

## *White County Community Corrections Programs Division*

### *Summary of Programs*

# “Thinking for a Change”

## What is “Thinking for a Change?”

**The philosophy of the program endorses that offenders should be empowered to be responsible for Changing their own problem behavior.**

The “Thinking for a Change” curriculum uses as its core, a problem solving program embellished by both cognitive restructuring and social skills interventions. While each of the concepts are presented systemically, the participant quickly learns and appreciates that cognitive restructuring does require some cognitive skill methods, as does cognitive skills require an objective, systematic approach to identifying thinking, beliefs, attitudes and values.

The cognitive restructuring concepts are introduced and emphasized during the initial eleven lessons of the program, interspersed with targeted critical social skills which support the cognitive restructuring process. This is followed by the problem solving techniques (lesson 16-21) again supported by appropriate social skills to embellish the concept. Simultaneously, the problem solving portion of the curriculum relies heavily upon the restructuring concepts and techniques already introduced to the participants, thereby integrating all three approaches.

By the time the participants reaches the 12<sup>th</sup> lesson of the program, the cognitive restructuring techniques are so ingrained in their repertoire of competencies, that it is no longer required to be emphasized as a separate entity, becoming “second nature” to the participant. By the 22<sup>nd</sup> lesson participants are ready to evaluate themselves using a skills checklist, in order to develop their own cognitive skills.

Thinking for a Change (T4C) uses a combination of approaches to increase offender’s awareness of self and others. This deepened attentiveness to attitudes, beliefs and thinking patterns is combined with explicit teachings of interpersonal skills relevant to the offender’s present and future needs. The self-insight and interpersonal skills offenders learn in T4C are also applicable to other treatment programs, either provided simultaneously or consecutively with T4C.

Participants should be:

- Incarcerated, House Arrest, Work Release, Day Reporting, Probation, or unsupervised Probation.
- Referred by the Courts, Probation Department, or Community Corrections.
- They should be under supervision long enough to complete the program.

The curriculum incorporates self-assessment as part of each lesson. Offenders learn how to report on situations (risk) that could lead to criminal behavior and to identify their thoughts, feelings, attitude and beliefs that may lead them to offending.

Participants learn to write and use thinking reports as a means to determine the awareness of their risk thinking that lead them into trouble. Within the social skills component of “Thinking for a Change” offenders try using newly demonstrated social

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skills in role play situations. Offenders apply problem-solving steps to problems in their own lives, role-play, problem scenario discussions, and homework applications provide assessment information on each offenders ability to problem solve.

Thinking for a Change is comprised of 22 lessons with the capacity to extend the program indefinitely, depending upon how many cognitive skills are taught. It is recommended that the group meet for an additional ten sessions which is based upon the self evaluation each person completes in the 22<sup>nd</sup> lesson.

Each lesson is formatted similarly. It begins with a summary and rational section in which the scope, breadth, and reason for teaching the lesson are provided. This is followed by concepts and definitions, which outline the key points of the lessons and any definition necessary for the trainer to facilitate the lesson. The lessons objectives are then outlined, followed by major activities in the lesson. Any supplement material, equipment and material are listed. The content of the lesson is then detailed.

Within each lesson, there are both suggested trainer scripts in which at least the fundamentals and required information is provided and also specific trainer notes given in parallel columns which further embellish the trainer scrip.

### THINKING FOR A CHANGE

#### CLASS CURRULUM

LESSON 1: INTRORDUCTION AND OVERVIEW

LESSON 2: ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

LESSON 3: ASKING QUESTIONS

LESSON 4: GIVING FEEDBACK

LESSON 5: OUR THINKING CONTROLS HOW WE ACT

LESSON 6: PAYING ATTENTION TO OUR THINKING

LESSON 7: RECOGNIZING THE THINKING THAT LEADS US INTO TROUBLE

LESSON 8: FINDING NEW THINKING

LESSON 9: USING THINKING CHECK INS

LESSON 10: KNOWING YOUR FEELINGS

LESSON 11: UNDERSTANDING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS

LESSON 12: RESPONDING TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS

LESSON 13: PREPAIRING FOR A STRESSFULL CONVERSATION

LESSON 14: RESPONDING TO ANGER

LESSON 15: DEALING WITH AN ACCUSATION

LESSON 16: INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM SOLVING

LESSON 17: STEP 1 STOP AND THINK

LESSON 18: STEP 2 PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

LESSON 19: STEP 3 GETTING INFORMATION TO SET A GOAL

LESSON 20: STEP 4 CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

LESSON 21: STEP 5 CHOOSE, PLAN, DO. STEP 6 EVALUATE

LESSON 22: SELF EVALUATION: WHAT ELSE DO I NEED.

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**References:**

“Thinking for a Change” The National Institute of Corrections/ [www.nicic.org](http://www.nicic.org)

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Bernie Iszler/doc.in.gov

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“Helping Hand” (HH)/ White County Community Corrections/ (2006) Jeffrey Wolf

“CALM/Calmer” Winogron PhD, Dieten PhD, Gauzas PhD 1997, WCCC/Jeffrey Wolf