

How I Am Now & How I Want To Be

ETC Level

Cognitive/Symbolic

MDV Level

Resistive, Complex, Structured

Materials

- one 18" X 24" sheet of white construction paper
- assorted magazines
- scissors
- glue or glue stick
- markers, chalk, or crayons

Procedures

1. Participants are asked to gather their materials and create a picture.
2. On one half of the collage, they are to tear or cut out magazine pictures that represent how they see themselves in the present.
3. On the other half of the collage, they are to tear or cut out magazine picture that represents how they see themselves in an "idealized" sense; how they would like to be.
4. The collage can be embellished with markers, crayons, and/or chalk.
5. Participants are asked to describe and contrast the images on their picture to the group.
6. Group members are invited to ask questions and offer feedback to anyone who shares their work.

Rationale

1. This is a great group activity to do after some level of trust has been established among group members.
2. The purpose of this activity is to get the participants to think about, and clarify how they think and feel about themselves now, and contrast this with their more idealized sense of self. This activity can help them think about the abstractions they use and encourage them to describe themselves in more concrete terms. Realistic goal setting can be initiated as a result of this activity.
3. The first question to ask the participants is, "When you look at your images, what do they represent?"
4. Other processing questions could focus on: 1.) Asking members to pick out what one image or several significant images represent., 2.) Asking what purpose the images serve and why?, 3.) Asking how the individual feels about their life and the steps they would like to take to change it., and 5.) Asking participants to rate their motivation to change or the strength of their feeling states.

Adaptations

1. Individuals could journal about their goals and share their progress with their group members on a week by week basis.
2. This activity could be adapted for use with disabled individuals who were able to conceptually understand the "actual vs. ideal" concept.
3. This activity could be used with Humanistic-oriented therapies, such as Roger's or Maslow.
4. Individuals could use cognitive behavioral coping strategies to help them learn

problem solving skills.

5. Individuals could use this activity to help them understand and accept more realistic definitions of self; a follow up activity to journal or share with the group would be, "This activity has taught me ...".

6. Instead of using magazines, markers, chalk , or crayons, participants could use clay to form their images.