

SEA/MENT/129(F) (Rev.1)  
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# Adolescent Mental Health Promotion

## Trainers' Guide on Dealing with Emotions



Health and Behaviour Unit  
Department of Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments  
World Health Organization  
Regional Office for South-East Asia  
New Delhi

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This document has been prepared by Dr Prema Sundara Rajan. It includes the work done by her for the South-East Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Mental Health of Adolescents. The views expressed in the document are solely the responsibility of the author.

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## PREFACE

Adolescence has frequently been called "the tumultuous teens". As defined by the World Health Organization, adolescence is the period between 10 and 19 years. These are the formative as well as impressionable years when the maximum amount of physical, psychological and behavioural changes take place. Adolescence is the transition from a "child" into an "adult". The "child" explores new ideas, widens his/her horizons, and finally assumes greater responsibility and an individual identity.

Healthy development of adolescents depends on several interactive and complex factors. They include the socioeconomic circumstances in which a person is born, the environment in which he/she grows up, his/her inter-personal relationships within the family, peer group pressure, values of the community in which he/she lives and the opportunities for education and employment.

Despite the multitude of factors which can influence the development of adolescents, their mental well-being is crucial. Adolescents must learn how to cope with psychological stress, handle peer pressure, deal with their emotions, resolve conflicts, build bridges with friends and family, develop self-confidence, safeguard themselves from high pressure marketing strategies, particularly of the alcohol industry, as well as cope with other stresses like academic competition and a hankering for material gains. However, rarely are these sensitive issues addressed in schools and within families.

As Dr Uton Muchtar Rafei, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region, says: "It is thus vital to support all those interested in the health of the adolescents and young people, including young people themselves, to understand their problems and needs and to address them through effective partnerships of relevant sectors and constituencies."

The programme on adolescent mental health, being developed by the Health and Behaviour Unit in the Regional Office for South-East Asia, attempts to meet the psychological needs of adolescents as they pass through "a difficult period" in their lives. The modules on adolescent mental health promotion developed by an expert on behalf of WHO, use life skills education approach by which adolescents are taught to analyse situations, think of various options and make informed decisions which are in their best interest. These modules are not meant as a "self-learning" or "do-it-

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yourself” kit. They are meant to serve as resource material for trainers in conducting life skills sessions for adolescents.

We hope that these will serve as a valuable tool for Member Countries to translate and adapt them for their own use in promoting the well-being of adolescents.

Dr Vijay Chandra  
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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page.</i>
Fact Sheet .....	1
Introduction .....	7
Activity 1 – Rapport Building: Discussing Our Feelings.....	9
Activity 2 – Sharing Different Feelings.....	11
Activity 3 – Understanding the Causes Of Emotions And their Benefits .....	12
Activity 4 – Listing Positive Cue Words To React To Negative Emotions .....	14
Activity 5 – Colours of Life.....	15
Activity 6 – Sharing What We Know About Fear And How to Deal With It .....	18
Activity 7 – Sharing What Causes Anger.....	21
Activity 8 – Stop, Think, Speak (Red, Yellow And Green) .....	23
Activity 9 – Killer Treat.....	25

### Annexes

Guidelines for Dealing with Emotions .....	28
Anger Reducing Technique - Get R...I...D of Anger.....	30

## FACT SHEET

Emotion is a particular feeling, a quality of conscious awareness and a way of responding.

With most people, emotions and feelings do not have a place in the everyday world. There are the "good" feelings like love and enthusiasm and "bad" feelings like anger and fear. Feeling is the most general category of personal experience. It covers sensation, desire, mood, belief, emotion etc. If we have an opinion, we may say: "I feel it is true that..." And when we dislike what someone did, we may say: "I feel angry that..."

All of us, at some time or the other, feel happy, sad, fearful, jealous, guilty and so on. These are all emotions. A wide range of stimuli, including people, objects and situations, elicit these emotions. Emotions can be positive or negative. There is nothing wrong in feeling sad if you do not get good marks or feeling guilty if you break a promise to your friend. But if these emotions disturb your daily life, then you need to do something about it. Despite the fact that these emotions may wear off with time, one may not be able to wait indefinitely.

Emotions form an integral part of our life. Without emotions, perhaps, we would be like robots! It is not unnatural that one day you are on top of the world and on the next you are in the depths of despair. When you are elated or delighted, you make everyone happy. But if you are in a bad mood, you may create terror or distress in others.

Anger is an "agent for change", a signal about what you want. Anger is a response to "not getting something that you want" or "not wanting something that you get". It can be seen as a message that, deep inside, you feel that "something needs to change in order for you to be happy". According to Charles Spielberger, anger is "an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage." It is accompanied by physiological and biological changes. When an individual gets angry, his/her heart rate and blood pressure goes up as do the levels of his/her energy hormones, and adrenaline.

Fear is an unpleasant, strong emotion caused by awareness or anticipation of danger. Fear and anxiety are not the same things. Anxiety stems from thoughts concerning an imminent threat, the cause of which the individual is unaware of. The individual believes that he/she will not be able to cope with the situation.

Hence the person feels anxious. On the other hand, fear is a feeling of threat from a cause of which one is aware. It is a self-preserving emotion. It encourages the person to be cautious and vigilant.

### **Pleasant Emotions**

The manifestations of emotion described by the terms joy, elation, love and laughter seem quite different from the emotions of fear and anger, yet they bear some resemblances. The joyful individual is stirred up and excited; he shows some interruption of ordinary habits. A good joke has a sudden turn in its sequence; interest and tension are built up by the preamble, and then suddenly released when the point is released. Humour serves an adjective purpose by releasing tensions.

Happiness and the other pleasant emotions have subjective existence, but are very difficult to define in objective terms. They are even difficult to study. Happiness involves the anticipation of desired future events, the satisfaction we derive from the successful step-by-step pursuit of a goal, and from achieving our aspirations. Whereas the goal of fear is to escape and the goal of anger to attack, the goal of love is to give and receive affection. Most conditions of affection lack the violent nature of the unpleasant emotions. Physiologically, they are calming rather than exciting.

Love between the sexes does, however, show some noticeable behaviours - distraction, rapid heartbeats at the sight of the loved one, and similar interruptions of the routine. Whereas some adolescents may act foolishly while "in love," observable social interaction gradually declines throughout adult life, although couples may remain just as much in love. Reactions in love develop from, and are to some extent patterned after, the affectionate responses of earlier life. They are difficult to describe. The maturing of sex glands in adolescents stimulates the individual to an intensity of reaction that is directed into either primary or substitute sexual activities. Since middle class culture imposes taboos on sexual relationships before marriage, "being in love" may be accompanied by longings and yearnings. Unselfish and mutually-tolerant behaviour, supported by sensory stimuli and memory images, characterizes love in a successful marriage.

### **Emotions as Feelings**

It is difficult for us to take cognizance of our own emotions except through the way we feel. We cannot ignore the sadness of the sound of iron-shod horses. No

one can doubt the impact of emotion when it comes as a conscious experience. Through introspective reports, emotions can be arranged along a dimension of pleasantness-unpleasantness called the affective scale. Emotional feelings vary in intensity. Both in feeling and outward expression, rage is more intense than anger, grief more intense than sadness, and elation varies in degree from a warm feeling to exuberance.

How we feel and how we respond emotionally both depend on our individual reaction to the circumstances of a given environment. A person may feel happy after a celebration or sad after some amount of alcohol taken to relieve loneliness. Emotional feelings are subjective experiences, varied and personal; for many people art is an emotional experience, for others it arouses no feelings. We cannot be sure that two people who report feeling angry actually share a similar experience. Emotional feelings are produced by internal stimuli resulting from the arousal of the autonomic nervous system and they can serve as motivators of behaviour. Some emotional feelings bring on only slight variations in mood, while others bring on disorganized behaviours; some of us waste our creative energy by masking our true feelings.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*1. I get annoyed very quickly. Why is it so? Is there any way to control it?*

Too much of anger can destroy your peace and happiness. If you constantly get irritated, then it means that something is bothering you, which you are not able to express clearly. Or somebody or something irritates you constantly. Express the cause of the anger clearly to someone. Try breathing exercises. Try keeping yourself calm and happy.

*2. I cry very frequently. Is it all right to cry and let out my emotions or should I hold them in?*

Crying once in a while is all right but crying too much will affect your health and also add up to your mental stress. You must always try and maintain a balance between your mental, emotional, physical and social health. Remember that crying is not the only way to let out your emotions. It is important to release your emotions in a healthy and wholesome way. Talking to somebody and expressing your feelings will keep you from crying.

*3. How can I forgive and forget others? I get very angry when others annoy me.*

To control anger you must try and distract yourself and not focus on what made you angry. That will only increase your anger. You must let go. Try and put yourself in the other person's place and think of reasons why they would harm you. If you find a reasonable answer, then you will understand by yourself why the other person is acting the way he or she is.

*4. How can I control excitement?*

Adolescents change their minds, their rules and their expectations. Sometimes it is all right to be excited, but not to be over-excited. Breathing will help control your excitement. Take deep breaths and make your body calm. Do not get agitated or nervous. Just try and act normal like yourself.

*5. I get depressed very fast just for small reasons. How can I stay calm and cool?*

If you want to stay calm and cool, then you must express your emotions in a healthy way.?

- You could tell someone else how you feel. Your friends can usually reassure you that they also get depressed at times and that the mood will always pass.
- Sometimes exercise can also help.
- Do things that will make you feel cheerful.
- Don't be tempted to stay at home. That will make you focus on your depression even more. Concentrate on making yourself feel better and don't think about your depression. Don't allow sad thoughts to disturb your mind. Positive actions will also make you feel better.

*6. I get tense and scared very often. How can I handle it?*

Phobias are a major cause of fear, nervousness, anxiety or shyness. You may try and avoid your phobia but this is not the best way to deal with it. A better way to deal with phobias is getting help and encouragement from others like your friends and family. You must also mentally prepare yourself for such tough situations.

*7. I am very scared of my father, but I cannot express this clearly and freely. How can I remove this fear?*

In such situations where you find it difficult to talk to your parents, the best thing to do is to take advice from a counsellor. Sometimes an outsider, who is emotionally distanced from the family and its problems, can have more effect persuading the one who is depressed to speak out their fear. Otherwise, understand why you fear him and try to adjust with him. Be nice to him and try to express your fear to him. Just act normal with him.

*8. How can I handle intense emotions? What is the best way to behave and control my emotions?*

Speaking out your emotions freely and calmly will help you feel better. Otherwise, letting out your emotions in another healthy way would do. Don't concentrate on your behaviour too much. It will make you over-conscious and act differently.

Express your emotions when appropriate. Discuss emotionally-charged situations and the range of possible responses. Separate feelings from reactions, for example, emphasizing that anger need not lead to hitting, name calling, or other negative behaviour. You will sometimes behave unpredictably, and you will wonder why, but it is OK as that is how you will manage your emotions. Try to control your impulses and think ahead, and consider the effects of your behaviour.

It is important to note that expressions of emotion or the behaviours associated with particular emotions are strongly rooted in culture. Some cultures favour being emotionally demonstrative, while others teach that emotions should be "felt inside" without any outward expression. Cultures also differ in regard to when, how and to whom certain emotions can be expressed.

*9. How can I control emotions?*

One of the important things to keep in mind is that emotional control does not come easily; there are no specific tests for it. Emotional control involves a clear grasp of one's own personality, habits and ambitions, and the ability to relate these to the various environments one encounters. Knowing what to exhibit and what to keep to oneself helps emotional control.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tell the adolescents that we are going to have a session on understanding and learning how to deal with interpersonal conflict.

*Before proceeding, please reassure the adolescents that:*

- All responses will be kept completely confidential within the group.
- Only issues and not individuals will be discussed.
- All are encouraged to participate and to share their personal experiences, but they have the right not to respond.
- Under no circumstances should any adolescent be allowed to laugh at or pass comments on the response of another adolescent.
- Each adolescent should listen to others without interrupting.
- There are no right or wrong answers.

*Explain the objectives of the session, which are:*

- Understanding what we mean by emotions.
- Identifying and analysing different kinds of emotions and their effects.
- How to deal with negative emotions like fear and anger.
- Some coping strategies to deal with emotions.

### *Session structure*

The session is based on questions and answers, discussions and role-play activities. Role-play situations can be modified in keeping with the local culture.

The session is divided into eight activities. Each activity has learning objectives, information to the trainer, the process to implement the activity, questions to the adolescents and possible responses. Each activity is linked to and leads to the next, so it is best to do them in order.

At the end of each activity, assess if the learning outcomes have been achieved. If any doubts persist or the adolescents seek clarifications, continue the discussion on the topic till the adolescents feel comfortable with having achieved the objective of the activity.

Annex 1 is to be given to the adolescents for use during indicated activities.

You will need 6"x3" index cards of at least three colours, two cards of each colour per adolescent, a board to paste the responses on, glue sticks, and markers. If index cards are not available, responses can be written on the black board.

## **ACTIVITY 1 – RAPPORT BUILDING: DISCUSSING OUR FEELINGS**

### **Learning outcomes**

The adolescents will be able to mingle with one another and the trainer before the session. The adolescents will learn to share their feelings.

### **Information for trainers**

Tell the adolescents, "Feelings and emotions, which mean the same thing, are the reactions we experience as we respond to the world around us".

During this period of their lives, it is normal to have a wide range of feelings.

### **Process**

Ask each adolescent, one by one, to share how he/she was feeling while entering the classroom. Divide the class into groups of four adolescents each.

Ask them to draw faces, showing feelings that they have experienced earlier.

### **Possible responses**

Happy

Joyful

Thrilled

Pleased

Cheerful

Comfortable

Light-hearted

Sparkling

Jolly

Warm

Silly

Angry

Suspicious

Uncertain

Questioning

Jealous

Annoyed

Irritated

Furious

Offended

Bitter

Boiling

Expressions

Happy, joyful, cheerful, bright



Sad, lonely, isolated, unhappy, depressed



### **Assessment of activity**

Assess if adolescents are comfortable with one another. If you feel that they are not, extend the discussion further. If they are comfortable, proceed to the next activity.

## **ACTIVITY 2 – SHARING DIFFERENT FEELINGS**

### **Learning outcomes**

The adolescents will share among themselves different feelings that they experience throughout the day.

### **Information for trainers**

It is important for adolescents to realize that the feelings they have and their rapid changes in mood are normal in adolescents. Once they realize this, they will be able to accept and deal with their emotions instead of being afraid of or frustrated by them.

### **Process**

Distribute a plain sheet of paper to each adolescent.

Ask each one to draw a line in the centre of this sheet to represent his/her day. The left side of the paper represents the morning half and the right side of the paper represents the afternoon.

Ask each adolescent to write his/her emotions and the times he/she felt these emotions, using dark colours for strong feelings and light colours for lighter emotions.

Ask adolescents to volunteer and discuss their feelings with the class.

### **Possible responses**

- 7 am: lots of fun today.
- 12 pm: expecting a friend home.
- None of the thrills happened.
- Friend came and it is already 9 pm.

### **Assessment of activity**

Ask the adolescents if they have shared different feelings that they experience throughout the day; if they want to share more, they can do so and then proceed to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 3 – UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES OF EMOTIONS AND THEIR BENEFITS

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will share the cause of their emotions and their effect.

### Information for trainers

Talking about their emotions and the way these affect their lives is the first step towards bringing adolescents' emotions under control.

Introduce the activity by saying that frustration and disappointment are natural and inevitable parts of our lives, and that we should not allow these emotions to upset us or to keep us down. We can accept them as normal, identify positive ways to deal with them, and learn from our experiences. Tell them that handling frustration and disappointment begins with analysing the reasons for these emotions.

### Process

*Ask the adolescents*

- (1) to identify the emotions they experience.
- (2) to identify the situations that cause these emotions.
- (3) to discuss the effect of these situations on their lives.
- (4) what they can and cannot change about these situations

### Possible responses

Emotion	Cause	Effect	What can be done?
Annoyed	My sister lied to me.	My feeling of annoyance is irritating me.	I can change annoyance.
Angry	My teacher scolded me.	Anger is problematic.	I can change anger.
Unhappy	My father is sick.	I am always sad.	I can change unhappiness.
Excited	My mother is making a new dress.	Happiness is making me feel nice.	Happiness is good for my health, so need not change.

Emotion	Cause	Effect	What can be done?
Sad	I have not got a good score.	Sadness leads to more sorrow.	I can change sadness.
Bored	Nothing interesting is happening in my life.	I cannot create anything interesting if I keep thinking like this.	I can change boredom.

### **Assessment of activity**

Assess if the adolescents have shared the causes and effects of emotions that they undergo. If so, proceed to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 4 – LISTING POSITIVE CUE WORDS TO REACT TO NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will identify some positive cues to react to their negative emotions.

### Information for trainers

Tell the adolescents that emotions could be positive or negative. Whenever they experience negative emotions, they can use positive cues to feel better. Positive cues could be just positive words and they may even repeat those words.

Positive emotions could be happiness, joy etc, and negative emotions could be anger, fear etc.

### Process

Ask each adolescent to narrate how he or she reacts when he/she feels sad or gets angry or is disappointed.

Now ask each adolescent to list on an index card a positive word which makes him/her feel better.

Ask each adolescent to paste these index cards and read out the responses one by one.

### Possible responses

Reactions	Positive words
I just argue and ignore that person. I shout, I throw things.	Enjoyment, love, cheerful, excited, happiness.

### Assessment of activity

Assess if the adolescents were able to identify positive cues to react to their negative emotions. If so, proceed to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 5 – COLOURS OF LIFE

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will be able to:

- Talk about their emotions.
- Deal with their own emotions and feelings.
- Solve problems arising out of their disturbed feelings and emotions.

### Information for trainers

We are at times happy, sad, joyful or depressed. Life is like natural colours. Imagine nature without emotions. How colourless life would be! It is natural to feel various emotions, i.e. "the colours of life". (Emotions can be identified with different colours).

Tell the adolescents that when they have conflicting situations, firstly, they have to understand why the conflict occurred. Is it their fault or someone else's fault? Secondly, whether the person with whom they had the conflict has any positive feelings towards them or not. Thirdly, ask them whether there is any possibility of having a convergence of views between themselves and the other person.

Many responses related to feelings and emotions are likely to emerge. Here, the usual response related to family and school are taken as examples. You may select any other if you find it relevant to the adolescents.

#### *Example*

Mother: "My daughter always irritates me."

Daughter: "I am always nagged; therefore, I feel irritated."

Adolescents need to be encouraged to share emotions or feelings attached to the incidents they narrate. Even if other adolescents and not the one who narrated the incident described their feelings, it is fine, as it shows that they are all involved and are critically thinking about the incidents.

Let the adolescents freely narrate their feelings and conclusions drawn from the incidents. At times the conclusions may be outrageous or startling. Don't

interrupt the adolescents. You may have to talk separately with some adolescents whose statements reflect their highly disturbed or emotionally charged state.

If time permits, let all adolescents discuss their solutions for as many problems noted on the board, as they want. Give them freedom to choose at random the problems noted on the board.

## **Process**

- (1) Ask them what factors complicate their decision-making capacity and cause confusion.
- (2) Ask the adolescents to narrate a recent, significant event in their life in which their emotions had an impact on their thinking and subsequently disturbed them. Allow one person to speak at a time, observe and write down all the issues on the blackboard. Ask them to concentrate on incidents without going into emotions.
- (3) Now ask the adolescents to narrate the emotions or feelings attached to those incidents or events.
- (4) Ask volunteers to note down the narration of adolescents (analysing the event) on the board or on chart paper (feelings and emotions). List both negative and positive feelings.
- (5) Ask the adolescents the following questions (different approaches/solutions to the events):
  - Do you think that father really hates you? Why did he abuse you?
  - Why did mother shout?
  - The teacher throwing the notebook on me is not a good gesture at all, but why could she have thrown it? Could she show her annoyance in some other way also? Could there be any other reason for such a behaviour?
- (6) Tell the adolescents that life is colourful and whatever be the situation, we can still laugh and dance. Ask the adolescents to put on colourful scarves, dancing to music to cheer up the colours of life for five minutes.
- (7) Record all their ideas, howsoever strange or unworkable they appear. Have a discussion as a follow up.

## Possible responses to questions

- (1) *Being emotional, misunderstanding somebody or the situation without knowing the facts etc.*
- (2) *Significant events*
  - My father scolded me without any cause.
  - My mother shouted at me in front of my aunt.
  - My teacher threw the notebook at me.
- (3) *Feelings related to the events*
  - I felt sad when my father scolded me.
  - I felt terrible and miserable when my mother shouted at me, in front of my aunt.
  - I was very angry when my teacher threw the notebook at me.
- (4) *Analysing the events*
  - No, my father actually does not hate me, but I think he is short tempered. He was tired, he did not have any money. He was upset.
  - My mother herself is facing a lot of problems and suppression. She had just hurt her finger while cutting vegetables, the small baby was unwell, she had a fight with my father who was drunk.
  - May be the teacher had some other underlying problem. The class was troubling her and she thought that may be I had played some mischief.
- (5) *Different approaches/solutions to the significant events*
  - May be the adults themselves are under a lot of stress. It made me think about his problem and brought me nearer to him. I decided to become more responsible; I decided to earn my own money.
  - We shall approach parents differently.
  - We need to know some new technique to talk to teachers.
  - We should become a mediator when parents fight.
  - Sometimes we need to play the role of adults.

## Assessment of activity

Assess if the adolescents were able to identify positive cues to react to their negative emotions. If so, proceed to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 6 – SHARING WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT FEAR AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

### Learning outcomes

The adolescents will share the things they are afraid of, the effect that fear has on them, and the techniques they use to deal with it.

### Information for trainers

Talking about their fears will help adolescents to open up with one another and realize that their peers are also afraid of many of the things as they are. This will help them accept their fear as normal and be more receptive to techniques for dealing with fear.

After discussing several of their own techniques for dealing with fear, they will also learn a technique that they can practise any time, no matter what their fear is.

### Process

Ask the adolescents to talk to one another about their fears and what they do to overcome their fear.

Now ask the whole class the following questions:

- (1) What are you scared of and why?
- (2) What are the effects of those fears?
- (3) How do you overcome fear?.

### *The technique*

**Step A:** Have each adolescent imagine or remember being in contact with whatever scares them. (Taking a test, giving a speech, acting in a skit, a particular teacher, a scolding parent, etc.)

Ask each adolescent to write down his fear on an index card. Set up a scale of 1-10 and ask each adolescent to "grade" his/her fear, with 10 being the most fearsome thing possible and 1 representing something that he is not at all afraid of.

**Step B:** Have the adolescents tell you how scary their fear is, on the scale of 1-10. Now say: "Close your eyes and begin tapping under both eyes with two of your fingers about 35 times."

**Step C:** Ask the adolescents to open their eyes and look to the lower left, then the lower right, to move their eyes around in a circle. Ask them to do this 10 times. Once they finish, tell them to hum a song that they like most.

**Step D:** Again have the persons close their eyes and imagine the fearful experience. Ask: "On a scale of 1-10 how intense is the fear now?"

**Step E:** If the fear level is below 3, the exercise is complete. Have them repeat after you: "I deeply and profoundly love and accept myself even though I have a fear of \_\_\_\_\_."

**Step F:** Ask the adolescents to tell you their fear level again. If it is still above 3, say: "Let's just do it one more time to be sure." Then repeat Steps A, B, C, and D. Adolescents will find it hard to believe that their fear has reduced and probably will never return! If it does return, simply repeat the technique again.

## Possible responses

### *Fears and their effects*

- I get scared of my physics teacher as he scolds me a lot. I do not understand the subject; I find it difficult.
- I do not like my father, and I get scared when he shouts at me if I take the bike out. The effect is I like to take the bike always and do not bother about it.
- I forget all other things when I get a slap from my uncle for no fault of mine; I am very scared of him.

### *How do I overcome fear?*

- Hum a song
- Listen to good music
- Talk to a friend
- Try to fix the problem.

### **Assessment of activity**

Assess if the adolescents could identify their fears, its effect on them and how they try to get rid of these fears. Also find out whether they are able to practise the fear-reducing technique. Once they all have understood it, proceed to the next activity

## ACTIVITY 7 – SHARING WHAT CAUSES ANGER

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will share the things that make them angry.

### Information for trainers

Talking about their anger will help the adolescents open up with one another and realize that the things that make them angry make their peers angry too. This will help them accept their anger as normal and be more receptive to techniques for dealing with it.

### Process

Ask the class to identify a few examples of events that make them angry.

Next, ask the adolescents to identify a few thoughts that could lead to or increase angry feelings.

Ask the adolescents what happens in their bodies when they are angry and how they react to anger.

### Possible responses

#### *Anger-causing events*

- Getting low marks
- Being scolded by my dad in front of my friends

#### *Anger-causing thoughts*

- If I think my teacher does not like me
- If I did not make the team and I thought it was unfair

#### *What happens in their body*

- My heart beats faster
- I sweat
- I get a headache
- I feel hot

*How they react*

- I shout
- I argue
- I talk firmly

**Assessment of activity**

Assess whether the adolescents have shared the anger-causing events, thoughts and the way they react to it. If they have identified these, then proceed to the next activity which will teach them how to deal with anger-causing words.

## ACTIVITY 8 – STOP, THINK, SPEAK (RED, YELLOW AND GREEN)

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will learn how to deal with anger-causing situations rationally through a series of role plays.

### Information for trainers

The adolescents have discussed what causes them to get angry and how their anger affects them. Now we will teach them a simple strategy for calming down in the face of their anger. Using this strategy, adolescents will be able to bring their reactions to anger-causing situations under control.

### Process

Tell the adolescents that the best way to respond to a person or event that makes them angry is to first stop getting angry and not allow themselves to respond. Having done that, it is best to think about the situation and why it is making them angry, why it might have happened, and what they can do to fix it. Only when they have thought about all this are they allowed to speak.

Form three groups. Give each group one of the following situations and tell them they have ten minutes to prepare a skit based on it, using the Stop, Think, and Speak approach to control anger.

#### *Situation 1*

Your parents went out for the evening and you invited your best friend to come over and keep you company. You had promised your parents you wouldn't have a group of children over while they were out. But your best friend told everyone to come for a party at your house. By the time your parents get home, the place is a mess. Parents are angry; you will have to respond using the above technique.

#### *Situation 2*

You studied really hard for your mathematics test. Your friend, who sits behind you in class, said mathematics was a waste and watched TV instead of studying. During the test, you accidentally drop your pencil and it rolls under your desk. While you are on the floor trying to find it, your friend looks over you at your

paper. The teacher notices this and in a loud voice accuses you both of cheating, and tells you both to leave the room immediately. You are angry, but have to respond using the above technique.

### *Situation 3*

Your girl/boy friend told you she/he couldn't go out Saturday night because she/he had to take care of her/his younger sister. That night you go to a movie with your cousin and end up sitting two rows behind your girl/boy friend and with another friend.

Tell the adolescents to use the simple strategy they have learnt to react to the situation without getting angry.

While the enactment is taking place, ask the adolescents observing to note all the anger-reducing words and techniques used.

### **Assessment of activity**

Assess if the adolescents were able to use the technique of Stop, Think and Speak for controlling anger. If you feel they have learnt this technique, then proceed to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 9 – KILLER TREAT

### Learning outcomes

Adolescents will learn another method to deal with anger-causing situations and have a positive feeling towards oneself and others.

### Information for trainers

Introduce the game, "Killer Treat", by recapitulating "Colours of Life" session in which adolescents realized that there are different emotions, feelings, different colours which is like a prism to block any other thoughts that can arise.

In this activity, killer means the adolescents will kill all the ill feelings and negative feelings. They will treat themselves with positive feelings and good, nice feelings which help them in self-awareness and coping with stress. Facilitate them to do these by writing, listing and expressing it on the paper. This is an individual exercise.

Finally, ask the adolescents to put the papers in the dustbin. Then encourage them to reflect upon, critically think and react to their feelings.

### Process

- (1) Distribute a sheet, which is big enough to write the following columns. Give one ink pen (fountain pen) to each adolescent.

1	2	3	4
Name	Irritants	Feelings	Punishments

- (2) Ask each adolescent to think of all the people who have hurt them. They could be their parents, their teacher or their friends or neighbour or a stranger or a relative. Let them list those persons. Repeat the statement that the adolescents may think of those people who have hurt them... say it slowly, mildly, reinforce on the word, "those who hurt you" (any name can be given, real name is optional). Thinking of the person who has hurt you is important in this step.
- (3) Ask the adolescents to write the behaviours of those persons who have hurt them (Also write any words which that person whose name

is written used or their behaviour or action that hurt them). List them in front of the names that they have written. Facilitate them to think, what they felt, how they felt when somebody hurt them. Make sure the feelings and emotions come out. Help them to critically think about the stress that they suffered because of the behaviour and action of those who hurt them.

- (4) Now ask the adolescents to write (following the sentence and putting brackets) the feelings or emotional disturbances that the adolescents underwent due to the behaviour of the person whom they have listed.
- (5) Ask the adolescents to think of themselves as a judge and list the punishments that they feel the person who has hurt them deserves and award the punishment.
- (6) Ask the adolescents to read out loudly the feelings which are written on their sheet and cover it with ink, slowly.
- (7) Encourage the adolescents to express their feelings while covering the names column with ink, next on irritants column, next feelings and punishment column. It can be seen as dissolving the name, irritants, feelings, and judgment in the water. The other alternative is to burn the paper. These are all optional. Anything can be adopted as convenient and easily practised. The rationale behind this exercise is to help the adolescent to cope with stress and cope with emotions. Clarify now that the purpose of covering the words with ink is to overcome the intense negative feelings about the person without harming the person concerned.
- (8) Find out how they feel while covering the writing in the columns.

### **Possible responses**

*List of names.*

- Naresh
- Kishen
- Rakesh
- X

*Hurting behaviour*

- Naresh abused me (used abusive language)

- Kishen cheated me
- Rakesh slapped me
- X bullied me

*Feelings attached*

- Naresh abused me (I felt very sad) (used abusive language)
- Kishen cheated me (I felt very miserable)
- Rakesh slapped me (I became depressed/frustrated) It was very painful; I became revengeful.
- X bullied me (I was angry)

*Punishment awarded*

- Naresh abused me (I felt very sad). I want him also to suffer
- Kishen cheated me (I felt miserable). I feel like punishing him in some way.
- Rakesh slapped me (I felt depressed). I want to slap Rakesh very hard too.
- X bullied me (I was angry). I want X to get it from somebody.

*Feelings while covering the ink:*

- I don't feel like covering the punishment column with ink.
- I don't want to punish them.
- I feel I should forgive this person.

**Assessment of activity**

Assess whether the adolescents were able to remember the names of people who had hurt them, the behaviour or words or actions that had hurt them and the feelings attached to those hurting behaviour. If so, find out if they could give punishment to them and were able to remove those negative emotions about those persons. Then proceed to the next activity. Distribute Annexes 1 and 2 to all the adolescents for future reference to deal with emotions.

## Annex 1

### GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH EMOTIONS

*1. Identify your emotions.*

Do you feel angry, hurt, worried, guilty, insulted, jealous, or have any other emotion?

*2. Analyse why the situation bothers you.*

Did something turn out differently than you had planned or hoped?

Did someone you trusted let you down?

Are you concerned about how others will react to what happened?

Was something else that was upsetting you earlier the real reason you are upset?

*3. Analyse the effect the situation is having or can have on your life.*

What does this situation mean to you? That is, what are the probable consequences in your life?

Are the consequences serious and long lasting or just momentarily disappointing?

*4. Decide what you can and cannot change.*

You can always change your reaction even if the rest of the situation is out of your control.

*5. Choose a positive way to react.*

If, for example, you failed a test, a positive reaction is to study harder for the next one.

If you could not make a basket the last time you played basketball, a positive reaction is to practise more.

If you applied for a summer job and didn't get it, a positive reaction is to apply for a different job.

*6. Think of something positive you can learn from the situation.*

Positive things you could learn might include a way to keep the situation from repeating or the recognition that you are improving in your ability to handle disappointment or frustration.

## Annex 2

### ANGER REDUCING TECHNIQUE - GET "R...I...D" OF ANGER

*R – Recognize your anger signals and accept that you are angry.*

Examples might include sweaty palms, gritted teeth, shaking hands.

Feelings of impatience, upset stomach, flushed face, tight muscles, or headache.

*I - Identify a positive way to analyse the situation.*

Depending on the situation, you might say to yourself, I am not going to take this seriously.

- My friends know I wouldn't do that.
- I am not going to get upset about this.
- I know I can work this out without getting upset.
- I can stay calm in this situation.
- I will not take it personally.
- This is a challenge, and I enjoy a challenge.

*D - Do something constructive to calm down.*

Examples might include:

- counting to 10
- taking a deep breath

- asking for time to calm down,
- leaving the scene
- talking about your feelings with someone not involved
- listening to music
- exercising or doing something else physical
- writing a letter to the person and then destroying it
- explaining how angry you are
- helping someone else
- watching a funny movie
- spending time on your favourite hobby
- doing something creative
- spending some time with a pet.