

THE

ZONES

OF REGULATION®

Lesson 16: Tracking My Tools

Goals

- Clients increase their use of tools to aid in self-regulation
- Clients generalize the use of their tools to a variety of settings

Materials

- One copy of the Tracking My Tools worksheet (Reproducible EE) for Client
- Pens or pencils
- Red and green colored writing utensil if unable to print Reproducible EE in color
- If using a white board, dry erase markers in black, red, and green are necessary

Overview

Through self monitoring using a bar graph, clients discover which tools are most beneficial for them and chart the frequency of use of their tools. By completing this visual learning activity, over time clients are able to reflect on the effect of their tools and find which tools benefit them most. This will help clients see the positive effect of using a tool; therefore, they will be more apt to use tools with increasing frequency across environments.

Preparation

- Copy the Tracking *My Tools* worksheet and distribute a copy to clients.
- If using a white board, draw a large-scale replica on the board.

Lead-In

- Review the goals of the lesson with clients. Engage clients in a discussion by asking:
 - *How would it be helpful to keep track of our use of our zone tools?*
 - Instruct clients that they will learn how to use a bar graph to keep track of which tools they are using and how well each tool is working (show them the graph they will be using). Explain that by graphing their tools, they can see which tools they are using as well as how well the tools are working.

Activity

1. Referring to the graph, instruct the clients that the left hand column is where they will list their favorite Blue, Green, Yellow, and Red Zone tools. The boxes to the right are to be filled in to indicate if the tool worked to help get to or stay in the expected Zone.
2. Have clients write down one of the tools he or she plans to use; for example, deep breathing. Give the client an example scenario to graph, such as the following:

This morning you got frustrated as you got up, you tried deep breathing and it worked. How would you fill in the graph? Your sibling had the television volume too loud, you used deep breathing to cope, but it didn't work so well. How would you fill in the graph? You forgot to do a chore so you weren't able to record it on your chore chart, but you used deep breathing and felt better. How would you fill in the graph? Pretend that tomorrow you try deep breathing and it works again. How would you fill in the graph? And it works gain the next day. But the next day, you try it and it doesn't work. How would you fill in the graph? (Make sure the clients stack the boxes they fill in, not using each box like it is a day and leaving gaps.)

Activity (continued)

3. Continue providing scenarios such as this, having clients suggest chosen tools until they demonstrate understanding in using the bar graph to keep track of their use of tools.
4. Have clients list their zone tools and color in the Yes boxes green and No boxes red if the worksheet was printed in black and white. Have them fill in any boxes if they have completed a strategy already that day. Instruct that this is an ongoing activity that you expect them to be filling in daily so they can see what is working for the and what is not. Let them know that you don't want to see the graph filled out with fictitious boxes. Stress that if they are filling in the boxes without doing the strategies, they are only cheating themselves by not gaining skills in self-regulation. Enlist parental assistance in monitoring and completing the graph.

How to Adapt This Lesson

Being able to see things from another's perspective and consider the thoughts of those around us are what motivates many of us to regulate our emotions and alertness level. We want those around us to keep thinking good thoughts about us, so we will stifle emotions or do what we need to get ourselves to a positive state. Unfortunately, many clients who have deficits in self-regulation have challenges in understanding how their behavior affects others thoughts and feelings. Many clients benefit from having an external motivator tied to using a tool (whether the tool works or not). What is important is that the clients are attempting to self-regulate, and that is a step in the right direction. You or the clients' family can set up a reward system—with each attempt at using a tool, the student receives a point toward earning something that motivates them (for example, a point toward earning a prize). After the client earns a set amount of points, they get the predetermined prize.

How to Adapt This Lesson (continued)

You can graph a client's use of tools if the client is unable to do so. If clients are unable to understand how the tools affect them, this activity at least serves as a guide and a data collection tool to assist staff in determining which strategies work best for clients based on subjective opinion. This information can help guide staff in future interventions for that client. For older clients, they can set up a graph to track their tools using a spreadsheet program on a computer.

Wrap-Up

Stress the importance of using the tools throughout the week whenever they feel themselves moving out of the Green Zone. This activity is designed to provide ongoing assessment opportunities not only for staff, but also for the clients and their parents by monitoring how frequently they are using self-regulating tools. It can also be used to collect data to determine the most effective tools for each client.

Ways to Generalize Learning

- The graph with the tools listed can be used by parents and others who work with the client for carryover in different environments.
- At each session, review the graph with clients and help them identify patterns or strategies that working and ones that are not (brainstorm reasons why they aren't working and other possibilities that might be more successful).
- Provide encouragement when you see clients using their tools and remind them to graph results. As graphs fill and tool lists lengthen, help clients recognize which tools are most effective and condense the graph.