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## *Communicating and Goal Setting*

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**“IF YOU HAVE BUILT CASTLES IN THE AIR, YOUR WORK NEED NOT BE LOST; THAT IS WHERE THEY SHOULD BE. NOW PUT THE FOUNDATIONS UNDER THEM.”**

**-HENRY DAVID THOREAU**

**SESSION PARTICIPANTS:** Foster-Adoptive Adolescent

**SESSION TIME:** 70 minutes

### Objectives:

1. To provide them with effective communication skills in order to solve problems, accomplish goals, and settle conflicts.
2. To provide them with tools to set goals and make plans for accomplishing these goals.

### Materials:

- Worksheet: Effective Communication Skills
- Worksheet: SCORE Goal Setting
- Video: Dreaming is important- you can make them happen
- Worksheet: Action Plan

### Materials for the Participant’s Folder:

- Worksheet: Effective Communication Skills
- Worksheet: SCORE Goal Setting
- Worksheet: Action Plan

## Introduction (10 minutes)

- General welcome and facilitator introductions
- Introduction of today's topic on communication and goal setting
- If conducting in a group format, ask each member of the group to share the following:
  - Name
  - Adolescent's age
  - Adolescent's hobbies (What is one activity you like to do for fun?)
  - One personal goal the group member has for today's session (Note: The facilitator should give a few minutes to think about the goal before asking them to share)

## Skills of the Day: Effective communication (20 minutes)

*Say: Today's session is focused on learning how to communicate with others in order to achieve your goals. We are going to talk about the importance of communication and how in order to get to our goal, we first need to be able to advocate for ourselves, use our own voice, and assert ourselves through communicating with others. I am going to teach you simple shortcuts for how to engage in a conversation and demonstrate that you're listening to the other person, and make sure you're also asserting yourself appropriately.*

- **Exercise 1: Worksheet: Effective Communication Skills**  
<https://nfrc.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/EffectiveCommunicationSkills.pdf>
  - Say: We know that your ability to communicate with your friends, foster/adoptive parents, teachers, and others in your life greatly affects the success of your relationship. This worksheet provides simple steps to improve your communication skills.
  - Say: Let's pick some types of effective communication on this worksheet and do a role play together. Sarah (pick a group member) and I will demonstrate examples of **asking for clarification**, **reflecting**, and **paraphrasing** in a conversation.
    - Role play example:
      - Therapist: *Hi Sarah, how are you today?*
      - Sarah: *I'm doing good. I'm feeling a little tired though.*
      - Therapist: *Oh really? Were you up late last night? (**asking for clarification**)*
      - Sarah: *Yeah, I was up working on a paper for school and I ended up going to bed super late and I definitely regret it now.*
      - Therapist: *Oh man that's tough. It seems like you felt a lot of pressure to finish that paper because it was due and as a result you had to stay up and got so tired! But it also sounds like you wish you hadn't. (**reflecting and paraphrasing**)*
      - Sarah: *Totally.*

- Ask the group member who participated in the role play: *What was it like for you when I paraphrased what you said? Did you feel heard? If so, how did you feel heard? Based on this example, would you want to talk to me again?*
- Say: *Let's get into pairs and practice a few of these effective communication skills. Take a minute to pick 2 and plan to use it in your conversation.*

## Skills of the Day: Goal Setting (30 minutes)

Say: *Now that we have learned how to communicate effectively and ways for us to feel listened to and to feel heard, I want to transition to how to set goals. Setting goals may be a process that requires just you to accomplish, but if your goal requires the help of others, we hope that the communication skills will be helpful in enhancing your relationships in order to get to your goal. For this section on goal setting, we use the acronym SCORE to make sure the goals you set for yourself are achievable.*

- **Exercise 2: Worksheet: SCORE Goal Setting**

<https://nfrfc.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/SCOREGoalSetting.pdf>

- Say: *SCORE stands for – S – say it simply, C- choose your steps, O – organize your time, R- rate your goal, and E – excellent job. These are steps to use when you want to set goals that are measurable and focused. Let's practice an example of a goal together (elicit feedback throughout this example, have group members pick a goal that is the most relevant to the group or you can use the example below):*
  - **S** – say it simply: I want to get a job.
  - **C** - choose your steps: I will apply to three jobs over the weekend.
  - **O** – organize your time: I will look on online for jobs today, then walk into some restaurants and ask if they are hiring on Friday, and finally email friends if they know of places that are hiring on Saturday
  - **R**- rate your goal: This goal for me is the green zone because I want a job to make extra money to be able to save some for college and also have some spending money.
  - **E** – excellent job: I am excited about getting a job and will start searching for positions today!
- Ask: *What was this goal setting experience like for? Would you do anything differently? What was helpful with this activity and what was not helpful?*

- **Exercise 3: Video: Dreaming is important- you can make them happen**  
<https://nfrc.ucla.edu/dreaming-important-you-can-make-them-happen?width=1200px&height=412px&inline=true#colorbox-inline-303378947>
  - Say: *In this video, Sarah talks about making your dreams happen.*
  - Ask: *What are some specific goals that Sarah mentions? (Answer: go to college, take a road trip, go see Rome, write a book about her life, volunteer abroad, get a high score on a test/good grade in a class). Pair up and turn one of Sarah's goals into something achievable by using **SCORE**.*
- **Exercise 4: Action Plan Worksheet** <https://nfrc.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/Action-Plan-Worksheet.pdf>
  - Say: *Now we want to focus on your goals. Long-term goals like getting a new job or trying out for a sports team are best achieved when they are broken down into action steps that will help you stay on track. This Action Plan worksheet outlines the steps you will need to take to achieve a long-term goal you have. Take some time to think of a goal. First, use SCORE to make sure it's attainable and then write down some action steps for it as a part of your Action Plan.*
  - Ask: *What was that experience like for you? Would anyone like to share their action plan?*

## Wrap Up (10 minutes)

- Remind the adolescent of the key takeaways of this session:
  - In order to achieve our goals, we must first learn how to communicate effectively with others, especially if our goals involve the help of others
  - When a goal is simple with steps and a time-frame, then it is more likely to be achieved
  - Writing out steps are important to make sure you put your plan into action
  - Utilize the Effective Communication Skills, SCORE Goal Setting, and Action Plan to help you plan and achieve your goals
- Ask the adolescent to set and share a personal goal to practice during the next week
- Ask the adolescent to discuss one thing they will take away from today's session