (5 mins)
- 0:10 **Memory Demonstration (Part I)** (5 mins)
- 0:15 **Prospective Memory** (5 mins)
- 0:20 **Effects of Drugs on the Brain** (5 mins)
- 0:25 **Multi-modal Strategies for Learning** (5 mins)
- 0:30 **External and Internal Memory Aids** (15 mins)
- 0:45 **Lifetime Goals Exercise** (5 mins)
- 0:50 **Discussion** (10 mins)
- 1:00 **BREAK** (10 mins)
- 1:10 **Review** (5 mins)
- 1:15 **Prioritizing Your Goals** (5 mins)
- 1:20 **Strategies for Taking the First Step** (5 mins)
- 1:25 **Game** (15 mins)
- 1:40 **Memory Demonstration (Part II)** (5 mins)
- 1:45 **Quiz and Feedback** (5 mins)
- 1:50 **Relaxation Tape** (10 mins)
- 2:00 **End**

BEGINNING OF EVERY GROUP (5 mins)

- Group members and counselors introduce themselves and welcome new members.
- Group rules are reviewed.

Visual

HHRP⁺
GROUP RULES **RESPECT**

R*elaxation* (complete quiet...no talking, shuffling of papers, or walking around during relaxation exercise)
E*ating* (No eating during group)
S*ober* (don't come to group high)
P*unctuality* (come to group on time)
E*veryone can't talk at once* (no crosstalk)
C*onfidentiality* (what's said in group, stays in group)
T*eamwork* (group members work together towards recovery)

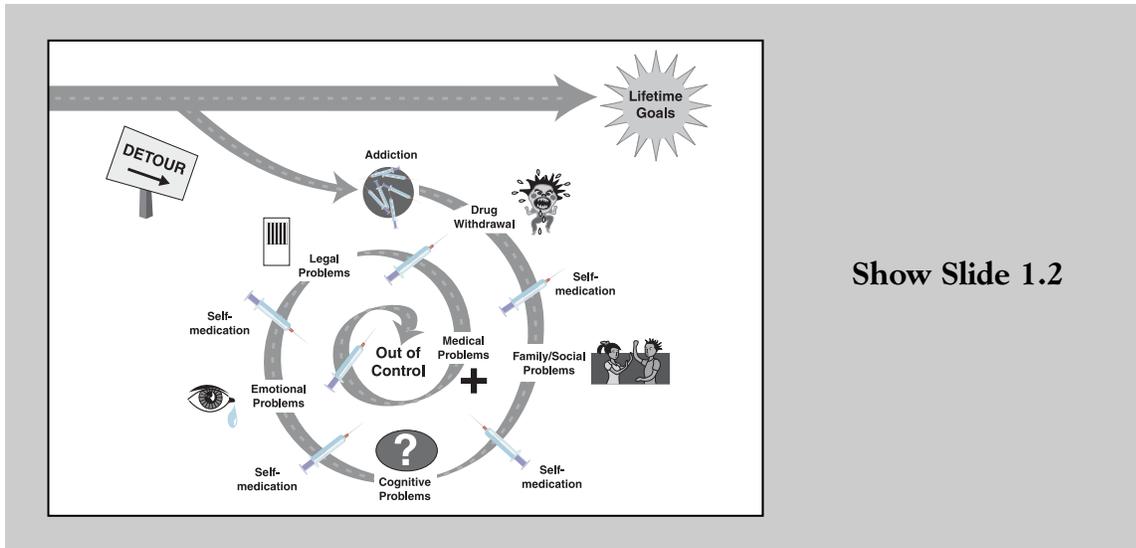
Show Slide 1.1

- Copy of agenda for today's group is distributed to group members.
- Ask for a volunteer to serve as time-keeper (to keep group on track and on time).
- Announcement of any graduates from the group today.
- Presentation of Certificate of Achievement to those who complete in good standing.

Verbal

Counselor provides introduction to today's topic. (5 mins)

The topic of today's group is reaching your goals. Setting and reaching goals is like starting out on a journey. If you keep your eye focused on your destination, make it your highest priority, and work steadily towards it, you can reach whatever personal goal you set for yourself in life. Chances are there will always be some obstacles along the way, but most can be overcome. Drug addiction represents one of the largest barriers to reaching goals because it completely changes your focus and your priorities.



Show Slide 1.2

Imagine that this arrow represents your **life journey**—you set out on your journey, taking your first few steps towards discovering your purpose in life and identifying your lifetime goals. But then you start using drugs. Addiction is a major **detour** in your life journey. When you are addicted, your highest priority in life becomes getting and using drugs. That's number one. Your highest priority is relieving symptoms of withdrawal and craving. Drug users who are HIV-positive may be even more focused on getting and using street drugs because they think that street drugs can provide some temporary relief from HIV-related symptoms or the anxiety and depression that may be associated with being HIV-positive. “Temporary” is the key word, however. Drug use creates its own set of problems that take you farther and farther away from your goals. Furthermore, both addiction and HIV-disease can have a detrimental effect on the very skills that you'll need to meet your goals. It can affect your memory and concentration, your ability to manage time and get organized, and your ability to take the steps towards accomplishing some of the things that you would really like to do in your lifetime. As you can see depicted on the slide, **addiction is a detour that makes you spin out of control in an endless cycle of self-medication.** The goal of this group is to provide you with some tools that can help you get back on track. Today, we'll talk about how to establish priorities, how to take the first steps towards your goals, and we'll provide you with some memory and concentration aids to help keep you on track.

Counselor provides memory demonstration (Part I). (5 mins)

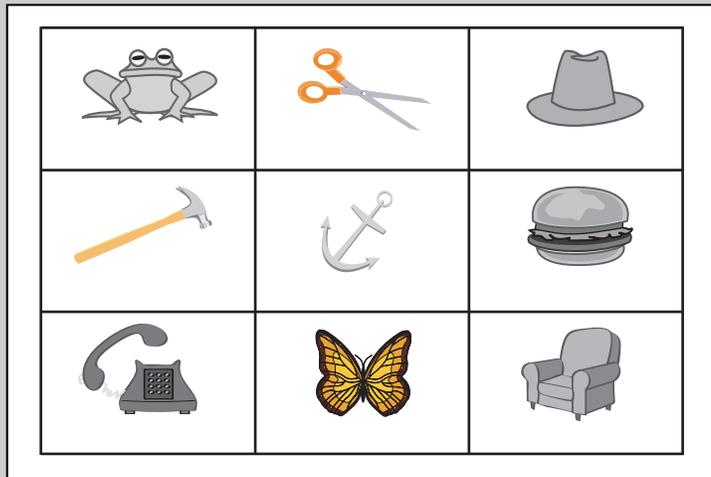
Experiential

We're going to start with a memory demonstration that will have two parts. In the first part, I'm going to present you with a number of different items

and ask you to remember them. While I am presenting these items, please do not say or write anything, just watch and listen. Let's begin: First, I'm going to show you nine items for 15 seconds, and ask you to remember them.

Counselor silently shows slide with 9 items for a total of 15 seconds and then removes the slide.

Visual



Show Slide 1.3

Now I'm going to name nine items. Please listen carefully because I cannot repeat them.

Counselor reads the following items slowly and clearly.
(3 items every 5 seconds for total of 15 seconds)

Snake

Knife

Coat

Screwdriver

Boat

Apple

Computer

Bird

Table

I'll be asking you to recall these items later in the group, but right now we are going to talk about different types of memory.

Counselor covers Prospective Memory as follows: (5 mins)

Verbal

QUESTION: Does anyone know what prospective memory is?

When we think of memory, we usually think of memory for past events. Prospective memory is different. **Prospective memory is the type of memory required to carry out actions in the future.**

The slide is titled "PROSPECTIVE MEMORY" and includes the subtitle "Memory required to carry out future actions". It features a central box with the heading "If Goal is Living a Healthy Lifestyle" and a list of seven items under the prompt "Remember.....". To the right of the box, the text "Show Slide 1.4" is displayed.

Visual

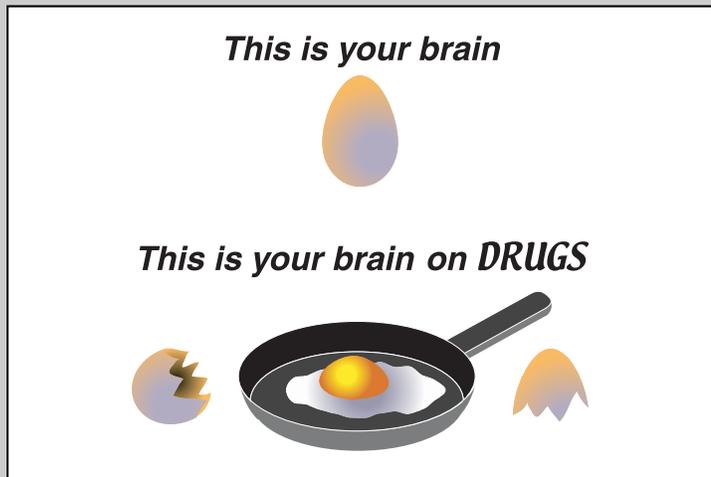
For example, remembering to take your medication this evening, remembering to come to group next week, remembering to go to your next doctor’s appointment, remembering to use a condom next time you have sex, remembering to use a new needle or to clean your needle properly if you make the decision to inject drugs — these are all examples of prospective memory. We are going to concentrate on prospective memory today because it is extremely important in maintaining your health and meeting your recovery goals. Many HIV-positive drug users have difficulty with prospective memory. This may be for any number of reasons. For example, it may be due to HIV infection, but it is probably more likely to be due to using drugs.

Counselor covers effects of drug use on the brain. (5 mins)

Verbal

Remember the anti-drug public service announcement that used to be shown on TV that showed an egg going into a frying pan and said—

Visual



Show Slide 1.5

“This is your brain... This is your brain on drugs.”

Well, here’s the real thing.

Visual



Show Slide 1.6

This really is your brain...and this really is your brain on drugs. The three images you see at the top of this slide are actual brain scans of a non-drug user. The red color depicts the flow of blood to various parts of the brain. It is particularly noticeable in the center image. This is what a normal brain looks like. The three images on the bottom are brain scans of a cocaine user. Notice how little red there is compared to the scans of the normal brain. That means that cocaine users have reduced blood flow to many parts of the brain.

So why is blood flow so important? Reduced blood flow can mean:

COGNITIVE DEFICITS ASSOCIATED WITH DRUG USE AND HIV DISEASE

- ✦ *Learning and memory deficits*
- ✦ *Attention/concentration deficits*
- ✦ *Deficits in action initiation and self-regulation*
- ✦ *Concreteness and mental inflexibility*
- ✦ *Deficits in insight, reasoning, and judgment*

Show Slide 1.7

- Learning and memory impairment
- Problems with attention and concentration
- Problems just getting started and learning how to interpret feedback
- Mental inflexibility
- Poor judgment

The good news is that you can prevent further damage and even possibly reverse some of the damage if you stop using drugs. You should not assume that because you have any of these problems that it is due to HIV and that therefore it is out of your control. There are many things that you can do that are under your control. Being abstinent from drugs is very important, and you've taken a very important first step by getting into treatment. However, in order to gain the greatest benefit from this program and prevent relapse, you will need to learn and remember a number of recovery skills that you will be taught in these groups. Therefore, one of our goals is to help you compensate for any learning and memory difficulties you may currently be having so that you can get what you need from this program.

Counselor describes multi-modal strategies for learning as follows: (5 mins)

Verbal

People learn and remember differently. Some people find it easier to remember what they see, others what they hear, and others remember by doing. This is why all the groups you receive present the material in several different ways—we call this a multi-modal presentation, and we use it specifically to help you learn and remember what is taught in these groups.

Visual

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY HHRP⁺ TO FACILITATE LEARNING

1. *Multi-modal presentation of material*
2. *Review*
3. *Games and experiential exercises*
4. *Memory book system*
5. *Breaks*
6. *Structure and consistency*
7. *Questions, quiz, and feedback*
8. *Stress management training*

Show Slide 1.8

All material is presented to you **verbally**. However, you'll also notice that major points are presented **visually** on the screen behind me. We'll also be asking you **questions** and **writing** on the flipchart. And you may think we repeat a lot, but **reviewing** information is a good way to remember. Another way to learn and remember, and to have some fun at the same time, is **experiential** – we will play a game or provide a demonstration that will permit you to interact with the material being presented on a physical level because some people learn best when they actually engage in an activity. We also use **memory books** (that's your client workbook) which we will be discussing soon. In addition, because fatigue can interfere with memory and concentration, we provide a **break** midway. **Structure and consistency** also aids learning; that's why we provide an agenda at the beginning of group and ask one of you to act as the timekeeper so that we keep on track. Asking yourself questions about material also helps you remember it. That's why we ask **questions** during the group to help you focus on the topic and at the end of the group we give you a brief **quiz with immediate feedback** to make sure we did our job well and that you understand the major points. Finally, before we adjourn, we all do a 10-minute **stress management exercise** because being relaxed and centered is key to learning new information and retrieving old information. It will also be of help to you in handling drug craving. We'll talk more about that in another group.

Verbal

Counselor presents External and Internal Memory Aids as follows: (15 mins)

External Memory Aids

As you will see there are many ways to help improve memory and learning. One method we will be relying on in this group is the memory book system.

An example of a memory book is your Client Workbook. Each of you were provided with your own Client Workbook and were shown how to use it when you began this treatment program. You were asked to bring it to every group. Does everyone have their Client Workbooks? If anyone has forgotten to bring it, we have a few extra here that you can borrow during this group, but please remember to bring yours with you next time. The Client Workbook has sections for keeping your personal information, emergency information, your schedules and appointments, to-do lists, important names and telephone numbers, and information and community referrals provided in these groups. Your Client Workbook is an example of an external memory aid. **QUIZ ITEM**

External memory aids are designed to store information externally and to cue you to take action. Here are some more examples of external memory aids.

MEMORY COMPENSATION STRATEGIES

EXTERNAL MEMORY AIDS

- ☆ *Memory/Client Workbook*
- ☆ *Watch*
- ☆ *To-Do List*
- ☆ *Address Book*
- ☆ *Calendar*
- ☆ *Grocery List*
- ☆ *Alarm*
- ☆ *Map*
- ☆ *Post-It Notes*
- ☆ *Appointment Book*
- ☆ *Bulletin Board*
- ☆ *Item Placement*

Show Slide 1.9

Visual

To-Do List

Watch

Calendar

Address book

Alarm

Grocery list **QUIZ ITEM**

Post-it note

Map

Bulletin Board

Appointment book

Item Placement

Counselor lists the above items, finishing with item placement.

QUESTION: Does anyone know how item placement aids memory?

Counselor begins a discussion of how to structure the environment to aid memory.

- An example of item placement as a memory aid is to place something you need to remember near the front door, or in the same place you keep your wallet or keys.
- Have clock, calendar, and bulletin board hung in places that are easy to see.
- Label shelves.
- Put instructions next to appliances.
- Once the room is set up a particular way, don't change it. For example, don't rearrange the pots, or change where you keep your keys.

QUESTION: Can anyone give me an example of an external memory aid you can use to help you remember to bring your Client Workbook to every group?

Counselor leads a discussion of ways to remember to bring the Client Workbook.

You could leave a note on your refrigerator, you could leave your memory book near the front door, or in the same place as you leave your keys and wallet. Any other ideas?

Counselor writes strategies for remembering to bring Client Workbook on the board and adds additional ideas provided by group members.

Internal Memory Aids

So far, we've talked about **external** memory aids. This slide also provides some **internal** memory aids.

MEMORY COMPENSATION STRATEGIES

INTERNAL MEMORY AIDS

- ☆ **STORYTELLING**
Linking items to be remembered by making up a story.
- ☆ **ORGANIZATION**
Categorize information when learning and recalling it.
- ☆ **FIRST LETTER CUEING**
*Cue yourself by making a word starting with the first letter of each item
(example: HALT = Hungry, angry, lonely, tired = triggers for relapse).*
- ☆ **REPETITION**
Frequently review what you have to do. Over-learning improves memory and increases confidence.
- ☆ **RELAXATION**
Anxiety and stress can block memory. If you forget, do a relaxation exercise and try to remember when you are relaxed.

Show Slide 1.10

Another word for internal memory aids is “mnemonics.” Mnemonics add something to the information to be remembered to make it more memorable. There are a number of different kinds of internal memory aids. On the slide you can see just a few examples:

→ The first example is **Storytelling**:

Some people find it is easier to remember a story than a series of unrelated words. Therefore, to remember a list of tasks, make up a story about them. If you make the story funny or bizarre it will help you remember better. Example: You have the following list of things to do tomorrow:

1. Go to the clinic for **methadone**
2. Fill out a **job application**
3. Go to the **bank** to pay bills
4. Visit a **friend** in hospital
5. Buy **chicken** for dinner

So you have to remember methadone, job application, bank, sick friend, and chicken. Now make up a story: For example, how about this?

“When I was in line for **methadone** this morning, my **friend** told me about this really **sick** dude who dressed up in a **chicken** suit and applied for a job as a **bank** loan officer; figures, he got the job.”

→ The second example of an internal memory aid is **Organization**:

Categorizing information is an effective way to organize and remember information. Example: when trying to remember what you have to do tomorrow, list your activities under category headings, such as: appointments, chores, leisure activities. Then when you recall the category, it will cue you to remember the specific item.

→ The third example is called **First Letter Cueing**:

An acronym is an example of first letter cueing. It makes a word out of the first letters of the items to be remembered. For example: **H-A-L-T** is a word some people use to help them remember triggers for drug use and other risky behavior. **HALT** stands for **Hungry-Angry-Lonely-Tired**.

→ The fourth example is **Repetition**:

Information is easier to recall when it is “over-learned.” Therefore, repeat the information to yourself frequently, and even when you have learned it, review it frequently.

→ Last, but certainly not least is **Relaxation**:

Stress and anxiety block learning and memory. When you have memory difficulties, it is easy to get frustrated and overwhelmed, and these feelings can further impair your memory and learning abilities. It is therefore extremely important to learn how to calm yourself. The relaxation technique we do at the end of every group is a valuable memory tool for you, for many reasons.

QUIZ ITEM If you have a mental block and just can't remember something, take a break from trying to remember, do a relaxation exercise, and try again later when you are more relaxed. Whenever you get overwhelmed or frustrated, it's important to just stop what you are doing, and calm yourself. When you “slow down the action” you can think more clearly.

Verbal

“Slowing down the action” and thinking clearly is essential for setting and meeting your goals. Please turn to the “Lifetime goals exercise” in your Client Workbook. If you forgot your workbook today, you can use one of these hand-outs and place it in your workbook when you get home.

LIFETIME GOALS EXERCISE (5 mins)

Experiential

Counselor distributes "Lifetime Goals Exercise" hand-outs to those without their Client Workbooks.

Materials

- Lifetime Goals Exercise Handout
- Pen/pencil
- Clock/watch

Instructions

On your Lifetime Goals Exercise sheet, list your lifetime goals **before** you started using drugs or tested positive for HIV. Think back. Write down whatever comes to mind, no matter how far fetched it may seem to you now. If you didn't have any lifetime goals or can't remember any, write down some lifetime goals that you **would have had**, if you could turn back time.

Counselor allows 5 minutes for everyone to finish their list.

QUESTION: What does it mean to prioritize your goals?

Answer: To prioritize means to list your goals in order of importance.

QUIZ ITEM

QUESTION: Can priorities change?

Answer: Yes. For example, people who are facing health problems often quickly realize what is and is not important in their lives. What they once thought was important may have low priority now, and what had low priority before becoming ill, may now have high priority. (Example: A man finds out he has heart disease. Prior to the diagnosis attending to his work may have had a higher priority than maintaining good family relationships, and may have taken most of his time, whereas now his priorities have changed and he feels that it is more important to spend time with his family.)

Counselor leads a discussion with the following questions: (10 mins)

Reaching Your Goals

- Have there been any changes in your lifetime goals since becoming addicted to drugs? Since testing positive for HIV?
- Can you accomplish your lifetime goals and still use drugs?
- Why or why not?
- Can you still accomplish your goals and be HIV-positive? Why or why not?
- After the break, we are going to be talking about establishing priorities. During the break, we'd like you to consider the following: If getting and using drugs used to be your #1 priority before entering treatment, what is your #1 priority now that you are in this program?

Break

(10 mins)

Let's take a break now, and start again in 10 minutes. Time-keeper, please get everyone back in time.

Review

After the break, counselor reviews the material covered so far. (5 mins)

Before the break we talked about addiction as a barrier to achieving your goals and causing damage to your brain which results in learning and memory problems that, in turn, can also prevent you from achieving your goals. We discussed prospective memory, which is memory required to carry out future events, and we discussed tools that you can use to improve your prospective memory. We focused on external memory aids, such as your Client Workbook, which is a memory book in which you keep your personal information, to-do lists, calendars, schedules, important names and phone numbers, and where you can keep reference material provided in this program. We also identified other external memory aids such as, grocery lists, alarms, leaving post-it notes on the bathroom mirror or refrigerator, and arranging your environment to help you remember. We also explained why you need basic memory and concentration skills in order to meet your goals. And, before the break, we asked you to write down some of the goals you had before you started using drugs and asked you to consider what your goals are now that you have entered treatment.

Verbal

Counselor presents material on Establishing Priorities as follows: (5 mins)

Now we are going to talk about how to meet your goals.

Visual

**TAKING STEPS TOWARDS
REACHING YOUR GOAL**

1. *Identify your goals (long-term and short-term)*
2. *Prioritize your goals (in order of importance)*
3. *Identify activities necessary to achieve goals*
4. *Prioritize identified activities*
5. *Schedule the activity*
6. *Get started*
7. *Engage in activity*
8. *Identify next activity towards goal, repeat 5-8.*

Show Slide 1.11

The first thing you need to do is to determine which goal has highest priority.

Counselor shows the "Taking Steps" slide and leaves it on throughout the upcoming experiential segment which reviews each point on slide.

The first thing you need to do is to determine which goal has highest priority. Now please turn to the "Prioritizing Lifetime Goals" hand-out in your Client Workbook. Again, if you forgot your workbook today, you can use one of these hand-outs and place it in your workbook when you get home.

Experiential

Counselor distributes "Prioritizing Lifetime Goals" hand-outs to those without their Client Workbooks.

Materials

- "Prioritizing Lifetime Goals"
- Pen/pencil

Instructions

As a member of HHRP+, you've expressed an interest in living a healthy lifestyle. On your "Prioritizing Lifetime Goals" handout, we listed this goal as an example that we can all work on together. Each of you look at your

own list of personal lifetime goals and enter the three that are highest priority to you in the spaces on your handout for goals No. 1, No. 2, and No.3.

Counselor gives group members a few minutes to identify and enter their No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 highest priorities in the designated space on their handouts.

GETTING STARTED

Once you have identified your most important goals, you need to determine how you are going to get started so that you can reach those goals. For the goal which is your highest priority, decide on the specific steps or actions necessary to meet this goal and in what order you need to take these steps. For purposes of demonstration, we provided the example of “living a healthy lifestyle” as a priority for everyone in this treatment program. But that is an extremely large goal with so many possibilities that it may seem overwhelming and unobtainable. We have selected this goal because it is typical of the kinds of non-specific goals that people set for themselves. Therefore, as you will see on the slide and on your hand-out, the very first thing we do is to take this large and complicated goal and break it down into smaller, manageable tasks or activities.

QUIZ ITEM

As you can see on your handout,

Sample Goal: To live a healthy lifestyle

Activities

- Take medications as prescribed
- Stay in this treatment program
- Eat healthy foods
- Remain abstinent from illicit drugs
- Take vitamins
- Use condoms
- Keep doctors’ appointments
- Do relaxation techniques
- Exercise regularly
- Think positively
- Engage in drug-free leisure activities
- Other

Counselor asks group for other examples of appropriate activities that can be written in space provided under “other.”

But what if you still feel overwhelmed? Perhaps the activity “eating healthy foods” is not one step and needs to be broken down into even smaller steps, such as “eat a green leafy vegetable every day.” You need to prioritize the activities needed to reach your goal and to make a plan for exactly how you will begin. We’ll do this next.

Instructions: You’ve identified your goals and prioritized them, but remember every journey begins with a single step. What is your **first** step? You need to select something relatively small, something manageable, something that you can do **this week** that will begin your journey toward your goal. In the space provided on your “Prioritizing Lifetime Goals” hand-out, write in what you can do **this week** that will get you closer to your goal of “living a healthy lifestyle.” Be very specific. The more specific you are, the more likely you are to do it. Use the word “**do**” not the word “don’t.” Many people may be tempted to write “this week I won’t use drugs.” That is certainly an understandable goal, but you will be more likely to accomplish it if you write down an activity you can actually **do** that can help you not to use drugs.

Experiential

Counselor provides examples, such as go to an NA meeting, get an NA sponsor, engage in drug-free activity with non-drug using friend or family member.

If you think of several activities, prioritize them. What’s the most important thing you can do **this week** to move you towards your goal of living a healthy lifestyle?

Counselor provides time for group members to write on their handout the activity they will do **THIS WEEK**. When everyone has written down one activity on their sheet, counselor continues.

Verbal

Counselor describes action initiation strategies. (5 mins)

Some people find that it is easy to identify the activity necessary to accomplish the goal, but find it difficult to get started with the activity, and therefore never reach their goal. Remember the journey towards your goal begins with the very first step. There are several things you can do that will help you take that first step. We are now at step No. 5 on the slide. As you can see, the first thing to do is: **Schedule the activity.**

Counselor refers group members to the “Action Initiation” handout in their Client Workbooks and writes the following on the board:

SCHEDULE THE ACTIVITY

- To-Do List
- Set deadline
- Block out time

1. Write the activity on the **to-do list** in your Client Workbook.

QUIZ ITEM

Experiential

Let’s do this now. Turn to the “To-Do List” in your Client Workbook and write down what you need to do to engage in the activity that you identified in the previous exercise that you are going to do **this week** towards the goal of “living a healthy lifestyle.”

Counselor provides an example, e.g., if the activity was to go to an NA meeting, write “check NA schedule and go to a meeting.” Allow time for group members to make an entry on their to-do list.

If you are not careful, a to-do list can also become unmanageable and you can end up with a list so long that you feel overwhelmed.

Keep your daily “To-Do List” do-able:

- Set priorities for what is to be accomplished.
- Check the to-do list every morning to see what needs to be done first.
- At the end of each day check off what was completed that day, and write what was not completed on the next day’s “To-Do” list.

You cannot expect to reach your goal in a single day; however, it will motivate you to see it on your “to do” list every day, and to see how the steps necessary to achieve the goal are being checked off as completed.

- 2. Set a deadline:** Set a deadline for completion of the activity and mark it on your calendar: Be realistic. Don't set yourself up for failure.

QUIZ ITEM

Turn now to your “schedules and calendar” section of your Client Workbook and mark your deadline for completion of this activity. Because you have agreed to engage in the activity some time during the coming week, your deadline is one week from today's date.

Experiential

Counselor provides time for group members to enter deadline on their weekly calendar.

- 3. Block out time:** Block out time on your weekly schedule to **engage** in the activity during the coming week. **QUIZ ITEM** Select times that are best for you. If others are involved, make sure the scheduled time is convenient for them too.

Turn now to your “daily scheduler” in your Client Workbook. Select a convenient time for the activity you have selected to engage in during the coming week and block out that time on your daily scheduler.

Counselor provides time for group members to select and enter a time block for the activity.

GETTING STARTED

Verbal

That brings us to item No. 6 on the slide—getting started. So now you have your activity scheduled, how will you get started?

Counselor refers group members back to their "Action Initiation" handout and writes the following on the board:

GETTING STARTED

- Reminders
- Self-affirmations
- Tell someone
- Set a time limit
- Relax/visualize
- Act "as if"
- Start anywhere
- Don't expect perfection

- Leave yourself reminders to engage in the activity
- Use self-affirmations (say to yourself "I can do it")
- Tell someone else what you are planning to do so that they can encourage you; don't keep it a secret **QUIZ ITEM**

QUESTION: What if the time for the activity arrives and you just can't get started?

- Set a time limit (contract with yourself to engage in the activity for just 5 minutes). **QUIZ ITEM**
- Relax and visualize yourself engaging in the activity. **QUIZ ITEM**
- Pretend you are an actor playing the role of a person who can engage in the activity.
- You don't have to start at the beginning, start anywhere. **QUIZ ITEM**
- Remind yourself that it doesn't have to be perfect. **QUIZ ITEM**

The **last step** then is to **engage in the activity**. During the week engage in the activity you selected. Then as shown in your handout, there are two more important things for you to do:

Counselor refers group members back to their "Action Initiation" handout and writes the following on the board:

- Engage in the activity
- Congratulate yourself
- Cross it off your to-do list

- **Congratulate yourself.** Acknowledging your accomplishments at each step gives you confidence for the next step. There is no such thing as an insignificant accomplishment. Each step, no matter how small, is absolutely essential for reaching your goal, and therefore of importance.
- **Cross it off your to-do list.**

So that brings us to Step No. 8 on the “Taking Steps” slide. At this point, select the next most important activity on your list that will move you closer to your goal of living a healthy lifestyle, and just repeat steps 5 through 8.

Counselor leads discussion concerning how each group member completed their “Prioritizing Lifetime Goals,” to-do lists, weekly calendar, and daily scheduler.

Discussion

QUESTIONS: Was the activity specific and do-able? Does the activity need to be simplified? Is there sufficient time blocked out? How committed is the individual to engaging in the activity?

Counselor encourages group members to use this process at home to begin moving towards the goals they set for themselves as their No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 priorities.

Game: Concentration (10–15 mins).

Experiential/ Game

Materials

- 30 picture cards (attached)
- Clock
- Prizes (e.g., “fruit or vegetable” fridge magnets to post reminders)

Therapeutic goals of the game (Counselor)

- Improve memory.
- Improve concentration.
- Review activities that can lead towards goal of “living a healthy lifestyle.”
- Encourage teamwork and appropriate social interaction.

Instructions: I'm going to place 15 identical pairs of pictures face down on the table. The pictures are relevant to your goal of "living a healthy lifestyle." I'm going to divide the group into two teams.

Counselor divides the group into two teams.

You are going to take turns. First player in Team 1 turns over two cards and then places them face down again. Everyone takes turns to turn over two cards for everyone to see; the item on the back of the card and the location of the card is to be remembered by the players. If the two cards do not match, the cards are placed face down on the table again (with only the number showing). The goal is for players to remember the location of a matched pair and turn over those two cards when it is their turn (team members may provide assistance to each other). When a player can turn up a matched pair, that pair is taken off the table and the player earns one point for his/her team. The game continues until all cards have been removed from the table or until I call time in ten minutes. The team with the most points wins the game and all the team members win a prize. I will keep track of the points. Player one of Team one goes first, then Player one of Team two, then back to Team one (player two), then Team two (player two) and so forth. The time starts now.

Counselor starts the clock and keeps score. At the completion, counselor announces the winning team and presents a small prize to each group member (e.g., fridge magnet).

SENSORY MEMORY DEMONSTRATION (PART II) (5 mins)

At the beginning of the group we asked you to remember a total of 18 items. Some of them we presented visually and some verbally. I'm going to distribute a hand-out now. On this hand-out please write down all the items you can remember.

Counselor distributes the Sensory Modality Memory Demonstration hand-out. When everyone has finished, counselor provides correct answers, as follows:

Score yourselves as I read the items. No cheating!

Those items I presented visually were:

Frog	Scissors	Hat
Hammer	Anchor	Hamburger
Telephone	Butterfly	Chair

Those items I presented verbally were:

Snake	Knife	Coat
Screwdriver	Boat	Apple
Computer	Bird	Table

On the bottom of your hand-out write down how many you got correct. The point of this demonstration is that people learn differently. Some people learn and remember better the spoken word, while others remember better the written word, and still others remember better by doing something. Did you respond better to visual or verbal presentation of material? Remember, although you are likely to be stronger in one modality than another, when you are trying to learn and remember something new you should use as many different modalities as possible. For example, you may have decided to buy vitamins and fresh vegetables next time you go to the grocery store; if you write the items on a grocery list you will be more likely to remember to get them. Similarly, when you go to a doctor's appointment, you will be more likely to remember everything that is said to you if you also write things down or ask the doctor to write things down for you? The more methods you use to encode the material in your memory, the more likely you will be able to remember on a daily basis the steps you need to take to reach your goal of leading a productive and healthy life.

QUIZ WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK (5 mins)

Quiz

As we discussed earlier, we end each group with a quiz and a ten minute relaxation exercise. I'm going to pass around the quiz now.

Counselor distributes the quiz, and reads the items aloud, providing sufficient time for group members to mark their answers.

Detailed feedback:

Counselor re-reads each item aloud to the group, providing the correct answer after reading each item.

1. Which of the following is an example of a memory aid? The answer is **(d)** all of the above (a relaxation exercise, a grocery list, and your client workbook are all examples of memory aids).
2. When you schedule an activity that will help you accomplish an important goal, you should do what? The answer is: **(d)** all of the above (you should write it on your “to do” list, set a realistic deadline, and block out time on your calendar).
3. Establishing priorities means listing your goals in order of importance. The answer is **(a)** true.
4. When you have several large goals to achieve, what should you do? The answer is **(d)** you should break down each large goal into small manageable tasks.
5. If you can’t get started on an activity, what should you do? The answer is **(c)** relax and visualize yourself engaging in the activity.

**Stress
Management**

STRESS MANAGEMENT/RELAXATION EXERCISE (10 mins)

We are going to conclude by doing a brief relaxation exercise. I’ll be dimming the lights and playing an audiotape. I’d like you to get comfortable in your chair, uncross your legs, and sit quietly with your eyes closed and just follow along with the tape as it asks you to imagine various relaxing scenes. Remember that learning to relax is a skill that takes practice, so if you feel restless at first, just remind yourself that this is a ten minute gift of quiet time that you give to yourself and to the other members of the group. With practice, you can use this technique in many areas of your life. For example, today we talked about how learning to calm yourself can help your concentration and memory and can therefore help you take the steps necessary to reach your goals. When the tape ends in ten minutes you are free to go.

Counselor dims the lights, says “quiet please,” and begins the tape.

END SESSION