



Session 4

Doing Time

Discipline = Freedom

Even when there aren't many distractions or things to do, there can be a lot of resistance to doing this work. It can be easy to find reasons not to read, exercise, or do other things that you know would be helpful to you. Our best intentions can get put on the back burner. While a part of you obviously wants to use your time in as positive a way as possible (after all, you signed up for this course!), many of our sub-personalities don't have any interest in changing. They find comfort in things as they are even if they leave us feeling miserable. A person might be lost in feeling angry, resigned, confused, scared, overwhelmed, or depressed – but at least it's familiar territory. It's important to know that ***resistance is a natural part of the process of change and growth.***

Because it's natural to have resistance to change, just try to be aware of any resistance you may experience. Resistances are excuses or rationalizations that could stop you from really getting into the course work. By being aware of your resistances, you are less likely to let them stop you from moving forward.

Even making a 5% effort can move you forward. If you have a lot of resistance, would you be willing to commit to 5% more effort today than you made yesterday?

Would you consider yourself a disciplined person, or has discipline been a challenge for you? Many people avoid discipline their whole adult life. They may not have had the support and guidance to know how to build a disciplined life. Many incarcerated adults struggle with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). This can make it much more challenging to focus our attention or to be disciplined. The reason we stress this over and over is because...

Participating in this course requires time and attention. And one thing is for sure – you are more than worth the effort!

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The more disciplined you are, the more freedom you are likely to experience. This doesn't mean you will be totally free from anger, fear, anxiety or other stressful feelings. It means you will have more and more moments when you feel inner peace, a sense of calm, a sense that you can deal with the situation you're in and come through it without having lost your sense of self or your dignity. By being disciplined, you can come through your situation having more inner strength and confidence than you experienced before. Participating in this course requires time and attention. **And one thing is for sure – you are more than worth the effort!**

Discipline in Seg/Solitary

"A lot of prisoners operate on the concept of "passing time"... this can be harmful [in highly restricted housing]. In such a situation... it's important to maintain control over our own selves as much as possible."

Anane Baye Camara, Indiana from Survivor's Manual

In "Survival in Solitary" published by the American Friends Service Committee, Laura Whitehom offers excellent advice for people in restricted housing (again, much of the advice targeted to those in restricted housing can apply to anyone). She says that each person needs to design their own program for survival. Her advice includes:

- Have several different schedules and alternate them to avoid having the days all melt into one another.
- Develop several different forms of exercise for different days and conditions.
- Do yoga and weight training in your cell.
- Develop some creative activity. She wrote that this "allowed me to admire my own human creativity - i.e. draw, write, make things from what is available, etc. reminding myself that my place in the universe was as a sentient [feeling and thinking], loving, creative human being, not a caged animal, was helpful."
- Learn something – "undertake to study something and use the mind so I left each unit having grown rather than been diminished by the experience."
- Keep some active communication with the outside. Get pen pals if needed.
- If you have money, get a subscription to a newspaper, magazine, etc.

"Discipline yourself, keep your mind active and exercise. I spent a total of 2 years in solitary. I quickly realized that I had to learn to discipline myself. I would not allow myself to stay in bed, made myself keep regular hours, exercised a lot, read whatever I could read. Unable to look without, I was forced to look within."

Troy, AL DOC

Session Notes

In this session we'll continue with meditation. There is also an exercise on "sub-personalities." In the last session you were introduced to the concepts of triggers and Cool Thoughts and Good Moves. These are all a basic part of the **Emotional Weather Report (EWR)** which you'll be working with in this and future sessions. The EWR gives you practice in using Cool Thoughts and Good Moves. In the EWR you are asked to: 1) identify a stressful situation, 2) name what triggered you, 3) recall what Hot Thoughts you had in reaction to the trigger, and 4) choose "Cool Thoughts and Good Moves" that you could use to deal with the situation in a good way. These are ESSENTIAL steps to taking back your power in any stressful situation.

Before getting into this session, take a few minutes to do a Mountain Meditation now. You can read through the directions in Session 2 (p. 28) and then close your eyes (or keep them open while putting your gaze downward) and bring yourself through as much of the script as you can remember. (Or, read through smaller sections and do the same.) A good way to start is with the 7-Breath Count. As you may recall from Session 2, to do the 7-Breath Count you count back from 7 to 1 putting most of your attention on your breathing. The counting should be like a whisper in the background with most of your attention on the movement and changing sensations in your body as you inhale and exhale.

It should sound like this in your mind: As you breathe in, silently say to yourself, "In-breath 7." Then as you breathe out, silently say, "Out-breath 7." Let your breathing be a little slower and fuller than usual. One good way to do this is to breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth – like blowing out a candle in slow motion. When you breathe out, feel tension gently being released from your body. Then move into the Mountain Meditation. (Directions are on p. 28)



The Emotional Weather Report

As mentioned, this week you'll start working with the Emotional Weather Report (EWR). The Emotional Weather Report got its name because like the weather, our thoughts and feelings are always changing. The EWR asks you to think of something that happened to you during the week that upset you or triggered you. It could be something big like finding out bad news about someone in your family. Or it could be something small.



The EWR helps us get a better understanding of how our thoughts, feelings and behaviors are connected. Most importantly the EWR can help us figure out ways we can take control of our lives no matter what is going on around us. The EWRs will be part of the Self-work in many of the sessions that follow.

Even if you have had a slow start, each new session is a chance to jump into the program with both feet. You'll notice that certain exercises are reinforced from week to week. **Only through repeated practice will your responses to challenging people and circumstances really change.** Through practice you will experience, as the title of *Houses of Healing* states, greater "inner power and freedom."

"I've started to STOP, BREATHE, and CHOOSE when someone or something triggers me. It has impacted me in ways I really didn't think was possible. I notice a big change in my attitude and behavior."

Reynaldo, 5 years

Week 4: Self-work

There is no new reading in *HOH* assigned for this session.

- ☐ **Meditate** daily for at least 10 minutes. It is good to have a regular time when you meditate. Try to meditate at this time every day. A few times before you meditate this week, read **Meditation - Things to Think About**. (pgs. 63 - 66).
- ☐ Do the **Emotional Weather Report** at least 1 time this week. (pgs. 68 & 69)
- ☐ Complete the **Sub-personalities Exercise**. (p. 67)
- ☐ **Practice SKY AWARENESS:**

For at least a few days this week, if you have any opening to the outside take five minutes to look up at the sky. If you can't see outside then close your eyes and imagine a big, expansive sky. Take some deep, letting go breaths. After a few minutes of just quieting down and being aware of the sky, reflect on the question, "Who am I, really?"

- ☐ The next few sessions focus on dealing with anger. To get a head start on thinking about anger, complete **Your Anger Style**. (p. 70)
- ☐ At least a few times a day take 2 minutes and reflect on the following "seed thoughts":

Today I can let go and be mySelf: calm, clear, and aware.

As you affirm this seed thought, take a few slow, deep breaths and tune in to the quiet awareness that is at your core.

If you feel that you can't choose to be "more calm and clear" in the situation you're in, be gentle with yourself. Thank yourself for even contemplating this possibility.

When you notice yourself getting triggered:

Stop...Breathe...And Choose a Cool Thought and a Good Move.

- ☐ Complete the meditation log: (Minutes meditated on each day)

Mon ____ Tues ____ Wed ____ Thurs ____ Fri ____ Sat ____ Sun ____

Reminders: Remember to fill out the meditation log (above). Try to complete one (and no more than one) session a week. Reflecting on the reading and doing the worksheets, the relaxations and meditation most every day is how you will really get the power of this program. Commit to 30-60 minutes of Self-work a day. You'll be glad you did. And if you do, pat yourself on the back!!! Great work!!!

Emotional Weather Report

1. Think about a situation from the past few days that stressed you out or upset you (even a little). What triggered you? (Be specific about people, places, and events.)



2. What were your thoughts when you got triggered? What “Hot Thoughts” or “Risk Thoughts” did you have?

3. What feelings got triggered? (And what were you feeling below the surface)? Circle those that apply.

abandoned	angry	annoyed	anxious	ashamed
bored	burdened	calm	cheated	cheerful
confused	concerned	defeated	disrespected	disturbed
edgy	empty	enthusiastic	entitled	excited
happy	helpless	hopeful	isolated	jealous
joyful	‘fed up’	frightened	‘imposed upon’	hurt
ignored	‘left out’	lonely	mad	miserable
glad	guilty	intimidated	nervous	overwhelmed
pained	pleased	proud	rejected	relieved
remorseful	restless	sad	scared	spiteful
stupid	tense	thrilled	worried	worthless

Write any other feelings you experienced that aren’t listed here _____

4. The strongest feeling I had was _____

On a scale of 1 (not much) to 100 (a lot), how strong was this feeling? _____

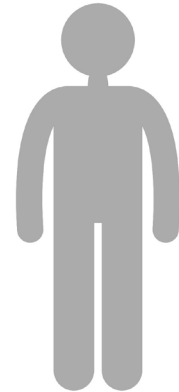
On a scale of 1 (not much) to 100 (a lot), how strong is this feeling now? _____

5. What body sensations or physical warning signs did you experience? Circle below.

muscle tension
physical pain
sweating
numbness
ringing ears
tired

pounding heart
dry mouth
tingling
hyper or restless
clenched teeth
skaky

upset stomach
headache
difficulty breathing
couldn't sleep
dizziness
body got hot or cold



6. What sub-personality came up most when you got triggered?

7. How did you react – what did you do?

8. Looking back at the situation, if there were other people involved, how do you think your reaction affected them – how do you think they felt? Why?

9. Think about where you were when you got triggered. Is this a place that triggers you often or leads you to engage in high-risk behavior? Can you avoid this situation in the future?

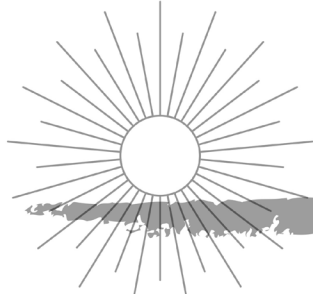
10. If you face a similar situation again, what “Cool Thoughts” could you tell yourself to stay calm, keep your power, and keep control?

11. If you face a similar situation again, what “Good Moves” could you use?

(Remember that Good Moves are things like: **use positive communication, walk away, let go of little things, exercise, meditate, do a breath-count, do some deep breathing, use positive communication, talk to a wise friend, distract yourself - focus on something else like another activity, help somebody else out, ask for help, read, play a game, write, etc.)**

Cool Thoughts and Good Moves For Getting a Grip on Anger

Cool Thoughts	Good Moves
There is another way of looking at this person or situation.	<u>Contain. Breathe. And Choose</u> a Cool Thought.
By not biting the hook, I keep my power.	Think about the consequences. Think about what you could lose.
If I react then I'm giving them my power.	Take some deep breaths. Do a breath count.
I'm not a robot – I can choose how I respond to this person or situation.	<u>Get out</u> - If possible, Leave the conflict, go for a walk, or even go someplace else in your imagination.
I choose where my attention goes. I can feed this anger or focus on something else.	<u>Distract yourself</u> – Read a book, watch TV, exercise, meditate. Listen to music that will calm you down.
My feelings of anger will pass.	Just walk away.
By controlling my anger, I take control of my life.	<u>Ignore disrespect</u> – don't play into their game. <u>Don't bite the hook.</u>
I can stand this. I am bigger than any feeling.	<u>Reach out to a friend</u> – someone who will calm you down, not work you up.
Everyone gets triggered at times.	<u>Take a time out</u> – walk away when you can.
Even the strongest feelings of anger will pass.	<u>Don't hold</u> onto disrespect – <u>let it go and move on.</u>
If I keep my cool, I keep my power.	<u>Write or draw. Meditate.</u>
I have the right to be angry. I don't have the right to hurt people with my anger.	<u>Ask yourself</u> – Is there another feeling underneath my anger?
I can't get to a good place in a bad way.	<u>Think about the consequences</u> of destructive anger.
Your Cool Thought that isn't in this list:	Imagine you are a fly on the wall watching the situation. Do things look different?



Session 6

Doing Time in Seg

Dealing with Anxiety

"It becomes much easier to adjust after gaining tools like the ones you learn in Houses of Healing. Use these tools because they'll help with anxiety and depression. And remember you are going to get through this."

Andre, 1+ years in seg

In this Session and in Session 8, we're going to take a look at **anxiety and depression** - symptoms that many people in highly restricted housing, as well as in general population, experience. In Session 9, we'll look at serious **challenges to thinking clearly** - which happen in isolation, especially long-term isolation. Humans are, by nature, social beings. We're wired to live, work, and interact with one another. When people are separated against their will and deprived of human contact, they often suffer. **SHU Syndrome** is the term that psychiatrist Stuart Grassian came up with to describe the psychological symptoms people in long-term solitary confinement often experience. You may or may not experience these symptoms... but if you do, use the tools that are offered here to help counter their impact. These tools, if used regularly, will help you take greater control of your emotional health and well-being.

Symptoms of SHU Syndrome

- ☐ Extreme anxiety, fear, or nervousness
- ☐ Easily startled by noises or lights
- ☐ Hallucinations - seeing or hearing things that do not exist
- ☐ Difficulty with concentration and memory
- ☐ Extreme confusion about where you are or what's happening around you
- ☐ Aggressive/destructive fantasies about hurting someone else or yourself. In severe cases, acting upon those impulses to do harm
- ☐ Paranoia - fear that someone or something is trying to harm you
- ☐ Rapid reduction of symptoms upon termination of isolation

Anxiety

One of the most common symptoms in highly restricted housing is **anxiety**. Like all emotions, anxiety evolved to help humans survive and even thrive. “Nerves” before a test or sports event can sometimes improve our performance. Feeling butterflies in your stomach when you walk down a dark alley is a signal to be on your guard. In low amounts, anxiety tells us that we need to be alert and pay attention to our surroundings in order to keep ourselves safe or to prime us to jump into action. But when we are stuck in dangerous, unpredictable, or extremely harsh environments, anxiety can take on a life of its own, hijacking our thoughts, keeping us in a state of continual worry and fear. Even if you weren’t an anxious person before you entered prison, your anxiety may have increased. And while anxiety in prison, and especially in segregation is normal, there are things you can do to ease its hold over your thoughts, feelings, and emotional well-being.

Participating in this course requires time and attention. And one thing is for sure – you are more than worth the effort.

“PRAY for the willingness to meditate and do other positive things. Ask a higher power for help. Praying for “willingness” was a step and it helped me take the next step. It wasn’t a leap.”

Carla, 27 days in solitary

Anxiety symptoms especially in highly restricted housing can include:

- ☐ Feelings of panic
- ☐ Feeling powerless or nervous
- ☐ Having a sense of doom or panic about the future
- ☐ Trembling, sweating, increased heart rate
- ☐ Feeling constantly stressed or “on edge”
- ☐ Difficulty focusing or concentrating
- ☐ Fear of losing control or going crazy

As you go through your day, remind yourself that... you are going to get through this.

Sessions 6, 8, and 9 include a “Tool Box” with suggestions for coping. Use the ideas in each Tool Box to help you manage those symptoms.

Tool Box for Anxiety

- Do the Relaxation Exercises found on page 31 of Session 2 - like the Comfort Pose, the Body Scan, or the Peaceful Scene.
- Re-read a part of a book that gave you comfort or was helpful to you.
- Keep a journal of things you feel grateful for, no matter how small.
- Remind yourself that feeling anxiety while locked up, especially in isolation, is completely normal.
- If you notice yourself thinking the same worrying or upsetting thought over and over, “catch yourself” and switch your mind to a “Cool Thought”, one that will calm you down. Think of it like watching something unpleasant on TV and choosing to change the channel.
- Do the 7-Breath Count found on pages 27 & 28. Simply close your eyes and count backwards from 7 to 1. It will sound like this: “In-breath 7, out-breath 7; in-breath 6, out-breath 6...” Feel yourself releasing tension each time you breathe out.
- Write down 2 or 3 phrases (Cool Thoughts) that help you feel calmer and less anxious and place them around the cell. Read them out loud whenever your eyes fall on them.

I recently came across a powerful example of how one man placed a phrase - a Cool Thought or Seed Thought - around the cell as a reminder to “help him feel calmer and less anxious”. Mark wrote the following letter to Sita Lozoff at the Human Kindness Foundation (HKF). Sita shared it the HKF newsletter. The letter refers to the book *We’re All Doing Time* written by Bo Lozoff, Sita’s deceased husband. *We’re All Doing Time* has been a blessing to thousands of incarcerated people.*

With Sita’s kind permission the letter is reprinted here. I found Mark’s letter very inspirational. I hope it inspires you!

**Information on We’re All Doing Time and the Human Kindness Foundation newsletter can be found on the resource list at the end of this workbook.*