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How to use this book

This book started out as 'The Know How' and came about when I was asked to run an Inclusion Programme for young people who were displaying a variety of behaviours and were just not 'thriving' within their mainstream schools. They came to me one day a week for ten weeks and I had to do something with them that would stop them from being permanently excluded! Using my enthusiasm for working with young people, coupled with my firm belief that they were no different from me on a fundamental human level, I accepted the challenge and put together this programme. This book is for all those people who want to help young people build resilience and succeed.

It illustrates a psycho-educational and metacognitive programme which is aimed at enabling young people by teaching them how to communicate and behave in more useful ways. The programme is based on a range of well-established frameworks and translates some of these into young-people friendly language, activities and techniques.

It is aimed at 10 to 18 year olds and has been rigorously tested and amended by my occasionally reluctant participants but very willing critics. The students I have worked with have had a wide range of concerns from poor motivation, low self-esteem, anger and aggression, to low aspirations, poor attendance and engagement. Some of them have been in mainstream schools and others have already been excluded and have experience of other educational provision. This book is by no means a cure-all and I am sure that in using the content young people will suggest amendments and improvements to the language and examples.

The book can be followed as a ten-week programme of work either with an individual or a group of young people. It can also just as easily be used on a session-by-session basis as and when the need arises, as all of these focus on specific areas or concerns a young person may have and can therefore be used discretely.

Each session includes detailed delivery and guidance notes, photocopiable student worksheets, and a list of the resources required. Timings of tasks and activities are given as an indicator of activity length. For example, 45 minutes is a guideline for the instruction, discussion and completion of a worksheet. This is a flexible timing guide, however, as discussions with young people can be quite abrupt or lengthy depending on the topic! I have highlighted some top tips and common pitfalls, as well as given case studies of how these have been used previously with young people.

The tasks and activities are not gender specific. However, when delivered, alterations in language or the specific examples used may be needed to suit the audience, age range, or needs of the young people involved.

At the root of this programme – which the young people called 'The Know How', as that is what it gives them – are some straightforward beliefs that I hold: I like children and young people but I am not the expert on their worlds. Because of this they can teach me just as much as I can teach them.

Points to consider

Before you embark on using this book there are a number of things that should be considered in order to ensure its success.

- *Size of the group:* as much of the work involves the young people discussing their ideas, and understanding and relating new knowledge to their own lives and experiences, a full assembly room of young people is too many! A group of ten is ideal as this number allows staff involved to monitor and work alongside students as they complete the work.
- In theory, because of the nature of the work, *the group should be closed* with the participants decided at the start: this is especially important if the book is being used as a ten-week programme of work.
- *Stability, safety and consistency are key:* as young people are learning about themselves the same member of staff should deliver the whole programme and boundaries and expectations can then be made clear right from the start.
- *Geography of the group and room layout:* the content is best delivered around a table using a flip chart to explain points. This enables the students to chat and work together with the teacher or facilitator sitting as part of the group. If this book is used in work with individuals then staff should sit alongside each young person as they complete their work.
- *Parental consent may be needed* if the programme is to be run over a course of ten weeks: at the back of this book you will find some examples of possible forms which can be used to decide on participants and inform parents.
- *Have individual folders ready for the students:* using these means they can complete the worksheets and then store them safely.
- In my experience, there are *some common pitfalls to be aware of* when working with young people: their openness and honesty will sometimes catch you unaware. It is therefore recommended that you follow the guidance in Session 3 about establishing the groundrules whether or not you intend to follow the whole programme or bits of it.
- Make it clear to the young people that should information be disclosed which is of concern, you have a *duty of care* to pass it on to the relevant people.
- I have found that if you spend time *establishing a positive rapport* with the young people and don't judge them, they will respond better to the work and content and be more open to you assisting and guiding them. This can be very difficult sometimes, especially when you are faced with challenging behaviour and young people from very vulnerable and diverse settings. Remain calm and consistent and employ humour!

- Young people in their teenage years are often only interested in the opinions of their peer group, with parents and teachers merely becoming background noise. They do, however, respond to shame and a quick wit; use both wisely if these are necessary and appropriate.

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Introducing the toolkit: establishing a safe group and finding out what the issues are

This session examines how to establish a functioning group and the ground rules which the group will operate under whilst also gaining the students' perspective on any current areas of concern. It also introduces the concept of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to students.

The deliberate structuring and forming of the group and the establishment of negotiated ground rules will ensure that the students feel safe and involved and will therefore be able to communicate openly about the behaviours they or others are concerned about.



Worksheet 1.1: Introducing the group (40 minutes)

Negotiating the ground rules (30 minutes)

Mr Maslow's Triangle: practical task (45 minutes)

Worksheet 1.2: What's happening now, what do I want and what do I need? (25 minutes)

Worksheet 1.3: The Circuit of Change (10 minutes)

Timings are a guide for discussions and the completion of the relevant worksheet.

Resources required: photocopies of Worksheets 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3; flip-chart paper; newspapers; magazines; paper; glue; pens; pencils; rulers

Recommended further reading

Maslow, A.H. (1987) *Motivation and Personality*, Hong Kong: Longman Asia Ltd. This can provide more information on the work of Abraham Maslow.

Teacher's notes

Worksheet 1.1: Introducing the group (40minutes)

This worksheet activity formally establishes the group.

It is done to establish a working relationship between group members and staff and also helps to develop rapport between all involved. It allows everyone to learn something about others in the group in a safe environment; this in turn allows the students to feel valued and the group to be formed.

Each student interviews their partners using the questions on the worksheet and notes down the answers.

The students introduce each other by reading out the answers they have written down to the questions; namely, 'This is xxxx, he is 13 years old, his birthday is in March, his favourite food is pizza, his favourite lesson PE and his favourite band xxxx.' Students will then swap over. At the end of each section the students will need to change partners and repeat the process.

Top tips and common pitfalls

Invest time in this worksheet activity and be involved in it. This is important for creating a non-judgemental atmosphere and will pay dividends in establishing rapport and a relationship with the students. Ultimately this means that they will trust you and therefore engage fully in the tasks and you will be able to influence them in the change process they start.

Make sure when partners are changed that all the students are involved.

This can be quite a fun activity, especially if members of staff take part and are honest about their choice of music, for example, which – as it will probably be different from that of the students – will start a bit of friendly banter!

Case study

Students meeting together as a group for the first time will usually begin this activity being very wary of one another – the atmosphere will be like that of a dentist's waiting room. They will know something is going to happen but they won't know whether they will like it. After this task the tension will start to evaporate and friendship and trust will begin to appear.

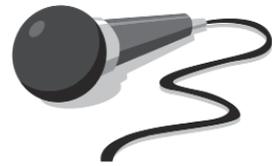
Worksheet 1.1

'Introducing ...'



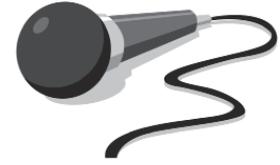
Name	
Age	
Birthday	
Favourite food	
Favourite lesson	
Favourite band	

'Introducing ...'



Name	
Brothers? Sisters?	
Pets' names?	
Favourite football team?	
Favourite sandwich filling?	
Favourite film?	

Worksheet 1.1 (Cont'd)



'Introducing ...'

Name	
What sort of job would you like to do?	
Have you met anyone famous? Or been on the TV? Or radio?	
What would you like to do if anything were possible? Swimming with dolphins?	
What would be your best present if money were no object?	

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Teacher's notes

Negotiating the ground rules (30 minutes)

This is a discussion task to establish the ground rules for the group.

As it is done in a negotiated manner, everyone involved will develop a sense of ownership and belonging. This will also ensure that they begin to develop a group identity.

These ground rules will be written using the 4MAT which was developed by Bernice McCarthy in the late 1970s (www.aboutlearning.com) from the learning cycle put forward by David Kolb (1984). The 4MAT is based on the assumption that as human beings we will have unconscious questions that will need answering so that we can engage, learn and understand. The four questions are 'What?', 'Why?', 'How?' and 'What if?/What next?' Individuals with a 'What' preference will like facts, information and to know what the experts think. Those with a 'Why' preference will need to have personal meaning created for them, namely, 'What is in it for me (WIIFM) for learning or engaging?' Those with a 'How' preference will enjoy applying their learning and those with a 'What if?/What next?' preference will be thinking how they can use and adapt the learning in the future. Education tends to be mainly 'What?' and 'How?' – the passing on of facts and information and how these will be needed in an examination. Young people who have attended our programme have had a mainly 'Why' preference, namely, 'What is in it for me for behaving in this lesson, attending school, learning algebra!'

Using four separate pieces of flip-chart paper note down 'What?' on the first one, 'Why?' on the second, 'How?' on the third, and 'What next?' on the final piece. The 'What' becomes the actual rule stated in the positive, namely, 'All mobile phones on silent whilst the group is working.' The 'Why' is the reason for having the rule, namely 'Because if a phone rings it will disturb the group and it is disrespectful.' The 'How' translates into 'How will we know if this rule has been broken? What will we see and hear?', for example 'it ringing or beeping', and the 'What next?' indicates the consequences the group decides for the behaviour, namely 'one warning and then it gets confiscated until the end of the session.'

The ground rules are then displayed and referred to throughout the programme.

Top tips and common pitfalls

Have an idea of the ground rules you want and guide students here. I have been pleasantly surprised when completing this and most groups will come up with similar rules.

Focusing on 'why' each of the ground rules is needed allows students to be more accepting of them.

You may be surprised at how harsh the consequences they want to impose will be! Use a voting system if there are disagreements here.

Once these two tasks have been completed there will usually be a distinct change of atmosphere, especially if the students do not know each other at the start of the session.

Case study

I have found that the few young people who have broken the ground rules have immediately taken the consequences without fuss, even Simon (aged 14) who was on his way to being permanently excluded. Tidying up after the session was the consequence of interrupting others whilst they spoke. The look on the face of a member of staff who visited us to see Simon doing this without a fuss was one of amazement; this member of staff had only ever seen him running around school shouting and swearing at people!

Teacher's notes

Mr Maslow's Triangle: practical activity (45 minutes)

This is a practical task to develop an understanding of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. (Maslow, 1954). Maslow's theory helps us understand how as human beings we are motivated to 'be all we can be' and to self-actualise. The hierarchy suggests that we are motivated to fulfil the needs in order, starting at the base before moving up. As we satisfy the needs in the lower level of the diagram we can then move on to satisfy the needs related to personal development. Maslow believed that the needs were linked to instincts and played a major role in motivating our behaviour. This model allows the students to understand what they need first as individuals in order to survive, feel safe and belong before they can then feel positive about themselves and achieve. It can be also used as a personal 'self-checking' list for when they are feeling less resourceful.

Draw Mr Maslow's Triangle on to a piece of flip-chart paper and ask the students to contribute examples for each section. Students can then create their own triangles on a large piece of paper and cut out examples from newspapers and magazines to fill each of the sections. The finished pieces of work can be displayed afterward.

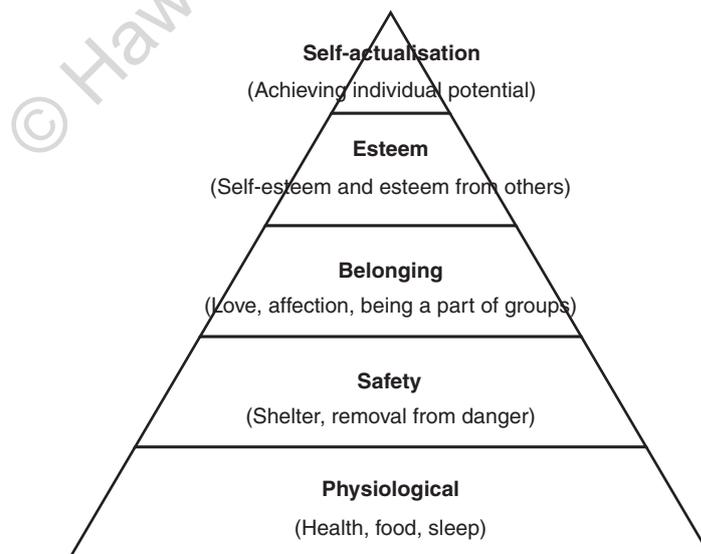


Figure 1.1 Maslow, Abraham, H.; Frager, Robert, D. (Editor); Fadiman, James (Editor), *Motivation and Personality*, 3rd, © 1987. Printed and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.