

3-S⁺ Group #8: The role of emotions in self-schema activation

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 and drawings to the walls, as needed).
7. Paper and easel board with marker for recorder.
8. Box of multi-colored crayons for each participant.
9. 8½” x 11” paper suitable for drawing with crayons (2 sheets per group member) with appropriate work surfaces (e.g., clipboards).
10. 2 banners – ‘Addict Self’ and ‘Spiritual Self.’

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 through art therapy.
 - c. the non-verbal experience and expression of feelings associated with the addict self and the Spiritual self.
 - d. experience of the commonality of suffering among all living beings, and the desire for relief from suffering.

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.

Stuart Hoffman, “Joy to Joy,” *Eversound Expressions*, Eversound (2002) (4.58 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. 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 emotions in self-schema activation

Therapist script:

*In our sessions together we talk a lot about **addict thoughts**, and the monkey mind -- the mental chatter that plays in our heads that can quickly activate the addict self. We also talk a lot about how to prevent **addict behaviors** that cause so much harm to ourselves and others. Today our focus will be on **emotions**.*

[Questions for group]

Can anyone tell me what the word 'emotion' means?

*Can anyone give me an example of an emotion associated with having HIV?
Can anyone give me an example of an emotion associated with the addict
self?*

Therapist ensures that group members understand that the word ‘emotion’ as used here means a feeling, and that they can give appropriate examples of feelings associated with the addict self; e.g., sadness, fear, anger, anxiety, depression, agitation. Therapist corrects misunderstandings as necessary.

Therapist script (continued)

Would you agree that feelings, like anger, sadness, and agitation are often associated having HIV and that these feelings can activate the addict self? How about craving—is that an emotion associated with having HIV and with activation of the addict self?

We usually don’t think of craving as an emotion, yet craving definitely a very strong feeling that can be triggered by the negative emotions associated with being HIV-positive.

These feelings and emotions seem so aversive, so awful, that we automatically try to push them away. We will do anything not to experience them. In fact, feelings, like these, can overwhelm us so quickly that we usually just react to them without even knowing exactly what it is that we are reacting to. That’s the automatic pilot – the addict self – taking over once again. The addict self is always ready, just waiting for the opportunity to tell us that it can make us feel better, fast. And, let’s face it, it may temporarily relieve the suffering caused by these feelings, but we know that if we allow the addict self to take control it will ultimately lead to more and more suffering.

*So what can you do about it? Well, the first thing is to really get to know these emotions. If you do, you will soon learn that **they are not as permanent as they seem to be.** Like all things, these unpleasant feelings arise and pass away; they are temporary – they do not last forever.*

*You will also learn that **you have the strength to tolerate these emotions** while they are present, and the wisdom to let them pass away naturally without reacting to them. When you gain this kind of mastery of your mind, you are able to ride out whatever emotions arise – with equanimity – that means having a balanced mind rather than being reactive.*

*Another thing you can do is to realize that **these feelings can actually be your allies in the fight against the addict self**. If you are willing to get to know them, they can provide you with an early warning signal that your addict self is about to take control.*

The more you know about your addict self and the environment in which it flourishes, the better armed you are against it.

In our exercise today we are going to get to know the feelings associated with both the addict self and the Spiritual self.

Because feelings are often difficult to express in words, we are going to try to express our feelings non-verbally.

I will be giving each of you a box of crayons and some paper to draw on.

*I want to **emphasize** that the exercise **does not require any artistic ability** whatsoever. Just be mindful of the instructions I will give you, and be willing to explore and express whatever you are feeling.*

*We will begin by identifying the feelings. To do this I will be asking you to close your eyes so that I can guide you through a brief visualization exercise. When that is over, I will be asking you to open your eyes and to **remain silent**. I will then give you your instructions for drawing.*

Let's begin.

Exercise #1: Artistic Self-Expression

Therapist provides each group member with a box of multi-colored crayons and two pieces of drawing paper with a solid surface (e.g., a clipboard). Therapist then leads group members in a brief visualization before providing the instructions for the art therapy exercise. **Note:** While having group members visualize suffering and feelings associated with being HIV-positive and with the addict self, therapist should emphasize that group members are in a safe environment, and should encourage a detached observation of any emotions that arise.

Therapist script (continued):

Get comfortable in your chairs, with your feet flat against the floor, and your hands in your lap.

Take a deep relaxing breath and close your eyes.

Take a few moments to focus on your anchor. Know that you are safe and that you can return your attention to your anchor any time you want. Now allow an image of addict self to emerge. Imagine that you can see all the negative emotions associated with having HIV that activate your addict self.

*Imagine that you can see your addict self responding automatically to **the pain of having HIV by using drugs and then see the additional suffering that this causes you and others.***

Just observe all this suffering associated with HIV and addiction mindfully. Try to see it clearly without getting caught up in it. Remember, you are safe here.

As you observe your addict self filled with and surrounded by the suffering associated with having HIV and the suffering caused by drug use, see if you can identify exactly what the suffering is made of – specifically, what painful feelings are there in all that suffering?

Is there agitation associated with having HIV?

Is there sadness associated with having HIV?

Is there anger associated with having HIV?

Is there fear associated with having HIV?

Is there unfulfilled craving for peace and happiness?

Don't be afraid of these feelings. The more intimately you get to know them, the better you will be at preventing the addict self from taking control.

*Take a moment to consider what negative feelings are associated having HIV that can activate your addict self. And, as you do this, imagine that these feelings have **a color, a shape, a form**. Take a few moments in silence to get a vivid image of the suffering associated with having HIV that activate your addict self – see the images that come to mind, see what colors and shapes are associated with your suffering.... [Therapist pauses 5 seconds]...Now I want you to open your eyes, **BUT REMAIN SILENT.***

*You will have 5 minutes to express those feelings, **IN SILENCE**, using the colored crayons and paper I have given you.*

The only restriction is that you cannot use words -- draw whatever shapes and images come to mind, using whatever colors you wish.

*Later, you will be showing your drawing to the group and describing in words what you were feeling. **DO NOT SHOW YOUR PICTURE TO ANYONE YET.***

If you have a question, or do not understand the instructions, you may raise your hand and I will come to you.

You have 5 minutes starting now.

At the end of 5 minutes, therapist calls ‘time’ and asks group members to write the words ‘addict self’ on the back of their drawing.

Therapist script (continued):

Time is up.

On the BACK of your drawing, please write the words ADDICT SELF.

Now we will consider the feelings associated with the Spiritual self.

Before proceeding, therapist ensures that all group members have written the words ‘Addict Self’ on the back of their drawing and have put their crayons down.

Therapist script (continued):

Get comfortable in your chairs once again, with your feet flat against the floor, and your hands in your lap.

Take a deep relaxing breath and close your eyes.

Take a few moments to focus on your anchor. Know that you are safe and can return to your anchor any time you want.

Now slowly begin to create an imagine of your Spiritual self.

*See your Spiritual self **surrounded by peace and serenity**. Just observe it mindfully.*

As you observe your Spiritual self surrounded by peace and serenity, see if you can identify exactly what feelings are associated with your Spiritual self’s peace and serenity.

*Take a moment to experience the feelings associated with this peace and serenity. And, as you do this, imagine that these feelings have **a color, a shape, a form**. Take a few moments in silence to get a vivid image of the peace and serenity of your Spiritual nature – see the images that come to mind, see what colors and shapes are associated with the activation of your Spiritual self.*

... [Therapist pauses 5 seconds]...

Now I want you to open your eyes, BUT REMAIN SILENT.

You will have 5 minutes to express those feelings of your Spiritual self, IN SILENCE, using the colored crayons and paper I have given you.

The only restriction is that you cannot use words -- draw whatever shapes and images come to mind, using whatever colors you wish.

Later, you will be showing your drawing to the group and describing in words what you were feeling. DO NOT SHOW YOUR PICTURE TO ANYONE YET.

If you have a question, or do not understand the instructions, you may raise your hand and I will come to you.

You have 5 minutes starting now.

At the end of 5 minutes, therapist calls 'time' and instructs group members to write the words 'Spiritual Self' on the **back** of their drawing.

Therapist script (continued):

Time is up.

*On the **BACK** of your drawing, please write the words **SPIRITUAL SELF**.*

Now I will collect all your drawings.

The purpose of this part of the exercise is for group members to share their addict self and Spiritual self feelings, to see how color and shape can be used to express feelings, and to experience the commonality of these feelings.

Steps for therapist:

1. Therapist collects the drawings and shuffles the pages so that they are in random order.
2. Therapist holds up each drawing, one at a time for the group to see.
3. Group members (except for person whose drawing it is) votes on whether the drawing is of the addict self or the Spiritual self.
4. Group member whose drawing it is, tells the rest of the group whether they have identified the drawing correctly, and describes to the group the type of feelings that she or he was trying to express in his/her drawing.
5. Therapist tapes all the drawings to the wall (or board), grouping together all the addict self drawings on one side, and grouping together all the Spiritual self drawings on the other side; [Note: two banners, prepared in advance, identify each grouping as either 'Addict Self' or 'Spiritual Self'].
6. Therapist then leads group members in a brief discussion of the differences and similarities between the addict self drawings and the Spiritual self drawings (e.g., similarities in colors used; meaning of the colors and images used).

Discussion (10 minutes)

Therapist script (continued):

I will hold up each drawing, one at a time, for the entire group to see.

Let's see if you can identify whether the drawing is of the addict self or the Spiritual self.

The person whose drawing this is should remain silent until everyone has given an opinion.

Let's begin [therapist holds up first drawing].

Is this the addict self or the Spiritual self? You may call out your answers.

Now, the person whose drawing this is, please tell the group whether the drawing is of the addict self or the Spiritual self and what feelings you were trying to express in the drawing.

Therapist holds up one drawing at a time, group members try to identify whether the drawing being held up depicts the addict self or the Spiritual self. The group member whose drawing it is tells the group if they are right or wrong and describes the feelings that s/he was trying to express in the drawing. Therapist then leads a discussion on the topic of the commonality of suffering associated with having HIV and with addiction and the desire for peace and serenity. Therapist concludes this section by recommending the use of a visualization exercise in daily life for replacing addict feelings with Spiritual self feelings.

Therapist script (continued):

What do the addict self drawings have in common? – Colors? Shapes? Forms?

What do the Spiritual self drawings have in common? – Colors? Shapes? Forms?

Do you see that the suffering associated with having HIV that tends to activate the addict self is similar in many ways for all group members?

Do you see that the peace and serenity associated with the Spiritual self is similar in many ways for all group members?

How alike we are! We all suffer, don't we? And, we all seek relief from our suffering. We all are searching for our peaceful center – our Spiritual nature.

During the week, whenever a negative feeling arises that could potentially activate the addict self, I encourage you to remember the images you created here today. Be willing to get to know the feeling, rather than running away from it, so that you can work towards replacing it with the Spiritual self feeling. If, for example, you used the color red to depict the suffering associated with having HIV and yellow to depict the peace of your Spiritual self, you could close your eyes whenever the negative feeling arises and take a moment to visualize the color red as you experience the feeling, then slowly allow it to be replaced by the color yellow, and actually

experience the peace of your Spiritual self. Remind yourself that feelings, like all things, are impermanent. They arise and they pass away. If you can simply observe this truth, you will be able to use unpleasant feelings as a valuable early warning device. If you permit the addict self to take control when unpleasant feelings arise, your suffering will only continue. If, instead, you activate your Spiritual self, you will be able to experience the peace of your true nature.

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 feelings, like all things, are impermanent and that we can use negative emotions as early warning signals that the addict self is about to take control.*
- *We learned that we all suffer and seek relief from suffering.*
- *We learned that it is possible to replace the suffering associated with being HIV-positive with the peace and serenity associated with our true Spiritual nature.*

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.