

SELF – EMPOWERMENT

TOPICS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Self-Empowerment

The development of self-empowerment is a process of self-discovery, learning new behaviors, and deciding where and how to use those behaviors. Participants learn about themselves, recognize their choices and the consequences of those choices.

"In addition to self-awareness, imagination and conscience, it is the fourth human endowment - independent will - that really makes effective self-management possible. It is the ability to make decisions and choices... Empowerment comes from learning how to use this great endowment in the decisions we make every day."

- Stephen Covey

Self-empowerment is about increasing inner strength, developing confidence, self-acceptance, believing, feeling secure and trusting in your self and your decisions, accepting responsibility for yourself and taking control of your life. Participants will learn tools and skills to help begin changing their lives for the better: Topics covered are:

Week 1 – Orientation

Orientation provides us with the opportunity to learn about the program, the leader and get to know other participants. We begin group building by developing guidelines to create a safe, comfortable environment for learning, and begin to set goals for the growth and development of the group and individuals.

Week 2 – Self-Awareness

Awareness is the first step in the creation process and includes recognizing strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes. As we grow in self awareness, we better understand why we feel what we feel and why we behave as we behave. Understanding gives us the opportunity and choice to change things about ourselves and create the life we want.

“Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is Enlightenment.” - Tao Tzu

Week 3 – The Four Parts of Self

We continue self-awareness, trust and team building with the use of “The Johari Window” a model of learning about ourselves from four perspectives through self-disclosure and feedback. Individuals build trust by disclosing information about themselves, learn about themselves through feedback and better understand their interpersonal communication and relationships.

Week 4 – Components of Self-Esteem

Being aware of influences on our self-esteem is an important step in becoming more self-confident. We explore how self-esteem develops, what undermines or builds self-esteem, and learn it comes from within. We explore our current level of self-esteem, what created it and begin learning ways to increase that level.

Week 5 – Building and Nurturing Self-Esteem

Before we can make significant changes in our lives we must begin to value and like ourselves. Our self-concept is acquired through life experiences and feedback from others. In this session we examine the impact of life experiences on self-esteem; look at ways we often attempt to gain esteem and share and learn more effective strategies.

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Week 6 – Risking Change

Change can disrupt our lives and affect our sense of well-being. It is important to recognize how we feel about change and what we can do about it. With increased self-esteem we handle change in a more positive way. The focus of this lesson is to discover our personal responses to change, become aware of ways we stay stuck in old patterns and behaviors and continue to learn ways to build self-esteem and manage change more effectively.

Week 7 – Recognizing Choices and Making Decisions

A major step in self-empowerment is the recognition that we always have choices and the choices we make are based on our decision making abilities. In this session we practice making choices, identify our patterns of decision making, the common difficulties in decision making and how to deal with them.

Week 8 – The Power of Personal-Responsibility

Responsibility is often regarded as a burden or confused with taking blame; it is actually a source of personal power. Personal responsibility is a healthy and critical component of all relationships. If we don't take responsibility for our life, others will and we probably won't like what they decide to do with it. We look at accepting responsibility for ourselves and being responsible to others versus taking responsibility for others and letting others be responsible for us.

Week 9 - Healthy or Toxic Guilt: What Is The Difference?

Feelings of toxic guilt undermine personal power. The main functions of guilt are to punish oneself for bad behavior, or a catalyst for changing what caused the feelings of guilt. In this session we work at identifying our guilt, examine what makes us feel guilty and explore techniques for dealing with guilt.

Week 10 – Boundaries – Costs & Benefits

The goal of having and setting boundaries is to gain enough security and sense of self to get close to others without the threat of losing ourselves, smothering them, trespassing, or being invaded. Boundaries are the key to loving relationships. This session compares healthy and unhealthy boundaries, looks at different boundary styles and examines the impact of boundaries on different areas of our lives.

Week 11 – Personal Boundaries – Moving from Selfless/Selfish to Empowerment

Setting boundaries is about learning to take care of ourselves, no matter what happens, where we go, or who we're with. Boundaries emerge as we learn to value, trust, and listen to ourselves. We will examine defenses versus boundaries and look at and practice strategies and tips for setting healthy boundaries.

Week 12 – Closure

The closure session allows an opportunity to acknowledge the mixture of conflicting emotions participants often experience; appreciations of new skills, knowledge and friendships as well as sadness and let down that group is ending. We also take time to acknowledge goal achievement and to evaluate personal learning and the effectiveness of the group process.