

3-S⁺ Group #4: The Spiritual Self in the Medical System

Materials Required

1. Meditative Video Segment, and the equipment required for playing the video.
2. “Tardiness” door sign to be placed on the door at the end of the video: “Entrance to the group room will not be permitted once the video has finished. The video has finished. Please join us next week.”
3. Wall Posters prominently displayed – In large letters ...
 - a. Commitment: “Today I renew my commitment to my spiritual path.”
 - b. The Spiritual Qualities – the spiritual self’s 14 Spiritual Muscles: “generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, effort, tolerance, truth, strong determination, loving kindness, equanimity, gratitude, courage, forgiveness, and serenity”.
4. Timer (for meditation and other timed exercises).
5. Pencils and notepaper for each participant.
6. Tape (to adhere poster paper to the walls, as needed).
7. Paper and easel board with marker for recorder.
8. Tips for being a Patient Patient Hand-out.

Therapeutic Goals

1. To provide a therapeutic context for a cognitive shift from habitual activation of the addict self-schema to increased activation of a spiritual self-schema that has as its focus doing no harm to self and others
2. To increase awareness of the automaticity of schematic processes, such as the addict self-schema.
3. To provide an opportunity for the creation of new cognitive scripts and behavioral action sequences that are consistent with the individual’s spiritual/religious faith.
This session provides the opportunity for ...
 - a. the practice of meditation on the in-and-out breath (to increase the ability to focus attention and still the mind)
 - b. the practice of mindfulness to improve adherence to HIV medical regimens
 - c. the creation of a new cognitive script for the role of ‘patient’ in the medical system.

Begin Group

1. Video

A commercially available meditation video of tranquil nature scenes is played to mark the beginning of each 3-S group session. The purpose of playing a meditative video at this time is to provide a buffer, or transition period, during which group members can begin to detach from their often chaotic lives, in readiness for the activation of their Spiritual selves through the practices of meditation and mindfulness. The video also provides a “tardiness window.” Out of respect for the group, punctuality is expected of group members. However, if group members are unavoidably detained, they will be permitted to enter the group room late only during the playing of the video. Once the

video has finished, the group room door is closed, the “tardiness sign” is placed on the door (see list of required group materials) and any late members will not be permitted to enter. They will, of course, be encouraged to return, on time, the following week. Repeated lateness should be discussed with the client during individual sessions.

Ron Clearfield, “Home,” *Eversound Expressions*, Eversound (2002) (5.51 minutes)

2. Welcome

At the end of the video the therapist places the “tardiness sign” on the outside of the group room door and welcomes all members to the 3-S group [Note: ground rules for the group, if any, (e.g., time management strategies used, policy regarding eating/drinking during group, etc.) may be reviewed at this time.]

Therapist script:

Welcome to Spirituality Group Therapy.

3. Introductions

Immediately following the welcome, the therapist asks group members to introduce themselves, by standing and saying their first names. [Note: as new group members may be added each week, it is important to have all group members introduce themselves every week.]

Therapist script:

Let’s begin by introducing ourselves. One at a time, please stand and say your first name; then remain standing. [Therapist begins]. Hello, my name is

4. Commitment

Following the introductions, while group members are still standing, they are asked to renew their commitment to their Spiritual path by reading aloud the words on the Commitment Statement Poster [“Today I renew my commitment to my Spiritual path”] that is displayed prominently on the front of the group room (see list of required group materials). Group members are then seated.

Therapist script:

While we are still standing, let’s renew our commitment to our Spiritual path by together reading the Commitment Statement aloud. [Therapist points to Commitment Poster]. All together ... Today I renew my commitment to my spiritual path.

5. Overview of 3-S development program philosophy: The therapist provides the following overview each week:

Therapist script:

Each of you are here today because you have made a commitment to abandon the addict self that has caused such suffering in your lives, and to develop instead your Spiritual self which will provide you with access to the peace and happiness of your true Spiritual nature. I know I don't have to tell you that although the addict self promises you relief from suffering, it is actually taking you on a path that leads to unending physical, emotional, and spiritual pain. You all know that once it takes over – once it goes on automatic pilot – your welfare and the welfare of loved ones is of no importance to the addict self: it can easily convince you that absolutely nothing else matters except getting high. The goal of this program is to help you see the addict self for what it is – a habit pattern of the mind that causes tremendous suffering. You will learn how to interrupt its habitual scripts – those “tapes” that play over and over in your head that urge you to use drugs just one more time, or to engage in other behaviors that can cause harm to you or others. These include sharing drug paraphernalia and having unsafe sex, both of which can transmit HIV and other infections that can cause even greater suffering in your lives and the lives of others. In this program you will learn how to recognize the voice of the addict self and to stop it before it can harm you or others. You will do this by seeking refuge and strength in your true Spiritual nature. In this program, we view you as your Spiritual nature. That's the real you, not the addict self. Over the years of addiction, you may have come to doubt that you even have a Spiritual nature, or you may feel that it is now inaccessible to you. At this point, just have faith that it is still there; that it is always there. Your true Spiritual nature may be temporarily hidden from view, but trust that it is there. All you need is a way to access it – a path – that's your Spiritual path. However, in order to develop or strengthen this Spiritual path you will need a Spiritual self that has strong spiritual muscles – [therapist points to the poster – see list of required materials] – your Spiritual self's muscles are these 14 spiritual qualities that the addict self has tried to destroy. Together we will help you strengthen those spiritual muscles so that your Spiritual self stays strong and so that access to your Spiritual nature is available to you in every moment of every day. Just like strengthening physical muscles, strengthening your spiritual muscles takes training and practice. Each week we will practice meditation and do mindfulness exercises together that will help you to stay on your Spiritual path and access your Spiritual nature, but

you also need to practice between groups. To get the most out of these group sessions, you will need to make the effort to quiet your mind, to focus your attention, and to listen carefully to what I and the other group members are saying.

6. Agenda: The therapist provides group members with the agenda for the session. Providing an agenda aids in keeping the group focused and facilitates time management.

Therapist script:

Today we are going to begin as we always do by practicing meditation on the in and out breath. We will do this for five minutes. We will then work on some new material for about 30 minutes. After this we will end as we always do with a discussion and review, and our spiritual stretch.

7. Meditation Practice

Each group session provides an opportunity to practice meditation on the in- and out-breath (*anapanasati*). This brief 5-minute practice session is primarily for the purpose of reviewing the technique, for providing rationale for its use as a means by which the automaticity of the addict self is reduced and the spiritual self is accessed, and for encouraging daily practice. Group members are encouraged to practice daily for longer periods (e.g., 30-60 minutes daily).

Meditation on the in- and out-breath (*anapanasati*) with rationale and step-by-step instructions:

Meditation Rationale:

Therapist Script:

- *Our minds have a center or resting place – a peaceful stillness that is available to each of us where we can go to experience our true Spiritual nature. Some people may experience this stillness as their Spirit, or God or their Higher Power. Whatever way you experience it, just know that it is always there within you.*
- *Habit patterns of the mind (like the addict self) cause the mind to wander away from its center – this stillness. In fact, the addict self thrives in the wandering mind. When we don't have mastery of the mind – when we let the mind jump here and there out of control, it can very easily get carried away by the addict self.*
- *We begin each group with meditation practice because it is through meditation that we begin to take back control from the addict self and give it to the Spiritual self.*

- *Meditation trains the mind to return to its center – it provides an **anchor**. Just like an anchor on a boat stops the boat from drifting away on the tide, your meditation anchor prevents your mind from being swept away by emotional storms and strong currents of craving and aversion. In other words, it prevents the addict self from taking control of your mind..*
- *When you practice meditation **every day** you are creating a new habit pattern of the mind so that whenever your mind tries to wander away from its Spiritual home, for example towards addict thoughts, you are quickly able to pull it back before the addict self takes over.*
- *In our meditation practice we focus on the in and out breath because as long as we live, the breath is always there. When you meditate on the breath, it might help you to think of what you are doing as connecting with your Spirit. In fact, the Latin derivation of the word ‘spirit’ is breath. So you can think of your meditation on the breath as your connection with your spirit which is your anchor in all of life’s storms.*

Meditation Instructions:

Therapist script:

When you practice meditation at home, you will need to choose a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. If you wish you may sit crossed legged on a cushion on the floor, you may kneel, or you may sit in a chair with your back straight. You should feel comfortable, but not so comfortable that you fall asleep. While meditating, it is important to remain alert.

Let’s do this now:

[In a slow, calm voice, the therapist narrates the first 1-2 minutes of the 5 minute practice]

- *Remain seated in your chairs. Sit with your back straight, feet flat against the floor, hands on your lap.*
- *Now close your eyes [Therapist checks that client is comfortable doing this in session. Clients who are uncomfortable closing their eyes are instructed to close their eyes half-way and to focus on an object within their vision. As clients’ comfort levels increase over the course of treatment, clients are encouraged to close their eyes more and more, and to do their daily at-home practice with their eyes closed.]*
- *Just breathe normally through your nose.*
- *As you continue breathing normally through your nose, begin to focus your attention on the sensations in and around your nostrils, and on your upper lip just below your nostrils, that are caused by the breath passing in and out. You may feel a slight tickle, or a feeling of warmth or coolness, or heaviness or lightness.*

- *Just keep your concentration fixed there – **this area is your anchor** – the place you will always return to -- observe the changing sensations you experience in that area as the breath passes over your ‘anchor.’*
- *At the beginning of every breath, commit yourself to noticing everything you can about the sensations caused by just that one breath. Then do the same for the next breath -- committing yourself to your practice, just one breath at a time.*
- *If thoughts arise, gently, but firmly, bring your awareness back to your anchor, and again commit yourself to remaining focused on the in and out breath, one breath at a time.*
- *...Pause briefly (e.g., 5 seconds) to give group members opportunity to experience the breath...*
- *Again, focus all your attention on the changing sensations around your nose and upper lip that are caused by the breath as it goes in and out. Notice whether the breath is long or short? Does the air pass through one or both nostrils? Is the air cool or warm?*
- *If your mind wanders again, just note ‘mind wandered away’, and immediately return it to your anchor. No need to get discouraged, it is the mind’s nature to wander, and your job to train it, so just keep bringing it back. Gently, but firmly bring it back. Just as you would train a young child not to stray away from home, you patiently train your mind to stay close to its Spiritual home.*
- *If you are having difficulty bringing your mind back, you can try counting your breaths, just up to 10, but don’t get caught up in counting. The goal is to stay focused on your ‘anchor’ not on numbers.*

We’ll continue meditating on the in- and out-breath in silence for another 4 minutes. I will let you know when the time is up.

At end of 4 minutes, therapist asks clients to open their eyes.

Meditation practice feedback

Therapist ensures that each group member has understood the technique. The following are examples of questions to pose to the group in the event that group members are having difficulty with their practice:

Therapist script:

Open your eyes.

How was that for you today?

Were you able to keep your attention focused on your anchor?

Could you experience your breath? Where did you feel it?

Did you notice if the air moved through one nostril more than the other; or if the breath was long or short, or if it was warm or cool? What sensations did you feel (e.g., tickle, tingle, pressure, perspiration, etc.)?

Note: If any group member is not experiencing any sensations, expand the area of concentration to include the entire nose as well as the area between the nostrils and the upper lip.

Therapist script continued:

Did you experience the monkey mind? It is very persistent, isn't it? Can you see how it could get you in trouble if you are not aware of where it has wandered off to? Were you able to bring your attention back to your anchor each time it wandered away? It takes a lot of practice, doesn't it?

Note: As needed, therapist explains that it is not uncommon for individuals to have difficulty returning the mind to the anchor, and that continued effort to bring the mind back to the anchor has lasting benefits even if the mind wanders away again.

8. Presentation of new material with experiential exercise:

New material is provided experientially each week for the purpose of helping group members to increase mindfulness and to practice activation of the Spiritual self-schema. The therapist uses a technique that requires group members to attend carefully to the instructions as they are being provided. Instructions for all exercises are provided slowly and clearly, just once. After the instructions are given, group members are permitted one question in the event further clarification is necessary. If a group member still does not understand the instructions, he or she may ask another group member to repeat the instructions aloud to the entire group. This technique fosters mindfulness, group cohesion, and cooperation.

New material: The role of 'patient' in the medical system

Therapist script.

Today we are going to talk about the word 'Patient' How many meanings are there for the word 'Patient?'

Therapist writes the word 'Patient' on the board, together with the definitions provided by the group members [allow 1-2 minutes only]. Therapist then reads the definitions provided in the dictionary – as provided below:

Therapist script (continued)

*The first meaning of the word 'patient' listed in the dictionary is **'bearing or enduring pain, difficulty, provocation, or annoyance with calmness.**' Notice that it requires a state of calmness.*

*The word 'patient' also means
'one who receives medical treatment or care.'
And, the origin of the word, 'patient' is from the latin, and means
'one who suffers.'*

Each of you knows about suffering, right? And each of you knows what it means to be one who receives medical treatment. But how many of you struggle with the first meaning of the word – to endure difficulties with calmness?

Being able to endure difficulties with calmness is a skill that you will learn from your meditation practice, and is a skill required of someone on a Spiritual path. Improving your ability to be able to “endure difficulties and frustrations with calmness” will help you in every aspect of your life. However, what we will focus on today is how to use this skill when you are being -- the other meaning of the word patient – someone who is receiving medical care for HIV.

Having HIV means having to take on a new role – the role of HIV-positive patient. This may be a difficult role for many of you. When you think of yourself as a patient, how do you feel? What kinds of feelings come to mind?

Therapist waits for group responses. [If necessary, therapist may pose questions to facilitate the discussion, such as 'do you feel frustrated? Stressed? Out of control? Do you feel stigmatized? Confused about your treatment?'] Maximum time allotted: 2-3 minutes.

Therapist script (continued)

If you feel stressed and out of control when you think of yourself as a medical patient you are certainly not alone. In fact, the feeling of 'impatience', not 'patience', probably comes to mind when you think about your experiences as a medical patient. Interacting with the health care system can be difficult even when you are feeling your best -- it can seem impossible when you're feeling unwell. So what happens when you feel you just can't cope with being a patient in the medical system? What happens is that whatever habit patterns you have developed over the years for coping with stress are activated. And, guess what?... for you, this will probably be the addict self's personal invitation to make an appearance. I can hear the addict self's scripts now -- 'Oh, I feel so sick, I need just a little something to get through this.' 'I'm ill, so what does it matter anyway.'

What else does the addict self say to you when you are having difficulty enduring the suffering of being a patient in the medical system with HIV?

Therapist waits for group members to respond [allot 1-2 minutes for responses].

Therapist script (continued)

With high levels of stress and the addict self activated, what's the chance you will follow medical recommendations? What's the chance you'll even remember what you are supposed to do? What's the chance that you will be able to communicate appropriately with your health care providers? No chance, right? And, all this just adds more and more fuel to the addict self's cycle of self-medication. It also gives your medical team the impression that you are not interested in participating in your health care.

Clearly, becoming a patient medical patient requires help from the Spiritual self. The Spiritual self is, above all, patient. In fact, in the dictionary, next to the first definition of the word 'patient' it should say – see Spiritual self! The Spiritual self is able to endure difficulties with equanimity; it is always mindful -- centered and calm and attentive to the present moment. These are the very qualities you'll need to interact effectively with your medical team. So, if you can allow our Spiritual self to help navigate you through the medical system, you will benefit enormously. Not only will you prevent any further harms caused by the addict self's attempts at self-medication, but you will be able to benefit more completely from the legitimate medical treatments that are available to you.

Let's see how the addict self and the spiritual self would handle a doctor visit.

Role-Play

Therapist and co-therapist briefly role-play two different scenes at the doctor's office (if no co-therapist is available, therapist may read the scenarios to the group). One scenario describes the patient with the addict self activated (or primed to become activated); the other scenario describes the same patient with the Spiritual self activated. The purpose of the role-play is to demonstrate differences between activation of the addict self and activation of the Spiritual self when interacting with the health care system. Only 2-3 minutes should be allotted for each scene.

Scene #1: Patient arrives for the appointment agitated. Patient is told to wait to be seen by the doctor. While waiting, patient constantly looks at watch, and gets more and more impatient. Doctor comes in, patient acts irritated and is non-cooperative when doctor asks about symptoms and medical history (patient mumbles and is unsure of history). Doctor describes the complex regimen of HIV-related medications that patient will need

to take and gives patient several prescriptions. Patient doesn't ask any questions; doesn't write anything down. Leaves the doctor's office. Gets high. Forgets to fill prescriptions.

Scene #2: Patient arrives feeling calm. Patient is told to wait to be seen by the doctor. While waiting, patient uses this 'found time' to meditate or pray. Doctor comes in, patient listens carefully and is cooperative. Patient speaks clearly, and refers to a written medical history that patient had prepared prior to going to the appointment. Doctor describes the complex regimen of HIV-related medications that patient will need to take and gives patient several prescriptions. Patient writes down the doctor's instructions, and asks doctor several questions about what to do in the event of side-effects. Patient asks to be given a contact number in case there are further questions, and leaves the doctors office. Patient fills the prescriptions. At home, patient sets up a schedule for taking the medications, and takes the medications exactly as prescribed, viewing each one as a precious gift (e.g., from God or Higher Power, if this is patient's belief system).

Therapist script (continued)

Which patient is more likely to benefit from the medical treatment? Which patient is more likely to be viewed by the doctor favorably as an active participant in the treatment? The second one, right? If you go to your medical appointments with your Spiritual self activated you will have all the tools you need to get the maximum benefit from your treatment. You will also earn the respect of your medical team. Remember, your medical team is there to help you, but you have to be ready to receive this help and to participate fully.

Let's go over some tips on your hand-out.

Therapist distributes the hand-out to each group member and reads the tips to the group.

Therapist script (continued)

Tip #1: Before you go to your medical appointment – make the decision to go as your Spiritual self (that is -- centered, calm, focused, and with compassion for yourself and for others). Take the time to consciously form this intention.

Tip #2: Before you go to your medical appointment – make a list of what you want to discuss with your health care provider and what you want to get accomplished. Have your medical history written down; you will be asked for it often, so have it available (including past and present medications and adverse reactions, if any).

Tip #3: If possible, take someone with you who can help you.

Tip #4: When you get to your medical appointment – expect to wait. Use the waiting time to meditate or pray. Stay focused, peaceful, mindful.

Tip #5: When you are seen by the doctor, expect that the visit will be brief, so stay on track; listen carefully, remain mindful, don't become distracted, take notes, ask questions, and paraphrase or repeat what is said to you to ensure that you understood correctly.

Tip #6: When you get home, set up a schedule for taking your medications (and for following other medical recommendations); get help from a loved one; leave yourself reminders.

Tip #7: When you take your medications, take them as your Spiritual self would take them – being mindful of what you are doing as you take each pill or capsule. Remind yourself that the reason you are taking these medications is to help you remain healthy longer. Follow your doctor's instructions exactly. Remind yourself that missing or adjusting doses can have very serious consequences. Renew your commitment to take every dose exactly as prescribed.

Tip #8: Do whatever you can during the day to help the medications do their work – Do your part ! That means live a healthy lifestyle and stay on your Spiritual path.

Mindfulness Exercise: Becoming a 'patient' medical patient.

Therapist provides instructions for the mindfulness exercise. Therapist is mindful of the time constraints for this exercise whose purpose is to simulate a brief medical appointment which requires the patient to be concise and to listen carefully.

Therapist script:

I'm going to divide you into pairs. Together you will come up with a plan for how to use your Spiritual path to transform yourself into a "patient medical patient" – that is someone who is able to calmly endure the difficulties and frustrations of being a medical patient with HIV so that you can get the most benefit from the available medical treatments. Remember, being patient does not mean being passive. It means being able to remain calm and focused on your goal of maintaining your health for yourself and your loved ones. Being patient allows you to be more actively involved in your own care.

Partner #1 will be the speaker and Partner #2 will be the listener. Then you will reverse roles and Partner #2 will be the speaker and Partner #1 will be the listener. You will each have 5 minutes, so both of you will need to remain focused. Later you will be asked to tell the rest of the group what your partner has told you, so listen speakers, be concise, and listeners, listen carefully.

1. Partner #1 takes the first 1-2 minutes (of the 5 minutes allotted) to describe to Partner #2 any difficulties you are currently having being a HIV patient in the medical system (examples: don't understand HIV, don't understand medical recommendations, medications too complicated, experiencing side-effects, feel you are not getting the help you need, feel you are being stigmatized, and so forth). Partner #2 just listens.

2. Then Partner #1 takes the remaining 3-4 minutes (of the allotted 5 minutes) to discuss with your partner how you can use your Spiritual path and your faith to help you overcome this problem and get the most out of your treatment (Partner #2 can help you if you wish). Be specific. Think about the tips we just read together and are on your hand-out. [Examples: For those of you who are prescribed HIV-medications, tell your partner how your Spiritual self can help you take all your medications exactly as prescribed (be specific). For those of you not on medications, tell your partner how your Spiritual self will help you follow other medical recommendations, such as diet or exercise, or if you have a medical appointment this week, how your Spiritual self will help you get the most out of that appointment – e.g., to discuss side-effects or ask questions about what you don't understand.)

3. Partner #2 will then become the speaker and Partner #1 will become the listener. Partner #2 will take a total of 5 minutes to complete steps 1 and 2, describing his or her own frustrations with being a medical patient and discussing a plan for overcoming these difficulties with the help of his/her Spiritual self.

4. At the end of 10 minutes, when both partners have come up with a plan, Partner #2 will take one minute to describe Partner #1's problem and solution to the rest of the group.

5. Partner #1 will then take one minute to describe Partner #2's problem and solution to the rest of the group.

6. *After each person has spoken, group members [and therapist] may take an additional 5 minutes to give suggestions to each other as to how to use the Spiritual self to navigate effectively through the medical system.*

At the end of the first 5 minutes, therapist calls 'Time' and tells the partner's to switch roles. Then at the end of the next 5 minutes therapist calls 'Time' and asks each group member to tell the rest of the group what their partner's plan is for using their Spiritual self to overcome frustrations of being a medical patient.

Therapist script (continued)

Time is up. Each group member will now tell the rest of the group what their partner has told them. Each person will have just one minute, so be concise.

Therapist calls 'Time' after each group member has spoken for one minute. Therapist then leads a discussion so that group members can provide additional suggestions to each other.

Therapist script (continued)

Well done. Did you notice how difficult it was to say everything you wanted to say in the time allotted. Do you have this experience when you are at your medical appointments? Do any of you have additional suggestions for each other about how your Spiritual self can be helpful you to get the maximum benefit from your medical care.

Therapist calls 'Time' after 5 minutes.

9. Questions and Answer Period:

Following the experiential presentation of new material, the therapist poses questions for group discussion in order to determine how well group members have understood the relevance of the new material to their daily lives, specifically, to the prevention of harm to self and others, and whether group members can identify the spiritual qualities that they demonstrated during the session.

Therapist script:

- A. *How can what you learned today help you remain abstinent during the coming week?*
- B. *How can what you learned today prevent the transmission of infections such as HIV?*
- C. *Which spiritual muscles did you exercise today? [Therapist points to the poster].*

10. Summary:

Therapist provides a brief review of the entire session

Therapist script:

Today,

- *We practiced meditation on the in- and out-breath and mindfulness in order to begin taking back control from the addict self and to strengthen the spiritual self.*
- *We learned that this takes strong Spiritual muscles and that a rigorous training program with daily practice is needed to keep them strong.*
- *We learned that navigating the medical system can be stressful and can activate the addict self which in turn can prevent us from getting the most benefit from our medical care.*
- *We learned the importance of forming the intention to activate the Spiritual self prior to interacting with the health care system, and we created a plan for how to use the patient mindfulness of our Spiritual self to help us follow medical recommendations.*

In a few minutes the group will be over. Until we meet again next week, keep reminding yourself of your true nature. Once you are back into the routine of daily life, it can be easy to lose sight of who you really are. Just remember, you are not your addict self – the addict self is that habit pattern of mind that lies to you over and over again promising you relief from your suffering when in fact it just causes more and more suffering. Don't forget that. Remind yourself of your Spiritual nature and its capacity for love and compassion, and enact it in your daily life. I know you can do it. Just keep practicing your meditation daily and try to be more mindful in everything that you do. When you practice, you are strengthening your spiritual muscles and making your Spiritual self stronger and your addict self weaker. Each step you take on your Spiritual path, no matter how small, takes you closer to your goal. You have taken several steps today. Well done. Let's end as we always do with our Spiritual stretch.

11. The Spiritual Stretch.

The Spiritual Stretch is shown in the Appendix. Its purpose is for group members to renew their commitment to staying on their Spiritual path throughout the day in their thoughts, words, deeds, and perceptions, and to be open to the experience and expression of their Spiritual nature in all their daily activities. Group members stand and, while in various postures, recite the following affirmations.

Therapist script:

Please stand, and repeat after me:

1. *Today I take my Spiritual path (hands raised above the head, palms together).*
2. *May my thoughts reflect my Spiritual nature (hands in front of forehead, palms together);*
3. *May my words reflect my Spiritual nature (hands in front of mouth, palms together);*
4. *May my emotions reflect my Spiritual nature (hands in front of chest/heart, palms together);*
5. *May my actions reflect my Spiritual nature (hands in front of abdomen, palms together);*
6. *May my perceptions reflect my Spiritual nature (hands outstretched to side, fingers pointing towards the ground);*
7. *May I be open and receptive to my Spiritual nature (hands outstretched to side, fingers pointing towards the sky);*
8. *I am my Spiritual nature (back to starting position with hands raised above the head, palms together).*

12. End.

Therapist script:

It was good to see you all today. See you next week.

3-S⁺ Worksheet Group #4
BECOMING A 'PATIENT' MEDICAL PATIENT
Let your Spiritual Self navigate you through the medical system

Tip #1: *Before you go to your medical appointment – make the decision to go as your Spiritual self (that is -- centered, calm, focused, and with compassion for yourself and for others). Take the time to consciously form this intention.*

Tip #2: *Before you go to your medical appointment – make a list of what you want to discuss with your health care provider and what you want to get accomplished. Have your medical history written down; you will be asked for it often, so have it available (including past and present medications and adverse reactions, if any).*

Tip #3: *If possible, take someone with you who can help you.*

Tip #4: *When you get to your medical appointment – expect to wait. Use the waiting time to meditate or pray. Stay focused, peaceful, mindful.*

Tip #5: *When you are seen by the doctor, expect that the visit will be brief, so stay on track; listen carefully, remain mindful, don't become distracted, take notes, ask questions, and paraphrase or repeat what is said to you to ensure that you understood correctly.*

Tip #6: *When you get home, set up a schedule for taking your medications (and for following other medical recommendations); get help from a loved one; leave yourself reminders.*

Tip #7: *When you take your medications, take them as your Spiritual self would take them – being mindful of what you are doing as you take each pill or capsule. Remind yourself that the reason you are taking these medications is to help you remain healthy longer. Follow your doctor's instructions exactly. Remind yourself that missing or adjusting doses can have very serious consequences. Renew your commitment to take every dose exactly as prescribed.*

Tip #8: *Do whatever you can during the day to help the medications do their work – Do your part ! That means live a healthy lifestyle and stay on your Spiritual path.*