

Group #5

Self-Soothing

This session has been designed to be run by a single facilitator. A group of individuals might choose to rotate who facilitates each session. The selected facilitator for a given may choose to do extra self-led learning prior to facilitating their topic.

Facilitator Overview

- 1. Check in- ask how the week has been for participants**
- 2. Review group norms & expectations for participation in exploration**
- 3. Facilitate group discussion asking questions and providing information from manual**
- 4. Deliver take home message(s)**
- 5. Set next meeting**

Group Expectations/Norms for Participation in Exploration

Confidentiality

All statements made by members in the group must be treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Specific group information will be shared with the treatment team; however, only general comments will be made to parents.

Norms will be read at the beginning of group for full understanding in order to create safety for each session.

Confidentiality is expected from all group members, members should not discuss group outside of group, please bring any issues/comments back to the next group.

Confidentiality creates a safe & trusting environment for the work of therapy. All cell phones/technology MUST be turned off.

What are the expectations of the group?

Arrive, and leave on time.

Group is voluntary. Group will be led by a different member each week. Can be on a rotation.

Sharing about yourself is necessary for you to benefit from group. This may feel difficult for some members initially however small disclosures build trust and safety within the group, which in turn will increase your comfort level when sharing. The premise is what you put into group is what you get out of group.

Note that we encourage balance sharing so that all members get the opportunity to share equally.

There is some structure to each session in that there will be themes for each week.

Direct advice giving and discussion of superficial topics is not helpful in this group.

Feedback is welcomed, as it connects the person giving and receiving and if non-blaming, constructive and relevant to what's occurring within the group it can be deeply meaningful.

Do not come to group under the influence of drugs/alcohol or other non prescribed medicine by your doctor.

Group offers the opportunity to learn more about how you relate to others. Group members are encouraged to ask questions, to wonder about things said or not said, to share associations and thoughts.

Check in. Ask each member how their week has been. Was there more awareness around their PLEASE skills? Did they implement any changes? If you, what? If no, why?

Ask Question: What does Self-Soothing mean to you?

Facilitate discussion, when appropriate provide some or all of the below information.

Answer: These skills have multiple functions. They help us ride out the moment, they put us in a state of relaxation and help bring our parasympathetic nervous system back on board. The rest/digest system vs. fight/flight/freeze. If we can do self-soothe, our breathing deepens and slows, heart rate goes down, blood pressure goes down. The best way to use the self-sooth skills is through our five senses.

Ask Question: Let's go through our 5 senses and brainstorm what we might do to self sooth using each sense

Facilitate discussion, when appropriate provide some or all of the below examples

Sense of Sight

- Go to nature (it can be a park nearby) and look at the beautiful way how the sky, the trees, the grass, the benches and the people make a collage of colors and life.
- Find pictures on the Internet of places that you find soothing to look at. It can be different cities, nature, or artistic images and pictures. One study showed that looking at photos of puppies increased levels ability the concentrate.
- Go to a museum or a gallery and enjoy the visual art presented there.
- Watch a movie that is famous for its beautiful cinematography
- Start a collection of pictures that you find pleasurable and soothing to look at, and look at them when needed.

Sense of Hearing

- Talk to a person that you like and whose voice makes you happy or you enjoy hearing.
- Listen to your favorite music that usually makes you more relaxed.
- Listen to soothing jazz, or instrumental live radio on YouTube. You might also enjoy classical music, opera or new age music
- Go to a park nearby and enjoy the liveliness of sounds around you (birds, wind, people chattering).
- If you play a musical instrument or sing in your free time, you can try to do that.
- Listen to an audio book, a podcast or a TV show that you enjoy and see if it makes you feel more relaxed.

Sense of Smell

- Wear a perfume or cologne whose smell you enjoy.
- Light up a scented candle in your room.
- Cook a meal that smells delicious to you.
- Buy some flowers or indoor plants that you would enjoy smelling.
- Go someplace where you enjoy the scent (flower shop, perfume shop, restaurant, bakery)

Sense of Taste

- Cook your favorite meal, eat it slowly and savor its taste.
- Go to your favorite place to eat and buy your favorite meal.
- Get some snacks or comfort food (chocolate, ice cream, potato chips) and enjoy it (but don't overdo it).
- Eat a fresh piece of fruit and enjoy its taste.
- Chew gum or eat some sweets.

Sense of Touch

- Take your favorite, soft blanket and wrap yourself or simply enjoy how it feels on your skin.
- Pet your animal and hold it in your lap.
- Wear comfortable clothes and enjoy how it feels on your skin.
- Take a shower or a bubble bath and enjoy the warm and soothing water. You can also take a cold shower if you find that more suitable.
- Get a massage or if you don't have the time, you can massage yourself.

Questions to ask group members to facilitate discussion

- *How can you practice self-soothing skills?*
- *What makes it easy and/or hard to practice self-soothing skills?*
- *How can you incorporate this into your life?*

Deliver Take Home Messages:

Different soothing techniques work for different people so try different techniques to see what works for you. Self-Soothing is a skill, don't expect any technique to work right away. Explore and practice these techniques to help you harness your physiology and calm your nervous system.