Lesson Five: Teaching the Thinking Report

WHAT WAS I THINKING – RATIONAL VS. IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS

Developed by: Marie Swope

The purpose of this lesson is to teach residents how to check their thinking against irrational beliefs that many people struggle with.

List of Handouts (scroll down to end of document to locate)

1. Major Irrational thoughts list

Format of the Group

This is a 45-60 minute group.

The same format is planned for each group

1. Introduction

Using a didactic format the facilitator will explain that it is necessary for a resident to be able to discuss with staff what they were thinking as part of a thinking report or at other times when staff is processing problems with residents. In order to know what caused a person to break a rule, or behave badly, or to get emotionally upset it is necessary to know what thoughts and emotions preceded the problem. Many times it was irrational thinking that preceded the problem.

a. Irrational thoughts do not help a person reach their goals, they do not match reality as seen through a camera view, and they come from assumptions about oneself, others, and the world around them.

b. After a while irrational thoughts become automatic thinking causing individuals to respond to situations with irrational thinking/beliefs they have learned but it is possible to replace automatic thinking with different rational, realistic thinking.

c. By monitoring thought patterns and paying attention to feelings it is possible to recognize irrational thoughts and reduce automatic thinking that can lead to hurtful/irresponsible behavior and replace these irrational thoughts with new more rational, reality oriented thinking that reduces the risk of problems.

d. One way to recognize irrational thoughts is to study them. Scientists have identified major irrational thoughts that many people have.
2. Review & discuss handout listing major irrational thoughts
   
a. Namby-pamby = “I can’t stand it.” In reality, you stood it before. You survived this far, you’ll continue.

b. Fairy-tale = “Things should be different.” I know, but things are what they are.

c. I stink = “I’m no good” Others don’t see it that way.

d. You stink = “He’s (You’re) no good” Same as above, Others don’t see it that way

e. Doomsday = “It’s terrible, we’re doomed.” Nothing is really that bad.

f. Robot = “He/she made me do it” You have control of your actions.

g. Center of the Universe = “I should always get what I want.” Sometimes delaying gratification is necessary to reach long-term positive outcomes

h. Escapist – “life should have no pain and require no effort.” Can not always avoid what is unpleasant

2. Activity -

Provide handout to each participant. They should pick a different irrational thought and illustrate it by making a poster/flyer to put on the wall and remind others of irrational thinking.
MOST COMMON IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS

i. Namby-pamby = “I can’t stand it.” In reality, you stood it before. You survived this far, you’ll continue.

j. Fairy-tale = “Things should be different.” I know, but things are what they are.

k. I stink = “I’m no good” Others don’t see it that way.

l. You stink = “He’s (You’re) no good” Same as above, Others don’t see it that way.

m. Doomsday = “It’s terrible, we’re doomed.” Nothing is really that bad.

n. Robot = “He/she made me do it” You have control of your actions.

o. Center of the Universe = “I should always get what I want.” Sometimes delaying gratification is necessary to reach long-term positive outcomes.

p. Escapist – “life should have no pain and require no effort.” Can not always avoid what is unpleasant.