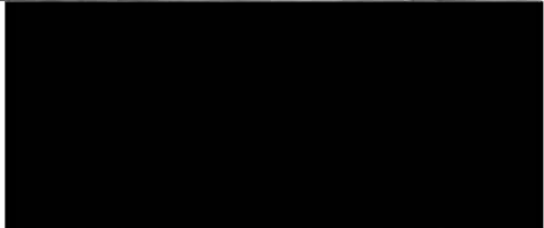


**IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION
INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE**

ATTACHMENT AR-11 TO STATEMENT OF ANDREW REAPER

Date of document: 17 July 2015
Filed on behalf of: the Applicant
Prepared by:
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This is the attachment marked '**AR-11**' produced and shown to **ANDREW REAPER** at the time of signing his Statement on 17 July 2015.

Before me:




**An Australian Legal Practitioner within
the meaning of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria)**

Attachment AR-11



Changeabout Program
Session Guide
HMA & Corrections Victoria

 **Session guide****Acknowledgements:**

We would like to acknowledge the input of the team from the Offending Behaviour Programs Branch, and in particular, Shaymaa Elkadi, Peter Persson, Marcus Stewart, Kim Eldridge, Melissa Braden and Matea Doroc. Hall McMaster & Associates were responsible for the design and development of the program.

Session guide

How to use this guide

In order to run the program you will need the following resources:

1. Theory manual
2. Program manual
 - Module 1: Orientation
 - Module 2: Beliefs and attitudes that support abuse
 - Module 3: Managing emotions
 - Module 4: Relationship skills
 - Module 5: Alcohol, drug and family violence
 - Module 6: Impact on others
 - Additional sessions:
3. Participant workbook
 - Beliefs and thinking: Session 1 - 4
 - Managing emotions: Session 1 - 4
 - Managing others: Session 1 - 4
 - Alcohol, drugs and family violence: Session 1 – 4
 - Impact on others: Session 1 – 4
 - SAFE ME
 - ABCD diary
4. Program resources

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters: Abusive practice wall Safe practice wall CBT diagram HMA family wellbeing HMA hot thoughts Avoiding responsibility thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Card activities: CBT cards Emotional compass cards HMA DV program resources kit HMA mind cards
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Session guide

Target Group for the Program

The program is designed for men who have engaged in violence within their families. Family violence is now recognised as a major issue, accounting for around 40% of police time in Victoria. As a result significant numbers of men are coming into Corrections Victoria either through incarceration or on community based orders.

Overview of the Program

The program can be run as either an open or closed delivery model. It utilises a risk, need, responsivity model for intervention with a gendered focus. It uses the Nested Ecological Model to ensure the complexity and interactive nature of factors are traversed through the program. The sessions are two and a half hours in length with a ten-minute break in the middle.

Sessions Themes	Time Allocation
Getting ready for the journey	
Orientation Session 1	2.5 hours
Orientation Session 2	2.5 hours
Beliefs & attitudes that support abuse	
Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking	2.5 hours
Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises	2.5 hours
Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking	2.5 hours
Session 4: Old and new beliefs	2.5 hours
Managing emotions	
Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse	2.5 hours
Session 2: Problem emotions	2.5 hours
Session 3: Distress tolerance	2.5 hours
Session 4: Responding to another's emotions	2.5 hours
Relationship skills	

Session guide

Session 1: Respecting others	2.5 hours
Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills	2.5 hours
Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour	2.5 hours
Session 4: Sexual respect	2.5 hours
Alcohol, drugs and family violence	
Session 1: The link between alcohol, drugs use and family violence	2.5 hours
Session 2: Peer pressure	2.5 hours
Session 3: Walking away	2.5 hours
Session 4: managing alcohol and drug use	2.5 hours
Impact on others	
Session 1: Parenting after abuse	2.5 hours
Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues	2.5 hours
Session 3: Managing children's behaviour	2.5 hours
Session 4: The wider family	2.5 hours
Additional sessions	
Session Exit (individual)	1 hour
Session: Maintenance (group)	2.5 hours

Session guide

Session Structure

Each session replicates the following format:

- **Opening** (greeting, welcome or thought)
- *Acknowledgement of Country* (in first session only or beginning of each module if new men are joining)
- **Check-in** on safety and emotional status
- **Brief mindfulness exercise** – to relax and settle members into session (see Toolkit)
- **Homework Review** – existing members report about goals and progress-to-date (e.g., takeaway cards, ABCD diary). Problem-solve as required – this will involve skill development and building safety strategies.
- **Theme for the session** – each session will be based on a theme around a core idea identified in the literature relating to managing risk and creating safety
- **Applying the theme to me** – ensuring a connection and personalising of the issue
- **Practice and skill rehearsal** – of new skills
- **Reflection** – reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills (including the updating of the participant's individualised pathway map)
- **Closing** – complete another brief mindfulness exercise to calm before exiting session.

The sessions do not have timing included because experience tells us that facilitators become anxious in getting through, rather than working with, the content during the session. However each session has a clear theme that relates to the reduction of stable and acute risk factors related to family violence. In addition having participants connect the session theme to their own behavioural map and abusive pathway maintains a clear focus within the session. Rehearsing alternative skills for managing situations that lead to incidents of family violence provides consolidation of alternative behaviours. It is also envisaged that within the 2.5 hour session that a 10 minute break will take place at some point. This is up to the discretion of the facilitators who can read the group energy and where they are tracking in terms of program content.

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Getting ready for the journey: Orientation Session 1

Session summary

- Welcome
- Where are you from? Who are you?
- Group culture – what gifts/experience will you bring?
- Your hopes for the program
- Cognitive behavioural approach - Dave's Story
- Between-sessions task
- Reflection questions/closure
- Session resources

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will be able to:

- Understand the aim of the program and what they are required to do - remember this is a partnership between the facilitators and the men, in creating safety in families
- Take an active position towards commitment to the program
- Consider and understand the basics of the CBT model (the way we think will affect the way that they feel, and together this will influence the decisions we make)
- Contribute to, and abide by, the group agreement

Session overview

This session is an orientation session designed to prepare the men for active involvement in the program. In addition to covering group readiness skills it also introduces the men to the cognitive behavioural model which underpins the program approach. This readiness work will help the men move into the group and begin working quickly on their goals for the program and safety planning.

Outcomes from session

- Group rules developed and confirmed
- The men have identified goals for the program
- The men have a commitment to the purpose and challenges of the program

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Program opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Change your opinions, keep to your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Welcome by the facilitators to this session of the program.



The welcome has the following purposes:

- *Bringing the facilitators and the men together to focus on the purpose of the program, including a brief description of the program.*
- *Laying down the challenge to take the program seriously.*
- *Inviting each group to speak on the reasons for their attendance.*
- *Depending upon the group composition, it may be appropriate to start with a prayer, or thought for the day. If there is a person from the area, it will be appropriate to ask them first.*

Those present will be anxious about what to expect, and may feel a range of things: shame, relief, hope, enthusiasm, frustration, and resentment or, open anger at being required to attend. If they have just broken up with their partner, or lost their children because of their abuse and violence, they may also be in the early “shock-denial-anger-depression” stages of grief, so we need to acknowledge that in this session.

Welcome to the program: Facilitators may offer a prayer, and then introduce themselves briefly, mentioning perhaps, their area of work and why they care about this work.



A facilitator may like to begin the introductory words, saying for example:

“It's good to see you all here today. Of the men invited to the course, you have chosen to come. Some others chose not to come. In the past, some men have told us that the first time they came here, they only got as far as the front door and turned around and went home. What do you think stopped them from coming? What brought you here? [Hear some views round the room].

What are some of the feelings you have about coming here today? [Hear a few examples around the room]. So I hear that some of you are angry about being sent by the courts. Some are more hopeful about finally getting some help. If you have been asked by the courts to come here, we don't want you to see this program as a punishment – we are not interested in punishing anybody. What we care about is supporting people to make the changes they want, like being safe for your partners and children to be with.”

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Identify where people come from using the room as a map

Work through a process of identifying where the participants have come from and where it is that they identify with - where are their roots? A good place to start this is to find out where the men are from and who they are. This is relationship-building to create a sense of common purpose. The session is about getting to know each other, to find out what is common to all, and what is different.

Have them imagine a map of Australia/relevant state out in the room. Imagine travelling down from one end/area/state to another until all areas have been covered.

Have the men place themselves in the area they come from. The group is likely to be small – one to four men – so ask them to describe three things to do with this place that are important to them.

If they are from outside Australia, ask them to place themselves in relationship to Australia. And repeat the exercise above.

The way we work in this program

Explain that in this program, there will be an expectation of getting actively involved. You might like to use the analogy of learning to fix a car engine. How many men in a group learnt from a book and how many learnt by getting under the bonnet and getting their hands dirty. Explain that in this program, we are taking the getting-your-hands-dirty approach by trying out and practising ways to create and maintain safety within the household.

Our group culture - what gifts/experience will you bring to the program?

Explore with the men that we are all part of groups all of the time. Our first experience of a group is the family or community group we grew up in. We then move on to being parts of other groups; kindergartens, schools, sports groups, clubs, gangs, etc.

Each of these groups has a set of rules, or culture, whether written or unwritten, that ensures the group functions effectively. We have to learn what these rules are so that we can know what is expected. This group is no different. Using your experience of being in groups, we are going to develop the culture for this group.

Ask the men what they need for this to be a safe place to learn the skills of being safe with others. You might want to reinforce the idea that the group has to work for the men, otherwise little will be taken away.



A typical list might include:

- *To help someone, or get alongside them*
- *To offer support in a more general sense*
- *To take responsibility for one another*
- *Honouring each other, perhaps by keeping things in trust - confidentiality*
- *Respect*
- *No hogging the time - allowing space for each other to talk*
- *No violence or abuse*
- *Use peoples' first names*

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

- *Come straight – don't come smashed or stoned*



A useful way to deal with confidentiality in a group where men have been violent and abusive towards others, is to state very clearly, the boundaries around how information is used. Facilitators could state something like:

“Before we go on I would like to clarify the idea of confidentiality. In this area of work you cannot expect confidentiality in the same way as you might from your minister, doctor or lawyer. The limits to confidentiality include if there was a threat of serious harm to either yourself or someone else, or if there was disclosure of a serious past offence having been committed. What you can be assured of, is that we will treat you with the utmost respect. This means that we will talk with you about what we are doing, what contact we will have with others, and invite you, in the first instance, to take responsibility. If we think someone is at risk, we will deal with it if you don't. The other thing we need to mention in regard to confidentiality is that the facilitators have supervision, which means we will need to talk about what is going on with the group with our supervisor. However, it is important to say that this person is bound by professional confidentiality also.”

Elicit from the men the idea of taking the purpose of the group seriously. Ask them if they have committed themselves to the challenge of the program, part of it, or are they still deciding?

Continuum

Ask them to place themselves on an imaginary line on the floor that runs from: *'No I haven't decided yet to pick up the challenge to take this program seriously and own it,'* to *'I have picked up the challenge and have owned it.'* A middle position might be *'I am thinking seriously about whether to pick up the challenge or not.'*

In a group, some members might own all of the challenge, some parts of it, while others will not. The challenge for the facilitators is to acknowledge group members honesty in taking a position but not to get stuck with it, or allow them an easy out. It is also about acknowledging that they are all in different places. Some questions that might be useful to ask include:

- *How do you think your decision may affect us working together?*
- *What did you weigh-up when you were making the decision about where you stand in relation to the challenge?*
- *What did you decide to ignore when making your decision?*
- *What will you need in order to commit yourself to the challenge of the program?*

Your hopes for the program

Remind each of the men that at the assessment sessions they were asked what their hopes/goals were for the program.

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

They were asked to consider what they want to walk out the door with in terms of new ideas, new thoughts, and new behaviours to keep their family members safe.

Ask them to talk about the hopes of their partner and children of coming to the program.



The process of speaking about goals early, starts to build a sense of accountability to other group members, as well as cohesion. Ensure the goals are specific and purposeful – we are looking for approach goals, that is, “I want to understand how to keep my family safe.” “I want to manage when I get jealous.” “I know my family want me to be safe. I do too.”

Be aware that for some men who have recently separated, this last question may be somewhat distressing. The reality is for many men, continued contact with children post-separation will also occur. If the men can take a position of thoughtfulness towards others, then this is a good sign of motivation towards change.

Let's hear from each of you what your hopes and goals are, along with those in your life.

Theme Introduction - Thinking about Thinking

Ask the men, 'What are thoughts and emotions?'

Provide simple definitions of thinking and emotions, then elicit examples of general thoughts and emotions, moving on to some specific examples of problem thoughts and emotions that lead to violence.

You could also use the following warm-up questions: 'When you're working hard at stopping your violence, and abusive practises, what do you imagine is important about:

- understanding more about the way you make decisions?
- knowing about the sort of thinking that encourages violence or abusive practises?
- Knowing about the associated emotions that lead to your violence?
- knowing about a range of thinking and mood-management strategies?'

Ask the men what would be really worthwhile to learn more about, in regard to their thinking, when they are being, or close to being, violent and abusive.



Possible responses are likely to include:

- *the sort of thinking that makes it all right to use abusive practises again and again*
- *take control of my thinking*
- *turn down the volume on my thinking*
- *take control of my life*

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Understanding your thinking pathway – the thinking model

Use the following instructions to make the thinking model (cognitive behavioural model) come alive. Tell the men that you want them to consider the idea that the way they think in a situation will affect the way that they feel, and that together, they will strongly influence the sorts of decisions they make.

Pathways into violence and abusive practises can have hundreds of intersections; each intersection will have its own decision options that can lead you towards, or away from, violent or abusive behaviour. The following exercise gets real involvement in developing understanding of the thinking model which will be used throughout the remainder of the program at various points.

Instruction to exercise:

1. Lay the cards from the HMA CBT Card Exercise on the floor and ask the men to try to put these into a model.
2. Discuss and clarify how the model fits together ensuring all the men fully understand the concept.

Choice to Change DVD – Dave makes a bad situation worse

Watch a video clip of Dave, who is talking with his mates at the pub about his recent separation from his partner. Tell the men that we are going to walk Dave's story through the model once, where he takes the pathway to making a tough situation worse. Then we will re-run Dave's story using the second scenario, but with different thinking.

Tell the men that one of them will need to be Dave for the purpose of making sense of the model. The rest of the group will help out.

Show DVD clip of Dave from the DVD 'Choice to Change.'

Using the cards on the floor, walk the volunteer through the stages in the DVD from the trigger event (the pub scene). Work through this sequence of events, thinking, feeling, action and consequence, and the core beliefs about women that emerge during the clip.

Ask the men what impact Dave's mates had on his frame of mind, his thinking, when he was in the middle of the issues with his partner?

Then skip forward in time to collecting his children from his ex-partner's house. Again, work through this sequence of events, thinking, feeling, action and consequence, and the core beliefs.

Show the second clip from the DVD where Dave manages things differently and safely, despite the same issues present. Choose another volunteer.

Again, using the cards on the floor, walk the volunteer through the stages in the DVD from the trigger event (the pub scene). Work through this sequence of events, thinking, feeling, action and consequence, and the core beliefs about women that emerge during the second clip. Ask the following process questions to explore understanding of the concepts:

- *What did you notice are the differences between these two pathways?*
- *What did Dave need to think in order to take a safety pathway, rather than giving in to abusive practises?*
- *What were the short- and long-term impacts from Dave's behaviour during the second walk through?*

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Reinforce these key ideas:

- Our thinking affects our feelings and together these influence our behaviour
- Our mates can positively or negatively affect our thinking about situations.

If you have say, four people in the orientation, you could get them to go into pairs and practice another example so everyone has a go.

Put up Poster 'Cognitive Behavioural Theory' and read through this, making links to the previous exercise. Ensure this poster remains on the wall throughout the duration of the program, as you will constantly refer to it.

Beliefs are the operating system - much like a computer, it ticks away in the background and allows us to do, or not do, certain things. Explain that we learn these things as we grow up, and that they are reinforced as we often get a short-term reward. Explain where they come from – i.e., social learning and operant principles – in plain English.

Something happens – this could be an event, like (xxx), a situation, like (xxx) – use examples, a separation, an argument, a loss, problems over money, etc. In life, there is always something happening and people don't always do the things we want, or situations arise that challenge us.

Thoughts – the key is what we say to ourselves about what is happening. We often slip into auto-pilot at this point (using thinking from our beliefs operating system). We may be really aware of our thinking, or alternatively, the thoughts could be automatic, especially when entrenched. Sometimes, thoughts may not be negative but could be associated with positive outcomes. Our challenge is to find alternative thoughts at this moment, which will take us to safe destinations.

Emotions – these come from our thoughts about a situation or situations. Note: it could be negative emotions and/or positive emotions a person has as a consequence of the thoughts.

Actions – this is how thinking comes out in behaviour.

Consequences – depending upon our actions, there are negative or positive consequences.

Summarise by saying that what we think affects how we feel, and together, they influence how we act or respond to events.

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Reflection questions/closure

Discuss the following questions with the men:

- *What have you noticed about yourself in the group today?*
- *How have you helped others in the group to become part of a team?*
- *In what ways has the group given you support?*
- *What are three things you will do this week to keep your family safe?*
Write these in your book.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Change your opinions, keep to your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots.”

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

Facilitator Notes

Preparing the venue to be welcoming

Facilitators will need to take care over the setting of the venue. This is about how we welcome and serve others. Another way to describe this is how we look after and care for others. It therefore involves processes of respect for each person, kindness, to look after, and to enhance others in some way. Considerate preparation is also about reciprocity, with the pride of the host also being respected.

Given the importance of the program, the physical surroundings need to provide a sense of warmth and welcome for the men. Issues to be mindful of include:

- Room size – allowing enough space for separate working groups
- Seating – comfortable chairs
- Ventilation, heating, light
- Access to facilities for tea break, smoking, toilets, etc.
- Ensuring the venue has a whiteboard, whiteboard pens, newsprint, permanent pens, pins or bluetac, video player and monitor.

Welcome

The use of a welcoming process meets several purposes:

- settling-in
- signalling a transition
- transparency
- signalling accountability

Group culture

When developing the group culture, the facilitators need to be aware that some rules are not negotiable. The clearer the group members can be at the beginning about what is expected, the easier it will be later on to maintain a safe and respectful culture within the group.

The non-negotiables include:

- No violence or abuse in the group – this includes disrespectful gender or racial jokes
- No coming to the group alcohol- or drug-affected.

Confidentiality between group members is critical. Group members can, and indeed need to, talk with others about their own learning from the group in a manner that respects the privacy of other group members.

Facilitators need to operate from a limited confidentiality perspective in that, if they become aware of imminent danger to the group member, or the group member's actions suggest imminent danger to another person, then they need to take action, which may include breaching confidentiality.

Best practice would suggest that the facilitators talk to the group member about their concerns and intention in the first instance.

Using proper names

Getting ready for the journey: Session 1 – Orientation 1

The development of a culture of respect, risk and support within the group, is an integral part of this program, and consolidating the names of group members and their use, is an important aim.

When people use abusive practices, they often discount other people by not using their proper names. Games and exercises assisting and encouraging the learning of the names of all group members are important. Taking time to learn and use other people's names when addressing them, frees group members up to develop closer and more respectful relationships.

Men who have used abusive practises will often talk about family members and victims in terms that denote ownership, or suggest lesser, or no value. These are to be challenged at all times and the group member reminded to use the name of the person.

“Being in this group requires us to use each other's names and also the names of the people we talk about, as a sign of respect.”

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2

Getting ready for the journey: Orientation Session 2

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Listening check
- Feedback exercise
- Short-term safety strategies – time-out
- Preparing for the group
- Between-sessions task
- Reflection questions/closure
- Session resources

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will be able to:

- Understand the aim of the program and what they are required to do – remember, this is a partnership between the facilitators and the men in creating safety in families
- Understand and explore the idea of time-out as a strategy
- Take an active position towards commitment to the program
- Contribute to, and abide by, the group agreement
- Demonstrate some basic skills in listening, and giving and receiving feedback

Session overview

This second orientation session builds upon the earlier session by preparing men for active involvement in the program. In addition to covering group readiness skills (listening check, giving and receiving feedback, and identifying program goals), it also introduces the men to safety strategies, such as time-out. This readiness work will help the men move into the group, and begin working quickly on their goals for the program and safety planning.

Outcomes from session

- The men have identified goals for the program
- The men have a commitment to the purpose and challenges of the program

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, within the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family/Wellbeing Tool.

Listening check

The aim of this exercise is to get the men familiar with describing, modelling, and practising listening. All facilitators should be trained in the use of the 'listening check' prior to undertaking this exercise, as the task should first be demonstrated by the facilitators through a role-play. Ideally, the facilitators will demonstrate an error in listening, so that the task has to be repeated correctly a second time. The men should then debrief using the following process.

1. Person A talks,
2. Person B listens to message,
3. Person A then listens while,
4. Person B summarises the message,
5. Person A says whether the summary of the message is accurate
6. IF THE SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGE IS NOT ACCURATE, RETURN TO STEP 1.

Initially the men may find this task difficult. Facilitators should point out that listening is a skill, like any other behaviour, and although we may have the physical equipment to hear, we still have to learn to listen. For example, just because we have a car, doesn't mean we have the skills to drive it. Once the men have developed proficiency, write the following on the whiteboard and ask the listener to identify whether the speaker is talking about facts, thoughts, feelings, or needs, as they undertake their role-plays:

Facts: Something that can be proven and is difficult to disagree with e.g. your age, your shoe size, the colour of your hair

Thoughts: are your opinions, your interpretations of events, your beliefs and attitudes

Feelings: are your emotional reactions

Needs: are what you want, need or desire

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2

Feedback Exercise

Ask the men to define – what does it mean?

Divide the men into small groups if there are enough, and ask each member to discuss a time when people have commented about their behaviour or attitude. Members should note:

- *What feedback was helpful? Why?*
- *What feedback was unhelpful? Why?*
- *What impact did the feedback have on you?*
- *How did you react?*

The men should subsequently contemplate the question: 'What do you think makes feedback helpful versus unhelpful?' The men should create a short role-play (2-3 minutes) to demonstrate their conclusions. In particular, each role-play should model the types of behaviours and attitudes that would motivate, versus de-motivate, others within a group context.

These role-plays require communication strategies that may exceed some men's current skill levels. Therefore, it is important to keep expectations realistic and actively assist the men to explore the effectiveness/helpfulness of their proposed strategies.

Ask each small group to present their role-play to the larger group, and then generate discussion on the following topics:

- *What are some guidelines for giving helpful feedback?*
- *How can we use these guidelines during the program to make sure that the feedback we give each other is helpful?*

Encourage the group to be as specific as possible and generate examples when possible. Facilitators should ensure that the following areas are addressed, and answers recorded on a large sheet of paper:

- It describes rather than judges
- No personal put-downs
- Be specific - no generalising
- Be accurate - report what was observed
- It takes into account the needs of the receiver
- It is aimed at behaviour that is changeable
- It includes what was well done

Provide the men with an A4-size copy of the following hand-out. Elicit perceptions on the usefulness of this hand-out for structuring feedback during the current group. In particular, note that the men would complete this form when a group member presents their work, after which facilitators would elicit their responses and guide subsequent discussion. Encourage suggestions for the modification of this structured feedback sheet – and implement changes as deemed appropriate.

The aim of this task is to facilitate the men's sense of ownership over future group processes. The resulting 'structured feedback sheet' should be used by the men during all individual presentations, and be followed by a guided discussion led by facilitators.

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2

Note that from time to time, the feedback that they receive from the group may de-motivate them, even when it is delivered in a positive way. Generate discussion around the following:

- *How would we know when someone is feeling de-motivated by others? What might we see?*
- *How might this affect the group?*
- *How would we deal with this as a group?*

Short-term safety strategies – Time-out

Say, it is hugely important that when we enter into programs that we keep ourselves and others (especially those within our families) safe. One strategy that is particularly useful, especially in the short term, is the strategy of 'time-out'.

Immediate safety needs are paramount for men entering into programs.

Use the following material to explore the idea of time-out as a strategy men can use straight away to keep women, children and family safe.

1. Talk about time-out with your family/friends/mates before you need to take it.
2. Let them know what you are trying to do and what signal you may give.
3. Leave when you feel unsafe and are about to become abusive.
4. Say something like: "I am beginning to feel unsafe to be around and need to take time-out. I will be back in ... minutes, once I have calmed down, worked out what is going on for me, and know I can be safe with you."
5. Do something physical. Go for a walk, run or bike ride. This will give you some distance from the situation and time to think through what was going on. Also, exercise has a calming rhythm and burns up the anger chemicals (adrenaline and glucose) that make you feel 'hyped.'
6. Phone a friend or one of the telephone counselling services available in your community, and talk over what is happening.
7. Return at the time agreed to. This helps to build trust in the relationship and shows that you are genuine in trying to act respectfully.
8. Negotiate a time within the next twenty-four hours to talk about what happened.
9. Talk about what it was you were reacting to in a non-abusive way, using "I" statements.
10. Remember to avoid statements such as "I think that you ..." or "I feel you ..." which are really blaming statements. Also, don't get into the same old stuff (SOS) by dragging up the past, blaming, and not listening.

Also inquire into what behaviours could increase the risk of family violence. Ensure that the following points are discussed:

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2

1. Don't do drugs or drink - they only make a bad situation worse. Being out of it, even slightly, makes it harder to make safe and non-abusive decisions. Time-out is for serious thinking and trying to understand what is going on. If men make responsible choices around the issues that have come up, this will communicate to others that they are serious about their decision to deal with their use of family violence.
2. Don't drive. When people are highly aroused emotionally, their ability to think and coordinate actions, is affected. There are enough dangerous drivers on the road without any of them becoming another one.
3. Don't do anything to harm themselves or others.
4. Don't label – “stupid bitch,” etc. Labels block clear thinking.

Acknowledge that taking time-out is not always easy. Ask the question, “What has made it hard for me to take time-out?” The group will generally come up with the following ideas:

- I might lose the argument if I leave.
- The issue is too important to drop it now.
- I've got to get my point-of-view across.
- Why should I go? I'm the boss around here.
- It's raining; it's cold.
- We're expecting visitors; I'll have to stay.
- She'll win. She'll think she's won. She'll think I'm a wimp.
- Where's my pride?
- If I leave, they might harm themselves.
- What will they think of me, an idiot perhaps?
- I've got nowhere to go.
- It's too late to go out now.
- I've no friends.
- I'll try and stay cool.

What others might say to stop me from going?

- Stay here and finish it.
- You're always walking out.
- Can't you handle it?
- If you walk out now, take your things and don't come back.
- How am I going to manage when I'm relying on you?

Preparing for the group

Remind the men of the date and time that they will be joining the group program. Check their motivation through using scaling questions (1 – 100) on how ready they are to take the next step, how important it is that they come to all of the sessions, and how confident they are that they can make the group material work for them.

Getting ready for the journey: Session 2 – Orientation 2**Reflection questions/closure**

Discuss the following questions with the men:

- *What have you noticed about yourself in the group today?*
- *How have you helped others in the group to become part of a team?*
- *In what ways has the group given you support?*
- *What are three things you will do this week to keep your family safe?*
- *Write these in your book.*

Revisit today's take-home message:

"Every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home."

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Session 1: Violence, Abusive Practises and Thinking

Session summary

- Opening
- Greeting by existing men to new men
- Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date
- Sharing of program goals
- Check-in on safety/emotions/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Thinking that supports violence, abusive practises and avoidance of responsibility
- Applying the theme to me – What thoughts and beliefs I have that support violence and abusive practises
- Practice and skill rehearsal – Catching these thoughts and looking for evidence to refute them
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the thinking process
- Described the sort of thinking that they use that encourages violence and abusive practises
- Demonstrated strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding the cognitive behavioural process, identifying thinking that supports violence and abusive practises (from offence maps) and identifying replacement strategies that promote safety. The men are invited to work with their problem thinking, apply strategies to deal with these, and identify more appropriate forms of thinking.

Workbook 1.1 Thinking about thinking

- Cognitive behavioural model
- Understanding thinking that supports violence and abusive practises
- Between-session tasks

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Greeting/welcome by existing men to new men

A senior group member who has been attending the program for some time will take responsibility for welcoming new group members to the group and to lead the discussion.



The framework to be used is a conversation around the goals men set for themselves during the assessment process regarding developing safety within their interpersonal relationships.

Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date

Existing group members share the main goals they established during assessment, and report on their progress towards meeting those goals. New group members are then invited to do the same.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the checking-in on the men's emotional status, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, engaging with the group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Violence and Abusive practises checklist: She'll Be Sweet – Thinking that supports abusive behaviour

Introduce the task by asking men to take five minutes to look over the Violence and Abusive Practises Checklist (see end-of-session notes for facilitators and Participant Workbook).

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Ask the group why they are being asked to look at the checklist. Inform the group of the following:

- That when they know the range of behaviours that contribute to abuse and violence, then they are able to learn the skills of identifying the signs early and make different decisions
- Another reason for asking them to look over the checklist, is to help them to become more aware of the frequency of the abusive practises they might be engaging in.

Use the following questions to explore participants' responses to the activity:

- *What did you become aware of when you were looking over the checklist?*
- *What surprised you?*
- *What other thoughts and feelings did you have about the checklist?*

Tell the men that they are going to watch a 20-minute DVD clip which revolves around the lives of Darryl, Gail, their children and their extended family, and friends. In it, there are a number of behaviours from the checklist that they have to detect.

Show the clip 'She'll Be Sweet.'

After the clip, pair the men off and ask them to fill in the checklist with the behaviours they saw. Have the pairs present their thinking back to the main group. Discuss these in the main group.



Note that the reason for showing the clip is that the men will begin to recognise the wide breadth of behaviours that constitute abusive practise. This is an awareness exercise and will help to inform a conversation around how they link together, and form the basis of their own unique pathway into abuse and violence.

Applying the theme to me

Ask the men to go back over the checklist and identify the behaviours they use in their relationships.

Introduce the next task by informing the men that when we engage in behaviour that is not okay, we have to make it okay in order to live with ourselves. Introduce the conversation by saying something like:

"Let's spend some time thinking about all the ways you try to con yourself and others. Let's use an example to discover these thinking processes. I want you to think of a time when you had a major disagreement with someone. Just sit comfortably and quietly, eyes closed if that's helpful. Feet on the floor, hands relaxed. Remember where you were and who was there. Remember what happened. Remember how you felt, what you said and what you did."

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Now think about afterwards.

- *Who were all the people you told about what had happened?*
- *How did you describe the situation and your behaviour to them?*



Pause after each question to allow sufficient time for recall and consideration.

Facilitate a brief group discussion using the following questions:

- *What did you say so that they would believe your version of the story?*
- *What didn't you tell them?*
- *How did you convince yourself that your explanation was right? How did you feel as a consequence of that? What thinking went alongside those feelings?*
- *What would an independent and neutral observer have added, or taken out of your story, to make it more accurate?*
- *And lastly, what are all the different statements you have made to convince others that you won't be violent again?*

Thinking related to violence and abuse

Introduce the next task by saying something like:

"You have been learning about the different ways of thinking that can lead towards violence and abusive practises. For many of you, it may seem that these practises have become a habit or pattern of behaviour, and have become routine.

We want to go deeper as we continue exploring thinking related to violence and abusive practises. When we do something that goes against our better judgement, we often have an internal conversation with ourselves, or a spoken conversation with others to help justify, or excuse what we did. This sort of thinking, or internal self-talk, makes it easier to use abusive practises again.

What did you notice about the types of thinking going on for you when you last engaged in family violence?" Elicit a range of examples.

Process by inviting feedback from all the men:



When the cognitive behavioural thinking theory was being studied, it was noticed that there were some types of "hot thinking" that kept recurring when violent offending or similar decisions were being made. Hot Thoughts: downers, blowing things up, predicting failure, labelling/put-down thoughts, setting yourself up for failure, and blaming. You will note that blaming also fits into the category of avoiding responsibility thinking (for your reference there is a fact sheet on 'avoiding responsibility thinking' in the facilitator notes)

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Draw the following chart on the whiteboard, break the group into sub-groups, and have the men record their examples on flipchart paper.

<p>Downers</p> <p><i>e.g. 'I had a shit day' or, 'everything is going wrong'</i></p>	<p>Blowing things up</p> <p><i>e.g. 'I never get anything right' or, 'I'm useless'</i></p>
<p>Predicting failure</p> <p><i>e.g. 'I know she doesn't like me' or, 'I'm not going to be able to do this'</i></p>	<p>Labeling/put-down thoughts</p> <p><i>e.g. 'I'm the black sheep' or, 'you are a bitch'</i></p>
<p>Setting yourself or others up to fail</p> <p><i>e.g. 'I shouldn't ever get angry' or, 'I can't do anything right'</i></p>	<p>Blaming</p> <p><i>e.g. 'It's her fault I'm in trouble again' or, 'It must be my fault'</i></p>

Refer to the 'Family-Focussed Approach' poster, and use this framework to inquire into what the impact of having these thoughts is when managing our thinking and conversations with others.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Men can work in sub-groups for the next activity. Ask the men to choose the statements that they commonly make, and identify a replacement thought that is consistent with family safety and to write these down in their workbooks, using the following three-step process:

- *Step 1: What are my thoughts that lead to family violence?*
- *Step 2: What are the consequences of my holding these thoughts – for my partner, my children, and myself?*
- *Step 3: What alternative thinking statements can I replace these with that will lead to family wellbeing?*

In the same sub-groups, they can practice saying their pro-social thoughts out loud – i.e., the statement that escalates risk of family violence, then the statement consistent with family safety. Ask them to notice the difference in their feelings and body between both sets of statements.



Many of these thoughts are 'intoxicating' and contribute to escalation of behaviour into violence. For this skills practise to work, it is important that there is some passion behind the statements, in order to develop the contrasting emotional experience.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Now that you have started learning about your thinking, particularly the thinking associated with the use of violence, in pairs, discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point or intersection, in your daily life?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to notice the thinking that is likely to escalate risk of family violence, and thinking that is consistent with family safety.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts, and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right.”

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Violence and Abusive Practises Checklist

Emotional abuse

- Calling a person names
- Criticising someone's appearance
- Suggesting the other person is useless, incompetent
- Calling others crazy, stupid
- Using guilt; being sarcastic
- Playing mind games
- Keeping important information secret
- Humiliating your partner in front of others
- Refusing to discuss issues
- Ignoring, sulking, walking out, storming out

Using bullying and threats

- Making threats and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt someone
- Threatening to leave
- Threatening to kill others
- Threatening to kill yourself
- Coercing others to drop charges
- Threatening punishments

Being intimidating

- Using gestures, looks, actions to intimidate others
- Smashing things
- Destroying property
- Abusing pets
- Displaying weapons
- Using stand-over tactics

Avoiding responsibility for what you have done

- Making light of abuse
- Not hearing/ignoring the concerns of others
- Denying abuse ever happened
- Shifting responsibility onto others
- Blaming other factors – alcohol, stress, etc.

Victim Isolation

- Controlling what the other person does
- Controlling where they go
- Controlling who they see
- Controlling how long they spend anywhere
- Dictating the area the family will live in, i.e., moving to a remote, isolated rural location
- Sabotaging the plans of others
- Being rude to the other person's friends
- Being rude about the other person's friends

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Being economically abusive

- Keeping control of the money
- Deciding on how money is used without consulting others
- Preventing a partner getting a job
- Forcing a partner to get a job
- Making a partner ask for money
- Forcing partner to attain and conceal fraudulent benefit payments
- Being secretive or dishonest about expenses and income

Using children

- Using children to hurt, hassle
- Harassing over access and custody
- Using the children to relay messages
- Threatening to take the children away
- Making the other person feel guilty about the children

Physical abuse


- Hitting, slapping, punching
- Pushing, shoving, tripping
- Shaking, choking, throttling
- Kicking, biting, burning, beating-up
- Pulling hair, spanking
- Squeezing overly tightly, hurting deliberately
- Hitting with an object, using a weapon
- Throwing things at the person

Sexual abuse

- Having sex when the other person doesn't want to
- Forcing sexual behaviour others don't like
- Harassing sexually: unwanted touching, making sexual jokes, forcing someone to watch or view, pornography
- Withdrawing sexually
- Threatening to go elsewhere for sex

Male entitlement

- Treating women like servants
- Acting like 'master of the castle'
- Insisting on respect, or treatment entitled to, as a man
- Sticking to strict traditional male/female roles
- Forcing decisions and/or opinions onto others
- Making big decisions without consulting others
- Believing men are better decision-makers

**Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking****Use of technology**

- Monitoring calls/texts
- Checking computer and phone histories
- Sending abusive texts or emails
- Misuse of social networking sites
- Hacking online bank accounts
- Hacking personal accounts
- Installing spyware/keyware programs to track others use of computer/internet

Add other examples from your own experience

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 1: Violence, abusive practises and thinking

Avoiding-Responsibility-Thinking Examples

If time permits during the session, it is also useful to identify the types of thinking after the fact, where men justify their behaviour, using the following statements:

1 - Denying what really went down

- My actions were misinterpreted
- I might have accidentally ...
- They must have mistaken someone else for me
- They've got it very wrong
- They don't remember properly
- I don't remember that
- They're only saying that to get back at me
- It won't happen again
- I'll never put myself through all this again
- I'm putting all my energy into work now
- I've paid my debt to society
- It's all behind me now - I want to focus on the future
- We just want all of us to get on with our lives now

2 - Making it less important than it really is

- It didn't really hurt them
- I only just touched them
- My offending doesn't hurt anyone
- It's been blown out of all proportion
- They're just exaggerating
- It hasn't really affected them. Things are fine now
- It was only a slap

3 - Blaming others for our behaviour

- They wanted me to do it
- They started it
- They asked for it
- I was drunk at the time
- They just led me on
- They knew what would happen
- I was under stress/had marriage problems
- It just happened - I don't know how or why
- They pushed my buttons

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4 - Making it good with ourselves

- I only did it once
- Anyone else in their right mind would have done the same
- They needed me to teach them a lesson
- I was completely justified because...
- It was a one-off thing
- I told them to back-off and they just kept on giving me lip

5 - Inviting others to see it from our point of view (inviting feedback about our actions from people we know will support our position or behaviour):

- I don't know how you put up with their whining for as long as you did mate
- I would have done worse than you
- Anyone would have done the same thing
- My mate, who was with me, said they deserved it.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Session 2: Beliefs That Support Violence and Abusive Practises

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional state/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving, as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Deeper beliefs (core belief and schema) that contribute to abuse in family
- Applying theme to me – What beliefs contribute to my abusive behaviour?
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Developing alternative beliefs
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the thinking process
- Identified the beliefs that underpin their thinking that encourages abusive practises
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing, using a strengths-based cognitive behavioural model.

Session overview

In this session, the focus is upon identifying the beliefs (gendered and general) that support family violence. The second part of the session is to identify which of the beliefs are unique to each individual man in the program. During the third part of the session, the man will begin to develop a personal model of resilience that can be used to inoculate against abuse and violence-supportive beliefs.

Workbook 1.2 Thinking about thinking

- Beliefs that support family violence
- Strength-based cognitive behavioural model
- Safe-thinking strategy: The respect test
- Between-session tasks

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Checking-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the checking-in on emotional status, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – deeper beliefs (core beliefs) that contribute to abuse in the family

Explain what core beliefs are, and their origins, by saying something like:

“Core beliefs are the fixed statements, thoughts or ideas that we have about ourselves. They help us to predict what will happen, and help us to make sense of our world. These core beliefs are formed in childhood, and our early experiences develop them into fairly rigid assumptions about:

- how we see ourselves and others
- how we judge what we and others do
- how we view the future.

Over time, these early childhood beliefs become entrenched and unconscious, but can be triggered automatically, i.e., without us being consciously aware of them, by events or interactions with others in our day-to-day lives. In other words, our problem thinking/automatic thoughts echo our core beliefs. The more negative our core beliefs, the more negative our automatic thoughts will be. We tend to interpret events and interactions with others, in a way that confirms our core beliefs.

When someone uses violence and abusive practises and keeps behaving in that way, they strengthen abuse-related beliefs. The beliefs can confirm, in the person's mind at the moment they act abusively, that the behaviour is “right” (when in fact it is not). As we saw when we looked at the pathways into abusive behaviour, people can get into the habit of behaving in a particular way. The cycle of abuse continues, and serves to trap the person on the abusive behaviours pathway.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Refer to the Value Pathway and tell the group that shortly, they will uncover the beliefs that sit behind the stairway to 'Steps increasing the risk of Family violence.' Tell the group that these can be elusive at times, but fall under a number of headings. Provide broad definitions for each of these beliefs. If the men need some prompting prior to beginning the activity facilitators can provide some examples using the notes at end-of-session guide:

- She's irrational
- Violence is appropriate
- She got what was coming
- Need for control
- Women can't be trusted
- Low frustration tolerance



Refer to the facilitator notes at the end of the session for examples of statements that reflect each of these beliefs. Prepare for the next part of the exercise by having these headings on the newsprint/flipcharts.

Break the group into sub-groups and have them brainstorm on newsprint/flipcharts, the types of beliefs and examples of statements that reflect each of these beliefs.

Put the completed posters onto the walls. Undertake a gallery walk, discussing with the men the impact these beliefs have on others, using the Family Focussed Approach poster. Use the following prompt questions to discuss the impact of these beliefs:

- *How do these beliefs violate any cultural beliefs of right and wrong?*
- *What is the impact on your partner's spirit, thinking, physical wellbeing, emotions?*
- *What is the impact on your children's spirit, thinking, physical wellbeing, emotions?*
- *What is the impact on your spirit, thinking, physical wellbeing, emotions?*

Break the group into sub-groups. Ask them to discuss a time when they went up the safe staircase (Value Pathway poster) and what they had to think about their partner in order to walk this path.



You are looking for strengths that reflect thoughtful, respectful and connection language, rather than surface comments. For example, this is the person I married and is the mother of my children, she deserves to be treated well. You are looking for 'approach' comments rather than 'avoidance' of behaviours/thinking comments.

Capture this thinking on newsprint/flipchart for display on the wall during subsequent sessions. These charts can be added to at any point during the program; visual prompts of key ideas also provides a platform for discussion and conversation.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Applying the theme to me

Building upon the work from previous sessions on changing thoughts and beliefs, use the following steps:

1. Identify examples of these beliefs from their offence maps and other offences worksheets, ABCD diaries and any other work they have done (directly applicable to self).
2. Question these beliefs (use the questions placed in the previous session for questioning thinking).
3. Development of new beliefs, as below.

Introduce the idea that you are now going to identify strengths that you can use to protect yourself against these negative/destructive beliefs. The framework you will use is based upon each participant developing their unique resilience model using the attached framework to combat their core beliefs, and beliefs that support family violence (see material at the end of the session guide for a populated example).

My Personal Resilience Model		
My Strengths	My Strategies that reflect these strengths	Images and Metaphors that remind me of my strengths



Coach the men through this process of identifying the strengths that they have, turning these strengths into strategies, then finding an image or metaphor, that they can use to remind themselves. The strengths, strategies and images can be used at acute moments when beliefs that support family violence are likely to flood in.

Tell the men that one of the key questions that will form the basis of the sessions, will be what we call the respect test (refer to poster).

"Do my actions enhance the respect of others or undermine the respect of others?"

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

The men can work in sub-groups for the next activity. Do a revolving conversation in the sub-groups. Their task is to practice having a conversation about their Personal Resilience Model and how this will help them to remain safe. It is suggested that the following process is followed (you can write this on the board):

1. The Personal Resilience Model (PRM) is a tool to help me undo the beliefs that support my use of abuse.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

2. Show a copy of the model and talk about what you have identified that would work for you.
3. Ask your supporters what other strengths, strategies and images/metaphors, they think you could use, and add these to your PRM.



Accountability is a core aspect of the program, so this part of the process is designed to prepare the men for the conversation with others about what is on their Personal Resilience Model, and how this will help them to undo the beliefs that support family violence. The skills rehearsal will also help to build confidence in communication.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Tell the group that they started learning about their beliefs, particularly those beliefs associated with their use of violence. In pairs, discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point or intersection in your daily life, about following the pathway to family violence or to family wellbeing?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises; record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts/beliefs, then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

"There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Beliefs that contribute to abusive practise

Partner-specific beliefs	
<p>She's irrational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She's inadequate • She wants to bust my balls • She disrespects me • She wants to control me 	<p>Violence is appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes you gotta stick up for yourself • What men do to keep their women in line is a private matter • It's OK for a man to be violent • As long as no one gets really hurt, hitting a partner can actually do them some good
<p>She got what was coming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She made me do it • If she starts it, then I'm going to finish it • She just needed to shut up • She knows how I am/she should know better • She gave me a good reason • She got what she deserved • She could have prevented it 	<p>Need for control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never show weakness • What I say goes • It's my way or the highway • If you cross me, you'll pay for it • I'm no pussy • Nobody walks all over me • If you don't like it, then get out
General	
<p>Women can't be trusted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are deceitful • Women like to laugh at men • If you let them, women like to take advantage of men • Women think they're so superior • A woman should know her place 	<p>Low frustration tolerance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She made me mad and I just lost it • I can't take any more of her crap • I tried everything, but she wouldn't leave me alone/shut up • I just got so pissed • I can't control myself when I'm really pissed • I just hit my breaking point • It was more than I could handle • I couldn't take it any more
<p>Entitlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She deserved what she got • I say what goes 	<p>Victim Stance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is against me • This is a beat-up on men • No-one understands me
<p>Righteous anger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She deserved it • It was the only response I could make • No-one messes with me 	<p>Cultural beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's the cultural way • Women should submit to me • She has shamed me

Building resilience through identifying strengths

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 2: Beliefs that support violence and abusive practises

Strengths are strategies, beliefs, and personal assets, used with relative ease, to promote resilience. There are seven areas of resilience that have been identified. These are:

1. Good health and an easy temperament
2. Secure attachment and basic trust in other people
3. Interpersonal competence, including the ability to recruit help
4. Cognitive competence, including the ability to read, the capacity to plan, self-efficacy and intelligence
5. Emotional competence, including being able to regulate emotions, delay gratification, maintain self-esteem, employ creativity and humour
6. The ability and opportunity to contribute to others
7. Holding the faith that your life, and the lives of others, matter, through a moral connection with others.

The four steps to resilience identified by Padesky and Mooney are:

1. Searching for strengths
2. Construct a personal model of resilience (PMR)
3. Apply the PMR to areas of life difficulty, and
4. Practise resilience skills

Below is a populated model of the types of things that the plan will include.

My Personal Resilience Model		
My Strengths and Beliefs	My Strategies	Images and Metaphors
Committed to my family	Keep an image of good times in my head	At the beach
Look out for others	Remind myself that I am committed to the long haul	Long distance truck driver
I am stubborn	I will not give up easily on getting abuse out of my life	
Can sort out problems	I can step back and take time-out to think about things	The thinking man

For further information see: Padesky, C.A. & Mooney, K.A. (2012) Strengths-based cognitive behavioural therapy: A four-step model to build resilience, *Clinical Psychological Psychotherapy*, 19, 283-290.

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking

Session 3: Strategies to Manage Beliefs and Thinking

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Thinking under pressure
- Applying the theme to me - Identify own pressure points
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Safety skills for thinking under pressure
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified their own pressure situations that create a high risk of family violence
- Rehearsed a number of strategies to manage these situations
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing.

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on identifying the situations and times when thinking comes under pressure within relationship situations. It draws upon attribution theory where men often attribute their partner's intentions inaccurately. The session also focuses upon the issue of negotiating to meet needs appropriately.

Workbook 1.3 Beliefs and Attitudes That Support Violence and Abuse

- Cognitive behavioural model
- Understanding thinking that supports abusive practises
- Defusion techniques
- Between-session tasks

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage, are the emotional/feelings check, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Theme for the session – giving abusive thinking the slip

Tell the group that before moving to the next stage, you need to give them some information about how, as human beings, we process incoming information. It will be helpful to use a strong image, such as the one here, to work with during this explanation.

Ask the group: What do they see in the photo? The man asked his partner to pick something up from Bunnings on the way home from work. It slipped her mind and she forgot.



Ask the group what things they think the man is attributing to his partner at this moment. Some clues might be:

- She couldn't even remember a simple thing
- My things don't matter; her things are much more important
- She did this on purpose to really piss me off

Walk the group slowly through the following stages about how we process information by saying something like:

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking

"When someone says something to us we have to "code" it. That means making sense of what is going on, what things mean, and what we think is behind what they are saying. It is really easy to get this stage wrong and a lot of escalation in conflict starts here."

Stage 1: Encoding – Making sense of the situation

We can code things wrongly by making the following mistakes:

- having unrealistic expectations
- getting the wrong end of the stick (we call this misattribution, and this can be around perceiving hostile intention on the part of the other person), or
- irrational beliefs (refer to the previous sessions on problem-thinking processes, and also see Ellis' REBT material).

Often our first thoughts are not accurate. What are we thinking about the person, their motives and intentions, and how have we previously responded in these situations?

Ask the group, *"Who has gone off at someone and realised that they had got the situation wrong? That they had made a mistake?"*

Stage 2: Decision-making

To undo inaccurate encoding, we have to stand back and look at the situation from a range of different perspectives or viewpoints. We need to check-out that we have the right view and aren't contaminating it with our own pre-conceived ideas or interpretations.

Stage 3: Enactment – Acting out our decision

We put our response into action.

Tell the men that in the skills part of the session, they will be actively working through these steps to consolidate the skills of learning to manage high-risk encounters safely. Tell them that they will also be learning a number of mindfulness skills to manage those acute moments.

Applying the theme to me

Ask the men if they have ever had trouble responding to their partners in the moment; that is, when their partner wants to know what they are thinking or feeling, or reasons for an action?



The idea of this session is for men to recognise that they often take longer to calm down once they are aroused compared to their female partners. They therefore need to be extra careful around others, and in responding to the reactions of others, in order to maintain family safety.

Research points to anthropological evidence suggesting that we evolved from hominids whose lives were circumscribed by very rigid gender roles, since these were advantageous to survival in a harsh environment. Females specialised in nurturing children while the males specialised in cooperative hunting. Breast-feeding of infants is impacted (amount of milk produced) by how relaxed the mother feels, which is related to the release of the hormone oxytocin in the brain. Natural selection therefore favoured the ability of females to quickly calm and

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking

soothe herself after feeling stressed. Her ability to remain composed could enhance her children's chances of survival by optimizing the amount of nutrition they received.

Men on the other hand were rewarded for an opposite response. Early hunters (and we have remnants of these remaining in our own arousal) were rewarded for staying aroused and vigilant for longer periods of time. Males whose adrenaline kicked in quite readily and who did not calm down so easily, were more likely to survive and procreate.

To this day, the male cardiovascular system remains more reactive than the female and slower to recover from stress. This does not in any way excuse violent and abusive behaviour and like any pre-disposition, men need to take responsibility for managing this appropriately. Going back into situations where they, and others, have heightened arousal is walking into an acute risk situation.

Ask the men to work in pairs and do the following two tasks:

1. Identify their unique situations where they have to respond to their partners under pressure. It would be useful to think back over the past several incidents of family violence to see if there are any patterns to these situations.
2. What they are saying to themselves about their partner at this time (their attributions – these normally start with something like, 'She's just trying to ...')? Have the men write these down on pieces of A5 paper. Tell the men that they will be using these for the next exercise.

Share these in the group to identify themes that might emerge with these types of issues.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Tell the group that the skills you are going to explore in this section are around the process of getting unhooked, or reeled-in, by thoughts: getting entangled, or swept away by them. A more technical name for this is defusion. In other words, developing the type of thinking that supports giving family violence the slip.



Fusion, the opposite of 'defusion' will likely be an issue for the men. When we fuse with a thought we believe it to be true (a fact) and if this thought is supportive of violence then this creates high risk thoughts and situations. The thought could also be the result of an error in encoding (making sense of the situation), but because we are fused with it we cannot see that – we cannot see alternative perspectives. This is why defusion is important – by creating some distance from thoughts we start to see them as just that – thoughts, rather than as facts or truth. This gives us space for perspective taking.

Ask the group to try the following exercise which will help them understand what happens when we become fused with our thoughts.
Run the following process:

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1. Ask the men to read to themselves the statements on the A5 cards
2. Tell the men to hold the cards tightly with both hands and hold them in front of their faces so they can't see things around them
3. Tell the men that when we become fused with our thoughts, it is like having a conversation with somebody with the cards in front of our faces
4. Ask the men to have a quick 30sec conversation with the person next to them
5. Ask the following process questions:
 - a. *how easy is it to have a conversation with someone when you are caught up with these thoughts?*
 - b. *how connected do you feel to the other person?*
 - c. *how open are you to hearing their viewpoints and ideas?*

Tell the men that we are going to work with, and practise, a number of techniques to defuse from those thoughts.



The idea of defusion from thinking has been recently described within the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy literature. In plain language "fusion" means getting caught up in our thoughts and allowing them to dominate our behaviour. "Defusion" means separating or distancing from our thoughts, letting them come and go instead of being caught up with them. Within an ACT framework, it is recognised that at times we will have negative thoughts. It is what we do with these that will make the difference between translating these in to behaviour that is either safe or unsafe. Defusion therefore means:

- *looking at thoughts, rather than from thoughts*
- *noticing thoughts, rather than being caught up in thoughts, and*
- *letting thoughts come and go, rather than holding onto them.*

Technique 1: I'm having this thought

Write the following process on the board:

- Put the thoughts into a short sentence. For example, "She's just being a bitch."
- Now fuse with this thought for 10 seconds. In other words, get all caught up in it and believe it is much as possible. Note that this is what men do when they engage in family violence; they become intoxicated with disrespectful thinking.
- Now silently replay the thought with the phrase in front of it: "I'm having the thought that my partner's a bitch."
- Now replay it one more time adding the phrase: "I am noticing I'm having the thought that my partner's a bitch."

Ask the men to notice a sense of separation or distance from the thought. Discuss what other thoughts started to emerge when they tried to separate themselves from the original thought. Ask if using this strategy softened the intensity of the original thought and emotion.

Have the men practise this technique several times to consolidate the skill of defusion.



Some people may be uncomfortable with this approach to dealing with disrespectful thinking around partners. Disrespectful thoughts that contribute to family violence appear and are triggered frequently. While a longer term process is to replace disrespectful thinking with respect-enhancing (thinking that supports

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the dignity and wellbeing of the other person) thinking, becoming defused and creating distance, will assist the men to become more mindful of their thinking.

Technique 2: Leaves on a stem

Use the following process as another example of defusion techniques:

- Ask the men to find a comfortable position and either close their eyes, or fix their eyes on a spot on the floor; whichever is more comfortable.
- Imagine you are sitting by the side of a gentle, flowing stream, and there are leaves floating past on the surface of the stream. Imagine it however you like – it's your imagination. (Pause 10 seconds).
- Now, for the next few minutes, take every thought that pops into your head, place it on a leaf, and let it float by. Do this regardless of whether thoughts are positive or negative, pleasurable or painful. Even if it is the most wonderful thought, place it on the leaf and let it float on by. (Pause 10 seconds)
- If your thoughts stop, just watch the stream. Sooner or later your thoughts will start up again. (Pause 20 seconds).
- Allow the stream to flow at its own rate. Don't speed it up in trying to wash leaves away – you are allowing them to come and go in their own good time. (Pause 20 seconds).
- If your mind is saying, 'this is stupid' or 'I can't do it,' place those sorts of thoughts on a leaf (pause 20 seconds).
- If a leaf gets stuck, let it hang around. Don't force it to float away. (Pause 20 seconds).
- If a difficult feeling arises, such as boredom or impatience, say to yourself, "Here is a feeling of boredom," or "Here is a feeling of impatience." Then place these words on a leaf, and let the leaf flow on by.
- From time to time, your thoughts will hook you and you'll lose track of the exercise. This is normal and natural, and will keep happening. As soon as you realise it's happening, gently acknowledge it and then start the exercise again.

Process with the group their experience of the exercise.

Technique 3: Lemon exercise

Use the following process as another example of defusion techniques:

- Ask the participants to spend 30secs or so thinking about a lemon – the smell, colour, taste, texture, etc. The idea is to fuse with the thoughts of lemon. If done successfully it will often result in an increased saliva build up in the mouth, which demonstrates the power of fusion by creating a physiological effect
- Now spend 1 minute repeating the word lemon as fast as possible without a break.
- Explain that during the exercise the word itself no longer resembles lemon – this demonstrates defusion as the meaning of the word is lost and participants would no longer be fused with the idea of a lemon e.g. no longer taste or smell it or have the increased saliva.
- Say to the men that this can then be applied to any risky thought the person has. The process can be explained as follows:
 - Realise you're having a risky thought
 - Pick one word that summarises it

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 3: Strategies to manage beliefs and thinking

- Fuse with it then repeat the word until it loses its meaning/power

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Now that you have started learning about ways to give thinking that supports family violence the slip, in pairs, discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you notice disrespectful thinking about your partner start to intoxicate your thinking?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to practise the skills of defusion and see what difference it makes to their relationships.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts, and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 4: Old and new beliefs

Session 4: Old and New Beliefs

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – My new self-script
- Applying theme to me – Living according to values
- Practise and skill rehearsal
- Exit process for men leaving the program at this point
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the values that will support family wellbeing
- Developed a plan to discuss with others, the steps to live according to those values
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on identifying the future self-script and the values that would support it. The skill part of the session is planning to have discussions with others about the values that they identify as important in supporting family wellbeing.

Workbook: Beliefs and Attitudes

- Important values to me
- Future self-script plan

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 4: Old and new beliefs

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“It's not the events of our lives that shape us, but our beliefs as to what those events mean.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session: My new self-script – The future me

Introduce the theme of the session by stating that the focus of today is on replacing old beliefs with new beliefs by exploring what we call a future self-script. The session will also identify which values are important to you and support family wellbeing.

Explain the structure of the exercise, which will explore three positions in time:

- The Past
- The Present
- The Future

Elicit from the group, what components would fall under each area. Ensure that the following ideas emerge:

The Past

- Your heritage
- Your family/extended family and your surroundings
- The type of person you were, your behaviours, your personality, the relationships you had with others
- Your values and attitudes
- Important life events

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- Experiences within the wider community (e.g., school, church, friends, associates, work) and their meaning.

The Present

- Current self-perception – how do you see yourself now?
- How would others describe you?
- Have your values and attitudes changed from the past?
- Current situation
- Connections to the past and changes for the future (where are you going right now?)
- Relationships with others (and their meaning for you).

The Future

- What sort of person do you want to be in the future?
- Look at the values, attitudes and 'code' that you want to live by.
- What will be different from the present and past? What will be the same?
- Longer-term goals, and dreams
- What about my family, my mental self, my physical self, my spiritual self - lifestyle balance? How will lifestyle balance look?
- Where will you be, who do you want to be with you, and what will you be doing?

Have the men work individually on flipchart paper to draw their own unique map-and-other-offences worksheets. Let the group members know that they can use symbols and words that are meaningful to them.



Be aware that some men may have difficulties with writing. Such an exercise may seem overwhelming to them. Emphasise that their self-story does not need to involve a lot of writing – the story can be told through the use of pictures and images that they draw or find, and not to worry about whether it sounds right or wrong, or spelling. It's about getting it all down on paper.

Applying the theme to me

Tell the men that now that they have identified what their future-self looks like, the next step is to work out the values that will support this new identity.



Have the values cards from the Program Toolkit prepared. These can be photocopied so that each participant has their own set, which they can potentially take away and explore with their family.

Tell the men to find a working space within the room. Have them keep the *Very Important to me*, *Important to me*, *Not Important to me* and the two blank cards separate. Shuffle the

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 4: Old and new beliefs

remaining 83 values cards.

They are to place the title cards *Very Important to me*, *Important to Me* and *Not Important to Me* cards in front of you. Each card describes something that may represent a personal value for them.

Tell them to look at each card and then place the card under one of the three title cards. There are also two blank cards. If there is a value they would like to include, write it on the card and put it in whichever pile they would like. You want them to sort all 83 cards, but whether they use the two additional cards is optional. The only rule is that they have no more than 10 cards under the *Very Important to me* stack.

When they are finished with the sorting, they are to look at the *Very Important to me* deck to make sure there are no more than 10 cards under this deck.

The second task is to focus on the top values they chose and sort them from 1 to 10 (total number participant has in the most important pile – no more than 10) using the ranking sheet. In this spot (point to #1) you will put the card that is your top value. Then you will put your second top value here (point to #2).

Ask the men to work in pairs and discuss the following questions

- *How will these values support the future-self you want to be?*
- *How will these values support your short-term goals? What do you want to achieve in the next six months? Twelve months?*
- *How will these values support family well-being?*
- *What beliefs about others, in particular your partner and children, would these values support you in having?*
- *What will be the easiest-to-hardest step in living according to these values?*
- *Who are the people in your life who support you in making these changes?*



Provide the questions to the pairs sequentially, pausing after each question to allow sufficient time for recall and consideration.

Facilitate a brief, group discussion, and ask the men to share two or three of their most important values and how they will use these to enhance family well-being.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Acknowledge with the group that living according to values is not always easy. Trying to live consistently, and remembering to live according to values that support family well-being, takes commitment and mindfulness.

Have the men discuss and develop a workable plan that will operate well, within their own context. The goal of the plan is to take these ideas of the future-self, as well as the values that support family well-being, back to their support team. Have them write this plan into their workbooks. Ensure that the plan has SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound).

Beliefs & Attitudes That Support Abuse - Session 4: Old and new beliefs



One of the issues that comes up in groups constantly is around the difficulty that men have sitting down and sharing important ideas and thinking with others. One skill to develop throughout the program, is to increase the ability to talk through important issues with others. This creates greater intimacy and transparency within the relationship.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Ask the men to discuss in pairs:

- *How will you remember over the week, to maintain a value-approach to your relationships?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point, or intersection, in your daily life?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Exit process for men leaving the program at this point

Invite the men leaving the program at this point to use their safety planning workbook (SAFE ME) to answer the following questions:

- *What were my challenges and goals for this program?*
- *How did I get on achieving these? What have I achieved, and what do I still need to work on?*
- *What are my times of increased risk?*
- *What are my strategies to manage these times?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to find an opportunity to discuss their values and future self-script with others on their support team.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts, and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“It's not the events of our lives that shape us, but our beliefs as to what those events mean.”

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Session summary

- Opening
- Greeting/welcome by existing participants to new participants
- Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date
- Sharing of program goals
- Check-in on safety/emotional status/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Defining emotions and the role they play in abusive behaviour
- Lifestyle balance
- Applying theme to me – Creating distance from emotions – safe strategies through ‘time-in’ and risk management through ‘time out’
- Practise and skill rehearsal – negotiating ‘time-out’ and walking away
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the thinking process
- Developed understanding of a range of emotions
- Described their problem thinking and associated emotions that encourage violence and abusive practises
- Developed strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding emotional dysregulation, which is closely aligned to general offending behaviour, as well as family violence. Building understanding and the ability to regulate emotions, is critical for family safety, and forms a key approach to this intervention. The notion is that ‘time-in’ relationships require skills to manage emotions and render these visible to others. ‘Time-out’ is about managing personal risk to others and is a shorter-term strategy, while building ‘time-in’ strategies.

Workbook: Managing Emotions

- ‘Time-out’ strategies

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Flowers are restful to look at. They have neither emotions nor conflicts.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Greeting/welcome by existing participants to new participants

A senior group member who has been attending the program for some time, will take responsibility for welcoming new group members to the group and to lead the discussion.



The framework to be used is a conversation around the goals men set for themselves during the assessment process regarding developing safety within their interpersonal relationships.

Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date

Existing group members share the main goals they established during assessment and report on their progress towards meeting those goals. New group members are then invited to do the same.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Theme for the session - Defining emotions and the role they play in abusive behaviour

Introduce the module by saying that we are going to explore the role of emotions in family violence.

Brainstorm responses to the following questions:

- *What do we mean when we talk about emotions, moods and feelings? What are some important examples from your own recent experience?*
- *Where do they come from?*



Answers will include the following:

- *Strong, instinctive feelings, such as love, fear, worry, shame and anger*
- *Emotions/feelings involve a body reaction (e.g. increased heart rate, facial expressions, tears)*
- *Emotions/feelings are influenced by thoughts and events; they don't just come "out of the blue." They are responses to what happens and to what we think about what happens*
- *Emotions/feelings are not right or wrong, only actions can be right or wrong. Feelings themselves just are, and they never force us to act in any particular way*
- *There are probably about eight or so basic emotions (i.e., anger, sorrow, joy, surprise, fear, disgust, guilt/shame, interest/excitement). People are born biologically wired-up to have these emotions. All other emotions are learned, and are usually some combination of these eight, basic emotions.*



Use the following process to explore with the group the ability to identify emotions in others. Place the Feelings Faces in a hat and ask each group member in turn to come forward and choose a feelings card. Then take turns to role-play for the other group members, the feeling on the card (this is done silently with body language and facial expression). The group members guess the emotion.

Process the exercise by asking:

- *What was it like role-playing the emotion?*
- *What was it like having to guess the emotion?*

Invite the men to describe what men usually talk about when they meet at smoko, or on the side-line watching sports, or over a few beers. Put the list on one side of the whiteboard – this usually includes the following:

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

- Sport
- Hobbies
- Hunting and fishing
- Cars
- Politics
- Work
- Telling jokes
- Leg-pulling and teasing
- Being either stoked or pissed-off about something.

Ask the men how talking about these things helps men to connect with each other. For example, these topics help men to get along and enjoy each other's company. Talk about how these things bring warmth and a feeling of inclusion. Some men may observe that while these topics create friendliness, they strictly avoid "personal stuff," so men are missing out on things that matter to us and affect us profoundly, yet remain doggedly silent about them.

Draw a bold, heavy line down the board, and ask, "What do men find it harder to talk about?" "What do we miss out on talking about?" Brainstorm the types of issues that men find it difficult to open up to others and talk about. The list is likely to include many of the following:

1. worried, troubled, anxious, afraid, jealous
2. sad, depressed, grieving, missing someone
3. lonely, isolated, despairing, suicidal
4. unwell or in pain, losing health or abilities
5. fearful of the future
6. humiliated or ashamed
7. love for one's children, parents, partner, friends
8. spiritual or religious faith or doubts
9. sexual feelings taken seriously (not just as a subject for ribbing and making jokes).

Explore with the men what happens if men always tough-it-out alone, never talking about the more personal feelings they are experiencing. You can use the following questions to frame the discussion:

What is the impact on our relationships when we take emotions off-limits and off the agenda?

What would happen to our family wellbeing if we learn to "talk across the line" and open up these themes with those around us?

What it's like living with emotional abuse

Tell the men that they are going to watch a 12-minute DVD clip which revolves around the lives of Amanda and her family, and what it is like to live with emotional abuse.

Brainstorm with the men, on the whiteboard, the range of emotionally abusive behaviours that someone could do under the headings below. You could use the following framework:

Ensure you cover the following behaviours:

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Emotional abuse	Being intimidating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling a person names • Criticising someone's appearance • Suggesting the other person is useless, incompetent • Calling others crazy, stupid • Using guilt, being sarcastic • Playing mind games • Keeping important information secret • Humiliating your partner or wife in front of others • Refusing to discuss issues • Ignoring, sulking, walking or storming out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using gestures, looks, actions to intimidate others • Smashing things • Destroying property • Abusing pets • Displaying weapons • Using stand-over tactics
Being economically abusive	Male entitlement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping control of the money • Deciding on how money is used without consulting others • Preventing a partner getting a job • Forcing a partner to get a job • Making a partner ask for money • Forcing a partner to obtain and conceal fraudulent benefit payments • Being secretive or dishonest about expenses and income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating women like servants • Acting like 'master of the castle' • Insisting on respect or treatment entitled to as a man • Sticking to strict traditional male/female roles • Forcing decisions and/or opinions onto others • Making big decisions without consulting others • Believing men are better decision-makers

Show the clip 'Amanda's Story'



After the clip: Note that the reason for showing the clip is that the men will begin to recognise that not all abusive behaviour is physical. Ask the men questions about what impact these behaviours have on a person's family and physical/mental/spiritual self.

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Applying the theme to me

Tell the men that we are going to use the Emotional Compass to map what emotions cause on-going issues in our lives. This will help to decide if we can tolerate the situation enough to be 'time-in' the relationship, or whether we need to take 'time-out' in order to create safety for others.

Lay the Emotional Compass Cards on the floor (see program resources) in the following sections in a clockwise rotation.

12.00pm	Activated - Feeling revved up, pumped, agitated
1.30pm	Pleasant Activated - Feeling excited, elated
3.00pm	Pleasant - Feeling happy, relaxed
4.30pm	Pleasant Deactivated - Feeling calm, chilled
6.00pm	Deactivated - Feeling quiet, still, sleepy
7.30pm	Unpleasant Deactivated - Feeling tired, bored, depressed
9.00pm	Unpleasant - Feeling miserable, sad, unhappy
10.30pm	Unpleasant Activated - Feeling tense, nervous, stressed

Ask the men to identify the typical emotions that would fall under each category of the eight points on the compass. This will ensure a richly described model is developed from the men's own experience.

Ask the men to identify when they are most likely to be at increased risk of family violence, and when are they most likely to be safe within the family. Have the men go back to their previous work (offence map, other offences worksheet, ABCD diaries, etc.) in order to identify their problem/high-risk emotions.



The model is based upon the work of Russell and is known as the Circumplex Model of Affect (see Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, (1980), Vol 39, No. 6. 1161-1178). Note that we are playing with the notion of risk being both positive and negative. It is risky to be fully present in a relationship, as this means we have to be prepared to be vulnerable. In terms of the model, we may often be in challenging situations which encompass activated and unpleasant emotions. The challenge is how we adjust our situation so as to not endanger others while we engage in strategies to reduce the intensity of the emotions.

Discuss with the men the concept of 'time-in'.

Ask, we all know what 'time-out' is but what is 'time in'? What does having 'time-in' a relationship look like?

Explain that 'time-in' the relationship means we are not merely present, but present to others, connected and open to experience. Link this back to the mindfulness work they have been doing so far in the program. Time-in is about being fully present, open to others around us, and able to be engaged.

Ask, which parts of the model would most apply to the idea of 'time-in'? Explore with the men what they notice when they are having 'time-in' the relationship.

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Revisit the ideas of when 'time-in' the relationships is not working and the need for 'time-out.'

Ask the men to describe their understanding of 'time-out.' Assess how many of the men are currently using this safety strategy. Ensure they have a full understanding of what 'time-out' is (refer them to the content covered in session 2) and what it is designed to achieve. The ideas below can inform the discussion:

- 'time-out' is the ability to leave a situation temporarily in order to avoid hurting others
- the other part of 'time-out,' is to come back and sort out what was going on
- some people think 'time-out' is a chance to get out of it (avoidance by getting high or drunk)
- 'time-out' is about taking time to think through what is going on and figure out what can be different.



Rather than repeating the same material, if the men are assessed as having a solid understanding and have been implementing safe 'time-out' strategies, use the following material as a review, focussing on a more nuanced attention to how to use 'time-out' to keep others safe.

'Time-out' successes

Pair the men and say to them, "identify a time when you have been able to walk away from a situation where you were likely to get into trouble. Identify what it was you had to do in order to walk away."

Draw from the men, guidelines that would work and maintain the respect of the others in the household.

1. Ensure the following ideas (which have already been covered in session 2) are reiterated and where relevant expanded on. Rather than go over the ideas again have the men comment on how they have used these strategies and how it has gone for them
2. Talk about 'time-out' with your family/friends/mates before you need to take it.
3. Let them know what you are trying to do and what signal you may give.
4. Leave when you feel unsafe and are about to become abusive.
5. Say something like, "I am beginning to feel unsafe to be around and need to take 'time-out.' I will be back in ... minutes, once I have calmed down, worked out what is going on for me, and know I can be safe with you."
6. Do something physical. Go for a walk, run or bike ride. This will give you some distance from the situation and time to think through what was going on. Also, exercise has a calming rhythm and burns up the anger chemicals (adrenaline and glucose) that make you feel hyped.
7. Phone a friend or one of the telephone counselling services available in your community, and talk over what is happening.
8. Return at the time agreed to. This helps to build trust in the relationship and shows that you are genuine in trying to act respectfully.
9. Negotiate a time within the next twenty-four hours, to talk about what happened.
10. Talk about what it was you were reacting to, in a non-abusive way, using statements.

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

11. Remember to avoid statements such as “I think that you ...” or “I feel you ...” which are really blaming statements. Also, don’t get into the same old stuff (SOS) by dragging up the past, blaming and not listening.

Also inquire into what behaviours could increase the risk of family violence.

1. Don’t do drugs or drink – they only make a bad situation worse. Being out of it, even slightly, makes it harder to make safe and non-abusive decisions. ‘Time-out’ is for serious thinking and trying to understand what is going on. If men make responsible choices around the issues that have come up, this will communicate to others that they are serious about their decision to deal with their use of family violence.
2. Don’t drive. When people are highly aroused emotionally, their ability to think and co-ordinate actions is affected. There are enough dangerous drivers on the road without you becoming another one.
3. Don’t do anything to harm themselves or others.
4. Don’t label – “stupid bitch,” etc. Labels block clear thinking.

Acknowledge that taking ‘time-out’ is not always easy. Ask the question, “What has made it hard for me to take ‘time-out’?” The group will generally come up with the following ideas:

- I might lose if I leave
- The issue is too important to drop it now
- I’ve got to get my point of view across
- Why should I go? I’m the boss around here
- It’s raining; it’s cold
- We’re expecting visitors; I’ll have to stay
- She’ll win. She’ll think she’s won. She’ll think I am a wimp
- Where’s my pride?
- If I leave, they might harm themselves
- What will they think of me, an idiot perhaps?
- I’ve got nowhere to go
- It’s too late to go out now
- I’ve got no friends
- I’ll try and stay cool

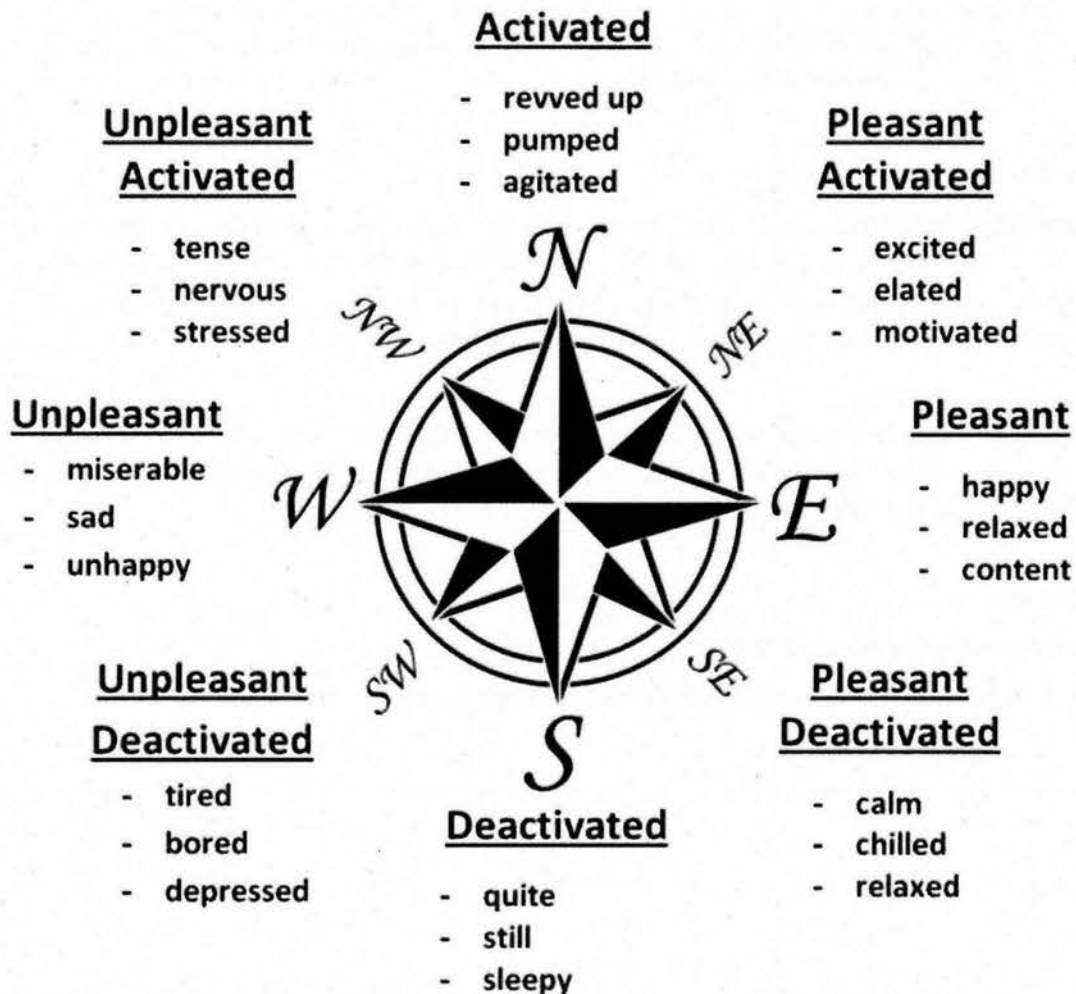
What others might say to stop me from going:

- Stay here and finish it
- You are always walking out
- Can’t you handle it?
- If you walk out now, take your things and don’t come back
- How am I going to manage when I’m relying on you?

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Preparing for 'time-out'

'Time-out' sounds easy but can be hard to put into practise. Have the men look at the emotional compass model (below) and decide when it is the right moment for them to take 'time-out'.



The following 'time-out' checklist can help to identify a clear plan of action:

I will know I need to 'time-out' when:

- My body tells me ... (What is happening in my physical self?)
- My thoughts tell me ... (What abuse-related thinking am I having?)
- My actions tell me ... (What level of arousal am I showing?)
- My memory of what I have done in the past tells me ... (What could I do that will take me towards interpersonal violence (IPV)?)
- I will ... (What steps will I take on the pathway to family wellbeing?)

Managing Emotions – Session 1: Defining emotions and the role of emotions in abuse

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

- Ask the men to reflect upon the session by reflecting upon the following questions:
- What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?
- What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point or intersection, in your daily life where your intensity of emotion increases?
- How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards). Complete an ABCD diary.

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to talk to their support team and partner (if appropriate) about their learning from the session.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts, and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Flowers are restful to look at. They have neither emotions nor conflicts.”

Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

Session 2: Problem Emotions

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – High-risk emotions
- Applying theme to me – Talking emotion down rather than up
- Practice and skill rehearsal – Acceptance of complaints
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the whirlpool of emotions
- Described their high-risk emotions related to family violence
- Strategies to manage complaints as a way of promoting family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding where high-risk emotions come from, with particular attention to the idea that anger, while a strong emotion, is secondary to more primary emotions. The session allows time to practice managing complaints that often emerge within relationships, without emotional escalation.

Workbook: Managing emotions

- The emotional whirlpool
- List of feelings words

Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Genius is the ability to renew one's emotions in daily experience.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – High-risk emotions

Explore with the men what happens when emotions are suppressed. Most people seem to learn very early that it is very important to always appear capable and confident, and that expressing so called “weaker” emotions is not okay. These are emotions that suggest one is *not capable or confident and in charge of everything. They are often looked down upon, so these emotions can end up being denied or suppressed.*



There are other metaphors that also work for the notion of turning primary emotions into secondary emotions, such as iceberg, volcanoes, etc. You can choose whichever metaphor you think will work best for the group you are working with.

Ask the men to imagine pouring water through a funnel. Ask them to describe what occurs at the top of the funnel, as well as what happens as the water gets drawn down. Ensure that the following ideas emerge:

- the water around the edge of the funnel can be fairly calm
- as the water gets sucked down into the vortex of the funnel, it accelerates, giving it more energy
- what emerges from the bottom of the funnel comes out with some intensity.

Ask the men to now imagine that what's going to the top of the funnel are emotions. Ask them to think about a time when the feelings have developed more energy as they

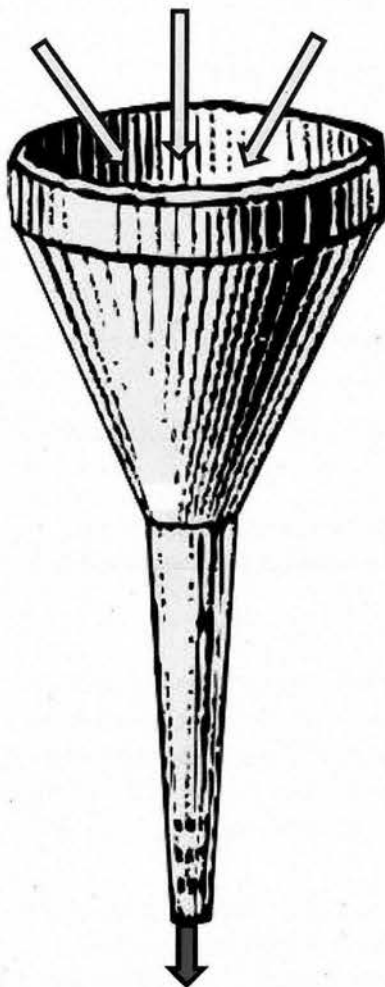
Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

accelerate. Ask them to consider what happens to the clarity of these emotions as they build up speed and get stronger.



The answer you are looking for is that emotions often become less clear and identifiable. As they grow more muddled and confused, these emotions are sucked down and transformed into the very raw, powerful, destructive feelings of rage and hatred.

Draw the following model on the board and title it Feelings Funnel – Suppressed Emotions. Work with the group to populate each of the six positions on the model by using an enquiry style.



Emotions (at the top):

Afraid, Anxious, Lonely, Sad, Confused
Ashamed, Embarrassed
Inadequate
Insecure
Pain, Uncomfortable

What happens to them?

Ignored, Denied
Depressed
Suppressed
(Alcohol/Drugs)

Then escalate to become:

Annoyed
Frustrated
Tense
Uptight
Blaming

Decide to take control and show:

Anger

Become:

Furious, Enraged

Resort to:

Family violence

Explore with the group what would happen if we were to continually stuff down, or suppress, primary emotions such as sadness, fear, hurt, and so forth. The answers are likely to include the following:

- sadness, depression
- lying around doing nothing
- moping, brooding
- having a negative outlook
- thinking only about the negative side of things

Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

- blaming or criticizing self
- hopelessness

Applying the theme to me

Ask the men to get into pairs and discuss the following questions:

Note: they should refer to the emotions they identified in the last session on their offence maps, other offences worksheets, ABCD diaries.

- *What emotions have you stuffed down or suppressed?*
- *What has been the outcome of that?*
- *Who will you need to talk to about these feelings or related events?*
- *What might stop you from doing this?*
- *How will you overcome these blocks to expressing yourself in a healthy way?*

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Tell the men that in order to practise skills of managing intense emotions in this session, the focus will be upon receiving complaints without over-reacting.

Have the men state the intense emotions that they have when they hear the complaint/criticism.

Engage in a group discussion about what happens emotionally, and then discuss the implications of the following belief: *'My partner has no right to criticise or complain about me?'*



The thinking behind this is usually that: "She has many faults herself, so what right does she have to complain about me?" The key to the exercise is for the men to remain calm in the face of a complaint or criticism. In the programme, we describe the distinction between a complaint being around a piece of behaviour, whereas a criticism is more global, about the person themselves.

Pair the men and have them identify a genuine complaint or criticism that they hear, perhaps quite often, from their partner or someone else close to them. It is important that the complaint or criticism is genuine. The men also need to clearly identify the emotions they felt as a result of hearing the criticism/complaint. Brainstorm these on the whiteboard. The list is likely to include the following:

- *not listening*
- *drinking too much*
- *drugging too much*
- *bad language*
- *not cleaning up messes*

Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

- *piggy habits*
- *being inconsiderate*
- *being lazy*
- *breaking promises*
- *leaving tasks undone*
- *failing to phone if late getting home*
- *not taking a fair share of housework*
- *not sharing enough in childcare*
- *not being fair with money, etc.*

This exercise may need to be done in two groups if time is an issue.

Write on the board beside each person's name, the complaint they identify. Set up two chairs facing each other in the middle of the room. One person is asked to be the first volunteer to test his ability to receive a complaint. The man next to him in the group then takes the chair opposite him, and reads from the board the complaint they identified. The participant receiving the criticism is to have two "goes" at responding:

"Take One" is a response without thinking – a knee-jerk response:

The participant is to simply respond without censoring their words, saying what they would actually say when feeling under attack. This might be to say, '*I was only trying to...*,' or to point the finger back at the other person, e.g. '*What about you, when you did such and such the other day...?*' (This is counter-attack, or shifting the blame). They also need to identify the emotion they are experiencing that fits with the statement.

"Take Two" is a more considered and thoughtful response:

This will show that they heard the complaint and are taking it on board as something to think about, and are ready to consider what changes they might be willing to make in response to the complaint. They also need to identify the emotion they are experiencing that fits with the statement.

Note: It would be useful to make reference to using "I" statements at this point, which shifts responsibility for others being responsible for the person's emotional reactions, to owning these themselves.

An example of a thinking response would be, "*You're telling me that you're upset that I didn't let you know I'd be late getting home, and how it left you worrying about where I was and whether I was safe. I didn't realise how much it was affecting you. In future I'll phone or text you if I am going to be late.*"

Clap in appreciation if a participant has come up with a thinking response that is convincing in these two ways: that the feelings of the other person have been recognised, and a plan to behave differently has been laid out.



When everyone has taken a turn, explore with the group what they learned from this exercise. How did they improve their "emotional toughness" through

Managing Emotions – Session 2: Problem emotions

practicing these responses? Hopefully, they will have noticed that they were, at first, often inappropriately reactive. Then, through trying a second time, they may have learned that they can handle a criticism without panicking (or experiencing negative/problem emotions that lead to violence), by the simple technique of listening carefully and sifting through what has been said to locate and identify the feeling expressed, and then offering in future, to act in a way that would meet the criticism.

Generate the following summary ideas from the men:

- No panic, no big deal – a complaint is not the end of the world
- Identifying what is going on 'inside' him with respect to emotional reactions
- Listen reflectively – be an accurate mirror of what is heard from your critic
- Avoid arguing or getting into the 'did so'/'did not' sort of conflict
- Acknowledge understanding gained from the exchange, 'I've realised more how it is for you when I swear and bang the cupboards'
- State intended changes clearly – what you will do differently in future.

If time permits, you can also run a number of other exercises on practising self-soothing (other than drinking, smoking weed, or using other substances) using breathing, prayer, and other acceptance techniques (see Programme Toolkit).

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Ask the men in pairs to discuss:

- *What will you manage to be aware of during the week, of your own unique whirlpool?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a complaint from your partner?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards and ABCD diary).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to be practising managing complaints without reacting emotionally.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Genius is the ability to renew one's emotions in daily experience.”

Managing Emotions – Session 3: Distress tolerance

Session 3: Distress Tolerance

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status check-in/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Distress tolerance
- Applying theme to me – Situations that are distressing
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Managing distressing situations
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified safe and unsafe situations to tolerate
- Added additional strategies to manage distressing situations
- Practised strategies to enhance family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on situations of emotional distress that occur in relationships. At moments of distress, acute risk factors come into play and increase the chances of family violence occurring. The skill of defusing distressing situations draws upon the work of Marsha Linehan (dialectical behaviour therapy; DBT).

Workbook: Managing Emotions

- Distress tolerance skills

Managing Emotions – Session 3: Distress tolerance

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Distress tolerance

Introduce the idea that in relationships all people get distressed at certain times over certain issues. A lot of today's session is focussed around developing skills for tolerating and managing distressing situations. The basic idea is to learn how to get through bad situations, no matter what is coming at us, without panicking, without over-reacting, without losing a clear head, and without making, what is often a bad situation, worse, by resorting to family violence.

Elicit from the men, what the terms distress and tolerance mean. You are looking to evoke the following ideas:

- Something is distressing when we experience extreme anxiety, sorrow, or pain
- Tolerance is defined as 'the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular, the existence of opinions or behaviour that one does not necessarily like'
- When put together, distress and tolerance in this program refer to skills that are used when we are unable, unwilling, or it would be inappropriate, to change a situation
- Sometimes there are situations that we need to manage emotionally to keep others and ourselves safe.



Distress tolerance skills constitute a natural development from DBT mindfulness skills (See Linehan, 1993, for extensive information). They have to do with the ability to accept, in a non-evaluative and non-judgmental fashion, both oneself and the current situation. Since this is a non-judgmental stance, this means that it is not one of approval or resignation. The goal is to become capable of calmly

Managing Emotions – Session 3: Distress tolerance

recognizing negative situations and their impact, rather than becoming overwhelmed, or hiding from them. This allows individuals to make wise decisions about whether and how to take action, rather than falling into the intense, desperate, and often destructive emotional reactions that are part of borderline personality disorder.

Explain to the group that there are distressing situations that we can learn to tolerate, but there are also distressing situations that we should not be tolerating and we need to make a careful distinction between these different types of distressing situations. Explore with the group that what might be safe or unsafe for one person, may not be so for others.

Write on the whiteboard the heading: **Distressing Situations**

Applying the theme to me

Explore with the group, the following issues:

- What things have they said, done, thought and felt during these times of distress?
- What has made it hard to manage emotions and behaviours during these times?
Where have they been on the arousal/pleasantness scale?
- What has been the behaviour they have carried out at these times?

Normalise with the men that the ability to control ourselves at these moments is often difficult. This is not to excuse the behaviours, but to know that we are in an acute, risk situation, and we need to calm down quickly.

In small groups, have the men identify their unique situations of distress (and their associated thoughts and feelings) where they are more likely to resort to family violence. Explain to the group that these are usually distressing/crisis situations that can be tolerated without making rash decisions and acting impulsively.

One of the key questions to explore with the men is whether the situation is safe or unsafe to tolerate. The following questions are helpful to identify what is and isn't safe:

- Is there any threat of harm or danger to myself, my family or my children?
- Will my children be physically safe?
- Will other family members be physically safe?
- Am I in a situation where there is risk of violence or assault?
- Will I be physically safe?

Group reporting and feedback

Split the men into their small groups again and have them identify times when they have been able to manage distressing situations without resorting to family violence. Have them write down on flipcharts, the skills in thinking, emotional management, and behaviour, that maintained family wellbeing.



Facilitators – make it very clear that it is not okay to stay passive (i.e., without acting appropriately) in situations where there is imminent threat of harm or danger to themselves, children or family, or even friends. Be aware that the

Managing Emotions – Session 3: Distress tolerance

group may identify the skills that fall into the categories below under 'Practise and rehearsal of family safety.'

Elicit a discussion and feedback from the group about what strategies they have found most useful and effective.

Brainstorm responses to the following question on the whiteboard:

There are ways to increase your 'emotional toughness' (the amount of emotional difficulty you can cope with without blowing a fuse). What might those be?



The group may come up with suggestions such as: taking a time-out, giving yourself space to think, knowing how to calm your breathing, talking things through, not rushing into judgments of good and bad.

If it is not raised, point out that another way to help reduce emotional vulnerability to negative emotions is to increase positive emotions. Elicit examples of how men might increase their positive emotions. They may wish to consider pleasant events that do not involve alcohol, drugs or immediately gratified needs.

You could use the following questions to guide the inquiry:

- What things do you do in your life that bring pleasure?
- Which of these provide longer-term, rather than shorter-term pleasure?
- Which of these would contribute to your lifestyle balance and the wellbeing of others?

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Working with the material from the Toolkit, introduce and practise the following skills to manage distressing situations. You may want to identify what tools are most suited to which participant, and have them actively work to rehearse these skills. Provide definitions of each of the skills below and a broad overview.

Break the men into four small groups. Assign one skill to each group. Ask the men to review the material in their workbook and to come up with two useful exercises that they will take the rest of the group through. This means they will need to practise it in their small group first.

- Distracting yourself
- Soothing yourself
- Improving the moment, and
- Focusing on the pros and cons.

Each group is to take the larger group through the exercises. Remember this is hands-on practise. We don't want them "telling" about the skills – we want them to "do" the skills.

Managing Emotions – Session 3: Distress tolerance

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Ask the men to explore the following key questions:

- *What distressing situations might arise during the week?*
- *What will you be doing differently to prepare for managing these?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Following each group delivery, ask the group how they found designing the exercises. Then ask the whole group:

- *What is useful about using this skill?*
- *What will make it hard to use it?*
- *What can you do about that?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises, record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to practise the distress tolerance skills.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts, and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher.”

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, check-in/mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session - Responding to emotion in others when others are emotionally aroused
- Applying theme to me – Understanding mindfulness
- Practise and skill rehearsal - Strategies to manage intense emotion in others without joining/retaliating
- Exit process for men leaving the program at this point
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Learnt about and consolidated their understanding of the three minds – emotional, rational, and wise
- Identified and developed skills to move between each position to defuse from intense emotion
- Discussed and demonstrated strategies to enhance wellbeing and safety

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding and developing skills of how to respond when others are emotionally aroused (Dutton, 1998). It is based upon acquiring the skills of mindfulness to manage these situations, as well as being able to be in their 'wise' mind.

Workbook: Managing emotions

- Three parts of self
- Mindfulness exercises

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Above all, I try to create an emotion to which others can respond.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, within the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session - responding to emotion in others when they are emotionally aroused

Tell the men that one of the first steps in regulating emotions is learning how to identify emotions. Emotions are very complex things. They involve thought processes and brain and other bodily changes. So it is important to have a bit of practise at learning what changes occur when different emotions are experienced. To learn more about this we have a fun exercise for you to do.

Break the men into small groups of three. Each group creates a large, about half life-sized outline of a person on their sheet of paper. Now assign to each group, one basic emotion, e.g., anger, fear, sadness, joy, love. Their task is to mark where something is happening in the body when this emotion is present, and describe it in words, out to the side.

Prompt if necessary by asking:

- *What is the facial expression?*
- *What happens to your body – to your breathing?*
- *What about the muscles in your body?*
- *How does your stomach feel?*
- *What is the person likely to do, given that particular emotion?*

Group reporting - put the posters up, discuss them, and encourage other group members to fill-in any omissions.

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

Invite group discussion by asking:

- *What changes happen in our faces?*
- *What changes happen in our bodies?*
- *What about in our brains?*
- *Can we sense or feel what happens in our bodies?*
- *What would happen if we couldn't sense what is happening in our body very well?*
- *Would we be able to regulate our emotions if we couldn't sense what is happening in our body?*

Ask the men:

- *What about the things that people do – their actions (each group should have different actions for their body sign posters)?*
- *What does this exercise illustrate?*



This exercise illustrates that there are a lot of brain and other bodily changes when someone has an emotional reaction. Sometimes, the problem with emotions is that people are not good at sensing their bodily changes. If a person has been practising shutting-off all of their sensations for years, this can be quite hard. So the task is to learn to identify our emotions in depth, through increasing awareness of where they live in the body and how the body reacts to emotions. This makes us less likely to rush into action or over-react.

Ask the men if they have ever noticed how you can be a completely rational, logical person one moment, and a complete emotional mess the next, sort of like, when you are having a reasonable conversation with your friend/partner, and then 20 minutes later, you find yourself in a yelling match or resorting to using other violent behaviours. You aren't even sure how it happened or what set you off, you just know it got out of control quickly and its effect is damaging. This shows how fast people can move from what we call a "Rational Thinking Mind" to an "Emotional Mind."

Both mind-sets are important. "Rational Thinking Mind" helps people to function in the world, and "Emotional Mind" tells us if we're living a life consistent with our values, and can release the tensions from our day-to-day life. However, people often find themselves swinging between these two a lot, or if you are only living in one type of mind, they have robbed themselves of the delights and contentedness of the "Wise Mind."

"Wise Mind" is where "Emotional Mind" and "Rational Thinking Mind" meet. Have you ever had the experience when you've made a decision, and no matter what others said, you just knew it was the right choice for you? The knowing and confidence that comes with this experience is an example of the "Wise Mind." It feels good, it feels right, and you're in a state where you can acknowledge and honour both emotions AND reason. It can be described as like being in a helicopter hovering above a situation which allows the "bigger picture" to be recognized.

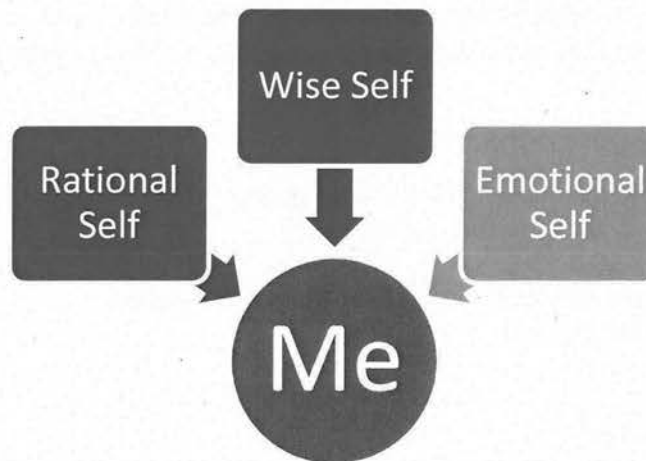
Many people may be familiar with the Serenity Prayer which describes these three minds:

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."



It might be useful to draw the following visual diagram on the board to enable the men to visualise how the three Minds are linked together.



Break the group up into pairs. Each pair receives the statements (randomly assorted) which characterise the "Rational Thinking Mind," the "Emotional Mind" or the "Wise Mind" (see next page). Their task is to determine which statements best reflect each mind-set. Encourage each pair to identify a time or situation when they used each mind-set.

Once finished, regroup the men for a large discussion by asking:

- *What are the key differences between each mind-set?*
- *What makes it easy to slip into the "Emotional Mind" or "Rational Thinking Mind?"*
- *What prevents us from using the "Wise Mind?"*

See the table at the end-of-session notes to inform the discussion.

Applying the theme to me - Playback using the "Minds"

Ask the men to work in groups of three. Ask each participant to identify the last time they used any type of family violence, or think of an everyday situation where they have found it tough to walk away from the abuse, or behave in a way that is consistent with their values.

Provide each group with three cards stating the titles of each "Mind." Have the questions printed on each card to act as a prompt. Get the men in each group to place the cards on the floor or on three empty chairs.

Tell the men this exercise is about stepping back from their thoughts and feelings and releasing their attachment to the situation. Viewing the scene through a different lens.

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

“Rewind and Play it Back” as if they were an audience member watching the scene unfold (e.g., an outsider or third person). The goal here is create distance from the situation to help consider what is going on without direct involvement.

Each participant is to take a turn to “stand” or “sit” in each mind-set and contemplate what someone with this “Mind” might notice. Start with the mind-set that is most closely aligned with how they initially felt at the time.

In each mind-set, briefly consider both the thinking and emotional responses as well as the physical responses in the body that may occur. Also explore how they respond to others in each of these three mind states.

Emotional Mind

- *What is going (or went) through my mind? What am I feeling?*
- *What is making me feel this way? What disturbed me?*
- *What am I reacting to?*
- *What's the worst thing about that, or the worst thing that could happen?*
- *What do I really feel like doing?*

Rational Thinking Mind

- *What am I thinking I should do?*
- *What would be more rational?*
- *What advice would I give to a friend?*
- *What would a caring friend say to me?*
- *Is this really as important as it seems?*
- *What are the facts about what's going on?*

Wise Mind

- *What do I make of this whole situation?*
- *What's the bigger picture here?*
- *If I fast forward to the future, what will the consequences of my reaction be?*
- *What's going to be the best response to this situation (for me, others, the situation)?*
- *What will be most helpful and effective, all things considered?*

Regroup, and prompt discussion about the ease or challenge associated with moving between each “Mind.” What comes naturally? Which takes more work? What is happening or changing within our body when in each mind-set?

Tell the men that we are now going to explore strategies to stay in the “Wise Mind” and manage our “Emotional Mind” using an idea called DESO.

Break the group up into their small groups again. This time, say they are to practise a technique that might be used to re-write the script. This is their chance to press “rewind” and develop an alternative way of responding to their scene (and likely confrontation) that models the “Wise Mind” approach, balancing reasoning and emotion.

Use the following:

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

- D - Describe exactly what you find unsatisfying
- E - Express how you feel about the situation ("I" statements)
- S - Specify what you would like to happen (i.e., a goal)
- O - State the Outcome you foresee if things do, or do not, work out the way you would like



An example could be read out as follows: Scene: You are getting frustrated that the lawns have been left to grow long again as your teenage son hasn't mowed them. You had agreed it was his job as part of his responsibilities around the house, but he's forgotten. He's been on school holidays and playing PlayStation.

Describe: *I notice that the lawn hasn't been cut in some time. I remember that a couple of months ago we agreed that it would be your job to cut it once a week.*

Express: *I don't like to see it get that long, but I feel frustrated nagging you about it all the time.*

Specify: *I'd like it to be done once a week as we agreed earlier.*

Outcome: *That way I won't feel I have to nag you about it (or, and you can watch TV that week)*

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Explore with the men how they can get to using a "Wise Mind" when confrontation arises - when the intensity of a situation ignites strong emotions that may automatically take over and control thinking and behaviour.

Mindfulness exercises help develop inner calm, emotional control, perseverance, and a strong sense of self. This type of meditation helps to elicit what is often called the "Relaxation Response" to calm the body. Simple mindfulness exercises can also help create the "Wise Mind" by cultivating a calm, centred place for thinking. It develops the ability to observe what is going on within yourself in any situation, rather than switch to "Automatic Pilot." Through mindfulness, it is possible to develop the skills to access the "Wise Mind."

Set up role-plays practicing the DESO formula for IPV scenarios. Have the men identify their own, from offence maps, other offending worksheets, ABCD diaries situations, and use the DESO steps to work through it.

Becoming aware of what is going on in our own minds and emotions is essential if we are going to gain more self-control. We can't soothe ourselves when we're very wound up, unless we can observe our own feeling states. In the past, it was often seen as the woman's task to do the heavy lifting when it came to soothing and calming everybody down when emotions got very intense.

Explore with the men that the first step is being able to look into their own interior and see what's going on there, and to be able to answer the question: "What is this that I am dealing with right now?"

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

You can draw from the range of mindfulness exercises in the Toolkit to practise staying in the moment and figuring out what is going on.



Note that many men find mindfulness a difficult concept to understand. It relies on the ability to remain in the moment and to notice what is going on, rather than feeling the need to action something.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Break into pairs and discuss:

- *When can you find time before the next session to practise mindfulness skills?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a situation when you partner is becoming emotionally aroused?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to start practising mindfulness on a daily basis.






This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Above all, I try to create an emotion to which others can respond.”

Managing Emotions – Session 4: Responding to another's emotions

“Rational Thinking Mind” 	“Emotional Mind” 	“Wise Mind” 
1. View world rationally	1. Thoughts are racing and “hot”	1. Balanced response
2. Analyse situation intellectually	2. Facts are amplified or distorted, excuses magnified	2. Able to make sense of thoughts and feelings
3. Think logically and scientifically	3. Reactive, impulsive, impatient and irresponsible	3. Able to grasp meaning, significance or truth, about someone, something or an event
4. Pay attention to facts	4. May sense how we are actually doing	4. Intuitive “gut feeling” of what is the best course of action
5. Plan response based solely on what is observed	5. Logical thinking difficult	5. The small voice within that knows what is best
6. Focused	6. Hard to remain objective	6. Responding with integrity - doing the right thing even when you may not always want to
7. “Objective” in approach	7. Behaviour done in the “heat of the moment”	7. Understand something in a calm, centred way
8. Feel detached from situation	8. Act how I feel	8. An “Aha!” moment – things seem to fall into place
9. Things are well thought out	9. Consequences of actions not considered	9. Create a sense of peace and knowledge that you are doing the right thing by your own mind and emotions
10. Consequences evaluated before actions are taken	10. Possible self-destructive behaviour	10. Adds wisdom and intuition
11. Action based on facts and experience	11. Controls thinking and behaviour	11. Serene state of mind
12. Easy to use when healthy, strong, sober and rested	12. Allows us to feel empathy, to love and be loved	12. Involves flexibility, imagination and open-mindedness

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

Session 1: Respecting others

Session summary

- Opening
- Greeting/welcome by existing participants to new participants
- Existing members report about their goals and progress to date
- Sharing of program goals
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – The concept of respect and what it looks like in action
- Applying theme to me – When using abusive practice, how am I undermining the respect of others?
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Skills for enhancing the respect of others
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of respect as a process of enhancing the wellbeing of others
- Described the sort of thinking they use that encourages violence and abusive practices
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding how the men position themselves with others as a key issue in relationships. The key concept is how we serve others, rather than being self-serving, and is the focus of many of the skills within the session. Equality and respect are the cornerstones of safe relationships, so this session explores these concepts and how to make these contribute to the family wellbeing.

Workbook: Relationships

- Cognitive
- Between-session tasks

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Greeting/welcome by existing participants to new participants

A senior group member who has been attending the program for some time will take responsibility for welcoming new group members to the group and to lead the discussion.



The framework to be used is a conversation around the goals men set for themselves during the assessment process, regarding developing safety within their interpersonal relationships.

Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date

Existing group members share the main goals they established during assessment, and report on their progress towards meeting those goals. New group members are then invited to do the same.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking and emotional states, and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme of the session – The concept of respect in relationships

Ask the men in the group to define respect. At assessment, you will have assessed who in the group has cultural knowledge around these concepts, so invite them to contribute their understandings.

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

Ensure that the following ideas are discussed, and how these would look in reality:

- Respect is defined as, 'a feeling of admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities or achievements'.
- Respect is a common theme associated with this program. How do the men respect and honour the uniqueness of others, especially family?
- The focus for the program can be explained as, 'The power acquired by an individual according to his or her ability and effort, to develop skills and to gain knowledge in particular areas.'
- The way that we gain respect is by our deeds, in particular, for family and friends.
- The process of showing respect is what we are all responsible for; it is how we serve one another, offer hospitality, and uphold the respect of the home. This is also about taking responsibility in regards to leadership.



Clarifying concepts and their true meaning through Socratic inquiry, is an important way to manage these issues. For example, a common concept that offenders use in programs, is the idea of respect and how their respect has been trampled on when they were only standing-up for what was right, from their cultural understanding. The inquiry can be based around, "Even if you felt your respect was trampled on, what right does that give you to trample on the respect of your partner in return?"

Applying the theme to me

Break the group up into pairs and have them discuss the following questions:

- *How do you practise respecting others in your life and the life of your family?*
- *What have you been able to achieve that enhances your own personal respect?*
- *What skills and knowledge do you have that has enhanced the well-being of your family, spouse, and children?*
- *How have you helped other members of your family enhance their personal respect?*
- *What types of behaviours would stop you from enhancing the respect of your family members?*



You may wish to have these questions pre-prepared on flipchart paper.

Now think about times when you engage in family violence which undermines your partner's respect, as well as your own:

- *What happens to your beliefs about respect at that moment?*
- *What would you have to think about others in order to keep their wellbeing (respect) at the forefront of your thinking?*

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

Refer to the Family-Focussed Approach poster and use the framework to inquire into the impact of managing our thinking and conversations with others.

Brainstorm with the men all of the ways that we can enhance the wellbeing of others. This can be done on posters that can be put on the walls around the room.

Explore with the men that one way to enhance the wellbeing of others is the process of negotiation. A handy guideline to answering the question of the difference between what is and isn't negotiable is:

If a person has a reasonable right to make a decision on their own, then that person may hold that the issue is "open for discussion" but not that it is "open for negotiation." However, if it is not reasonably just one person's right to make the decision, the issue can fairly be regarded as open for both discussion and negotiation.

Use the short questionnaire (at the end-of-session notes and also in the Toolkit) "What is open for negotiation?" It has 20 questions about decisions that get made in relationships and families. It will take the men around five minutes to go through it. Tell them to fill it in as honestly as possible. There are no right or wrong answers and it will form the basis of a conversation about the wellbeing of others.

Tell the men:

- If you think the issue should be open for negotiation, put a tick in Column One.
- If you think it is open for discussion and your input, but not for negotiation because your partner or another person has the absolute right to make that decision, put your tick in Column Two.
- If you think it is open for discussion and input but not negotiation, because it is your right to make the decision, tick Column Three.

After filling in the questionnaire, pair the men up and have them undertake the following tasks:

- *Discuss the questions and your answers.*
- *What attitudes or beliefs lie behind each decision?*
- *What do your answers suggest is your relationship style? E.g. are you a negotiator, a dictator, a walk-over (passive) etc.*
- *How does your relationship style influence your thinking when you each have conflicting ideas, needs or opinions?*

In small groups, practise using these ideas and then re-group for reporting, clarifying and discussion. Ensure that you cover the following ideas:

- *What are some of the attitudes or beliefs that get in the way of fair negotiation? For example, 'I know best,' 'My way is the only way.'*
- *When you get into conflict, what is the self-talk that reinforces those attitudes? 'She wouldn't know what's best,' 'I can sort this myself.'*
- *What do those attitudes and self-talk encourage you to do? 'Not respect the wisdom of my partner,' 'Not listen to what she wants,' 'Not be open to new ideas.'*

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others



Be particularly alert for examples of thinking that undermine respect for the other person. Make sure during this session, that if the man wants a trusting relationship, then he must choose to let go of beliefs that reflect distrust and controlling of others behaviour, and replace these with beliefs that lessen the tension, frustration and anger in their relationships and encourage respect and trust.

Brainstorm with the men, the self-talk that would support the respect of others and the relationship. Ensure you cover the following ideas:

- Am I going to have a closed mind or an open mind? An open mind is being open to the ideas of others. A closed mind is having a narrow judgement on issues, relying on past experiences, and closing down others.
- It is okay to say “I don’t know,” “I don’t understand,” “I’ve made a mistake,” or “I need more time to think about that.”
- How important is it for me that I get what I want? Am I really going to force my decision on them?
- Is it worth it? Does it really matter that much?
- If it gets done in a different way, will that be the end of me? Will I survive? What’s my problem?
- It’s okay for people to differ. Conflict can encourage creative solutions. I can disagree with someone’s opinion, without judging them. “I can live with that.”
- It’s okay for others to have and express their own opinions, values, needs and beliefs
- I do not have a monopoly on the truth
- I can change my beliefs, attitude and behaviour.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Changing the situation from one of conflict to one of discussion.

Provide some examples of recurring conflict situations then get the men to think about and discuss how they would typically react and/or behave.

Examples of recurring conflict situations might include:

- Your partner has a regular ‘girls night’ that she attends every Thursday night. She says she really needs this because she works weekends and doesn’t get any other chance to connect with her friends. It causes conflict because you need to prepare dinner and get the kids to bed after working yourself.
- You often go out after work on a Friday night without telling your partner. When you get home there is often a fight as she is annoyed you never called. You feel entitled to go out as you have been working hard all week.
- Your mates often ‘pop’ round unannounced. When they do it is common for them to drink and to stay quite late. This causes conflict as your partner says it is too loud for the children and that ‘you’ have work tomorrow.

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others



Encourage honesty during this exercise and ensure the men explore the idea of respect and whether or not it is or isn't part of how they currently handle conflict situations.

Regroup and discuss some of the typical ways in which the men manage conflict within their relationships.

Tell the men that we will now be discussing how they might change the situation from one of recurring conflict, to one of respect where conflict situations are dealt with respectfully.

Write the following questions on the board then using the same examples discussed earlier work through each question and discuss as a group.

- *What parts of your thinking would you have to change?*
- *What might you have to organise or plan to put these ideas into action?*
- *What can you do to stay focused on being supportive and caring, in spite of all that might have been happening for you?*
- *What are some of the ways you could handle other people's surprise or doubts?*

Explore with the group the idea of the RESPECT TEST – Are their ideas going to demonstrate respect and responsibility, or create anxiety, fear and confusion?

6 steps to negotiation

Introduce the negotiation steps below as a more formal way to think about dealing with conflict situations respectfully.

1. Getting prepared
2. Setting some rules
3. Defining the problem
4. Identifying goals
5. Finding solutions
6. Checking it out.

Have a quick discussion with the men about what they feel each section would look like in a real situation. This should include both the types of things they would be saying and thinking.

Use the following information to prompt the men to ensure all of the main points are covered.

Step 1. Getting prepared

Before people can even begin the process of negotiation, they must first be committed to behaving in a fair way. In preparation for being fair, each must agree to:

- Listen
- Be patient
- Reach a mutually-agreed resolution.
- Hear things they disagree with or find painful, and not be abusive or defensive.
- Accept that things will change.

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

Step 2. Setting some rules

- No yelling
- No bringing up unrelated issues
- No threats. No Intimidation
- No mind games or smart tricks
- Be patient
- Is a time limit a good idea?
- Is a third party needed to help this discussion?
- Review these rules. Add any you both agree are important.

Step 3. Defining the problem

- What is it we're negotiating? Is it actually negotiable?
- How does each of us experience and define the issue? (This may be different for each person)
- Who else is affected, and how?
- Listen actively
- Be patient

Step 4. Identifying goals

- Short-term: What needs to be included in an immediate solution?
- Long-term: What needs to be in a final solution?

Step 5. Finding solutions

- What would each person propose as an immediate, or long-term solution?
- What takes into account each person's goals?
- Is compromise necessary? Can both parties gain?
- If compromise is necessary, identify and list several fair solutions.

Step 6. Checking it out

- Contract to review the decision and its effect after an agreed time
- Dealing with Conflict - Negotiation Practise
- Let's give this negotiating formula a try and see how it goes.

Role play activity

Tell the men that shortly they will be participating in a role play where they will get to practise some of the skills they have just discussed.

Split the men into groups of three then explain that each group is to work through the following process:

1. Come up with a conflict scenario that as a group they would like to do some work on.
2. Brainstorm how they might apply the ideas discussed as a group as well as the 6 steps to negotiation to their specific situation.
3. Practice using these ideas in a role play situation before presenting their role play.

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

4. Prior to presenting their role play they are to explain the scenario and the plans they intend to use to manage the situation/scenario.
5. Role play the scenario in front of the group
6. Receive feedback from the group including a respect test rating



Their proposals are up for clarification, comment and challenge. The observers rate it on the Respect Test.

After everyone has presented their role play use the following questions to discuss the exercise in the large group:

- *What was hard for you?*
- *What was easy for you?*
- *What have you learnt from doing this exercise?*
- *What will you be doing differently as a result?*

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Ask the men to explore in pairs, how they will implement the ideas practised in the session in their own situations:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point or intersection in your daily life?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to practise negotiation skills around issues that emerge in their relationships.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.”

What is open for negotiation?

	Open for discussion and negotiation Both decide	Open for discussion but not negotiation They decide	Open for discussion but not negotiation You decide
1. Who can your partner spend time with?			
2. Who can you spend time with?			
3. Will your partner drink or use drugs?			
4. Will you drink or use drugs?			
5. Which TV program gets watched?			
6. Who is in charge of the TV remote?			
7. Who organises a baby-sitter for the children?			
8. Who takes responsibility for contraception?			
9. You work and bring in the money. Who decides what car to buy?			
10. Your partner works and brings in the money. Who decides what car to buy?			
11. You both work and bring in money. Who decides what car to buy?			
12. Your partner wants to go back to school or study. Who decides if they will?			
13. You want to go back to school or study? Who decides if you will?			
14. Which relatives can visit your home?			
15. Who's allowed in the house?			

Relationship Skills – Session 1: Respecting others

	Open for discussion and negotiation Both decide	Open for discussion but not negotiation They decide	Open for discussion but not negotiation You decide
16. What discipline will be used with the children?			
17. What will the children be disciplined for?			
18. Will your partner go on holiday or a trip without you?			
19. Will you go on holiday or a trip without your partner?			
20. How does your pay get divided up and spent?			

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Session 2: Effective and Safe Communication Skills

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Effective communication skills and avoiding the relationship traps
- Applying theme to me – Identifying the traps that operate within your own relationship and how these relate to family violence
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Effective communication strategies and dealing with the tough conversations
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified how contempt, stone-walling, criticism and defensiveness damage relationships
- Strategies to enhance thinking and behaviours that promote family wellbeing, including the Magic 5 hours

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding the behavioural patterns that lead to family violence. The work is based upon that of John Gottman (see Gottman, J. (1999) *The Marriage Clinic*, Norton: New York), who has studied the relationship between stress and family violence. The men will be invited to explore how these ideas apply in their own relationships, before exploring and developing a range of strategies that enhance family wellbeing.

Workbook: Relationships

- The Four Horsemen
- The Magic Five Hours

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Effective communication skills and avoiding the relationship traps

Let the men know that communication problems in relationships are often very predictable. Tell them that today we are going to explore a number of things that make for conflict and increased risk of family violence in relationships. As we walk through these ideas, many will be familiar to them in their relationships.

Firstly, talk briefly about harsh start-ups to relationship conflict.

Ask the men, ‘Who has had a situation where you have come home and before you know it, the situation has escalated to being abusive very quickly?’

A harsh start-up is an attack on the person, not the issue. Things are said to one another, and before you know it, the disagreement has escalated to a point of distress. How often do your disagreements involve a harsh start-up? Research shows that if your discussion begins with a harsh start-up, it will inevitably end on a negative note, even if there are a lot of attempts to “make it nice” in between. Statistics tell the score: 96% of the time you can predict the outcome of a conversation based on the first three minutes of the interaction. A harsh start-up simply dooms you to failure. So if a discussion starts that way, you’d be better off to pull the plug, take a breather, and start again.

In addition to a harsh start-up, there are a number of ways of communicating in relationships with others that contribute towards abusive practises. These are what Gottman calls ‘The Four Horsemen: criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stone-walling.’

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Horseman 1: Criticism

Work through the following material in an eliciting manner with the men:

Say something like, *"We will always have some complaints about the people we live with."*

Ask the men what the difference is between a complaint and criticism?

Ask the men for examples of each.

There's a world of difference between a complaint and a criticism. A complaint only addresses the specific action your partner has performed that you are upset about. A criticism is more global – it adds on some negative words about your partner's character or personality.

For example, *"I'm really annoyed that you didn't phone me like you said you would. We agreed that you would phone me"* is a complaint.

"Why are you so forgetful? You know I get jealous when I don't know where you are. You just don't care" is a criticism.

A complaint sticks to the point about a specific behaviour, but a criticism ups-the-ante by throwing in blame and general character assassination.

Here's a recipe: To turn any complaint into a criticism, just add my favourite line, *"What is wrong with you?"* Usually a harsh start-up involves dishing out a criticism.

Ask the group to figure out which is a complaint and which is a criticism.

	Complaint	Criticism
There's no petrol in the car. Why didn't you fill it up like you said you would?	√	
Why can't you ever remember anything? I told you a thousand times to fill up the tank, and you didn't.		√
You should have told me earlier that you're too tired to make love. I'm really disappointed, and I feel embarrassed.	√	
Why are you always so selfish? It was really nasty of you to lead me on. You should have told me earlier that you were too tired to make love.		√
Why do you keep putting your friends ahead of me? I always come last on your list. We were supposed to have dinner alone tonight.		√
You were supposed to check with me before inviting anyone over for dinner. I wanted to spend time alone with you tonight.	√	
Add in the ones below you have used in your relationship:		

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

The first horseman is very common in relationships. So if you find that you and your partner are critical of each other, don't assume you're headed for separation. The problem with criticism is that when it becomes a pattern, it paves the way for the other, far deadlier horsemen.

Horseman 2: Contempt

Ask the men what contempt looks like. Ensure they cover the key ideas below. Define contempt and then ask what it looks like in a relationship. Answers would include:

- Sarcasm
- Cynicism
- Name-calling
- Eye-rolling
- Sneering
- Mockery
- Hostile humour



In whatever form, contempt – the worst of the four horsemen – is poisonous to a relationship because it conveys a closing-off of openness to the other person's viewpoint. It's virtually impossible to resolve a problem when your partner is getting the message you're dismissing them unheard. Inevitably, contempt leads to more conflict rather than to reconciliation. Contempt and nastiness are closely linked to family violence. Contempt is fuelled by long-simmering negative thoughts about the partner. You're more likely to have such thoughts if your differences are not resolved.

Belligerence, a close cousin to contempt, is just as deadly to a relationship; it is when you are looking for a fight and egging the other person on. When one partner complains that the other doesn't come home from work in time for dinner, a belligerent response would be, "Well, what are you going to do about it?" or "What are you going to do?"

Elicit some personal examples of belligerent responses from the group members.

Horseman 3: Defensiveness

Use the following trigger questions to explore defensiveness:

- *What is defensiveness?*
- *What happens when one person in the relationship becomes defensive?*
- *What are we communicating to our partners when we act defensively around an issue?*

Ensure the following ideas are covered:

- Defensiveness is really a way of blaming your partner. You're saying, in effect, "The problem isn't me, it's you." Defensiveness just escalates the conflict, which is why it's so deadly.

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

- Criticism, Contempt, and Defensiveness don't always gallop into a home in strict order. They function more like a relay race – handing the baton to each other over and over again, if the couple can't put a stop to it.
- The more defensive one person becomes, the more the other feels unheard in their complaint and gets heated. In no time, you've got a fight going.

Horseman 4: Stone-walling

Ask the participants, “*Have you ever tuned-out on your partner?*” Ask for some examples.

Normalise this process through using the following story:

Think of coming home from work, tired and just wanting to relax. You walk in the door and your partner is telling you about a situation with a friend of hers that she is fired-up about. You are not that interested in what she is saying and you don't even like her friend. You hit the TV remote and see what's on. The less responsive you are, the more your partner gets wound-up. Eventually you get up and leave the room. Rather than explaining to your partner and being clear with her, you disengage, you switch-off. By turning away from her, you are avoiding a fight, but you are also avoiding the relationship. You have become what is called a “stone-waller.” Although both partners can be stone-wallers, this behaviour is far more common among men.

Ask the group what situation(s) they have noticed where they are likely to stone-wall in their relationships? Also discuss the impact on others of stone-walling.



Facilitators might want to read more in this area: See Gottman, J.M. (1999) The Marriage Clinic: A scientifically-based marital therapy. Norton: New York.

Applying the theme to me

Have the men discuss with each other which of these horsemen have ridden into their relationships and what the impact has been.

Next, break up into groups of three and tell them to write down their responses to the following questions on flipcharts:

- *How would your partner know you are an interested listener?*
- *How do you want your partner to feel?*
- *What do you have to do to show you are an interested listener?*

Invite the small groups to present their ideas back to the whole group.

Generate a list from the group, as a form of repetition.



Facilitators will have been coaching the men in good listening throughout the whole program and using every opportunity to pause and allow them to re-try and rehearse situations where listening can be improved.

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Brainstorm with the group what makes a good listener. Generate the following ideas:



Be active non-verbally:

- *Maintain an alert posture that focuses on the speaker*
- *Use encouraging facial expressions and head movements*
- *Maintain appropriate eye contact. Be appropriately silent, don't interrupt.*

Participate in the conversation:

- *Use "minimal encouragers" – uh, ah, mm, right, yes, tell me more ...*
- *Check your understanding by asking the speaker to clarify statements*
- *Use "open" questions to encourage the speaker (Questions that begin with How ...?, Where ...?, What ...?, Who ...?, and And then ...? encourage further disclosure or conversation, rather than brief answers, compared with "closed" questions that invite only a "Yes" or a "No" answer, or minimal factual information)*
- *Reflect the speaker's feelings to demonstrate empathic understanding*
- *Confirm you are listening and understanding by occasionally repeating information or understandings for verification*

Listening and emotions

Say, that while these ideas are fantastic it is not always that easy as there are often strong emotions at play which may make it easier for the 4 horseman to appear and more difficult to engage in good listening.

So in order to be willing, ready and able to even try to be a good listener it is useful to first ensure that we have our emotions in check. So thinking about the material we have covered in previous sessions:

- *What would be some quick strategies to manage heightened emotions?*
- *What could we do to remind ourselves to use these strategies before we get too emotional?*



If the men have covered the emotions content then this can be more of a recap of the content. If they have not done the emotions session this can be a quick introduction with the intention of expanding on these ideas at a later date.

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Tell the group that they now have the opportunity to try out these skills. As preparation, ask them to think about something important to their family that they feel quite excited about – it could be some plans for the future they have, or something interesting or exciting they did in the not-too-distant past.

Break into groups of three for this exercise – a) a talker, b) a listener, and c) an observer. Each person will take turns at talking for three minutes.

- a) The Talker is to talk about something interesting they have done recently, or plan to do in the near future
- b) The Listener is to listen actively, using ideas from the 'Good Listening Guidelines.' Their task is to draw as much information as they can from the talker and to find out as much as possible about their topic
- c) The Observer is to observe the attentiveness of the listener and to check their listening skills against the Good Listening Guidelines. The observer's job is to give feedback about the communication process, commenting on the active verbal and non-verbal listening.

After each conversation, the talker is to report on how the experience was for them, remarking on the things the listener did or said that they found especially helpful. Change places one-by-one, and continue until everyone has had a turn in each position.

Process this exercise by asking for feedback from the whole group, asking the following questions:

- *What was hard for you?*
- *What was easy for you?*
- *What would you do differently if you had another chance?*
- *What have you learnt from doing this exercise?*
- *What will you do differently as a result?*
- *In what ways will others in your families benefit from you using active listening skills?*
- *How would heightened emotions impact on your ability to listen actively?*
- *What skills can you put in place to assist you to actively listen (e.g. time out)?*

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

Creating an environment conducive to healthy relationships

Cover Gottmans Magic Five Hours, which has been associated with relationship health.

Activity	How to do it	Time	Total time each week
Partings	Make sure that before you say good-bye in the morning you've learned about one thing that is happening in your spouse's life that day – from lunch with the boss, to a doctor's appointment, to a scheduled phone call with an old friend.	2 minutes a day x 5 working days	10 minutes
Reunions	Be sure to engage in a stress-reducing conversation by checking-in and discussing how the day has been, at the end of each workday.	20 minutes a day x 5 days	1 hour 40 minutes
Admiration and appreciation	Find some way every day to communicate genuine affection and appreciation toward your partner.	5 minutes a day x 7 days	35 minutes
Affection	Kiss, hold, and touch each other during the time you're together. Make sure to kiss each other before going to sleep. Think of that kiss as a way to let go of any minor irritations that have built up over the day. In other words, lace your kiss with forgiveness and tenderness for your partner.	5 minutes a day x 7 days	35 minutes
Weekly date	This can be a relaxing, low-pressure way to stay connected. Ask each other questions that let you update your relationship goals and turn toward each other. (Of course, you can also use these dates to talk out a marital issue or work through an argument you had that week, if necessary.) Think of questions to ask your spouse, like, "Are you still thinking about redecorating the bedroom?" "Where should we take our next holiday?" "How are you feeling about your boss these days?"	2 hours once a week	2 hours
		Total time	5 hours

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Tell the men that they have started learning about the ways that The Four Horsemen can impact upon their relationship. The challenge is to not let these horsemen come into the door of the relationship. In pairs discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time a horseman comes in the door?*

Relationship Skills – Session 2: Effective and safe communication skills

- *How will you implement the Magic 5 Hours into your relationship?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises, record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to notice the horsemen and work hard to keep them from coming in the door.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Understanding the impact of violence and abuse on others
- Applying theme to me – What behaviours have I noticed in my own partner and children?
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Perspective-taking and building empathy
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Understood that when family violence comes into a relationship, its spirit is damaged and therefore people's behaviour changes in response
- Identified how their behaviours and actions impact on others within the family
- An ability to take a different perspective and empathic connection with others
- Identified how others within their families are affected by their behaviours
- Developed strategies to enhance thinking and behaviours that promote family wellbeing

Session overview

The goal of this session is to explore how the idea that a partner's behaviour, rather than being constructed as personal, is resistance to family violence. Many of the men will be living in intact relationships, so being able to reframe these behaviours, will be important for safety. The session will also explore both the short- and long-term impact of abuse on others. We are also aware that a majority of the men will have experienced abuse as children themselves and will have a lot of 'insider' knowledge to bring into the room.

Workbook: Relationships

- Understanding the impact of family violence on my partner and children

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Since we cannot change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Checking on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking and emotional states, and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Understanding the impact of abuse on others (especially my partner and children)

Tell the men that today they are going to explore the issue of the impact of violence on those around them. The theme for today is to focus upon empathy – that is, putting yourself in the shoes of someone else.

Divide the group into pairs and ask:

- “What would interest you most in learning about how to place yourself in someone else's shoes?” Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flip chart
- Ask, “On a scale of 1 to 10, what is your interest level?” (1 little interest – 10 critically interested)
- Remaining in pairs, ask, “Identify three things that might get in the way of learning more about what it is like to be in someone else's shoes?”
- Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flipchart
- Remaining in pairs, ask, “Identify three things that will help you to overcome these blocks to learning.” Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flipchart.

Victim Impact – What is it?

Split the group into sub-groups. Ask them to think of a time when they have been open to hearing about what it is like for another person, or someone they have hurt, e.g., a partner, and ask them to discuss and answer the following questions:

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

- *What did you need to do in order to be open to listening?*
- *What did you say to yourself to remain open?*
- *What did you need to think about the other person in order to remain open?*
- *How did it help you to better understand that person's experience of the world?*
- *What impact did being open have on your relationship with that person?*

Show Section 1 – 4 Men's Stories, from 'Talking about Family Violence' DVD.

In this clip, several men talk about their use of violence in their intimate relationships. The sections to cover are:

1. The abuse (10.44)
2. Effects on family (7.19)
3. Protection Orders (11.06) Note that while a Protection Order is New Zealand based legislation, being served with any order for family violence is an issue for many men.
4. Point of change (7.01)

Use the Family-Focussed Approach poster to process these effects.

Applying the theme to me

Process with the men what they heard, what resonated with their own situations and what stories were different. Have them discuss what behaviours they have noticed in their own partner and children. Again use the Family-Focussed Approach poster to process these effects.

Brainstorm these ideas on the whiteboard.



Ensure the following ideas emerge from the group:

- *self-esteem being worn down or destroyed*
- *sense of no longer having options or choice*
- *degradation of health, both physical or mental*
- *lack of self-care and self-preservation*
- *inability to trust – this is one of the major outcomes of living with violence and effects victims both in the short- and long-term*
- *clinical depression or other mental health issues*
- *denial and justification about the current situation*
- *chemical dependency (alcohol or drugs)*
- *suicidal ideation or attempts*
- *extreme co-dependency. In some cases, usually after prolonged exposure to abuse, the abused partner will cling to the abuser, believing that it's all they deserve or will ever get.*

Denial of the abuse by both people in the relationship (abuser and the abuser's partner) is also common in abusive relationships. This denial is

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

similar to the type of denial experienced by addicts, and can ultimately be as much of a threat to wellbeing. Until abuse is acknowledged, the abused partner will often remain very loyal to the abuser.

Chemical dependency in one or both partners is extremely common in abusive relationships. The isolation of abusive relationships provides an ideal climate for the progression of addictions.

To consolidate the material covered so far and to begin to introduce the concept of abuse as a cycle read the following passage from the book *"The Emotionally Abused Woman: Overcoming Destructive Patterns and Reclaiming Yourself"* by Beverly Engel, MFCC.

Note: Although the book is directed at women, it applies equally to both sexes.

"Emotional abuse is any behaviour that is designed to control another person through the use of fear, humiliation, and verbal or physical assaults. It can include verbal abuse and constant criticism, to more subtle tactics like intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased. Emotional abuse is like brainwashing in that it systematically wears away at the victim's self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in her perceptions, and self-concept. Whether it be by constant berating and belittling, by intimidation, or under the guise of "guidance" or teaching, the results are similar. Eventually, the recipient loses all sense of self and all remnants of personal value.

Emotional abuse cuts to the very core of a person, creating scars that may be longer-lasting than physical ones. With emotional abuse, the insults, insinuations, criticisms and accusations slowly eat away at the victim's self-esteem until she is incapable of judging the situation realistically. She has become so beaten down emotionally that she blames herself for the abuse. Her self-esteem is so low that she clings to the abuser.

Emotional abuse victims can become so convinced that they are worthless that they believe that no one else could want them. They stay in abusive situations because they believe they have nowhere else to go. Their ultimate fear is being all alone.

Abusive relationship recovery is a long and painful process. The first step is realizing that you cannot change your partner's treatment of you. On-going contact with the abuser can throw you back into the shame spiral and keep you from moving forward with recovery."

Process this passage using the following questions:

- *What stuck out as being particularly interesting and/or relevant?*
- *How can you relate to this material through either your own experiences or the experiences of others?*
- *How might this information contribute to a cycle of abuse?*

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Tell the group that you are now going to work with them to fully explore the cycle of abuse that can run through the family, as a way of understanding what the impact on others is like. We call this Working Backwards to Work Forwards.

Step 1: Tell the men that many men who end up in programs like this have often experienced or witnessed violence as children. Draw on the whiteboard, or use a copy of the 'Working Backwards to Work Forwards' diagram (see end of session).

Step 2: Pair group members and ask them to consider what life was like when they were growing up. What violence and abusive practices did they see or experience directly.

NOTE: For those men who didn't experience an abusive childhood ask them to consider what they think it might have been like, and did they have any friends that told them what it was like for them etc.

Step 3: Form the pairs into sub-groups and ask them to write on newsprint, what it was like for them growing up with family violence. How did this affect them physically, emotionally, behaviourally, and spiritually?

Step 4: On a different piece of newsprint, ask them to think about what similarities might exist between their experience of abusive practices, and what their own children would say if they were in the room today.

Step 5: Now ask them to write on newsprint what it was like for the females in their lives living with family violence. How did this affect them physically, and emotionally, in relation to managing them as a child?

Step 6: On a different piece of newsprint, ask them to think about what similarities might exist between what the females might say about living with family violence, and their own partner's stories.

Step 7: Now ask them to write on newsprint how their fathers, or father figures, might describe what it was like. Where did their fathers learn about family violence? How come they picked this up as a way of managing situations? What have you said that is similar to your dad about making sense of abusive practices?

Step 8: On another piece of newsprint, identify what is similar and what is different between you and your dad.

Step 9: Have the group display the charts on the wall and lead a discussion on the content. What is clear from the charts? What does this tell us about the patterns of abusive practices that are passed down from generation to generation?

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Step 10: Ponder with the group about whether they are going to be the one to break the tradition of abusive practices in their families, or leave it up to their children to take on this role?

Debrief the exercise with the men about what they now see as a result of the work they have done.



The Working Backwards to Work Forwards process allows for men's own experience of victimisation as children to be acknowledged. It also assists in creating empathy and understanding of the reactions of others as they take a position of resistance against abusive practice. This also links well with attribution theory, whereby men can more effectively understand that their partners' behaviour towards them is often a rejection of the behaviour of abuse, rather than of them personally.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Tell the men that they have now started learning about the impact of abuse on others. In pairs discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *How will you let others know about your new understanding around their behaviour being a consequence of abuse, rather than behaviour directed towards you personally?*
- *How will you manage to remember that many of the reactions of your partner and children, are reactions to abuse, rather than to you personally?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises, record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to notice how their behaviour impacts upon others. The legacy of abuse is on-going and it takes significant time to rebuild trust within a relationship where abuse has occurred. Over the next week, identify what steps you could take to restore empathy and understanding with those in your family.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Since we cannot change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality.”

Relationship Skills – Session 3: Impact of abuse on my partner and children, others, and understanding their behaviour

Working backwards to work forwards



Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect

Session 4: Sexual Respect

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Sexual respect
- Applying theme to me – How do I manage negotiating around intimacy in my relationship after abuse?
- Practise and skill rehearsal
- Exit process for men leaving the program at this point
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Discussed the issue of sexual respect within intimate relationships
- Explored the many functions of sexual contact within relationships, such as finding a way back into the relationship after abuse
- Strategies to enhance sexual respect within relationships

Session overview

In this session, the focus is on understanding the issue of sexual respect as one of the key components of family violence. With an estimated 30 – 50% of victims reporting experiences of rape and other sexual abuse as part of living with family violence, this is an important issue to address. This session explores what is informed consent, how sexual disrespect (forcing someone to engage in sexual activity after or as part of violence), and the challenges of rebuilding intimacy in relationships after violence has occurred.

Workbook: Relationships

- Informed consent (what it is and what it is not)
- Understanding thinking that supports sexually abusive practices
- Safe thinking strategy: The respect test

Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“How can a man respect his wife when he has a contemptible opinion of her and her sex?”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Checking on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states, and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Sexual Respect

Introduce the theme of the session by asking the men how comfortable they are talking about sexuality, sexuality within relationships, and sexuality after abuse. Normalise this by saying that it is not necessarily an easy topic to talk about. Tell the men that this session is based around the idea of sexual respect. As with other areas of respect that have been discussed in the program, it is important in our personal relationships.

Form two sub-groups and give one sub-group the story of Pat A, and the second, the story of Pat B. You can find these stories in the facilitator notes at the end of the session.



If possible, have the groups working in different spaces so that they cannot overhear each other's conversations. As you will see from the material, the behaviours are exactly the same, but the genders of the two Pats are different. This exercise will draw out a number of issues around attitudes and beliefs about women's sexuality and about men's sexuality.

Bring the two groups back together and brainstorm responses to the following questions on the whiteboard under two columns headed 1) Sexually active men, and 2) Sexually active women.

Ask the following questions:

- *What words are used in society in general to describe sexually active men?*
- *What words are used in society in general to describe sexually active women?*

Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect



Encourage the inclusion of 'colourful' responses. One of the objectives of the exercise, is to highlight the stark contrast between the two lists. A few examples are listed below:

Sexually active men	Sexually active women
Stud, the boss, the man, a horse	Slut, slag, bike, sexpot, loose, easy

Process the exercise by asking the following questions:

- What attitudes and values do the two lists represent?
- From which group in society do you think the words originated?
- What might be the intentions behind using words like these, to describe men's and women's behaviours so differently?
- What does having these values and thinking in this way lead to and encourage?

Pair the men up and ask them to discuss the following question:

- What would the attitudes and behaviours of someone who demonstrates sexual respect in a relationship be?

Invite feedback from the pairs and write their responses up on the whiteboard under two columns headed 1) Sexually Respectful Attitudes, and 2) Sexually Respectful Behaviour

Applying the theme to me

Engage the men in a discussion from their own experience regarding the different conditions that men and women require for intimacy.



It has often the case that men tend to genitalize intimacy, to isolate sex from other areas of life, and from other feelings. For men, sexual intimacy is focused on an act – a doing – a performance, and is more specific and definable than the overall intimate relationship may ever be. While women tend to experience their sexuality as more internal and mysterious, men are inclined to experience sexuality as an instrument for penetrating and exploring, and therefore something which is essentially external to himself. Too often men just want to skip some steps and get to the climax. Orgasm floods the body with oxytocin (the bonding hormone) so for men this often signals a return to intimacy in the relationship. Women who are afraid, fearful or depressed are unlikely orgasm so have a different experience of the act of sexuality compared to men.

Informed consent

Explore with the men, what informed consent is and what it is not (also, what it might look like when someone is giving/not giving consent).

In terms of consent, this must be a verbal statement from her saying, "yes I do" or, "no I do not."

Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect

Make the point that reading body language is not appropriate, and this can get very confusing when drugs and alcohol are involved. Be aware that men's interpretations can be distorted, especially when a situation is ambiguous.

Ask the men to work in pairs and discuss the following:

- *How might sexual needs be different between partners, especially after family violence has occurred?*
- *How might you communicate about these differences?*
- *Identify how you will make sure that you are getting informed consent from your partner*
- *Identify how you will check regularly to make sure that this consent is still given*



Note that this is a semi-private conversation, given the sensitive nature of the issues. Some men will be particularly uncomfortable talking about sexuality and other intimate issues with another man. Also, when abuse has occurred in a relationship, sexual intimacy is often one of the ways that men use to reconnect. Women seek safety and security as a prerequisite for intimacy. Be sensitive and encouraging around the conversation.

Bring the discussion back to the large group reflecting on the ideas and conversation that was generated during the discussion.

Practice and skill rehearsal of family safety

Facilitate a brief group discussion using the following questions:

- *How do we communicate our sexual needs with others?*
- *How do we create intimacy as a pathway to sexuality and not the other way around?*
- *How do we ensure everyone's needs are met?*



As we have noted in other sessions, one of the issues that comes up in groups constantly is around the difficulty that men have in identifying and negotiating to meet needs in safe ways. Many men expect their partners to know what they need and when they don't, escalate into violent behaviour. This can be particularly true for sexuality, with men needing to be clear and sensitive with their partners around meeting sexual needs appropriately.

Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Say something to the group like, “Now you have started learning about your sexual respect within relationships.”

In pairs discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you want to engage sexually with your partner to ensure this is negotiated between you?*

Exit process for men leaving the program at this point

Invite the men leaving the program at this point, to use their safety planning workbook to answer the following questions:

- *What were my challenges and goals for this program?*
- *How did I get on achieving these? What have I achieved and what do I still need to work on?*
- *What are my times of increased risk?*
- *What are my strategies to manage these times?*



Men mandated to attend the program because they have a Family Violence Intervention Order may have exit forms to complete.

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to have a conversation with their partners (if appropriate) about how they will negotiate sexuality in the relationship, given what has occurred.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“How can a man respect his wife when he has a contemptible opinion of her and her sex?”

Relationship Skills – Session 4: Sexual respect

The Story of Pat – Group A

Pat is a single man who is twenty-five years old. He lives alone in a small apartment. Pat's sex drive is quite high. On weekends, he goes into bars to meet women. He's a charming man, and after a few drinks, he often leaves with a beautiful woman. Usually, they wind up back at his apartment having sex. Most of the time he uses protection, but sometimes in the heat of the moment, he forgets. He isn't interested in settling down, so rarely sees the women he meets for very long. Last week, he went to the doctor for a work-related physical. Pat was diagnosed with herpes.

1. Is Pat's behaviour typical of most single men you know? Why or why not?
2. Is Pat behaving responsibly?
3. Does Pat deserve to get herpes?
4. When Pat gets ready to settle down with one woman, will he have any trouble finding a partner?
5. What words would people use to describe Pat?

The Story of Pat – Group B

Pat is a single woman who is twenty-five years old. She lives alone in a small apartment. Pat's sex drive is quite high. On weekends, she goes into bars to meet men. She's a beautiful and charming woman, and after a few drinks, she often leaves with a handsome man. Usually, they wind up back at her apartment having sex. Most of the time she has her partner use protection, but sometimes in the heat of the moment, she forgets. She isn't interested in settling down, so rarely sees the men she meets for very long. Last week, she went to the doctor for a work-related physical. Pat was diagnosed with herpes.

1. Is Pat's behaviour typical of most single women you know? Why or why not?
2. Is Pat behaving responsibly?
3. Does Pat deserve to get herpes?
4. When Pat gets ready to settle down with one man, will she have any trouble finding a partner?
5. What words would people use to describe Pat?

Many thanks to the team from SHINE (Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday) for allowing the use of this exercise.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 1: The link between alcohol, drug use and family violence

Session 1: The link between alcohol, drug use and family violence

Session summary

- Opening
- Welcome by existing participants to new participants
- Existing participants report about their goals and progress-to-date
- Sharing of program goals
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Linking alcohol and drug use with family violence
- Applying theme to me – Exploring own use of alcohol and drugs and its relationship to abuse.
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Establishing personal goals for safe use
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of the link between alcohol and drug use and family violence
- Described the link of alcohol and drugs use to their own family violence
- Identified strategies to enhance family wellbeing through safe use

Session overview

In this session the focus is on understanding the strong overlap between alcohol and drug use and IPV. This module takes a harm-reduction approach to exploring safe use levels, as well as ensuring others are safe when participants are using. This session will also explore what happens to participants' ability to manage themselves when they become intoxicated or drug affected.

Workbook: Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence

- Safe use of alcohol

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 1: The link between alcohol, drug use and family violence

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Alcohol gives you infinite patience for stupidity.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Welcome by existing participants to new participants

A senior group member who has been attending the program for some time, will take responsibility for welcoming new group members to the group and to lead the discussion.



The framework to be used is a conversation around the goals men set for themselves during the assessment process regarding developing safety within their interpersonal relationships.

Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date

Existing group members share the main goals they established during assessment and report on their progress towards meeting those goals. New group members are then invited to do the same.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Linking alcohol and drug use with IPV

Remind the men that as part of assessment, they worked through the ASIST, which assessed their use of alcohol and drugs over the past six months. Let them know that this session is going to focus on the link between alcohol and drug use and family violence. Use your motivational interviewing skills to engage the men in a conversation around safe and unsafe use.

Ask the men to discuss the following saying: *“I'm not myself when I'm wasted.”*

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 1: The link between alcohol, drug use and family violence

Allow seven or eight minutes, then return to the whole group, inviting the men to say whether it is their experience that drinking and drugging have made them more likely, or less likely, to be violent or abusive, and in what situations.



There will be answers both ways, for example, some men may say that marijuana “helps them mellow out.” Acknowledge this, but counter by inviting a few of the men to speak up about how alcohol or other drugs have been involved in not keeping everyone safe. Also ensure that the issue of arguments and escalation over the amount of money spent, can also contribute to family violence.

Put the following question on the board: “Why is making safe choices around substance use important for the safety of your family and friends?”

Explore the group’s ideas about this, putting suggestions on the board. Look for a clear recognition that alcohol and drugs may:

- weaken (disinhibit) restraint against using abuse and violence, i.e. “take off the brakes.”
- cause irritability and short temper if someone is in withdrawal
- weaken logical thinking and boost emotive thinking
- lead to careless decisions.

Other reasons may come up, such as: men may prefer to hang out with drug or drink buddies rather than be with their loved ones; the money spent on drink and drugs causes problems for the family’s finances; and many substances are illegal and put men at risk of additional criminal charges.

Explore with the group what happens to their ability to manage themselves when they are drunk or stoned.

You may wish to provide brief information about what happens to our brains when we use substances (see additional material at the end of the session).

Read to the group how one man tells the story of the drunken rage in which he seriously hurt and terrified his partner – it’s a really “over-the-top” story.

“I was really drunk and full of suspicion about where she was and who she was with. I just flipped out when she came home – I don’t remember it all, but I was on top of her, bashing her in the face and then I had my hands round her throat and I was choking her, and she lost consciousness so I let go.

When she came around I apologized to her and said I would never do a thing like that to her if I was sober – I’m not that kind of person. I must have had a blackout or something. She was crying and wanted to leave then, but I pleaded with her to stay and she did. She still denies she slept with anyone else, but I don’t believe her.”

Ask at what point do you think this man really made his decision to become violent as a solution to his problem? Do you think this decision was impacted by his use of alcohol?

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Why/why not? Did his violence help her to want to stay with him? What is your guess about how the future of their relationship will unfold?

Run a continuum exercise and ask the men to place themselves where they best fit between the two points – 'I care about safety in my Alcohol and Other Drug (AoD) choices' or, 'I haven't even thought about safety in my AoD choices?'

Ask the men to choose the position most true for them.

Evoke from a number of men, what their thinking is around the position they took.

Ask them, if their partners were in the room, where might they place them? Compare and contrast the differences.

Explore with the men how they balance their decision to abuse, with family safety.

Tell the men that they are going to watch a 20-minute DVD clip which revolves around the lives of Roimata and her family, and how alcohol and drug use can make a bad situation worse (Talking About Family Violence DVD). Refer to the Family-Focussed Approach poster for prompts.

Show the clip 'Roimata's Story.'

After the clip, explore how, in this case, alcohol use created problems in the relationship. You can ask the following questions:

- *What was the impact on (insert partner's name)?*
- *What was the impact on the children (insert their names)?*

Applying the theme to me

Ask the men to talk in pairs about the situations where alcohol and drug use has contributed to family violence.

Discuss that there are international, scientific recommendations for the moderate and safe use of alcohol:

- No more than 21 standard drinks in a week for men (14 for women)
- No more than six standard drinks on any one occasion
- Some alcohol-free days each week.

Go past these guidelines, and you are starting to "need your fix." This is the point at which real choice goes out the window. The medical evidence is that even above 16 standard drinks a week for men, there is a significant risk of developing alcohol-related physical problems and dependency. This is equivalent to only two bottles of wine a week or 16 beers. If you find it hard to take even one alcohol-free day, you are already getting into trouble.

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Ask the group members how they rate themselves on these guidelines. Go round the circle quickly, each saying either “I’m under” or “I’m over.”



This relates to one of the key ideas behind the program design around taking a position in relation to behaviour. It renders the invisible visible.

Practice and skill-rehearsal of family safety

Brainstorm on the board what considerations need to go into a safety plan for choosing how to use, or avoid using, alcohol or drugs in the near future, such as over the coming weekend.

When this list of ideas seems complete, point the group to the safety plan in their workbook and have them fill it in, working silently for five or six minutes.



The focus of their thinking should be on the next occasion when they expect to face a choice about using drink or drugs.

When this task is done, discuss in the whole group, any difficulties that came up with filling in the safety plan:

- *What thinking, behaviour and decisions would they need to make to be able to stick to it?*

Work with the men on developing a safety plan that will enhance the wellbeing of their family by working through the following decisions:

- My decision about whether to use any alcohol or drugs on this occasion is:
To use alcohol or drugs or Not to use alcohol or drugs
- If my choice is to use alcohol and/or drugs, I will choose whether to drink beer, wine or spirits, use party pills, or take the risk of using illegal drugs.
My decision is:
- I will set an upper limit on my spending on alcohol and drugs for the night out or the weekend I am planning.
My decision is to spend no more than \$
- I will choose to be with the following people while I am using alcohol or drugs:
My decision is to be with these people:
- I will stay away from these people:
- I will tell the following people about these decisions and ask their support for keeping to my plans and promises.

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Once the men have completed their safety plan, have them practise having the conversations with others as if they were their partner.

Process the exercise by reviewing and reflecting on how the men are likely to arrange a time to talk with others about their decisions around managing alcohol and drug use.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Have the group discuss in pairs:

- *When will they have an opportunity to talk with other family members about their decision around responsible alcohol and/or drug use?*
- *What will they do differently next time they are faced with a choice-point, or intersection, in their daily life around the use of alcohol and/or drug use?*
- *How will they manage to remember to use the respect test next time they are talking with their partner and children? Remember, the question is, 'Does my behaviour enhance the wellbeing and respect of others, or rob them of their wellbeing and respect?'*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to stick with their alcohol and drug use safety plan.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Alcohol gives you infinite patience for stupidity.”

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Facilitator notes: Criteria for Dependency and Abuse

Criteria for Substance Dependence DSM-V

A maladaptive pattern of substance use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by **three (or more)** of the following, occurring at any time in the same 12-month period;

- 1) tolerance, as defined by either of the following;
 - (a) a need for markedly increased amounts of the substance to achieve intoxication or desired effect
 - (b) markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance
- 2) withdrawal, as manifested by either of the following;
 - (a) the characteristic withdrawal syndrome for the substance
 - (b) the same (or a closely related) substance is taken to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms
- 3) the substance is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended
- 4) there is a persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control substance use
- 5) a great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain the substance (e.g. visiting multiple doctors or driving long distances), use the substance, or recover from its effects
- 6) important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of substance use
- 7) the substance use is continued despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by the substance (e.g. current cocaine use despite recognition of cocaine-induced depression, or continued drinking despite recognition that an ulcer was made worse by alcohol consumption).

Criteria for Substance Abuse

A. A maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by **one (or more)** of the following, occurring within a 12-month period;

- 1) recurrent substance use resulting in a failure to fulfil major role obligations at work, school, or home (e.g., repeated absences or poor work performance related to substance use, neglect of children or household)

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2) recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous (e.g., driving an automobile or operating a machine when impaired by substance use)

3) recurrent substance-related legal problems (e.g., arrests for substance-related disorderly conduct)

4) continued substance use despite having persistent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance (e.g., arguments with spouse about consequences of intoxication, physical fights).

B. The symptoms have never met the criteria for Substance Dependence for this class of substance.

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Brief information on the types of drugs available

Five classes of drugs: Their direct and indirect effects

Drug Category	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects
Sedatives – suppressors: Alcohol Tranquilizers Barbiturates Sleeping pills Inhalants	Drowsiness, sedation, relaxation, slurred speech, blackouts, poor motor control, depression, confusion, impaired muscle control, impaired judgment, lower blood pressure, impaired vision, work impairment	Hyper-stimulation, agitation, irritability, hallucinations, delusions, anxiety, fear, shakes, headaches, tremors, seizures, vomiting, insomnia, work impairment
Narcotics – suppressors: Heroin Oxycodone Codeine Oxycontin Morphine Vicodin Pain killers Percodan Methadone Demerol	Blocks pain, depression, increased sense of pleasure, relaxation, euphoria, impaired judgment, reduced personal care, mental confusion	Irritability, panic, anxiety, tremors, shakes, chills, sweating, cramps, nausea, loss of appetite, runny nose, muscle aches, spasms
Stimulants – enhancers: Amphetamines Methamphetamine Cocaine Caffeine Ritalin Adderall	Insomnia, euphoria, restlessness, talkativeness, weight loss, tremors, hyperactivity, panic, agitation, sweating, dry mouth, paranoia, hallucinations, seizures, aggression, inappropriate social behaviour, impaired muscle co-ordination, impaired judgment, overconfidence, increased blood pressure, work impairment	Depression, paranoia, apathy, slow response to stimuli, headaches, fatigue, guilt, cravings, slowing of body functions, over-sleeping, slow responding, indifference
Hallucinogens - enhancers: LSD Ketamine Mescaline Mushrooms PCP Ecstasy (MDMA)	Excitation, euphoria, hallucinations, insomnia, decreased coordination, confusion, flashbacks, delusions, stimulation, increase heat and blood pressure	Loss of appetite, depression, anxiety, irritability, delirium, paranoia, heavy use can damage brain
Marijuana – enhancer and suppressor	Initial stimulation followed by pleasant feeling, relaxation, well-being, impaired motor coordination, slow reaction	Anxiety, irritability, paranoia, restlessness, sleeplessness, problems concentrating, stomach pain, vomiting,

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times, drowsiness, impaired judgment of speed and distance, impaired short-term memory, occasional hallucinations, blocked tracking time, impaired concentration, paranoia	hostile behaviour, increased anger
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The Effects of Drugs and Alcohol on the Adolescent Brain

Information taken from *The Adolescent Brain: A Work in Progress*, Daniel R. Weinberger, MD, Brita Elvevag, PhD, and Jay N. Giedd, MD, for The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2005.

Overview

Though it has long been known that teenagers are prone to impulsive behaviour, to emotional rather than logical thinking, and to not fully considering the long-term consequences of their actions, only recently has neuroscience and MRI technology provided an understanding of why. The teenage brain, it turns out, is a brain still developing. To understand the risks associated with using psychoactive substances in adolescents, it helps to understand that teenagers are not just less-experienced adults; they are undergoing an important, yet challenging developmental stage in which they are prone to errors of judgment, and sensitive to neurological assault by psychoactive substances. More than any other age group, adolescents are at risk of substance addiction, and more than any other age group, they risk permanent intellectual and emotional damage due to the effects of drugs.

Normal Adolescent Brain Development

The human brain is sculpted by experience. At birth, the brain contains many more neural connections than it could possibly use, but these connections are unspecialized and undeveloped. As time passes, some connections are strengthened (such as the nerves that process the sight of a mother's face or the sound of a sibling's voice) and others are pruned away.

The process of refinement and pruning continues throughout childhood, adolescence, and even into early adulthood. The most marked development in adolescence is in the brain's frontal lobe and outer mantle. The pre-frontal cortex, located in the frontal lobe, executes such skills as setting priorities, formulating strategies, allocating attention and controlling impulses; the outer mantle is involved with processing abstract information and understanding rules, laws and codes of social interaction.

The behaviours that accompany these changes are transparent. Teenagers are notorious for their obsession with social interaction, for making up social rules and breaking them. As teenagers grow into young adults they often exhibit a fascination with abstract thinking on topics like history, culture and media, which demonstrates their growing ability to understand the larger world. While the teenage brain is, in some ways, ill-equipped to make decisions and choices without the help of trusted adults, it is perfectly designed for the types of intellectual and social challenges teenagers most need to master.

Still, development of fully mature complex thinking takes a long time. MRI studies show that the development of the pre-frontal cortex and outer mantle of the brain continues into the early 20's, and may not be completed until the mid 20's. As the wiring for logical thought is used more and more over time, the connections become more robust, and when this process nears completion, parts of nerves become coated in a fatty layer called a "myelin sheath." Like insulation on a wire, this fatty layer allows the nerve connections to process faster, making rational, reasoned decision-making quicker and more automatic.

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Effects of Drugs on the Developing Brain

There are many ways that psychoactive substances can alter or damage the development of the adolescent brain. Firstly, psychoactive substances often target and alter the function of neurotransmitters, the chemical messengers that allow nerves to communicate at their junctions. Interference with neurotransmitters can directly damage fragile developing neural connections. Secondly, use of these substances alters perception and may interfere with the developing perceptual skills. And finally, the habits and choices associated with the use of drugs and alcohol slowly become ingrained in the wiring of the brain. Repeated action becomes habit and the habits of thought, perception, and reasoning developed in childhood and adolescence can stay with a person throughout his or her lifetime.

Neurotransmitter Function

Alterations in neurotransmitter function are partially responsible for both the high addiction potential and the devastating effects of methamphetamines and cocaine. The neurotransmitter dopamine, links the nerves in the outer mantle and pre-frontal cortex of the brain and is associated with the feelings of motivation and reward. When adolescents use the problem-solving circuitry of the brain, they experience feelings of both reward and motivation. Over time, teens become more and more motivated to think through problems, and more likely to develop better solutions as they refine the neural circuitry associated with these skills.

Methamphetamines and Cocaine are known to cause a flood of dopamine into the brain. This is one reason for the extreme addiction potential of these drugs: their use is associated with a tremendous sense of reward. It has been found though, that cocaine addicts have a blunted perception for certain types of reward, and it is hypothesized that cocaine, and by extension methamphetamines, over time, override the brain's ability to sense rewards accurately in day-to-day interactions. The effects of these drugs can be devastating, not only to intellectual development, but to the very ability of the user to feel satisfaction from life.

Alterations in Perception

Perceptual changes caused by drugs can also have long-term complications for adolescent development, since adolescent perceptive abilities are not fully mature. For example, MRI studies show that adults tend to use the frontal lobes, or logical problem-solving, to determine facial expressions, while adolescents use the amygdala, an area which normally processes emotions such as fear and worry. It holds true in many studies that where adults use problem-solving areas of the brain to perceive the world, adolescents use the more primitive areas of the brain more associated with emotions, and self-preservation; it also holds true that adult perception is generally more accurate.

Marijuana, like all drugs, changes perception. And like most drugs, it engenders perception that is fearful, emotional, defensive, and often inaccurate. Though the short-term addiction potential of marijuana may be less than other drugs, the long-term impact of chronic marijuana use can be profound. Determining the feelings and motives of other people is necessary to function as an adult in society. If marijuana use is chronic or constant enough to hinder perceptual maturation, an adolescent user may encounter misunderstood failures in school, work, and relationships, which in turn re-enforce the desire to retreat to drugs.

Habit and the Hard-Wiring of the Brain

As self-help gurus are quick to point out, if you do something for long enough it becomes automatic. Nowhere does this wisdom hold more true than in adolescence. Though teens

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may change clothes, ideas, friends and hobbies with maddening frequency, they are developing ideas about themselves, their world, and their place in it, that will follow them for the rest of their lives. Adults may spend years trying to create or break even the simplest habit, yet most adults find that their most profound ideas about themselves and the world were developed in high school or college. This is because, by age 25 or so, the brain is fully developed and building new neural connections is a much slower process.

Conclusion

Early detection and treatment is essential to heading off the development of substance addiction in adolescents. Given their brain development, teenagers cannot be expected to understand the full range of consequences in their choices regarding drugs and alcohol. The disease must be prevented, and where it cannot be prevented, it must be cured while there is still time for a full recovery.

See more at: <http://samafoundation.org/youth-substance-addiction/effects-of-drugs-on-adolescent-brain/#sthash.VtLsjPtC.dpuf>

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure

Session 2: Peer pressure

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Managing peer pressure around alcohol and drug use
- Applying theme to me – Exploring the challenges of standing-up to peers
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Using assertive skills to make the best decision
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified the situations where managing peers, in relation to alcohol and drug use, is challenging.
- Rehearsed skills of how to negotiate with family about safe use
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session the focus is on managing peer pressure when it comes to the use of alcohol and drugs. Balancing obligation to others on the one hand, and the importance of family on the other, is one of the key challenges for men entering stopping violence programs. While recognising peers are important, managing alcohol and drug use to ensure safety of family is paramount. Negotiating safe use is not just about the amount consumed, but also the amount of money spent that may be required for other family needs.

Workbook: Alcohol, Drug Use and Family Violence

- Managing peer pressure worksheet
- Negotiating skills

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Alcohol gives you infinite patience for stupidity.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Managing peer pressure around alcohol and drug use

Introduce the topic by exploring the different types of relationships we have with others, including cultural obligations. These can include:

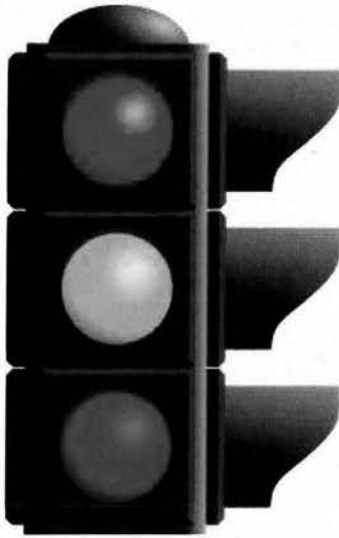
- *Who we hang out with?*
- *Who we have close relationships with?*
- *Cultural obligations towards, and from, others?*
- *How we affect these relationships?*
- *How they affect us?*



The idea here is to very briefly elicit different types of relationships, e.g., intimate, family, friends, acquaintances, business, community, sports, gang, etc. These relationships affect us and we affect them.

Draw a set of traffic lights on the whiteboard and explain the model.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure



'Red' Relationships – stop and think

These are the relationships you have with others that get you into trouble. You need to stop and think about the influences these relationships have in your life.

'Amber' Relationships – proceed with caution

These are the relationships you have with others that sometimes, but not always, lead you into trouble (e.g., causing problems in your family relationships; alcohol and drug abuse; doing crimes, etc.).

'Green' Relationships – go ahead relationships

These represent the positive relationships you have with people. These would be the relationships you have with people who want the best outcome for you and your family. They are the relationships with people that are a good influence on you.

Ask the men to work in pairs and identify, when it comes to alcohol and drug use in their lives, who fits where? (The worksheet is in their module workbook and at the end of this session).

You can put the following questions on the whiteboard to focus the conversations:

- *Who do you have the relationships with?*
- *What is it about those relationships that make them green, amber, red?*
- *In what ways are the relationships an influence upon you?*
- *What does it feel like to have relationships with those people?*



Many men feel conflicted about being with their friends (which is important) and balancing the obligation to be responsible with their family. The skill is in how to manage these conflicting issues and make decisions that contribute to safety and wellbeing of others. Note that a person can be influenced by one or more people.

Inquire with the group, and generate ideas about, how to manage those situations that promote safety and wellbeing of others. Use the following questions to prompt discussion:

- *What values do you want to live by?*
- *How do you see yourself as the "new me?"*
- *What sort of role model do you want to be for your children?*
- *How will managing your alcohol and drug use demonstrate respect for others?*
- *How will you manage to never be violent towards others?*
- *Not using drugs/alcohol? How do/will your green, amber, and red relationships impact on those values of not abusing alcohol and drugs and adding to risk towards others?*

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure



Note that while this session is specifically focused on managing peer pressure when it comes to the use of alcohol and drugs, being influenced by others around attitudes and beliefs about family violence, can also be explored. Make the point that doing the right thing by others and asserting yourself, are life skills that we use in many situations. You could also have the men notice how they have been practising these skills within the group.

Applying the theme to me

Elicit from the men what 'Doing what's right' means?

Put these questions on the board:

- *Are your mates who pressure you to drink or drug, considering what "doing what's right" means for you and our family?*
- *Are your mates who pressure you to drink or drug, considering the safety of your family?*



Doing what is right is about shifting to a pro-social orientation and is about reciprocity, social inclusion and abiding by social norms. The challenge for men who 'go along' with their peers, is to stand firm and make decisions that build safety, trust and respect. Standing-up to group pressure is a huge problem for those men who know, "One drink and I'm gone – there's no stopping me after that." To stay safe, those men know they need to maintain complete abstinence. How do friends support the needs of those men? Do those mates still see them and include them in activities when they are sober, or was the closeness only about sharing intoxicants?

Say, in all likelihood you mates aren't thinking about what's right for you and your family therefore it's up to you to make the best decisions you can in order to keep both yourself and your family safe.

Ask the group what kind of skills would be useful to develop in order to be able to make the right decisions when facing peer pressure to drink or drug?



Ideally the answers to this question will boil down to the ability to be able to say "no". If the answers are not heading this way ensure you sterr the group towards this concept. Once this has been done ask the following question.

Ask the group what their experience has been of saying "No, I'm not having any more," or "No, I'm not drinking at all."

Say, for many men saying "no" is not a skill that they practise very much and in some cases you may have never practised it. However it is a skill which is important to develop in order to be able to be able to do what is right for you and your family.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure

Invite the men to stand in a bunch in the centre of the room, milling around a bit.

Ask one man to step back a little from the bunch, and use the sorts of words he might say in order to stand up to those pressuring him to stay and have another drink or take some P, like “Hey, sorry guys, but I’m going to go now because...” Then the group can call out the sorts of things they might say to pressure him to stay. Let all of the men practise the skill of saying no to their friends. Encourage the use of ‘I’ statements as part of skills coaching.

Process the learning by reflecting upon which strategies would work best for them with their peer or family group.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Say, another strategy around helping us do what is right for you and your family might be some negotiation about your alcohol and drug use.

Ask the men what they find the challenges are within their family, around negotiating with others, the role that alcohol and drug use plays.



Note that the theme of respectful negotiation is an on-going one throughout the program, where the men are being asked to consider the impact of their behaviour upon others. This builds mindfulness, as well as empathy, towards the impact of the man’s behaviour on others. For the exercise below, some men may have been exposed to this in earlier modules. If that is the case, evoke from them the structure, as a process of review. Throughout the process below, keep inquiring with the men as to how they will manage those thoughts that will lead them down the path towards family violence.

As in almost all situations of tension, when you decide to engage in respectful and positive negotiation, the most important action is to listen.



The process below has been covered within the relationships module, however it applies just as well to the issue of peer pressure. When going through the process again make specific links to what has already been discussed around peer pressure.

Step 1. Getting prepared

Before people can even begin the process of negotiation, they must first be committed to behaving in a fair way. In preparation for being fair, each must agree to:

- Listen
- Be patient
- Reach a mutually-agreed resolution

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure

- Hear things they disagree with or find painful, and not be abusive or defensive – no stone-walling
- Accept that things will change and that they may not always get what they want.

Step 2. Setting some rules

- No yelling
- No bringing up unrelated issues
- No threats. No Intimidation
- No mind games or smart tricks
- Be patient
- Is a time limit a good idea?
- Is a third party needed to help this discussion?
- Review these rules. Add any you both agree are important.

Step 3. Defining the problem

- Today's negotiation is around the role that alcohol and drugs play in your life
- How does each of us experience and define the issue? (This may be different for each person)
- Who else is affected, and how?
- Listen actively
- Be patient

Step 4. Identifying goals

- Short-term: What needs to be included in an immediate solution?
- Long-term: What needs to be in a final solution?

Step 5. Finding solutions

- What would each propose as an immediate or long-term solution?
- What takes into account each person's goals?
- Is compromise necessary? Can both parties gain?
- If compromise is necessary, identify and list several fair solutions.

Step 6. Checking it out

- Contract to review the decision and its effects after an agreed time
- Dealing with Conflict - Negotiation Practise
- Let's give this negotiating formula a try, and see how it goes.

Break the group up into sub-groups of three and have them practise the negotiating with another group member (acting as their partner) around their use of alcohol and drugs.

Two group members are to be the negotiating parties A and B, and the other is to be the observer C. The focus is upon negotiating the role that alcohol and drug use has in their lives.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 2: Peer pressure

- A and B are to work through the issue to reach an agreement that both are prepared to accept, using the Negotiation Skills process and especially the Listening Skills they have learnt in this program.
- Observer – to observe the ability of each to use the Negotiation Skills and maintain their own well-being. The observer's job is to give feedback about the communication process, commenting on the active listening demonstrated and fairness of the resolution.

Change places so that each person has at least one turn negotiating.

Discuss the exercise:

- *What was hard for you?*
- *What was easy for you?*
- *What have you learnt from doing this exercise?*
- *What will you be doing differently as a result?*
- *How might this process be made more difficult when strong emotions are involved?*
- *What types of strategies might you use to ensure strong emotions don't get in the way of effective negotiation?*

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Have the men discuss in pairs:

- *What will they be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will they do differently next time they are faced with a choice-point or intersection in their daily life?*
- *How will they manage to remember to use the respect test next time they are talking with their partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to set up a discussion time with others to negotiate how they will manage alcohol and drug use from this point forward.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

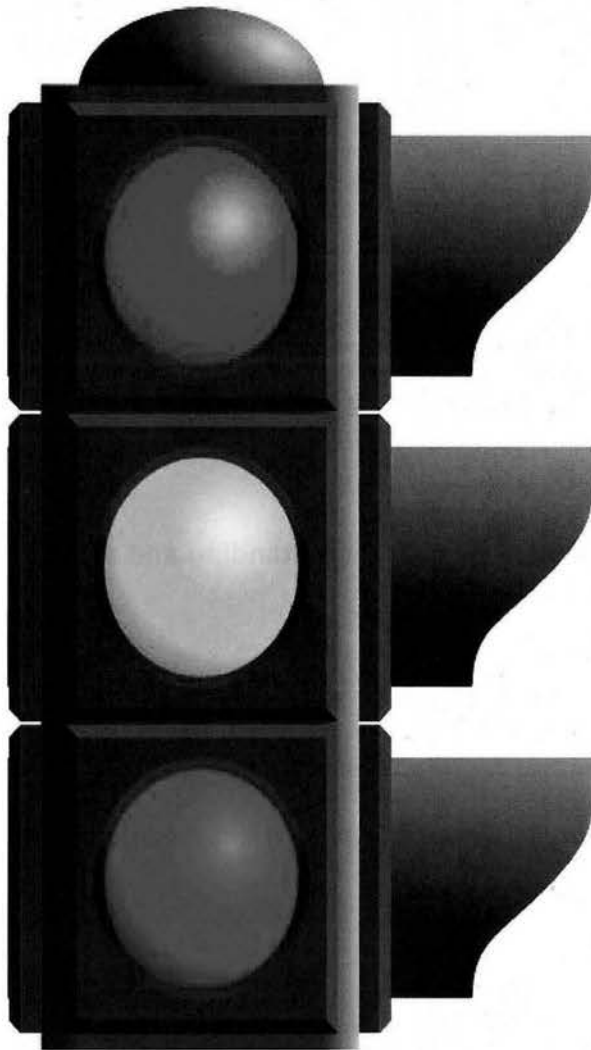
Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Alcohol gives you infinite patience for stupidity.”

Managing Peer Pressure Worksheet

List who in your life fits where



Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Session 3: Walking away

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Walking away - Building assertiveness skills (doing what is right)
- Applying theme to me – identifying situation where it is hard to walk away
- Practise and skill rehearsal – assertiveness skills
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Consolidated their understanding of assertiveness skills
- Identified tough situations to remain assertive in
- Strategies to enhance assertiveness that promote family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session the focus is on understanding and developing skills of assertiveness to manage situations where the pressure to use alcohol and drugs is evident. While the skill-set within this session is based around alcohol and drug use, the skills of assertiveness operate across other life domains.

Workbook: Managing alcohol and drugs

- Assertiveness idea

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“You make choices every day and almost every hour that keep you walking in the light or moving away toward darkness.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Walking away – building assertiveness skills (doing what is right)

Say, last session we started exploring notion of saying no and practiced doing this. Today the focus will be on developing assertiveness skills which can help us to stand up for our own needs and also help us to say no to others when required. We will also explore how our thinking can influence the type of reaction we have to a situation e.g. making it harder to be assertive and using aggression instead.

Draw a chart sufficient to show the BLUE boxes only. Once complete, add another row at the bottom for the RED area and fill. Finally add a column for GREEN boxes.



One of the challenges that many men find, is the sense of cultural beliefs and obligation towards others, e.g., an uncle expects them to go drinking with them, friends expect them to pay for alcohol or drugs. Ensure that this issue of cultural beliefs and obligations, and the differences between them, are discussed. You may wish to use the Assertiveness Quiz located in the session notes, as a warm-up activity.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

	Passive	Aggressive	Passive aggressive	Assertive
Behaviour				
Non-Verbal				
Beliefs (about self, others, or the future)				
Emotions				
Goal				
	↓	↓	↓	↓

Invite the men to brainstorm what might come under each heading. Gauge their knowledge. Write responses onto the chart.

- *What would they see? What would it look like?*
- *What would they feel?*
- *What beliefs would reflect this style?*
- *What is the ultimate goal of taking this approach?*
- *What effect does this style have on others?*

<i>What impact does this style have on others?</i>				
<i>What does this mean for the well-being of my family?</i>				
<i>What is this modelling for my children?</i>				

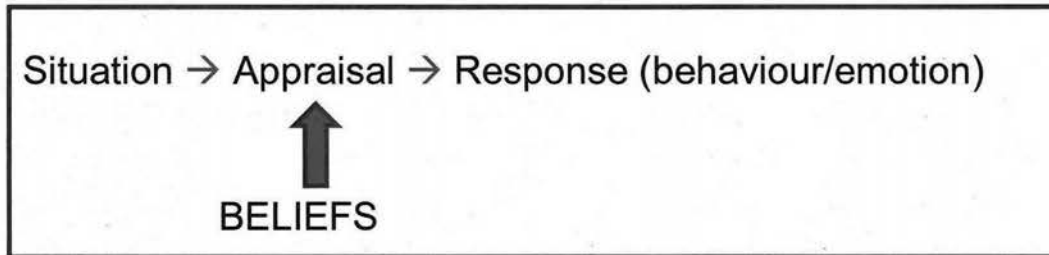
Applying the theme to me

Say, the types of response we have to specific situations (passive, aggressive, assertive) is strongly influenced by the way that we perceive a situation. For many of us it seems as though we see the world the way it really is and we react to it predictably. However, we don't actually react to what is going on in the real world; we react to what we THINK is going on. Sometimes we're right; sometimes we're wrong. The response in our behaviour and emotions depends on our interpretation of events, rather than the events themselves.

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Consider what Epictetus (Greek philosopher, 50-135 A.D.) said – “People are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of them.”

Reinforce the following idea that has been covered in earlier sessions, of the crucial influence of how we interpret an event, has on the system of beliefs (or truths) we hold about ourselves, other people, the future, and the world and how it works. Elicit from the group that our interpretation of situations, ultimately affects our subsequent response.



This material is based on the cognitive behavioural ideas of the cognitive triad: our beliefs about ourselves, the world and the future. Any number of distorted beliefs can cause us to behave in a passive or aggressive manner. Beliefs are often automatic and you may not be aware of them.

Explore the following scenario: Imagine a close friend of yours announces that he is about to be married. Brainstorm what some of the beliefs are that you might use to evaluate your friend's news. Below are some examples:

- It's just a ball and chain for the rest of his life. Why lock himself down?
- Marriage is a waste of time, it makes men miserable
- Marriage is good for people for many reasons
- She's going to get in the way of me and my mate. It will threaten our friendship and possibly ruin it if he follows through with it
- She's such a nice woman that he'll obviously prefer to spend all his time with her
- Everything works out in the end
- I'm glad he found someone to share and spend his life with

Now, brainstorm how having these various beliefs can lead to different responses e.g. passive, aggressive and assertive. Use the same examples above and work your way through asking the men to comment on how they would all lead to different responses.

Work through other scenarios. Note that the men can look at their offence maps, other offences worksheets, and ABCD diaries, for examples of their own scenarios. In small groups of three, use two blank copies of the worksheet to write ideas down for each scenario. Work through the variety of ways the scenario can be perceived (and ultimately responded to).

Discuss:

1. One of the scenarios below, and,

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

2. An example from their own lives of a “pressure point” – an everyday situation where they found (or find) it tough to walk away.

Consider at the end of your personal situation, thoughts from the last session:

- *What is the honourable/respectful/right thing to do?*
- *What values do you want to live by?*
- *How do you see yourself as the “new me?”*
- *What sort of role model do you want to be for your children?*



Elicit from the men the following concepts, if required:

What is correct and appropriate; this could be morally, spiritually or socially.

It also means to be straight, direct and fair.

What is the right way to do things – this is about rules or customs that are accepted by cultures about the correct way for their people.

Being true and loyal in relationships with others and also to have faith in the spiritual sense. By living this way, there is a sense of honesty with yourself and others. People expect that when you speak, you speak the truth.

In essence, this means that in your heart, there is nothing hidden.

Use some, or all, of the following scenarios:

You’ve just arrived home late from work after a long and frustrating day, not to mention getting delayed in traffic. You’re tired and hungry. You enter the backdoor and discover that your partner is sitting on the couch watching TV, with no dinner preparation in sight. What beliefs might you have about this situation?

or

After your sport game, your team starts to pack-up to head over to the clubrooms for a few beers. Your family are expecting you home straight after the game, as your partner’s family are coming over for dinner that night and she’s needing help to prepare. However, your mate offers to buy you a couple of quick rounds. You say you’re not sure. Your mate then says that it seems like you’re being pushed around more these days, that she’s “wearing the pants” and that you need to “man-up” and make your own decisions.

or

You’re at a big BBQ function with many extended family and friends to celebrate your birthday. You’re sitting around talking with an older cousin, uncle and your brother, whom you are close to. Your older cousin then pulls out a joint and lights up, as has been the tradition between you all. It’s passed around and finally you’re offered a drag. You hesitate. They look at you and say, “C’mon man, are you a part of this family or what? She’ll (your partner) never know. What she doesn’t know won’t hurt her. It’s your birthday anyway. You’ve got the right to do what you want.”

And ...

Your own personal situation drawn from your ABCD diaries, offence maps, etc.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

	Passive	Aggressive	Passive Aggressive	Assertive
Behaviour				
Non-Verbal				
Beliefs (about self, others, the future)				
Emotions				
Goal				
	↓	↓	↓	↓
<i>What impact will this have on others? (family, friends, work mates)</i>				
<i>What does this mean for the well-being of my family?</i>				
<i>What is this modelling for my children?</i>				

Facilitate a brief group discussion using the following questions:

- *What could you tell yourself when you are next in those situations, about behaving assertively as an option?*

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Practise and skill-rehearsal of family safety

Break the group up into smaller groups of three. Tell the men that they are each going to practise the identified situation they find (of have found) it tough to walk away from. They can use examples from their offence maps, other offences worksheets, ABCD diaries. This is about getting comfortable and confident with the words to use and knowing what it looks like and feels like to take an assertive stance.

There will be three roles. Rotate each role until each participant has had a chance to practise their own situation.

Yourself – try to respond to the pressure of the situation by using the assertive ideas you've just developed. Think about not only the words you are using, but what your body language conveys. Following this, reflect on what worked well, what your challenges were, and what you would set as a goal for next time. How did it feel? What emotions were evoked?

Other person in situation – pose the question or statement that creates the pressure and tension of the situation or dilemma. Think about tone of voice, emotional expression and body posture. Be as realistic as possible, keeping in mind that the aim is to allow the other person to practise their assertiveness skills. When debriefing, offer thoughts of the experience from your perspective.

Observer – remain the “silent mouse” whilst the interaction is taking place. Note how the person attempting to be assertive is coping. What phrases, body language or other skills are used that reflect an assertive approach. Ensure this person has the first opportunity to reflect. Then feedback your thoughts in a positive framework.



One of the issues that constantly comes up in groups, is around the difficulty that men have in identifying and negotiating to meet needs in safe ways. Many men expect their partners to know what they need, and when they don't, escalate things into abusive and violent behaviour.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Break the group into pairs and discuss:

- *In what situations, before the next session, will they have the opportunity to act assertively?*
- *What do others need to know about how they intend to act differently?*
- *How will they manage to remember to use the respect test next time they are talking with their partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards, ABCD diaries).

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to practise situations assertively in order to maintain family safety.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“You make choices every day and almost every hour that keep you walking in the light or moving away toward darkness.”

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Background materials

Lack of assertiveness has been identified as an issue for men who engage in IPV. This session, while focusing primarily upon building assertiveness skills around managing alcohol and drug use, will also generalise to relationships with them in the home. We are constantly communicating (or trying to) our ideas, needs, and opinions with others. Whether it is asking someone to help with a task, giving directions, offering, or being offered, a compliment, resolving conflict, accepting or turning down requests, we are constantly in the process of trying to make sense of information and get our ideas across clearly.

Being assertive, as opposed to aggressive, passive or passive-aggressive, is the style that works best in most situations. Sometimes however, we find it difficult in certain situations, to remain assertive. In reality, in some situations, being assertive can lead to risk. Being able to choose what style is best for what situations is the key.

The key indicators of assertive, passive and aggressive behaviours

Posture

Assertive: An upright posture with the shoulders back. The body plane is vertical and generally faces the other person directly. The face plane is also vertical (tilted neither up nor down) and is aimed more or less directly at the other person.

Passive: The body is hunched, as though you want to make yourself smaller than you really are. The body plane is usually pointed to one side of the other person and may lean away or toward the ground. The face plane is often angled downward and away. Shoulders may be raised toward the ears. Your head may be lowered like a turtle's. The body seems either tense, or defeated.

Aggressive: The posture may be large and threatening, or crouched, as though you are a tiger ready to pounce. The body plane is often angled downward and toward the other person. The face may be angled toward the other person, or tilted upward toward the ceiling (the nose in the air). Overall, this posture communicates that you are ready for a fight.

Movements and Gestures

Assertive: Movements are usually relaxed and fluid. There is little muscle tension. Gestures are natural, open and relaxed. The hands are usually relaxed and open, rather than grasping one another or balled up in fists.

Passive: This varies from person to person. Some people gesture little when they are being passive. They look depressed and lethargic. Others speed up when they adopt the passive style, making quick, but unfocused gestures (fluttering hands, fidgeting, playing with coins or buttons). Some people make classic "don't attack me" movements, shrugging the shoulders and making helpless gestures with the hands, palms outwards. Showing the palms is a classic passive gesture.

Aggressive: The body tension associated with this style is revealed by physical gestures, which tend to be rapid and sharp. The person may gesture with the index finger pointed. Alternatively, all fingers may be extended stiffly together. Sometimes the hand is used in short, striking, or karate-chopping motions. The closer these motions are to the other individual's personal space, the more aggressive the gesture.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

Physical Distance

Assertive: Interpersonal distance differs a great deal from culture to culture. People using the assertive style during conflict, usually maintain their normal, conversational distance (i.e., the same distance they use in situations not requiring assertive behaviour).

Passive: The interpersonal distance is usually greater than normal (unless the quiet voice makes standing close essential). Combined with the turned-away body posture, this distance makes passive individuals look as though they want to escape from the interaction.

Aggressive: The interpersonal distance is often closer than usual, invading the other person's space. The broad and rapid gestures that are often used, may cause the hands or face to suddenly lunge towards the other person.

Eye Contact – note that this can vary culturally

Assertive: Eye contact is frequent but is broken by occasional horizontal glances away

Passive: Eye contact is usually avoided. The eyes tend to be cast downward. When eye contact is made, it's usually done by looking up rather than by lifting the head.

Aggressive: Eye contact is usually direct and fixed. Considerable muscle tension is usually held around the eyes, resulting in a squinting or glaring look. A person unused to being aggressive may have the same tension around the eyes but look away from the other person.

Facial Expression

Assertive: The facial expression is appropriate to the content of the message. If the discussion is serious or confrontational, the person will typically smile less often than usual. Regardless, the face generally communicates openness via a direct gaze, a calm expression, and little muscle tension. The teeth are slightly apart and the forehead is usually smooth.

Passive: The expression is often anxious or apologetic. Considerable tension is likely to be evident, particularly in the forehead. The person may flush. Nervous smiling or inappropriate laughter is common for some people.

Aggressive: The face generally holds significant muscle tension, often most noticeably in the jaw. The expression tends to be fixed rather than rapidly changing, is often recognizably angry, and glaring (directed toward the other person, or away) is common. Reddening is likely but is usually distinguishable from a blush (sometimes by being somewhat blotchier) unless the person is unused to being aggressive, in which case, blushing may occur.

Physical Contact

Assertive: Physical contact varies tremendously from culture to culture. During an assertive exchange, the individual will generally touch the other person no more or less than is usual for them in other situations. When touching occurs, it is usually gentle and intended to express empathy for the other person. In cultures that do not often touch, gentle open-handed patting gestures against the edge of the person's personal space (or against a table or the arm of a chair in the direction of the person) may be common.

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Passive: Touching is usually minimal because passive people retreat into themselves. If used at all, physical touch tends to communicate “Don’t hate me” or, “Don’t hurt me.”

Aggressive: Touching, if present, may be firm and jabbing (as with an accusing finger). Some people, of course, become physically violent. More often, the aggressive person will make rapid gestures (including pointing and hand jabbing) close to the other person, but without touching them. It may look as though the person is attempting to pierce the bubble of the other’s interpersonal space.

Voice Tone

Assertive: The voice is warm and well-modulated. It may be firm if the situation requires gravity, but the message is seldom delivered through gritted teeth. The volume is normal.

Passive: The voice is often quiet, sometimes to the point that others cannot hear. The tone may be complaining, particularly during self-justifications, or attempts to pacify the other person. Statements may have an upswing at the end, as though the person is asking a question. “So, I’d like a raise?” This “question-talking” represents a significant difficulty for many individuals. It communicates uncertainty and openness to being influenced.

Aggressive: Some individuals exhibit a “hot voice” by yelling and shouting, with lots of emotion and volume. “How could you do this! I can’t believe it!” Others typically have a colder style, the words being squeezed out between gritted teeth with little emotional variation. “I. Want. It. Done. Now. Understand?” The volume of a colder voice may be hostile and loud, or icy and threateningly quiet, and often has a sarcastic or condescending tone.

Fluency

Assertive: The flow of words is even and conversational, without rushing or hesitating. That said, anyone can speak assertively, no matter what their usual conversational style might be. The main point, is that the person’s usual fluency doesn’t typically change much during an assertive encounter. The low stress level associated with the assertive style doesn’t interfere with the production of fluent speech.

Passive: There may be considerable hesitation caused partly by stress and partly by a search for the words that will satisfy the other person. Sentences are often left incomplete, “... and I wanted to ask you if ... because I’m so busy that ... and Aunt Florence arrives Friday ...” There may also be much pausing and stalling before getting to the point, “... so I thought, well, you know ... I mean ...” The pace is often slow, or speech may pour out in an anxious rush.

Aggressive: The pace of speech may be slower than usual (through gritted teeth and with a cold expression) or faster (usually with increased volume and sharp gestures). Some people become less fluent when angry (the “spluttering rage”). More commonly though, there is little hesitation. Fluency may be less of a problem than with the passive style because the aggressive person is less worried about offending others.

Physical Appearance

Assertive: Clothing, hairstyle, glasses, tidiness, and so on, are all expressions of ourselves. The assertive person is able to adapt to the situation (for example, by dressing up if the occasion demands it), but this is not designed either to seek anonymity (by wearing what everyone else wears) or to intimidate others. Assertive people may be conscious of the impact their appearance has on people (perhaps taking some time to find a hairstyle that

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

looks good), but the look is chosen, at least in part, to reflect the person's own preferences and personality.

Passive: The most common passive style is designed to help the person blend with a group. Clothing, glasses, and hairstyle are all carefully chosen to avoid standing out, the product of a fear of what might happen if the person was more visible, distinctive, or honest. Some people use glasses, make-up, or beards, as barriers to hide behind (though others find them to be comfortable expressions of their personalities).

Aggressive: Clothes, hairstyle, and accessories (including glasses, watch, and even car) may be chosen deliberately to intimidate others or to communicate power. Others aggressively rebel against expectations, choosing styles mainly for their ability to provoke people (for example, wearing jeans to a formal wedding out of a desire to displease, rather than as an honest expression). Extreme or unusual styles, are not aggressive or passive-aggressive in themselves – the key is in the reason the styles are chosen.

Sourced from: Paterson, R.J. (2000) *The Assertiveness Workbook*, New Harbinger Publications: Oakland.

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Assertiveness Quiz

This exercise was copied from "Developing Positive Assertiveness - Practical Techniques for Personal Success" by Sam R. Lloyd

Answer the questions below as honestly as you can. This will help you gain some insights about your current level of assertiveness. Put a number that best represents how you would act in each of the situations.

Never	Almost Never	Could go either way	Mostly	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Score	Questions to answer
	I ask others to do things without feeling guilty or anxious.
	When someone asks me to do something I don't want to do, I say "no" without feeling guilty or anxious.
	I am comfortable when speaking to a large group of people.
	I confidently express my honest opinions to authority figures.
	When I experience powerful feelings (anger, frustration, disappointment, etc.), I verbalize them easily.
	When I express anger, I do so without blaming others for "making me mad."
	I am comfortable speaking up in a group situation.
	If I disagree with the majority opinion in a meeting, I can "stick to my guns" without feeling uncomfortable or being abrasive.
	When I make a mistake, I acknowledge it.
	I can tell others when their behaviour creates a problem for me.
	Meeting new people in social situations is something I do with ease and comfort.
	When discussing my beliefs, I do so without labelling the opinions of others as "crazy," "stupid," "ridiculous," or "irrational."
	I assume that most people are competent and trustworthy and do not have difficulty delegating tasks to others.
	When considering doing something I have never done, I feel confident I can learn to do it.
	I believe my needs are as important as those of others and I am entitled to have my needs satisfied
	Add up your number for your Total Score

Look over the page to see what the result means.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 3: Walking away

How Assertive Are you?

If your total is 60 or higher, you have a consistently assertive philosophy and probably handle most situations well.

If your total is 45-60, you have a fairly assertive outlook. There are some situations in which you may be naturally assertive, but you should be able to increase your assertiveness through practise.

If your total is 30-45, you seem to be assertive in some situations but your natural response is either non-assertive or aggressive. You may want to change some perceptions and practise new behaviours in order to handle things much more assertively in the future.

If your total is 15-30, you have considerable difficulty being assertive. You need to practise and allow yourself time to grow and change. You can become much more comfortable in situations where asserting yourself is important.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

Session 4: Managing Alcohol and Drug Use

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session - preventing relapse into problematic alcohol and drug use, understanding the relapse process
- Applying theme to me – anticipating lapse and relapse situations and planning to manage these
- Practise and skill rehearsal - identifying strategies and rehearsing these in order to consolidate safety, managing urges and cravings
- Exit process for men leaving the program at this point
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified their own unique lapse process (thoughts, feelings, behaviours and first occurrence of problem drinking/using) and have in place strategies to manage these
- Strategies to enhance thinking that promotes family wellbeing

Session overview

Relapse prevention has been a core platform within the alcohol and drug field for many years. Understanding the notions of lapse and relapse from an addiction's perspective, are helpful in anticipating situations of risk.

Workbook: Alcohol, Drug Use and Family Violence

- CBT AoD model
- Relapse plan

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – preventing relapse into problematic alcohol and drug use

Tell the men that today's session is around managing to maintain the decisions they have made around safe use of alcohol and drugs so that family can remain safe. Tell them that you are going to introduce them to an extension of the ABCD model, focusing on the thinking and feelings related to alcohol and drug use.



Substance use/intoxication is a criminogenic need if it occurs in the offending period. Substances intoxicate, disinhibit and cloud rational, logical thinking. As part of the discussion, explore problematic use – if it affects them or their family, then they really need to look at either abstinence and/or controlled use, in order to reduce the harm.

Draw the model on the whiteboard, as the next exercise will begin to populate different sections (The model is attached to the end-of-session notes).

Ask the men what sorts of early life experiences gave them the message that using alcohol or drugs is acceptable. The answers you are trying to elicit include:

- growing up in families where drinking and drug-taking was normal
- modelling use of alcohol and drug taking by parents, peers, siblings, uncles, aunties
- experimenting as part of growing up and enjoying the effects (rewarding and reinforcing)

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

Ask the men what substance-related beliefs they learned about alcohol and drug use. Addictive-type beliefs can be seen in terms of a cluster of ideas centring on pleasure-seeking, problem relief, and escape.

The answers you are trying to evoke include:

- “I need ... (substance) if I am to keep my head and emotions together”
- “I can think better when I am out of it”
- “I can socialise better when I’m smashed, wasted”
- “I will have pleasure, a rush, from using ... (substance)”
- “The ... (substance) makes me feel 10-feet tall and bullet-proof, powerful”
- “Using will relieve my boredom, anxiety, tension, depression, (other).”

Talk with the group about how these beliefs feed into cravings and urges. Discuss what the men know about the difference between the two. Elicit some examples of urges and cravings from the group.



A craving is a physical response (e.g., physical arousal, emotional arousal, “need” and “desire”) of wishing to achieve the psychological state induced by alcohol and drugs – i.e., get smashed, high, out of it, etc. Urges are described as the behavioural impulse to satisfy the craving by seeking and using the substances – preparing a needle, a joint, going to the bottle store, etc.

Write ‘Something happens’ onto the diagram and ask the men what situations would trigger a craving or an urge. The answers you are trying to evoke include:

- argument with my partner
- money worries
- medical problems
- feel a partner or girlfriend let you down
- Super 15 game coming up
- girlfriend has let you down
- with friends and wanting to fit in

Work with the men to identify what thoughts are likely to emerge from the ‘Something happens’ (trigger event). The answers you are trying to evoke include:

- the ... doesn’t care about me
- if she wouldn’t always be late ...
- she ignores me
- drugs/alcohol use make me more sociable
- it’s going to be a great night

Now populate the feelings that go alongside each of the thoughts, and note which of them contribute to family wellbeing and which lead down the path to family violence.

The answers you are trying to evoke include:

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

- Positive self-feelings, which might include pride, happiness, contentment, anticipation of pleasure, euphoria, the 'buzz'
- Negative self-feelings, which might include depression, shame, guilt, frustration, anger
- Negative feelings towards others, which might include anger, hate, disgust

Once complete consider and explore the types of decisions the men are likely to make in each of these situations. This includes what substances they may want to use and how they might intend to use them.

Lastly, explore the consequences of these decisions. Inquire into how these decisions can either make a situation worse or better.

An example might look like the following:

- Situation – argument with my partner
- Thoughts – she never listens to me and what I think is important
- Feelings (self) – Frustration, anger (could lead to violence)
- Feelings (others) – Hate, guilt (could lead to violence)
- Decision – Make a snap decision to leave the house, get some beers and go round to mates place where I would probably get on it pretty hard using the argument as an excuse
- Consequence – Have an argument with my partner when I get home that could lead to violence and would almost certainly make things worse

Applying the theme to me

Have the men work in pairs and help each other to identify their own unique pathway through the CBT AoD model.

Note that men who are abstinent can still complete this and identify the thinking they use to manage situations that could be potential triggers. This will act to reinforce their pro-social decision-making.

Undertake the following work to identify each man's unique pathway and how they will manage not to relapse. Have each man take a position around the most likely pathway for them into managing cravings and urges. You can position each of these around the room and ask them to stand in the place that best represents their challenges.

- **Position 1:** Response to withdrawal symptoms
Examples include flu-like symptoms, any physical symptoms associated with withdrawal to particular drugs, e.g., sweating, headaches, cramps, crawling sensations on skin/body, nausea, shakes, heart palpitations.
- **Position 2:** Response to lack of pleasure
That is, trying to improve moods in the quickest way, by using alcohol and drugs. This could be in response to boredom, feeling low, depressed, anxious, sad, irritable, angry, having mood swings, etc.

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

- **Position 3:** Response to drug cues
No particular stresses, negative emotions or pleasure seeking. In using, the person has learned to associate everyday neutral events or cues, with the use of the drug. Examples include a particular street corner, a person or group of friends, a song, a certain time of the day, as being associated with drug use.
- **Position 4:** Response to pleasure-seeking (hedonistic) desires
This happens when there is a wish to enhance positive experiences. Examples include using drugs to enhance sex, social activities (e.g., parties, clubs), sense of self (e.g., 10-feet tall, bullet-proof).

Have each group work on strategies that they could use to respond to these positions in a way that maintains their own and others' wellbeing.

Have the sub-groups present their ideas back to the large group and add their own ideas.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Discuss with the men that their next step is to practise the skills of managing cravings and urges to ensure they are locked-in.



During the course of the program, you will have covered a range of skills to manage situations from the perspective of thinking, emotional regulation and behaviour. These include mindfulness skills (being able to observe and describe the situations that lead to use, the subjective experience during the use, and following use), managing/changing thinking (ABCD diaries, identifying the thinking that is associated with cravings and questioning the thinking, looking at thinking), distress tolerance and emotional management skills (defusion, relaxation techniques). This is an opportunity to revisit, review and undertake further practise on the skills covered so far.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Have the men pair-up and discuss:

- *What will they be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session on managing their cravings and urges?*
- *What will they do differently next time they are faced with a choice-point, or intersection in their daily life?*
- *How will they manage to remember to use the respect test next time they are talking with their partner and children?*

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

Exit process for men leaving the program at this point

Invite the men leaving the program at this point, to use their safety planning workbook (SAFE ME) to answer the following questions.

- *What were my challenges and goals for this program?*
- *How did I get on achieving these? What have I achieved and what do I still need to work on?*
- *What are my times of increased risk?*
- *What are my strategies to manage these times?*

Men who have a Family Violence Intervention Order in place, need to complete the standard evaluation exit forms.

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to identify/notice their cravings and urges and practise the skills learned during the session. They can use the Tracking urges worksheet and their ABCD diaries to help with this.



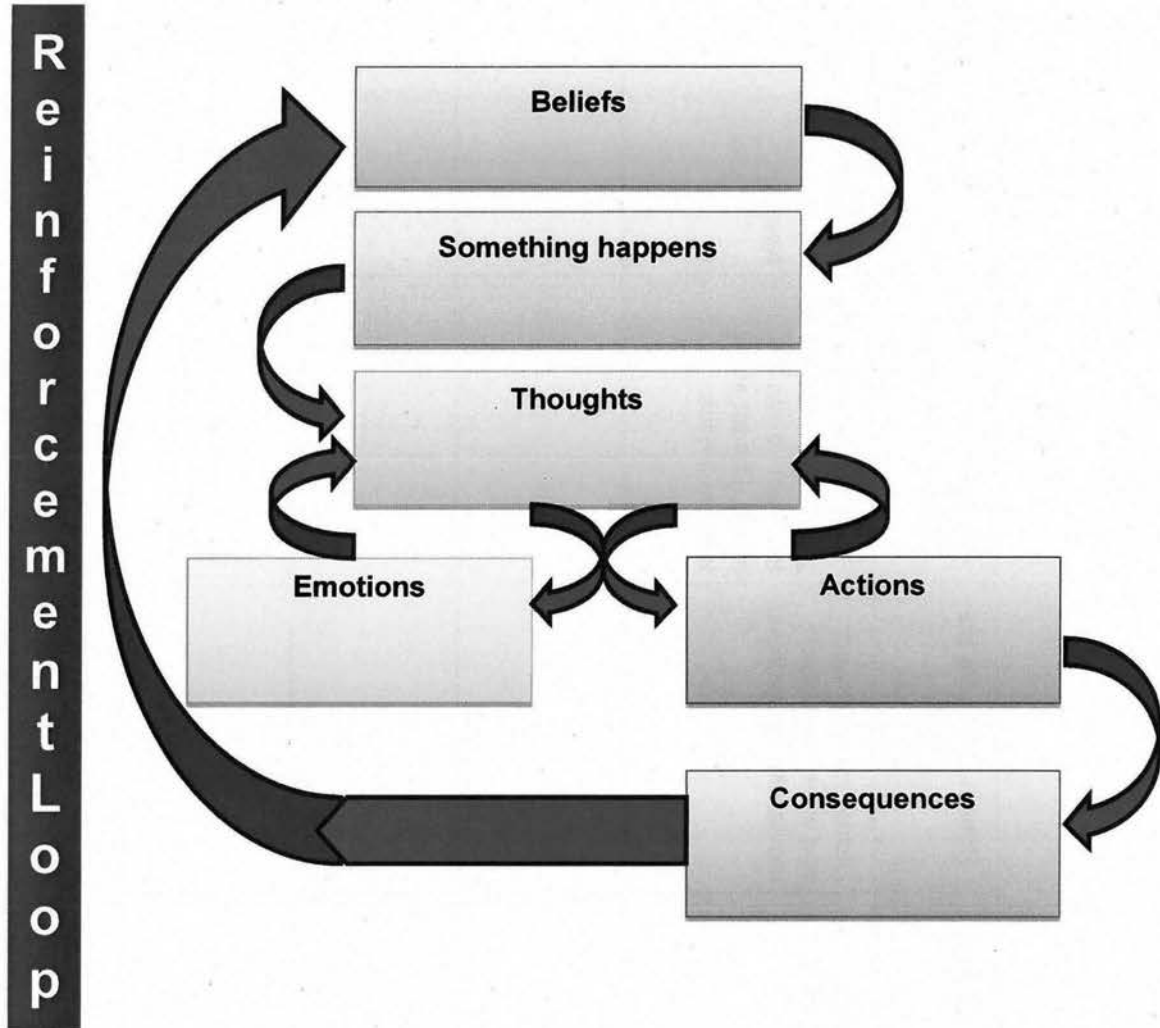
This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.”

Alcohol, Drugs and Family Violence – Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use



Cognitive Behavioural Model (adapted from Stallard 2002).

Alcohol, Drug Use and Family Violence - Session 4: Managing alcohol and drug use

Tracking Urges Worksheet

Date	Time	Intensity (1 – 10)	What prompted my urge?	How did I handle the urge?	My reaction to how I handled my urge?	What can I do differently/better next time?
Example: Friday 10th	5pm	4	Workmates talking about heading off to the pub	Distraction – left work and went to an action movie with my girlfriend	Pretty happy – glad my girlfriend backed me up too. I got so into the movie, I forgot about wanting a drink.	Predict the situations where I am likely to be tested

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Session summary

- Opening
- Welcome by existing members to new members
- Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date
- Sharing of program goals
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Parenting after abuse and how children’s behaviour changes
- Applying theme to me – Appreciating how my own children who have experienced trauma, start to behave differently
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Skills for managing children impacted by IPV
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session Summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session the men will have:

- Understood the effects of family violence on their children
- Understood more about their children’s feelings and experiences
- Identified the challenges of parenting after abuse
- Described the sorts of behaviours they are likely to encounter
- Strategies to enhance communication with children about family violence

Session overview

In this session the focus is on understanding the impact of family violence on children, who are often described as the “forgotten victims.” The men are invited to consider the experiences, behaviours and perspectives of children who grow up in homes where such violence is commonplace, and the effect it can have on their development. The men are then encouraged to reflect on the implications and challenges for parenting children after experiencing such trauma.



The parenting sessions can be run in groups where not all participants have children. As starting a family will be ‘probable’ for many men without children it is likely that they will still get something out of these sessions. In the situation where none of the men have children this session along with the other parenting sessions should be omitted.

Workbook: Impact on others

- Parenting after abuse guidelines

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“What distresses me at times is that I meet a lot of people in their 40's, 50's, 60's, who still say they're a victim of child abuse.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Welcome by existing members to new members

A senior group member who has been attending the program for some time will take responsibility for welcoming new group members to the group and to lead the discussion.



The framework to be used is a conversation around the goals men set for themselves during the assessment process regarding developing safety within their interpersonal relationships.

Existing members report about their goals and progress-to-date

Existing group members share the main goals they established during assessment and report on their progress towards meeting those goals. New group members are then invited to do the same.

Checking on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework Review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the Session – Parenting after abuse – how children's behaviour changes

Introduce the session by saying that today we will be looking at how to parent children after abuse has occurred. This can present a specific set of challenges due to the fact that post abuse it is common that a child's behaviour will have changed and that they will often be more challenging to parent.

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Before delivering this part of the session, acknowledge that many of the men will have experienced family violence from the inside, i.e., as children, they have been on the receiving end of witnessing, and sometimes being the direct victims of, violence. Tell the men that they will be able to draw upon their own experience and that of their own children, to make sense of the issues involved. Parenting after abuse, as many of the men will know, adds a level of complexity to the hard job of being a parent.

For this exercise, each participant will be asked to imagine that they are a boy or girl of a particular age. To prepare for the session, create an index card for each participant that says what age they are. For example, write "10" on a card to indicate that the person is ten-years old. Make cards for ages 5, 10 and 16 years (to coincide with the content of the story).

Instructions:

"We are going to talk today about the effects of family violence on children. We're going to start with an exercise to understand this. Everyone is going to get a card saying what age they are (for example, 10-years old). The purpose of this exercise, is to understand the effects of violence on children so we can better help them. It is difficult, but try not to judge the parent for what they did or didn't do. Just listen from the point of view of the child. Keep yourself firmly planted in their shoes."

Give each participant a card with either a 5-year old, a 10-year old, or a 16-year old written on it. Cluster men of the same age into small groups to allow brief discussion of responses to each scenario.

Tell them to imagine that they are a child of that age while you are reading the story.

Tell the men the following background scene:

"So far, you have grown up with both parents. You love both your parents. Sometimes they get along very well. Your father is sometimes very nice to you. He is handsome and funny. He makes you laugh. You want your mum and dad to be together. The violence in your home has been going on since you were born."

Before you begin, write titles for two columns on the board and provide some examples for each (below):

1. **Abusive Behaviour e.g.**
 - a. Being yelled at
 - b. witness violence towards someone they care about
 - c. feeling as if the abuse is their fault
2. **Child's Feelings and Thoughts e.g.**
 - a. Fear
 - b. Guilt
 - c. Anger

After reading each scenario, stop and elicit what they felt was the violent and abusive behaviour, and what they thought the child's feelings and thoughts from each age group were. Do as many scenarios as time permits.

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Scenarios:

1. Lots of times, when you are having a family dinner at home, your father tells your mother that he can't stand the way she chews. She is a slob. She is so gross. He can't bear to look at her. He tells her to wipe the grease off her chin. She takes a napkin and wipes her face. She looks down and doesn't say anything.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

2. Your mother is doing a load of laundry and cooking dinner. You are playing on the floor in the living room. Your sister is napping. Your father comes home and trips on one of your toys. Your father screams at your mother and tells her she's a slob and why doesn't she ever clean the house. Your mother tells him to stop. He tells her to quit her bitching. Your sister wakes up and starts screaming. Your mother says that he shouldn't talk like that in front of you. Your father slams her against the wall and hits her. On his way out the door he says he wants the house clean when he gets home. You are crying. Your mother is crying. She hugs you and tells you not to worry. Things will be OK.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

3. Your father comes home the next night. He brings you a beautiful new kite. He says he's sorry he upset you, but if your mother were a better housekeeper, these things wouldn't happen. He hugs you and the two of you go outside to fly your kite.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

4. You aren't doing so well in maths class. You just can't concentrate. You get a D. You bring your report home. Your mother tells you that you shouldn't show it to your father. Later, your father finds it. At that moment, your mother is on the phone with a friend. Your father calls you into the living room and asks you why you're doing so badly. You say you don't know. He keeps asking you. When you don't answer, he gets very angry. He takes off his belt and hits you across the legs. Your mother comes running in and physically tries to stop him. He throws her to the ground. He says to her, "Maybe if you weren't so busy yacking on the phone all the time, my kid would be doing better in school." He tells you that you better answer him next time he asks you a question. The next night your mother offers to help you with your maths homework.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

5. You're driving home from a family picnic. You're on a narrow back road. You had a great time playing with your cousins. Your parents smiled at each other the whole time and you feel good. Things are going to work out. Your father was drinking beer all day. He and your mother are singing. There's a fork in the road and your father asks your mother which way to go. She says, "I don't know." She grabs a map and tries to open it. Your father starts screaming at her and telling her she's a stupid bitch. He accelerates and drives at 140 km an hour around a sharp curve. You notice the speedo. Your mother pleads with him to slow down. Your little sister starts crying. Another car comes and your father slams on the brakes. You are holding on to your sister. Your father turns around and smiles at you. "Close call, huh?" You smile back.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

6. Your father seems to have disappeared for good. You haven't seen him in a long time. Your mother is always worried about money now. You had to move out of your house to a small apartment in a yucky building. There are lots of strange people on your street. You had to change schools. You don't have a backyard to play in. You never see your friends anymore. The other kids in school tease you a lot for the way you dress. You're the new kid. You don't understand what's going on in most of your classes. You hope your father will come back. Then you can move back into your house and have your backyard and your friends back. Maybe your Mum and Dad will get along. When you ask your mother when he's coming back, she just says she doesn't know. You wait to hear from him. You're afraid to ask because your Mum doesn't seem to want to talk about it.

One day you're leaving the new school and your Dad is standing by the door. You shout "DAD!!!" He picks you up, gives you a big hug and says you're going for a ride with him. You go out to your favourite takeaway restaurant and he gives you a nice present. He asks you where you live now. You are eager to see him so you tell him. He asks you if your Mum is seeing anyone new. Then he tells you that your Mum won't let him see you anymore. He asks, "Do you miss me?" You start to cry. He says you can stay the night with him if you want to. Do you want to?

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

7. He takes you to his new place. It's a very nice house with views of the countryside. He has a whole room that he says is just for you when you come to visit. He's bought all the toys you said you wanted but didn't have. He has a huge TV with the video game you always wanted. You play for a while. Later you tell him you need to call Mum. He says you can call later. He takes you to a fun movie. He asks you how you like school. You remind him to call Mum. He asks for her number. He calls her and tells her that you're with him. He says he just wants to spend some time with his own child. You can tell by the way he's talking that she's angry. He sounds calm. He says he loves you. He gets off the phone and says your Mum is just crazy. She broke up your family and now she doesn't even want you to spend time with him. He asks you where you'd rather live.

Ask for, and list on the board: *What was the abusive behaviour? What would the child feel?*

Sum up the exercise by reflecting on the following questions. Ask volunteers to share their experiences in their age-related roles:

- *How old were you?*
- *How did you feel about your father?*
- *How did you feel about your mother?*
- *Who did you blame?*
- *What did you want to do?*
- *What was it like to be an adult participating in this exercise?*
- *What did you learn about how the different age of a child affects their response?*

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Applying the theme to me

Say, as we have just learnt children's behaviour can be adversely affected by violence, abuse and trauma. It is important to appreciate how children who have experienced trauma start to behave differently so we can then deal with their behaviour and unique challenges in an appropriate way



Facilitators will need to source some appropriate drawings by children that demonstrate their experience of abuse. This could provide a good opportunity to collaborate with local organisations and service providers around the topic of child abuse and child welfare.



Ask the men to view a selection of drawings created by children who have come from homes where they have experienced family violence. Facilitate a brief group discussion using the following questions:

- *What is being expressed through each drawing?*
- *What are these children learning about home and life?*
- *What messages do the drawings convey about how children see themselves, other people, and their surroundings? What is changing about how they perceive their world?*
- *If your own child drew a picture of their family and home life, what would they draw?*
- *What image would you draw about growing up in your own family of origin?*

Where do we learn our parenting skills?

The last exercise is to explore where we learn our parenting skills from. Remind the men of the earlier activity where they were re-enacting various scenes and scenarios through the eyes of different aged children.



Every parent has their own set of experiences that teach them about their role as a parent and how to interact with children. Everyone is going to have some hard moments remembering the past, and those who are parents will have some tough moments recognising how they might be repeating some of the cruelties and mistakes of their parents. Incorporate the CBT process around where we learn our core beliefs from.

Tell the group that this task is designed to spend some time looking at what experiences have shaped and influenced you as parents, particularly thinking about your family of origin.

Allow the men a few minutes to talk amongst themselves to discuss where they learnt their parenting skills from and why they have the skills they now possess as parents.

After a few minutes come back as a large group and brainstorm a list on the board. Some examples are:

- Your own family including parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, extended family
- Your culture
- Your ethnic background
- The culture in which your children are being raised, if different from your own

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- Your religion
- Your spouse or partner's background
- Your experience in your relationship with the father or mother of your child
- The community where you currently live
- Your income level, immigration status, and other factors that affect your life.

Family of origin

Inform the group of the following:

Our family of origin – the family we grew up in, as opposed to the people we live with now – is the place we learned to be who we are, for better or worse. It is the most significant place for handing down the blueprint for living from one generation to the next. Many individuals who are abusive to others are often carrying out the very behaviours they were trained to do, which can often be referred to as the “Old Rule Book.”

From our family, we learn rules about how to communicate, deal with our emotions, and get our needs met. We also learn many of our values and beliefs from our families. We often develop a strong sense of self in the context of our family of origin – a strong sense of self if we are loved and kept safe most of the time; often, a damaged sense of self, if care and safety are frequently unavailable. Parents often have not had much choice about the “Old Rule Book” they received from the family they grew up in, and end up raising their own children in the same way they were raised. However, there is a choice about whether to continue the traditions from your family of origin or to pioneer the building of a “New Rule Book.”

Family of origin questionnaire

Introduce the next task by informing the men that they are going to do a small questionnaire on their family of origin. Instruct the men that in their workbook, there is a questionnaire called ‘Your Family of Origin’ (see workbook). They will complete it twice which should take about ten minutes.

1. The first time, about **their family of origin**. They are to use **circles** to mark their responses.
2. The second time, about **their current family situation**. They are to use **squares** to mark their responses.

Once completed, divide the men in to pairs to briefly swap ideas and discuss what they have found about what they discovered in their questionnaire responses.



For an example of how the questionnaire appears in the members' workbooks, see the end-of-session notes.

Bring the men back as a group and use the following questions to prompt discussion:

- *What feelings came up as you were doing the questionnaire? What did you discover?*
- *How did the family you grew up in provide a model, or template, of how to behave when you came to have a family of your own, that you now find yourself living out, as if you were on automatic pilot?*
- *Would you like to be making more choices yourself about how to parent?*

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- *What have you learnt about how your own experiences as a child impact upon how you interact with your children?*
- *How do you want your children to remember you as a parent? To remember family life?*
- *What kind of parent would you like to be in six months, in one year from now?*
- *What different thinking and behaviours as a parent will this 'new me' involve?*

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Start this activity off by writing the following two questions on the board and have the men discuss the answers in pairs before coming back to the large group.

- *Why might it be important to discuss family violence with your child/ren?*
- *How might your new knowledge/way of behaving inform a discussion with your child/ren about family violence?*

Say the focus of this next activity is to consider how children might respond when we talk with them about family violence and abuse, and to practise talking with them about these hard and sensitive issues.

Ask the men about how they think their child might respond when they try to talk to them about the violence? Generate a list which should include the following ideas.

- Ignore you
- Change the subject, for example, "I'm hungry"
- Blame you, for example, "If you were nicer to her, she wouldn't have left you," or "You should have done what you said."
- Put her hands over her ears
- Kick his Lego set
- Run to her room and slam the door
- Say "Don't worry, Dad" and try to cheer you up
- Scream at you, call you names and say, "You're so mean to my Mum."
- Hit you
- Listen quietly, without saying anything
- Say, "It's no big deal."

Say, once we start talking to our kids about violence, we need to be ready to listen to them, and accept their responses. We also need to consider what they might need to hear. Ask, what kind of things do children need to know from you about the violence?



Ideas for helping children when they've witnessed IPV and what children need to hear from you as the parent:

- *My behaviour was not okay; violence is not okay*
- *I am responsible*
- *It's not your fault*
- *There is nothing you could have done to prevent or change it*
- *It's not your mother's fault*
- *I am sorry you had to see/hear that*
- *You must have been scared*

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

- *You can tell me how you feel; it is important*
- *I will listen to you*
- *It's okay if you are mad at me, or scared of me. I would be, too*
- *You don't deserve to have this happen in your family*
- *Your feelings are important*
- *I am getting help so you can feel safer*
- *I care about you. You are important.*

Responding to children – skills practice

Break the men into groups of three and ask them to imagine a situation where they are with their child on an outing when they say *"Why did you do this Dad? Why can't you be normal like other dads and families?"*

There will be three roles as outlined below.

Rotate each role until each participant has had a chance to practice. You might like to review what children need to hear about family.

- **Parent** – play yourself and try to respond to your "child" using your own ideas, and possibly some of the ideas presented above. Following this, reflect on what worked well, what your challenges were, and what you would set as a goal for next time.
- **Child** – pose the question to start the conversation. Think about the age of their child, their possible responses and feelings. Be as realistic as possible, keeping in mind that the aim is to allow the parent to practise their listening and talking skills. When debriefing, offer thoughts of the experience from the "child's shoes."
- **Observer** – remain the "silent mouse" whilst the interaction is taking place. Note how the parent is coping, what phrases, body language or other skills are used to respond positively and constructively to the child. Ensure the parent has the first opportunity to reflect. Then feedback your thoughts in a positive framework.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Now that you have started learning about the impact family violence has on children, think about the following questions:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point, or intersection in your daily life?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards and ABCD diary).

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to consider thinking about how their children's behaviour is a product of what they have experienced and witnessed. Before you react, think carefully about how to respond to enhance their wellbeing.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“What distresses me at times is that I meet a lot of people in their 40's, 50's, 60's, who still say they're a victim of child abuse.”

Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Your Family of Origin Assessment

Instructions: Circle the number that best describes the family you grew up in. For each item, 1 is a very low score and 10 a very high score. For example, if people listened to each other a bit in your family, but when the going got tough they stopped listening and got argumentative or aggressive, you might score a 3 or a 4 on the first item.

Go through the list a second time, putting squares around the numbers that best describe your relationship, or family now, as an adult.

People listen to each other.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

People feel connected and close.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

All members have some degree of power appropriate to their age.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

There is an acceptance of who you are.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

There is respect for each other.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members are appreciated for their contributions and for being themselves.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Punishments fit the crime.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members trust each other and work together.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members show warmth and affection to each other.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members are honest and truthful with each other.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members can have fun together.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

There is a sense of commitment.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Rules are fair and negotiable.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

It's okay to make mistakes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Members solve problems together.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The family is a safe place to be.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse

Children's Drawings



Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse



If shouldn't hurt
to be a kid

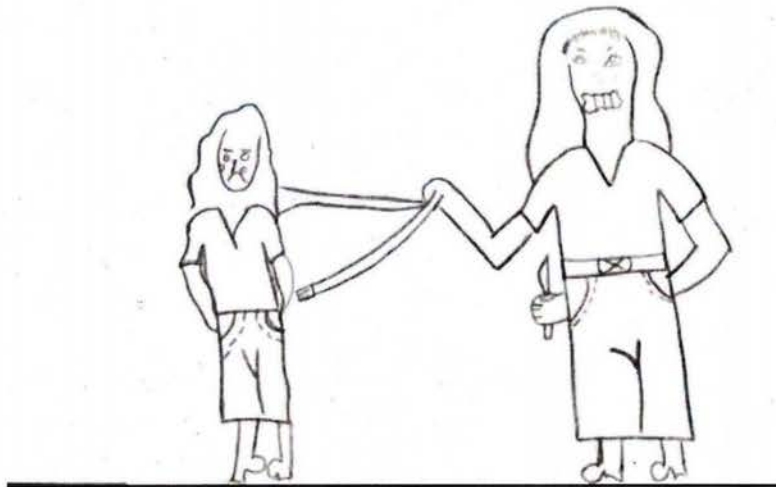
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Impact on Others – Session 1: Parenting after abuse



Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Parenting apart and parenting after separation
- Tessa's story - Identifying the high-risk times around parenting after separation
- Applying theme to me – Creating a new identity as a parent
- Overcoming obstacles to parent according to values
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Managing emotionally distressing situations while keeping the focus on children
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Developed a sense of awareness around the challenges of transitions and separations after abuse that children go through
- Developed and practised strategies to manage their children's questions regarding changes to the family structure
- Practised strategies to enhance family wellbeing

Session overview

In this session the focus is on managing the impacts on children due to custody and access issues, which are areas of potential difficulty and distress for children, particularly after separation. Children often get caught in the middle of parent hostilities which can further victimise them. This session will develop skills to manage these situations so as the impact on children during these transitions can be lessened.

Workbook: Parenting

- We need to think, are there helpful takeaways?
- Between-session tasks

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Parenting apart/parenting after separation/parenting through transitions

Tell the men that today we are going to think about parenting through a time of transition. Many things make parenting at this time a challenging experience for all involved (e.g., parents, children, grandparents, extended family) as it can impact on many levels (e.g., emotional, social, financial, legal, personal). There might be other factors which are preventing you from being the dad you want to be. So let's first get an idea about what transitions people are going through with regards to parenting.

Brainstorm a list on the whiteboard of the variety of transitions people are encountering in their lives. This may include:

- Parenting after divorce or separation
- Parenting in a step-family situation
- Parenting through limited or supervised access visits
- Parenting via a shared custody arrangement
- Preparing to parent for the first time (baby due, or in the future)
- Parenting after family violence and abuse

There are many different kinds of transitions which all bring their own complexities and challenges. Move the conversation towards what this transition means for them as a parent?



You may wish to bring into this session distress tolerance skills, as these are potentially, very high-risk situations. Also see information on high risk in the end-of-session notes that you can draw upon.

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Divide the men into pairs to ask them to discuss the following questions. Re-group at the end and seek feedback.

- *What makes this transition time easy/difficult?*
- *What changes have you noticed to your parenting role as a result of this transition? (e.g., levels of responsibility, activities, decision-making, nature of relationships with kids)*
- *How can you keep being the dad you want to be during this transition time?*

Tessa's story

Watch part of Tessa's story on the "Talking About Family Violence" DVD video, which illustrates one type of situation of parenting in a time of transition. Pause after this scene (2.37mins – 3.10mins) showing a young boy being exposed to arguments and tension between his parents regarding breaching contact conditions. Briefly discuss:

- *What is happening for this young boy? What reactions are you detecting from him?*
- *What might he be thinking and feeling?*
- *What happens when children are "caught" in the middle like this?*
- *What is he learning about his mother/his father?*
- *What questions or fears might he have?*

At the end of the video, also invite comments or thoughts in general, regarding Family Violence Intervention Orders. For example:

- *What could they identify with? What resonated with their own situation?*
- *What did they hear?*
- *What questions regarding abuse and violence would your children have?*
- *What did they see as the "take home" message from watching the different experiences described?*

Applying the theme to me – Creating a new identity as a parent

Say to the men that we are going to continue to work on the idea of the 'new me' which is all about creating a new identity. An identity that doesn't resort to family violence to sort things out. To do this we need to really understand the challenges of separation and transition after abuse has occurred.

What makes it all so hard?

Say, after a separation you may be in a state of shock. It's completely natural to have very strong feelings, and to find it difficult to be reasonable at first.

Ask the men what they have felt or are feeling during times of separation and transition. Use the information below as a prompt.

You might be feeling a mixture of things such as:

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

- Hatred
- Regret
- Foolishness
- Fear for yourself
- Fear for your children
- Isolation
- Loneliness
- Blame
- Guilt
- Confusion
- Anger
- Worry about the future (including money and housing)
- Frustration
- Hopelessness
- Grief
- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Relief
- Jealousy
- Resentment
- Shock
- Disappointment
- Exhaustion (especially if you are now looking after your children on your own)
- Sadness



Make the point that these are very difficult feelings to manage in terms of staying safe and not using violence as they often trigger strong feelings of blame and resentment towards partners/ex partners i.e. this is all their fault, if it wasn't for them and there... etc. In these situations the skill of distress tolerance and mindfulness can be a fantastic leveler and help to put things into perspective.

What happens if I let my feelings take over?

Ask the men what has happened or what they think will happen if they let their feelings take over during times of separation and transition. Use the information below as a prompt.

Things will get worse because you're more likely to:

- Be unreasonable and not think clearly about what's best for your children
- Try to get your children to take sides
- Punish your ex-partner
- Get revenge
- Remove your ex-partner from your life and your children's lives

How can I be more understanding about what's best for the children?

Split the men into pairs or small groups and have them discuss the following two questions:

- *How could you be more understanding and see the situation through the eyes of the children in order to do what is best for them?*
- *What are some ideas you have for coping*

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When discussing these questions the men should draw on all of the skills and information that we have covered so far. The information below can be used to prompt the men.

How can I be more understanding?

- Accept your feelings towards your ex-partner
- Stop blaming yourself and your ex-partner
- Talk with your ex-partner. If it is difficult to do this, you can get help
- Take positive steps to help yourself cope

Ideas for coping

- Organise support from friends and family
- Tell friends and family what's happening and what they can do to help; make sure you keep in touch
- Ask for help to look after your children when you need a break
- Take good care of your health, especially:
 - eat well and get some exercise
 - get as much sleep as you can
- Remember it's okay to cry
- Try not to rely on drink or drugs – you will be able to deal better with what's going on for you and your children without these things.
- Get professional support if you are not coping, which could be provided by:
 - your health professional
 - a school counsellor at your children's school
 - a professional counsellor (which you will have to pay for)
 - social support agencies or parent groups in your area
- Talk to other parents you know who have split up
- Work at making friends if you move home and are living in a new area
- Keep a diary – write about how you and your children feel. Over time, you will see how you feel stronger and that things have progressed
- Be strong for your children. It helps if you focus on what you know will make your children happy.

Bring the men back into a large group and use the questions below to process the discussions:

- *What were some of the key ideas you had regarding being more understanding and seeing things through the eyes of your children?*
- *What is one thing that you will use immediately?*
- *What were some of the key ideas you had for coping better drug separations and transitions*
- *What is one thing that you will use immediately?*

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

Parenting my children according to my values

Say, identifying the values that resonate with you is great start in terms of trying to be the best parent you can be. Living to those values with regards to parenting your children, especially during tough transitions is the next step.

Discuss with the men that children are transitioning too. They might be adjusting to a family separation. They are also processing the trauma of being in a home where there has been family violence. They will have questions; they will have doubts; they will have insecurities. When you are with them, think about how they react. What do you notice? What are they telling you with unspoken words? This exercise is about stepping into their world, considering their needs and what this transition time might be like for them.

Break the men into groups and have them discuss the following questions for 5 minutes as a warm up to the next activity (What do my children want to know?):

- *If my child could ask me anything, what questions would they have? What would they be wondering? What concerns would they have?*
- *Think back to your family of origin – What questions might you have for your own Dad about growing up in your family? What questions remain unanswered for you? What do you still wonder about?*

What do my children want to know?

Remaining in the same groups have the men follow the instructions below:

- Reflect on their own situation with their child/children
- Generate a list of questions their children might have for them keeping in mind what their children understand, depending on their age and stage of development (age appropriate question examples are included below)
- As the men generate their questions have them come up and write them on the board where they will be used in the proceeding skills practice activity



You may wish to go over the information below to provide examples for the men or for them to use if they are having trouble creating their own questions. Some examples have been included below:

Under 5 years

- *Why don't you love Mum anymore?*
- *Why do you hurt mummy?*
- *Why do you scare us?*
- *Why can't we live together and go back to how it was before?*
- *Can I still see you?*

5 – 10 years

- *Is it my fault you and Mum split up?*
- *Why can't you and Mum just get along?*
- *Why do you get so angry and scary?*
- *Does this happen to lots of other kids too? Or is it just our family?*
- *Whose job is it to look after me now?*
- *Who will I live with?*

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10 – 15 years

- *Will things ever get back to normal?*
- *Will I become like you? (Boys thinking about their dads)*
- *What if things don't get better? Is it always going to be this hard?*
- *Do I have a say in who I want to live with?*
- *Why are you with someone new? Why don't you want to try with Mum again?*

15 years +

- *Why should I try to get along with your 'new partner'?*
- *Why should I listen to you now?*
- *What if I don't want to spend time with you?*

Overcoming obstacles to parenting according to my values

Discuss with the men that it is often difficult to talk to children about the changes and transitions happening around them, about the violence, and about how they are feeling regarding the past and future. It takes a lot of work, patience and commitment. And it takes practice. There are lots of obstacles to talking to our children, and working to overcome them, which might make it difficult. We are going to discuss these now.

Write the following two questions on the board and invite the group to brainstorm answers. As they generate answers get them to come up and write these on the board.

- *What are the obstacles to talking with your children about going through this period of family transition and any experiences of violence?*
- *How can you overcome these?*

Bring the group together again to discuss what they have come up with. Depending on the depth of answers you may want to add examples from the list below:

Examples of obstacles	Examples of ways of overcoming obstacles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have tried to talk about it. My child won't listen • I feel uncomfortable • I'm scared to bring it up • I don't know what to say • I don't have time • I'm embarrassed • I'm afraid I'll make things worse • I don't think it's such a big deal • It's over now; why talk about it? • I don't want them to hate their Dad/Mum • They won't understand • They didn't know it happened • They are too young to hear about it • They'll just be more scared • They'll tell other people • Their Dad/Mum will be mad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be patient. Don't push it. Try another time. They usually hear you anyway. Acknowledge that it may be uncomfortable for you to talk about the violence. Try to get more comfortable by talking to someone you trust. • Acknowledge that it may be scary for you to remember the violence. It's scary for your children too. Once you start talking, it may feel less scary. • Acknowledge that saying that you don't have time is probably because it's difficult, or you don't feel capable of talking to your child about it.

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As you go through this exercise, acknowledge each parent's feeling. Also remind them that no matter how young their child is, or how far away from the violence they were when it occurred, children can sense that something scary has happened.

Tell the men that in order to help children understand, we need to be ready and willing to respond to their questions, and we need to learn to listen to them. The first step to overcoming these obstacles is having a go. The two most important things that we are now going to practice are:

1. Talking with them
2. Listening to them



Many of us have the tendency to do everything except listen, including telling our own experiences, offering advice, denying the other person's feelings, trying to psychoanalyse, or just changing the subject. There is nothing wrong with any of these responses, but they aren't the same as listening.

Discuss briefly as a large group:

- *How do you know when someone is listening to you?*
- *How do you know when someone is not listening to you?*

Use the following ideas to add to what has been discussed in the group.

How to Listen	How to Not Listen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't interrupt • Look at the person who is talking. • Give them your full attention, if possible • Answer in a way that lets them know you are listening • Don't express an opinion or say that the other person is right or wrong • Let them know you understand their point of view • Being a good listener takes effort and practise. Try to hear what the person is saying, even if you don't agree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't look at the person speaking • Interrupt him • Correct him • Give advice • Tell her she is wrong • Tell her not to feel what she is feeling • Change the subject • Ask a lot of questions

Practice and skill rehearsal – Managing emotionally distressing situations while keeping the focus on children

Say, now that we have discussed the types of questions our children might ask, as well as some of the things we need to be aware of when discussing these questions, it's time to have a go at answering them.

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

Group the men based on the developmental stages of their child/children (0-5yrs, 5-10yrs, 10-15yrs, and 15yrs+) if appropriate. Although some participants will have a variety of ages of children, encourage them to choose just one age of their children for this exercise.

Ask the men to choose one of the questions their child might ask (developed from previous activity) that they would like to practice. There will be three roles as outlined below. Rotate each role until each participant has had a chance to practice. You might like to think back to what children need to hear about family violence, from the last session "Parenting After Abuse."

Three roles for the skills practice

- **Parent** – play yourself and try to respond to the your "child," using your own ideas and possibly some of the ideas presented below. Following this, reflect on what worked well, what your challenges were, and what you would set as a goal for next time.
- **Child** – pose the question developed by the parent to start the conversation. Think about the age of their child and their possible responses. Be as realistic as possible, keeping in mind the aim is to allow the parent to practice their listening and talking skills. When debriefing, offer thoughts of the experience from the "child's shoes."
- **Observer** – remain the "silent mouse" whilst the interaction is taking place. Note how the parent is coping, what phrases, body language or other skills are used to respond positively and constructively to the child. Ensure the parent has the first opportunity to reflect, then feedback your thoughts in a positive framework.

Prior to beginning the practice get the men to consider the following questions which should influence how they respond to the questions asked of them.

- *What answers did I receive when young (if any) that helped?*
- *What did you need to feel safe and secure to ask?*
- *How can I create an atmosphere in my relationship where my children feel safe and secure to ask me these things?*
- *What are my kid's needs?*
- *What do they need from me to trust me?*

In their groups men are to take turns asking and answering their list of questions.



During this practice the facilitator(s) should be circulating around the groups assisting men where needed and also offering helpful feedback on both effective skills and the skills that still need some work.

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Review the main points of the session and invite pairs to discuss:

- *What will you be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

- *What will you do differently next time you are faced with a choice-point, or intersection in your daily life?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to use the ABCD diary to reflect upon their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards their children and what the consequence was.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

Impact on Others – Session 2: Safely managing access and custody issues

High-risk situations

For the purposes of the program, we define high-risk as situations which are likely to result in family violence. The RP model proposed that there are three types of HRSs that can lead to relapse:

- negative emotional states (or situations in which the person experiences unpleasant emotions or feelings, such as anger, boredom, depression),
- interpersonal conflict (or situations in which the individual has recently been involved in an argument or other unpleasant interpersonal confrontation), and
- social pressure (or situations in which the individual experiences direct or indirect pressure from others to violate their rules to remain abstinent from the problem behaviour). (Marques & Nelson, 1989)

The following strategy can be used to manage potentially high-risk and acute-risk situations:

- Predict what might be a high-risk situation
- Recognise that you have choices
- Organise an escape if you cannot be safe in the situation

Impact on Others – Session 3: Managing children's behaviour

Session 3: Managing Children's Behaviour

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Managing children's behaviour with parenting strategies
- Applying theme to me – Practising parenting strategies to manage
- Practise and skill rehearsal
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Gained skills in managing children's behaviour by exploring a range of parenting skills
- Described the sorts of areas that they are required to be mindful of in their parenting
- Strategies to manage children's behaviour without resorting to violence and abuse

Session overview

This session focuses on how children will always mirror a parent's behaviour, so if the parent uses abuse and violence, this will model an unhelpful style of managing difficulties and solving problems for children. The alternative offered in this session is called "Positive Parenting." This addresses the helplessness and panic men feel that causes them to act abusively when their children misbehave, by describing methods of discipline that research shows are effective and build better fathering, or step-fathering relationships with children.

Workbook: Parenting

- Parenting job description
- Positive Parenting Strategy game

Impact on Others – Session 3: Managing children’s behaviour

Opening and welcome

Today’s take-home message is:

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents.”



Prior to the session, write today’s take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session – Managing children’s behaviour with parenting strategies

When we look for work or apply for a job, we usually have some idea of what it is going to involve. Ask the men which of them might apply after hearing the following job advertisement:

Invite thoughts and reactions from men:

- *What did they envisage parenting would involve BEFORE they became a parent?*
- *How well do those expectations match their CURRENT experience?*

Parent job description

Read the following:

Job description: Long-term player needed for challenging, permanent work in chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work evenings, weekends, and frequent 24-hour shifts. There is some overnight travel required, including trips to primitive camping sites on rainy weekends, and endless sports tournaments in far-away cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed.

Responsibilities: Must keep this job for the rest of your life. Must be willing to be hated (at least temporarily). Must be willing to bite tongue repeatedly. Must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule. Must be willing to tackle stimulating, technical challenges, such as

Impact on Others – Session 3: Managing children’s behaviour

small gadget repair, sluggish toilets, and stuck zippers. Must handle assembly and product-safety testing, as well as floor maintenance and janitorial work. Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars, and coordinate production of multiple homework projects. Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and levels of mentality. Must be willing to be indispensable one minute and an embarrassment the next. Must assume final, complete accountability for the quality of end product.

Advancement and promotion: There is no possibility of either. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you.

Previous experience: None required, but on-the-job training is offered on a continually exhausting basis.

Wages: None. In fact, you must pay those in your charge, offering frequent raises and bonuses. A balloon payment is due when they turn 18 and attend university. When you die, you give them whatever income you have left.

Benefits: There is no health nor dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays, and no stock options. However, the job offers limitless opportunities for personal growth and free hugs for life.

Ask the group – What job are we talking about here?

Answer = A parent

Write the following two statements on the board and have a discussion about them as a group.

- parenting can be extremely rewarding, enlightening and enjoyable – elicit examples
- parenting can also be demanding, frustrating and exhausting – elicit examples

Explain the following:

Parents have the important role of raising the next generation, yet most people begin their “careers” as parents with little preparation, and learn through trial and error. The challenge for all parents is to raise healthy, well-adjusted children in a warm, secure and predictable environment.

There is no one, right way to be a parent or caregiver. It is up to you to decide what values and skills you would like your children to have and how you will teach them. The aim of this module is to unpack some ideas around parenting strategies and discuss them, to help you meet the challenges of raising your children and managing their behaviour in a positive, healthy way.

Impact on Others – Session 3: Managing children’s behaviour

Parenting tools and strategies

Break into pairs and discuss the following questions, then bring the men back to a group discussion:

- *What does being a parent mean to you?*
- *Every job or role involves having a “tool kit” of skills and strategies to draw upon. Some tools are picked up whilst on the job. Other tools are taught directly, or gained whilst observing others. What is in your tool kit at the moment to manage your children’s behaviour?*
- *How did you learn these tools of the parenting “trade?” Where have your ideas come from? (regarding managing children’s behaviour)*
- *What “tools” or activities, were actively used in your own family when growing up?*
- *What was done to:*
 - *build and form a strong relationship between you and your parent/caregiver(s)?*
 - *let you know when you did something well?*
 - *discipline you when you misbehaved?*
- *Which three skills do you believe are the most important for a parent to have (e.g., discipline, honesty, respect, maturity, attentiveness, patience, authority, humour, balance, unconditional love).*

When the men return from the group discussion, use responses in the following ways:

- Invite them to share the types of strategies they currently use. Encourage them to be honest then get them to write these in their workbook in the ‘Strategies I currently use’ column
- In the other column (Skills that are important) get them to write all of the skills they feel are important for a good parent to have
- Reflect on the activity by getting the men to look at both lists and answering the following questions:
 - What do you see looking at both of these lists?
 - Do the skills and the strategies complement each other and work well together, or do they work against each other?

Likert Scale exercise.

Print off the numbers 1-7 and lie them on the floor across the room in sequential order (like a ladder). Inform the men that learning about parenting is an on-going task. Every parent makes mistakes. Everyone learns through experience. The idea is to find out which aspects of parenting feel easy and which the men feel less confident about. This task is designed to allow reflection on current levels of confidence and areas for growth.

Read the following statements and encourage the men to rate their self-confidence. Instruct them to move towards the number which most represents how they currently feel.

(1 = strongly disagree, 4 = neutral, 7 = strongly agree)

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- My home environment has lots of opportunities for my child to explore, discover and learn
- I have interesting activities for my child to do to develop their skills and keep them busy and involved (like drawing, puzzles, books, building, cooking)
- I play games, or do other fun activities that my child chooses or plans
- Dangerous or breakable things are out of reach, to keep my children safe (like medicines, poisons, glass)
- I know where my child is, who they are with, and what they are doing, to ensure they are well supervised
- I help my child to learn by encouraging them to try things for themselves
- I have friendly chats with my child
- When my child approaches me, I stop what I am doing, acknowledge them and make myself briefly available by giving my full attention
- When my child is doing a good job or something I like, I pay attention and tell them
- I am consistent in reacting the same way every time there is a discipline situation
- I respond to misbehaviour immediately to prevent further problems
- I expect my child to be good all of the time (such as polite, happy, tidy, helpful)
- I can tell when my child is ready to learn a new skill
- I take care of myself as a parent and ensure my own needs are met so I can be patient and available when my child needs me.

Process the activity by asking the following questions:

- What stuck out as being an area of strength? What makes you say this?
- What are one or two things that you could start doing immediately that could make these strengths even stronger?
- What stuck out as being an area that could be improved on? What makes you say this?
- What are two or three things you could start doing immediately to start to improve the areas that could be improved on?
- What is one thing you do that makes you a good parent?

Applying the theme to me

Say, so far we have covered what being a parent means to you, the skills you need to be an effective and positive parent, and the things you feel you are doing well and the things you feel still need some work.

What we are moving on to now is the theme of discipline. We are going to look at what discipline is, how we currently discipline our children and how we could discipline our children in a positive way. To do this we are first going to fill out a questionnaire called the ‘parenting scale questionnaire’.

The Parenting Scale questionnaire

There are two versions of the Parenting Scale Questionnaire available. Each can be scored to indicate the extent to which the men are employing various parenting styles.

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1. Version 1 – for parents of younger children (3-12 years)
2. Version 2 – for parents of teenagers



Information on the parenting scale can be found in the facilitator’s notes/resources section. The questionnaires themselves can be found in the supporting documents. Copies will need to be printed so as each participant has their own form. If a participant is not a parent or caregiver, ask them to complete the questionnaire guessing what they think might be their typical response style.

Discuss with the men that there are many different strategies and discipline styles that parents use to manage children’s misbehaviour. This questionnaire asks about their approach and ‘flavour’ to managing those situations.

Ask the men to read the statements and circle the number that best reflects their current, and typical, way of responding to their children. Be prepared to contribute to a group discussion.

Use the following questions to develop a discussion:

- *What did you notice about your parenting style whilst filling out the questions?*
- *What do you feel are your areas of strength?*
- *If you picked three statements to set as a goal for change that would make a difference to the way you parent, what would you prioritise for yourself?*



Points to Remember – What is discipline?

Discipline is necessary for children’s happiness and well-being and is as vital for their healthy development as nutritious food, physical exercises, love, and other basic needs. Without discipline, children lack the tools necessary to navigate relationships and challenges in life, such as self-discipline, respect for others, and the ability to cooperate with peers.

There are many reasons why a parent may not want to discipline a child. Some parents may be reluctant to discipline children because they want to avoid having conflict, or because they don’t want to have their child be angry with them. Others may be unable or unwilling to devote time and energy to the task of disciplining children. And still others may have unpleasant memories of being disciplined when they were children, and may want to make things easier on their own children by relaxing rules and giving them more free reign.

The fact is, discipline is not about creating conflict with a child. Child discipline, when done correctly, is not about trying to control a child, but about teaching them how to control their own behaviour. It is not about punishing a child for doing something wrong, but about setting clear parameters and consequences for breaking rules so that they learn self-discipline.

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Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Divide the men into groups of three. Ensure each has a summary copy of the positive parenting strategies. Read the following parenting situations out loud, one by one. Allow a few minutes for each group to discuss and decide what they would say or do. Invite feedback briefly and discuss responses. Move on to the next scenario. Use as many scenarios as time permits.

Tell the men that they are going to think about some parenting situations where they have to make a decision about what they are going to say or do.

Ask them to try to put themselves in the parent's place, with all the emotions they might feel. Then discuss in their small groups what their response would be using the Positive Parenting strategies presented. Be specific. Exactly what would they say or do? If they wouldn't say or do anything, then say this as their answer.

1. Your child has been quietly playing by themselves without interrupting you while you have been on a long telephone call. *What would you say or do?*
2. Your child comes home with a note that says he got an automatic zero on a test because he was talking to another student. Your child says all he said to the other student was "shh." *What would you say or do?*
3. Your child says she is "finished" cleaning the bathroom. When you check it, you notice that there is still scum behind the taps and the base of the toilet wasn't wiped. *What do you say or do?*
4. You are preparing dinner when your child comes up to you excitedly and wants to show you the Lego castle they have created while you have been busy cooking tea. *What do you say or do?*
5. Your child was visiting a friend's house and the friend's parent let the children go to the park alone, which you normally don't allow your child to do. *What do you say or do?*
6. Your teen asks to go somewhere, but hasn't mowed the lawn as he agreed.
 - a. *What do you say or do?*
 - b. Now your child tries to argue with you, and talk you into letting him go. *What do you say or do?*
7. Your child is attempting to do a jigsaw puzzle and you see that they are getting stuck finding the next piece to put in. They turn around and ask for your help to finish the puzzle. *What do you say or do?*
8. You walk into the living room and see your child's backpack, coat, and shoes lying on the floor. One of your agreed family rules is to tidy up after yourself. *What would you say or do?*
9. Your child asks if he can climb on the roof to get a ball that accidentally landed there. You express your concerns about the danger and say you'll get the ball later. Several minutes later, you go outside and find your child on the roof. He refuses to come down. 1) *How do you get your child off the roof?* 2) *When he/she is off the roof, what do you say or do?*
10. You and your child disagree about whether she can walk to a shop alone, crossing a busy street. Your child insists it is safe to go and says she will go, whether you approve or not. You are getting angrier, and so is your child. Your child shouts, "I hate you! You never let me do anything!" She starts to walk out of the house. *What*

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do you say or do?

11. Your child has come home from school and independently gets on with their homework without you needing to ask. They are focused and concentrating hard on what needs to be done. This doesn't happen very often. *What do you say or do?*

Process this activity as a large group by asking the following questions:

- *What specifically did you find challenging about this exercise and why?*
- *What could you do to ensure you address these challenging areas appropriately when they emerge with your own child/children?*
- *What areas did you feel comfortable dealing with and why?*
- *What are you now thinking in terms of areas of strength and areas that you could improve on?*

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Have the men discuss in pairs:

- *What will they be doing differently, starting immediately, as a consequence of this session?*
- *Who needs to know about what they are trying to do in terms of new parenting skills?*
- *How will they manage to remember to use the respect test next time they are talking with their partner and children?*

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercise and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to really think about how they are interacting with their children during the week, and track their responses on their ABCD diaries.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents.”

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The Parenting Scale (PS; Arnold, O'Leary, Wolff and Acker 1993)

Version 1 – for parents of younger children (3-12 years)

The PS is a 30 item scale designed to measure dysfunctional discipline strategies in parents. Three discipline styles have been identified; laxness (permissive discipline); over-reactivity (displays of anger, meanness, irritability) and verbosity (lengthy verbal responses or reliance on talking). The scale has adequate reliability and validity.

Version 2 – for parents of teenagers

This version of the PS is a 13 item scale designed to measure dysfunctional discipline strategies in parents of adolescents. Three discipline styles have been identified; laxness (permissive discipline); over-reactivity (displays of anger, meanness, irritability) and verbosity (lengthy verbal responses or reliance on talking). The scale has adequate reliability and validity.

The Parenting Scale documents can be found in the resources section of the program material

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Strategies to Help Children Develop

Spending Quality Time Together	Involves parents being available to their child and spending brief amounts of time together each day. A small amount of special time (even 1-2 minutes of undivided attention) is better than longer periods only once in a while.
Talking with Children	Brief conversations or interactions with your child about activities or topics they are interested in. This strategy is central to the development of communication, language, emotional, intellectual and social skills.
Showing Affection	This is important for the development of secure bonds, attachment and trust with a caregiver. If it is provided immediately following behaviour you want, it serves as a powerful form of encouragement. It includes hugging, cuddling, kissing, tickling and safe touch.
Descriptive Praise	A powerful way to convey approval and encourage more of the behaviour you like in your child. The principle is that behaviour you want needs to be encouraged if it is to be continued. It needs to be specific. Describe exactly the behaviour that is to be encouraged. Examples include “Thanks for doing as I asked” or, “I’m really pleased you tidied up.”
Positive Attention	Involves non-verbal ways in which you may convey your positive approval to your child. It involves taking an interest in, and noticing what your child is doing (by sitting or standing near) and using touch, smiles, winks, or nods, to encourage.
Engaging Activities	Arranging the physical and social environment, to provide your child with interesting activities, materials and age-appropriate toys. The goal is to encourage independent play and stimulate curiosity, language, intellectual development, creativity and problem-solving. It also helps to keep your child busy and learn in a fun way.
Modelling and Setting a Good Example	You can encourage new behaviours by demonstrating a behaviour and then letting the child copy you. In this way, children have the opportunity to learn about appropriate behaviour by watching their parents.
Incidental Teaching	This is a valuable “teaching moment” between a parent and their child that arises naturally in unstructured everyday situations. In this interaction, the adult shares information, or gives the child an opportunity to practise a skill, or teaches them something new. A “teaching moment” begins when your child starts with a request for assistance in something they are interested in (e.g. approaches parent and points to an object). Learning is not forced, but occurs in a relaxed and fun manner.
Ask, Say, Do	Involves breaking down a big task into small steps that children can learn sequentially. It is also known as ‘forward chaining.’ Provide the minimal amount of help required to prompt your child at each step – ask first if they know the next step; tell them the step if they do not know the answer, then physically help them to do it if they cannot do it on their own.
Coaching Problem-Solving	Helping your child to work through a complex problem or decision when there is no obvious solution. There are six main steps – (i) define the problem; (ii) generate alternative solutions (or brainstorm); (iii) evaluate alternatives; (iv) develop a solution; (v) put the plan into action; (vi) review and revise the plan.
Behaviour Chart	A short-term strategy that can be used when your child needs a little extra motivation to change a behaviour, practise a new skill, or complete set tasks. It involves setting up a chart and providing social attention and back-up rewards for your child when they show the behaviour you want.

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Behavioural Contract	Can be useful when a parent wants to provide extra motivation to get their teenager to increase certain behaviours (such as chores around the house) or to discourage problem behaviour (such as rule-breaking). There are three steps to writing it – (i) decide on the behaviour to be encouraged or the rule to be followed; (ii) decide on the reward; (iii) decide on how the reward will be linked to the new behaviour or rule-following. Parent and teen agree to the terms, write it down and sign it.
Family Meeting	Organizing a set time for family members to come together and to work to set goals for change. This strategy teaches children compromise, decision-making and personal responsibility.

Strategies for managing misbehaviour

Ground Rules	Strategy for managing misbehaviour that involves establishing a few basic house rules. They need to be fair, easy to follow, and enforceable. They also need to be positively stated, e.g., the rule should be "Walk in the house," rather than "Don't run in the house."
Directed Discussion	Used for mild misbehaviour or rule-breaking, to remind the child in a calm, low-key, matter-of-fact way, what he or she is meant to do. It involves gaining his or her attention, specifying the behaviour of concern, asking for the rule to be stated, and then requiring the correct behaviour.
Planned Ignoring	Removing all attention from your child for a minor problem behaviour, particularly for harmless problem behaviours aimed at simply gaining attention or a reaction, e.g., pulling faces, whining. It is important that parents give no attention or eye contact, while ignoring the problem behaviour, and then praise their child for stopping the problem behaviour. Can test a parent's patience and tolerance.
Clear, Calm Instructions	Specific statements that convey an expectation and require cooperation. This strategy is used to get your child to start a task, or to stop a problem behaviour, and to replace it by starting the behaviour you want.
Logical Consequences	Involves the brief loss of a toy, activity or privilege when problem behaviour occurs. It should apply for a short time, ideally 5 to 30 minutes maximum. Return it after the time has elapsed so your child has an opportunity to practise the appropriate behaviour while it is fresh in their mind.
Quiet Time	A non-exclusionary form of time-out. The strategy involves removing your child briefly from an activity (5 minutes maximum) in which a problem behaviour has occurred, and prompting your child to be still and quiet. Your child remains in the same room or space where the problem behaviour occurred. Once settled, they can re-join the activity.
Time-Out	A positive strategy which, when used correctly, can be an extremely effective way of helping children learn self-control and more acceptable behaviour. It involves removing the child from the setting where the problem occurred, and putting them in a safe place, away from others, until they have been quiet for a short time (5 minutes maximum). Once settled, they can re-join the activity.
Acknowledging	This is useful to help teens deal with unpleasant and intense emotions. It

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Teen's Emotions	allows them to feel heard. This strategy uses active listening skills to validate and empathise with a teenager's feelings, as opposed to discussing the issue and trying to fix it. It promotes emotional management and assists the teen to cope with events that cause distress.
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Impact on Others – Session 4: The wider family

Session 4: The wider family

Session summary

- Opening
- Check-in on safety/emotional status, mindfulness exercise, problem-solving as required
- Homework review (e.g. takeaway cards, ABCD diary)
- Theme for the session – Building an audience for change
- Applying theme to me – How to actively engage with my family to create on-going accountability for my behaviour
- Practise and skill rehearsal – Preparing for a family session
- Exit process for men leaving the program at this point
- Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills
- Closing

Session summary

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified the impact of family violence on themselves and others
- Learnt how to see things from the perspective of others as a way of developing on-going accountability

Session overview

In this session the focus is on exploring the impact of family violence on the wider group that is also managing to keep children safe. When it comes to help-seeking behaviour, men tend to find this difficult. A number of gendered scripts often restrain men from effectively identifying their needs and negotiating to meet these appropriately. This session will explore how to establish vibrant and workable strategies for family accountability.

Workbook: Impact on Others

- Who is on my team

Impact on Others – Session 4: The wider family

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“My family is my strength and my weakness.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, from the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the emotional status check-in, ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

Homework review

Have the men reflect upon what they are noticing about their thinking, emotional states and the relationship of these to behaviour. Use the takeaway cards and ABCD diary as resources for this exercise.

Theme for the session: Building an audience for change

Tell the men that in this session they will explore the foundations of support and accountability to others. In order to generate support from others, it is important to appreciate that they may well have strong opinions about family violence that has gone on previously. A first step in building an audience for change, is beginning to develop empathy and understanding of the impact of abuse on others. Within the program, there has been a strong emphasis on continual enquiry about the impact on others' spiritual, physical, mental, thinking and feeling selves.



It is often difficult for men with a history of family violence to listen well to their partners and other family members about the impact on them. This session will provide a warm up ahead of the many real life situations where the men will be expected to talk with others about what they understand about their use of violence, and what they understand has been the impact on others.

Tell the men that today they are going to explore the issue of the impact of violence on those around them. The theme for today is to focus upon taking a range of perspectives. This will help to build empathy – that is, putting yourself in the shoes of someone else.

Explain to the men that we are going to go over a similar process that has already been covered to some degree in other sessions, in particular the relationships module. However, the difference this time around is that we will be trying to understand this process with mind to on-going accountability within our families and wider families. This will hopefully make us more open to seeing things from others perspectives during this session.

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Divide the group into pairs and ask:

- *What do we mean by the term 'putting yourself in someone else's shoes?'*
- *What would interest you most in learning about how to put yourself in someone else's shoes and why would this be beneficial?*



The term 'putting yourself in someone else's shoes' has been previously explored in the relationship module (session 3). Therefore the expectation is that the men will be able to articulate what this means in more depth at this stage. Ensure you remind them of the work previously done so as they have something to draw from.

Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flip chart.

Remaining in pairs:

- Identify three things that might get in the way of learning more about what it is like to be in someone else's shoes.

Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flipchart.

Remaining in pairs:

- Identify three things that will help you to overcome these blocks to learning.

Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flipchart.

- Identify how seeing things from other people's perspective can help you to keep your family safe?

Process and list responses on a whiteboard or flipchart.



This process is designed to identify openness to others, as well as restraints to truly hearing the impact that family violence has had on others.

Impact of family violence on themselves and others

Tell the men that they are now going to explore the impact family violence has on themselves, as well as others. Many of them know what it is like to grow up in a home where family violence is going on. Read the following statements written by Andrea Needham about her experience.

"I have always believed that the fear one experiences as a child in a violent home is akin to a soldier at war, but much worse. You see, in the case of my war, I was 16 years living under fear of death, of pain, of hurt, of losing my mother. I know of no soldier who is asked to live in those conditions for that long. No society would dare ask their soldiers to do that length of service without a break. It would be regarded as inhumane.

If you are a soldier, you have government support. You have buddies. You have training. You are armed. They even have parades for you at the end of your duty to reinforce the hero

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you are. As a child, I was alone. I was not trained. I had no weapons. No one had a parade for me or my brothers. No one will have a parade for the millions of children who are right now, trying to survive in their homes of violence. No one has told us that we are brave and have served well. No, we are told to put it behind us, forget about it, move on."

(From Needham, A. (2004), Workplace Bullying: A Costly Business Secret, Penguin Global)

Ask the following question:

- *What do you make of this quote, and how does it relate to your experience of growing up?*



This is a powerful quote and for many of the men, this will resonate with their own, personal experience. It also indicates that family violence has an ongoing impact on a person's life.

Women stories – Seeing things from the other side



This work follows on from previous sessions where the impact on others has been examined. In terms of taking responsibility and being accountable for their actions it is important for the men to put themselves in the shoes of others, in particular their victims. This will ideally allow them to be more receptive to the views of others.

Show the first three sections of the DVD "Talking About Family Violence" - Women's stories:

- The abuse (5.20)
- Effects on children (4.40)
- Staying (4.40)

Process in the group by asking the following or similar questions:

- *What were the themes you heard from the women about their experience of living with abusive practices?*
- *How do these themes relate to your victims?*

Ensure that you cover the principle that all forms of violence and abuse within relationships, whether emotional or physical, have a massive impact on the partners of abusers. These impacts could include:

- self-esteem being worn down or destroyed
- sense of no longer having options or choice
- degradation of health, both physical and mental
- lack of self-care and self-preservation
- inability to trust – this is one of the major outcomes of living with violence, and effects victims both in the short- and long-term
- clinical depression, or other mental health issues

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- denial and justification about the current situation
- chemical dependency (alcohol or drugs)
- suicidal ideation or attempts
- extreme co-dependency. In some cases, usually after prolonged exposure to abuse, the abused partner will cling to the abuser, believing that it's all they deserve or will ever get.



Denial of the abuse by both people in the relationship (the abuser and the abuser's partner) is also common in abusive relationships. This denial is similar to the type of denial experienced by addicts, and can ultimately be just as much of a threat to wellbeing. Until abuse is acknowledged, the abused partner will often remain very loyal to the abuser.

Chemical dependency in one or both partners is extremely common in abusive relationships. The isolation of abusive relationships provides an ideal climate for the progression of addictions.

Applying the theme to me

Discuss with the men that one of the challenges when meeting with family is to have an open mind to hearing and considering new ideas, rather than being closed-minded.

Split the men into pairs and have them recall a time when they were open to taking on a new idea from their partner that was different from how they had understood or thought until then, and as a result made a change to the way they did something. You can use the following prompts:

- *What was the new idea or opinion you took on?*
- *What was it like handling this different idea? Was it a struggle, or perhaps, no problem?*
- *What did you do that made it okay to listen, consider, and take on this information?*
- *If you hadn't wanted to know about it, how would you have had to handle the situation?*

Ask, "Who knows about the concept of being honest?"

Ensure the following ideas emerge:

- In order to show others we are really serious about making change, we need to be true in our actions and honest as well, to really show our commitment
- It's about being honest or truthful with your thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- Matching the internal (thoughts, feelings) with the external (behaviour) will ensure that you remain on task with your alternative path-way
- By being honest in all aspects of your life, then nothing is hidden; your true intentions are made clear to others
- By living by this, you ignite the love and respect for others, as well as being compassionate, and ultimately, you receive the same from others.

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Brainstorm by dividing the whiteboard into two columns headed up, 'honesty' and 'dishonesty,' and include two subheadings under each, 'myself,' 'my family.'

Ask the following questions:

- *What would be the impact on yourself, and your family if you were dishonest while you were taking part in this group?*
- *What would be the impact on yourself and your family if you were honest while you were taking part in this group?*



Note that this exercise has links back into the relationship, in that a key relationship skill is to be able to be honest in their relationship with their partners. It is also a basis of the program to get to a position where men can be honest with themselves about the nature and extent of their abusive practises on others. Only then can they begin to reclaim their own respect.

Practise and skill rehearsal of family safety

Set up small groups and ask the men to identify the key questions that others from their family are likely to ask. You may wish to use the following headings:

- Do you know what it has been like for us?
- What are you going to do differently at the risk times?
- How will you keep us safe in future?

In these same groups, have one man at a time share the questions that their partners or other family members are likely to ask. They can then practise responding to these questions as a way of preparing for family meetings.



One of the challenges of face-to-face meetings between men who have used family violence and those at the receiving end, is the issue of not re-victimising. Practising responding to challenges from partners and family members, is a skill to be rehearsed without defensiveness. One of the areas where men who have used family violence find it difficult, is where they are expected to respond in the moment to expectancies around emotions and behaviour.

Impact on Others – Session 4: The wider family

Reflecting and planning for implementation of new understanding and skills

Form pairs and discuss:

- *What preparation will you need to do on an individual level, to be ready for a meeting with your family?*
- *How will you manage to maintain a calm thoughtfulness when discussing your history of family violence?*
- *How will you manage to remember to use the respect test next time you are talking with your partner and children?*

Exit process for men leaving the program at this point

Invite the men leaving the program at this point to use their safety planning workbook (SAFE ME) to answer the following questions:

- *What were my challenges and goals for this program?*
- *How did I get on achieving these? What have I achieved and what do I still need to work on?*
- *What are my times of increased risk?*
- *What are my strategies to manage these times?*

Men who have a Family Violence Intervention Order in place, also need to complete the standard evaluation exit forms.

Between-sessions task

Complete any unfinished exercises and record mood state daily. Ask the men to take a card and fill in their goals before next session (see takeaway cards).

Tell the men that before the next session, you want them to give further consideration to how they might manage a family meeting, remain open to hearing the concerns and impact on others, and not stone-wall, or become defensive.



This takeaway task is designed to build mindfulness of thinking and catching these thoughts and then providing the opportunity for a choice to enhance safety at the right moments.

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

“My family is my strength and my weakness.”

Impact on Others – Exit Session

Exit Session

Session summary

- Greeting/Welcome
- Safety plans
- Farewell

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Understood safety strategies in relation to their abusive practices
- Informed others of the content and understandings of their Safe Me Plan
- Been open to feedback from others as to gaps and strengths of safety plan

Session overview

IMPORTANT: How you run this session will depend on whether the group is being run as an open program or as a closed program. If the program is **open** this session should be completed **individually**. If the program is **closed** then this session can be run **within the group**.

This session works through the Safe Me Workbook to develop a written safety plan for the man, who can then share this with others, as part of the accountability process. The Safe Me Workbook is based around the concepts of lifestyle balance (spiritual, physical, mental and family/relationships)

Outcomes from session

- Written Safe Me Plan in place

Workbook

- Safe Me Workbook

Impact on Others – Exit Session

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“Necessity is the mother of taking chances.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Welcome the man and acknowledge the work that he has done during the time in the program. Note however, this is, in some ways, only a beginning. Life after a program such as this is really critical. Finishing a program like this can bring up a variety of mixed feelings and thoughts.

Ask the man:

- *What will it be like for you now that the group has finished?*
- *How will you remember to keep up the work you have started here?*
- *How will you manage to be mindful of what to do when you are in situations where abusive practices could emerge?*
- *What does it say about you that you have finished the program?*
- *What would others who know you well, say about your completing this program?*
- *What would you want them to know about what you now know?*

Safety plans (SAFE ME) – rating

Work through the Safe Me Workbook and ensure you have a robust safety plan in place. The test of a good Safety Plan is to have strategies in place at each decision point, so that you don't make a wrong turn. Remember, strategies will include alternative thinking, feelings, actions and beliefs. Rate these to assess how good the Safety Plan is.

Rate these on the following scale:

1. = I have no idea what I am going to do
2. = I have a few ideas about what to do
3. = I have at least three alternatives
4. = I have at least six alternatives
5. = I have heaps of choices

Farewell/Closing

Spend time reflecting with the man, about the changes that he has made and his next steps.

Revisit today's take-home message:

“Necessity is the mother of taking chances.”

Session: Maintenance

Session: Maintenance

Session summary

- Welcome/Review
- Relapse record
- Offence Mapping and feedback
- Remapping and feedback
- Safety planning
- Present risk of reoffending
- Reflection questions
- Closure

Learning objectives of session

By the end of this session, the men will have:

- Identified relapse behaviours/successes
- Understood the reason for relapses/successes by reviewing offence maps
- Identified successful strategies used to overcome relapses
- Reviewed course material, safety plans, support networks and motivation
- Identified present risk of reoffending
- Set goals for the next period

Session overview

Post-program maintenance is an opportunity to review and reinforce the changes made during the treatment phase of the program application to a group member's lifestyle, and to redirect efforts where relapse has occurred. In short, maintenance aims are:

- to assist participants in monitoring their criminogenic needs
- to consolidate a non-offending lifestyle
- to re-motivate and assist those who have relapsed

Outcomes

- Have disclosed successes/relapses
- Have remapped successes/relapses
- Have taken a position on their risk of reoffending
- Can demonstrate skill selection and implementation of coping strategies
- Have reviewed and renewed safety plans
- Have renewed their motivation to continue a positive lifestyle

Time: 2 hours per session - open group.

Session: Maintenance

Opening and welcome

Today's take-home message is:

“What defines a relationship is the work that's involved to maintain it, and it's constantly changing.”



Prior to the session, write today's take-home message on the board. Leave this on the board to refer to throughout and at the conclusion of the session.

Welcome the new men to the maintenance group, as well as the men who are coming back.

Remind the group that the purpose is to keep building the skills of remaining safe with others. We want to know how you are all doing, so we will do a group round, identifying what has been happening since our last session (approximately two weeks prior).

Facilitate a group round in the usual way. The purpose is to get the group 'engaged.'

Check-in on safety

This part of the session is flexible, with the facilitators using the range of tools, and their own, within the Toolkit for Sessions. The resources that will be most helpful at this stage are the ABCD analysis of thinking, cognitive behavioural cards, SOLVE process, Engaging with the Group framework, and the Family Wellbeing Tool.

You can use the following structure:

1. Have the men talk about their own behaviour - if there are a lot of incidents, pick one
2. Identify what successes or slips they had
3. Identify what worked and what did not work
4. Use the ABCD diary
 - A = situation, was it a HRS, part of Unbalanced Lifestyle, usual pattern for them?
 - B = thoughts/beliefs, what was their thinking, distortions, style of thinking?
 - C = feelings, what feelings did they have?
 - D = their action/behaviour, what did they do?
5. Have the men get ideas from each other about what they could have done differently

Have the men feed back to the group their situations and strategies of success, as well as their situations and strategies if they were unable to remain safe.

Reviewing Safety Strategies

If time permits, it is useful to go back over safety strategies with the men to consolidate understanding and learning.

Reflection questions

Ask the participants to talk in pairs and to identify three things they have learnt today about themselves and their behaviour. Also, identify how these things fit into their safety plan?

Use the following prompts:

 **Session: Maintenance**

1. Include the three ideas (or more) you have got from today
2. Note what you are going to tell your significant people about these ideas and how you are going to use them
3. Note how they will know when you are using the new strategies - what differences in your behaviour will they see?

Closing

Revisit today's take-home message:

"What defines a relationship is the work that's involved to maintain it, and it's constantly changing."

Session: Maintenance

Facilitator Notes:

Maintenance can take different forms. It is suggested that maintenance sessions begin two weeks after the program ends.

There are two main reasons for this: many group members feel a sense of loss once the group ends; the contact with the group has served as support for members, as well as a constant reminder not to reoffend, and this is suddenly missing at the cessation of a group. Setting a date two weeks ahead, gives group members a manageable time frame in which to survive without group support.

After the first meeting, the group could meet every two-three weeks, depending upon the needs of the men. In this way, they are eased into the new phase. It is recommended that approximately six maintenance sessions should be run however discretion should be used as to the actual number of sessions run based on needs.

Setting up a Maintenance Group

To set up the first maintenance session, a little time will have to be put into group forming.

It is useful to:

- identify group members' and facilitators' expectations regarding maintenance groups
- maintain the ground rules established during the group program
- go through the format to be used for maintenance groups and check if this sounds useful for the group
- do any housekeeping necessary.

After the initial setting up is done, the group will run along the lines given in this session. Remember that maintenance sessions are never-ending. As men complete the group cycle, group members join the maintenance group. Some of the original group will still be present, depending on factors such as their length of sentence, risk of reoffending, etc. When new members join the group, a little time will need to be put into introductions and reforming the group. This usually happens easily, as everyone is well used to groups by now. If necessary, take a little more time in the welcome round to achieve this. It is worth explaining to new members what happens in maintenance, adding that they will pick it up easily as they go along.

Before starting any session, have your agenda format written-up on newsprint, with gaps between items so that issues raised by the group can be added. Also, be familiar with the range of tools used during the program to manage issues (these are found in the Program Toolkit).

Ensure that if there are any relapses, that information is passed on to the man's Probation Officer or Case Officer, so that they can follow-up, in terms of sentence management issues.