The Lighthouse Project
Bayless Health Care
Understanding Strategic Interventions with High Risk Youth
Basic Concepts and Practices Related to Psycho-Educational and Cognitive Behavioral Practices with High Risk Youth
Strategic Program Design: A Context for Content

*High Risk Youth Demonstrates:*

- Patterns of school failure and underachievement
- Deficits in interpersonal effectiveness
- Deficits in critical thinking and decision-making
- Pre-disposition for impulsive emotionality
- Disproportionate Background of Developmental Trauma
School for Life

School: A Place of learning
Life: Your complete existence
Strategic Concepts and Methodologies
Interpersonal and Situational Decision Making

Hierarchy of Needs

Diffusion of Emotional Volatility

Resolution of Ambivalence in Relationships and Goals

Facilitating Stages of Readiness and Change

Facilitated Psycho-Social Development

Improved Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
Psycho-Educational Group Discussions
Strategic intervention

- **Hierarchy of Needs**
- Diffusion of Emotional Volatility
- Resolution of Ambivalence
- Stages of Change
- Facilitating Psycho-Social Growth
- Development of Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
Adolescent Transitional Needs

Identity In Process

• Dependency/ Autonomy Dilemma-Adult Relationships
• Dating and Social Networks- Peer Relationships
• Emerging Self Concept – Self Concept and Self Image
• Neuro-Psychological Maturation-Emotionality and Belief Systems
Growing Up...Not So Fast

• A key developmental dilemma of adolescence is the desire for adult choices and the fear of adult responsibilities. Teens view turning 18 years old as the doorway to freedom and choice as well as deadline for self sufficiency. Neither are true but the significance placed on this often creates simultaneous excitement and panic.
Hierarch of Needs and Fears
Individual and Community Thematic Interventions

Freedom from A Meaningless Life
Need for Purpose and Meaning
Freedom from Embarrassment and Failure
The Need to Feel “I Can Do It”

Freedom from Abuse and Loneliness
The Need for Feeling Cared For

Freedom from the Fear Pain, Suffering, and death
The Need for Feeling Safe
Philosophical Anchors

• **Developmental Need**
• There are basic needs the youth require:
  To feel loved and valued. We openly express our affection for the youth as a means of both meeting needs and modeling comfort with expressing feelings to and about others
  To feel safe and secure: We talk persistently about protecting the youth community and insuring safety in order for people to speak the truth without fear of judgment, rejections or retaliation. No topic is off limits
Philosophical Anchors

• **Choice and Consequences**

• Youth will often claim parents, probation officers, CPS case manager or others are “trying to make me” do something including participating in the program. Avoiding consequences is a choice. They can just as easily choose to not come and get arrested. The youth are not victims of their own choices or of the consequences their choices result in.
Philosophical Anchors

• **The Problem is Decision-making and Choice,**

• Behavior is the consequence of choice therefore the goal is to improve decision-making under emotional duress. The goal is to change the decisions that resulted in problem behavior, not to simply modify behavior. Youth know right from wrong but are often influenced by “decision-stoppers”; competing interests often not identified that serve as a motive for choices that have negative consequences as a byproduct not as a goal
Philosophical Anchors

• **Doing What is Right versus Doing What You Can Get Away With**

In the absence of internal guiding principles that develop with maturity, youth too often base their decisions on “not getting caught” rather than doing the right thing. The challenge is to work with youth to develop internal standards for behavior in order to fundamentally change how they approach life.
Philosophical Anchors

• **Privacy versus Secrecy**

• Youth will often claim things are “private” in order to make them off limits whether it is what they are doing or their personal space like their room, diaries, phone or contact lists. Privacy is about holding something to one’s self or with others because of its special value and importance. Secrecy is the fear or consequences of being found out which creates stress, lies, and deception.
Philosophical Anchors

• Trust versus Trust Worthy

A common complain of youth is “You don’t trust me..” At the same time, the youth will engage in secrecy regarding their lives outside of home. Challenge them on their level of honesty and the degree to which they are deserving the trust they want to have to determine their “trustworthiness”
Philosophical Anchors

• The Problem is Your Solution:
Youth often say they have “trust issues”, “anger problems”, “drug problems” etc. In most cases these are actually strategies that allow them to avoid emotions they have difficult accepting or tolerating. They chose not to trust people, they use anger and hostility, and consume mood altering substances to avoid feelings of hurt, fear, and powerlessness. Until they understand their emotions are a source of personal knowledge about themselves and their circumstances, they will be at war with their own emotions and be conflicted within themselves.
Philosophical Anchors

• **Emotional Responsibility**

• “Anger Management” is not an effective intervention

• Youth who are desperate do make choices that can be destructive to themselves and/or others however the driving force is being overwhelmed by and seeking to avoid distressing emotions related to fear and emotional hurt. These actions are functional and strategic as a means of protecting against emotional vulnerabilities, not expressive of emotion
Strategic intervention

- Hierarchy of Needs
- **Diffusion of Emotional Volatility**
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- Development of Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
Functional to Protective

Emotional Breakpoints:

The emotional pain of missing someone or something you can not live without...

The emotional threat of someone or something presence in your life that you can not live with..
Functional Hostility versus “Anger”

Life Strategies of Emotionally Overwhelmed Youth Include:

• Defend by Attacking
• Protect with Apathy
• Use Hostility to Mask Difficult Emotions
• Lacking in Emotional Literacy and Equate Action with Feeling
Emotional Responsibility
Emotionally Explosive and Reactive States

The more expectations differs from what is actually happening, the more explosive emotions are likely to be. The difference between what is expected and what is perceived to be occurring is proportional to the intensity of emotional expression.
Emotional Responsibility

• The Way Things are....

Your Belief About Why Things Are Not the Way You Want Them to Be is Also Why You Feel The Way You Do...

• The Way You Want Things to be...
Strategic intervention

- Hierarchy of Needs
- Diffusion of Emotional Volatility
- **Resolution of Ambivalence**
- Stages of Change
- Levels of Learning
- Levels of Risk Reduction
- Development of Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are.

J. Pierpont Morgan
Ambivalence

• Ambivalence is normal.
• Feeling two ways about something.
• “I want to and I don’t want to.”

Want to  Don’t want
Change       to change
Motivational Interviewing

The goal of motivational interviewing is to create and amplify discrepancy between present behavior and broader goals.

Create cognitive dissonance between

Where one is now

Where one wants to be
Phase I: Strategic Preparation
Building Motivation to Change

The goal is to build motivation by:

1) Identifying the presence of a problem and the associated consequences of the problem
2) Identifying the availability of an option and the associated benefits of the option

Hazards in Phase I:

- Mis-Identified Primary Problem
- Insufficient direction or sense of purpose
- Over-estimating Commitment
Phase II: Strategic Action
Maintaining Commitment to Change

The goal shifts from building motivation to persistence in sustaining efforts to effect changes.

Hazards in Phase II:
- Underestimating ambivalence
- Over Estimating value, underestimating cost
- Insufficient direction or sense of purpose
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The Change Process:

- Stages of Change
- Motivation
- Ambivalence
Program Model: Problem Attack Strategy

• Process of Change Theory
  – Pre-contemplation
  – Contemplation
  – Preparation
  – Working
  – Relapse Prevention

(Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992)
Readiness and Uncertainty

Readiness

- Haven’t/Don’t Want to Think About It
- Thinking But Not Sure About It
- Sure But Don’t Know How
- Doing It But Just Getting Started
- Working But We’ll See What happens
- Working and Trying to Keep It Going
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of Change &amp; Therapist Tasks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECONTEMPLATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Raise doubt - Increase the client’s perception of risks and problems with current behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONTEMPLATION</strong></td>
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<td>Tip the decisional balance - Evoke reasons for change, risks of not changing; Strengthen client’s self-efficacy for behavior change</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PREPARATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help the client to determine the best course of action to take in seeking change; Develop a plan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACTION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help the client implement the plan; Use skills; Problem solve; Support self-efficacy</td>
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<td><strong>MAINTENANCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help the client identify and use strategies to prevent relapse; Resolve associated problems</td>
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<td><strong>RELAPSE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help the client recycle through the stages of contemplation, preparation, and action, without becoming stuck or demoralized because of relapse</td>
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Strategic intervention

• Hierarchy of Needs
• Diffusion of Emotional Volatility
• Resolution of Ambivalence
• Stages of Change
• **Facilitating Psycho-Social Growth**
• Development of Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
The Lighthouse Project
Levels of Learning Stages

Level 1 : The Truth About How I got to this Point in My Life

Level 2: The Truth About What Happened and Who was Harmed Along the Way

Level 3: The Truth About What I could Do Different or Better

Level 4 The Truth About What I am Going To Do Next
The Truth About Why You Are Here

• Why you are here in this room
• Why you are here at the program
• Why you are here at this point in your life

The truth about these things are not in your file. These things tell us how you got to this point, but not why.
The Truth is...

- Some of you are here because you do not have healthy relationships with parents
- Some of you are here because you do not have healthy relationships with peers
- Some of you are here because you do not have a good relationship with yourself
- All of you are here because you have secrets about one or more of these things
The Truth About Parents Is...

- They are missing from your life for some reason (Physically or emotionally)
- They are present in your life in a way that is a problem (Physically or Emotionally)
- They are present in your life but there is something in the way preventing the kind of relationship you both want
The Truth About Peers is

• You try to get from them what is missing at home

• They are the distraction that is getting in the way of what you need at home.
The Truth About Yourself is

• You think that you are not good enough for somebody
• You think that you are too good for everybody
• You think you need to change something about yourself or there is something wrong with you
The Truth About Yourself is

- You think that you are not good enough for somebody
- You think that you are too good for everybody
- You think you need to change something about yourself or there is something wrong with you
- **None of these are actually true**
Strategic intervention

- Hierarchy of Needs
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- Levels of Learning
- Levels of Risk Reduction
- Development of Interpersonal and Situational Decision-making
Relationship Based Education

• are your greatest means of insuring security and safety.
• are your greatest means of promoting the motivation for change
• are your greatest tool in teaching youth to see and do things differently

• *It’s personal...If kids don’t care about you, they don’t care about what you have to say*
Readiness

In each of the stages, a person has to grapple with a different set of issues and challenges related to reaching a specified goal. The same is true of stages of functional, working relationship.
Plus One Staging...
Being In Sync with the Process of Change

It is vital to identify
-where you and the youth/client are presently in your relationship.
What needs to happen in order to move the relationship to where it needs to be?

-where the youth is relative to a resolution to the problem
What needs to happen in order to move the youth to where s/he needs to be?
DECISION-MAKING

Assessing Liabilities Associated with No Change
• Determine the motivation for change based on unwanted elements in current circumstances

Assessing the Benefits Associated with Change
• Determine the motivation for change based on desired elements missing in the current circumstances
DECISION-STOPPING

Assessing the Benefits of No Change
• Determining the Positive Aspects of the Current Situation and Advantages Associated with Current Circumstances

Assessing the Liabilities of Change
• Determining the Challenges, Problems, and Fears Associated with Changing the Current Circumstances
Restoration of Adult/Parenital Credible Authority

--Building and Sustaining a Relationship and Re-establishing Credibility in Responsible Authority

- Reconciling Ambivalence in Primary Family Adult Relationship with Parents/Care taker

- Establishing a basis or experiencing care, concern, and a sense of being valued

- Building normative expectation of parental mentorship of child for facing life challenges

Many youth who have experienced disruptions in healthy bonding are fearful and resistant to deferring control over their lives to adults who they see as ineffective or uncaring. The problem with authority is one of credibility, not simply being oppositional.
Developing Emotional Responsibility and Critical Thinking

“Inner-world Stability and Growth”

- Developing capacity for accurate attribution of motivation and intention of others
- Developing the capacity for critical thinking to identify alternatives beyond habitual, impulsive reaction
- To provide awareness and tolerance for uncomfortable emotions as a source clarifying unmet personal needs and seeking a course of action

High risk youth are prone toward assuming hostile intention as motives and therefore have difficulty trusting others or seeking help. This contributes to their overall high level of reactivity and subsequent impulsive behavior. Healthy belief systems uncompromised by distrust and suspicion allow for more reasoned decision-making and informed judgments.
Defining Trauma

• Trauma: a wound or injury; emotional shock producing a lasting effect on a person. The personal experience of violence and victimization including sexual abuse, physical abuse, severe neglect, loss, and/or the witnessing of violence, terrorism, or disasters.

NASMHPD, 2006
PTSD In Children

Family Violence is the most common cause of PTSD in children who witness 10-20% of homicides and 10% of sexual assaults resulting in:
- Chronic affective dys-regulation
- Destructive behavior towards self and others
- Learning disabilities
- Dissociative states
- Somatization of emotional distress
- Distorted concepts about self and others
- Nightmares about monsters
- Re-enactment in daydreams and compulsive play
- Separation anxiety and
Trauma Triggers

Seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling something that reminds us of past trauma

Activates the alarm system...

The response is as if there is current danger.

The thinking brain automatically shuts off in the face of triggers.

Past and present danger become confused.
Trauma-Informed Care

- Proven practices
- Acknowledges the role that violence and victimization play in most delinquent youth
- Helps us understand youth behaviors and actions
- Shifts the approach from control to partnership.
- Focus on what happened, not what is “wrong”
Psycho-Educational Groups

- **Orientation “Newbies”**
- **Entering the Community**
  - The purpose of this educational group is to provide new community members with an introduction to the Lighthouse community and orientation to program basic principles and expectation. It also allows new youth to interact with “senior youth mentors” to build familiarity and relationships.

- **Boys/Girls Gender Responsive Group**
- **Examining Interpersonal Relationships**
  - The purpose of this educational group is to provided girls and boys with separate forum to explore some of the more sensitive areas of personal development and growth. Healthy Interpersonal relationship patterns are explored as well as dating and relationship violence in order to provide for improved quality of interpersonal relationships.
Psycho-Educational Groups

- **Emotional Responsibility**
  The purpose of this educational group is to learn about the source and purpose of emotions, to accurately recognize emotional states and to address the use of “functional hostility and apathy” where anger is strategically used to mask vulnerability, insecurity, fear, and hurt.

- **Healthy Thinking and Problem Solving**
  **Developing Situational Reasoning**
  The purpose of this educational group is to develop critical thinking skills required for sound decision-making. Anticipation of consequences allows for the possibility of seeing more options and avoiding, escaping or coping effectively with high risk circumstances.
Educational Groups

• **Expressive Arts:** The use of creative expression and arts allows the youth to tap into a medium of expression that they may both enjoy and have more confidence in using. This includes examining the influence of music, arts, and social media on self image and interpersonal relationships.

• **Interpersonal Relationship and Self Study:** The purpose of this group is to provided a forum where youth can discuss how they are perceived, how the perceive others and the impact they have on each others which is critical in this peer oriented development period.

• **Chemical Independence and Substance Abuse Education**

• The purpose of this educational group is to increase knowledge of drugs, the impact of drugs, and encourage an understanding of the hard facts about the natural future consequence of drug use and involvement in the drug culture.
Educational Groups

- **Psycho-Dramatics:**
  The purpose of this group is to provide “real time” experience in understanding and working with emotions through role plays, re-enactments, and anticipatory scenarios of future challenges.

- **Recreational and Community Service Group**
  **Activities** Youth also take part in activities that promote group cohesion through attendance at activities such as local sporting events and participating in homeless shelter food distribution to provide both enjoyable and service-oriented learning.
Educational Groups

- **Parent Discussion Groups** The focus of parent groups is to provide a forum for parents to learn about program methods and challenges currently in place and to develop partnerships with parents in reconstituting relationships with their teenage sons and daughters. In being coached in what their children are learning, parents covertly are provided with parallel knowledge and skills reducing their reactivity and improving their conflict diffusion abilities.
- **Monthly Community Meetings**
- The staff and core members of the Lighthouse community meet monthly to address relationship issues in the community and to established predetermined themes of focus for clinical work in the community based on team discussion about where the community is perceived to be and where opportunities for promoting specific areas of growth have been identified.
The Micro-Community Network

Thematic Individual Interventions- "Tuning"

- Psycho-Ed Group" Psycho-Drama
- Psycho-Ed Group" Substance Abuse Education
- Psycho-Ed Group" Expressive Arts
- Psycho-Ed Group" Managing Emotions
- Psycho-Ed Group" Healthy Thinking
- Psycho-Ed Group" Leadership and Movie Study

Thematic Youth Community Meetings

- Youth /Non-Primary Check Ins
- Youth /Non-Primary Check Ins
- Youth /Non-Primary Check Ins
- Youth /Non-Primary Check Ins
- Youth /Non-Primary Check Ins

- Reduced Somatic Complaints related to Traumatic Stress and Anxiety
- Mother Hawk Lost Lamb and Prodigal Child Recovery
- Father Owl Lost Lamb and Prodigal Child Recovery
- Reduce Chronic Medical Conditions Related to Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Reducing Out of Home Residential Placements
- Reducing Acute Hospitalization and Emergency Room use