Efficacy: Your Secret Power for Decision Making

Mentor’s Manual
Northwest Media, Inc.

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For a product catalog or for further information, please contact:

Northwest Media, Inc.
326 West 12th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401

Telephone: 541-343-6636 or 800-777-6636
Fax: 541-343-0177
email: nwm@NorthwestMedia.com

or visit www.SocialLearning.com

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Efficacy: Your Secret Power for Decision Making

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Writing:
Lisa Siegle
Lee White

Interactives:
Lee White
William Haldane

Artist:
William Haldane

Graphic Design:
Kristian Hansen
Preface

Efficacy: Your Secret Power for Decision Making creates a model for having the confidence and skills to solve problems and make choices that help achieve the bigger goals in life.

Approach

We wrote this manual to help you experience Efficacy together. Very few of us are experts at making the decisions that help us reach our big picture goals, and by working together you can both learn new skills for solving problems and making decisions.

The program is broken down into 11 sessions and most sessions will take about 30 minutes. The lessons build on each other, so it is helpful to review previous lessons before beginning a new lesson. After viewing the lesson and doing the online interactive activities (10-15 minutes total), there are activities and discussion questions to help you understand and apply the concepts.

Establish a schedule for working together. Complete one or two segments per week; it takes time for the lessons to seep in, so it’s important to not rush through Efficacy. The more you practice skills as you learn them, the more they will become a part of who you are and how you conduct your lives.

You will both need a notebook for notes and assignments. A simple spiral notebook will work just fine.

Thank you for visiting us on Vstreet.
Class 1: The Big Picture
(What You Want in Life)

Purpose

- to review the anger cycle
- to define “efficacy”
- to define and understand the Big Picture as it relates to reaching goals
- to hear about the concepts and skills that will be covered in this class

Overview

In Efficacy: Your Secret Power for Decision Making, an animated group of teens are in a group are learning to solve problems, work towards Big Picture Goals, learn about giving and getting respect, and build the courage to make decisions that honor their beliefs. Their leader is John Aarons, a counselor who helped develop the Options to Anger program at the Lane County Department of Youth Services in Eugene, OR.

They start out by reviewing the Automatic Anger Cycle from Options To Anger.

Preview Discussion

- if you have taken the class, Options to Anger, discuss your experience and how it has affected the choices you make in difficult situations
- Efficacy has the same instructor and some of the same format at Options, but is about making decisions that help meet goals. Have you thought about your goals?

Watch Efficacy class 1:
The Big Picture (What You Want in Life)

Discussion & Activities

- in your journal, write down a Big Picture goal you have for yourself
  - make a list of mini-goals that will help you reach that goal
- Every outcome in life is the result of many choices, or decisions.
  - Is it easy to make good decisions?
  - When you make bad decisions, are you stuck with the results or do you think you can turn things around?

**A New Beginning**

Efficacy means having the skills and confidence to solve problems and get what you want in your big picture, without causing harm to yourself or others. Can you think of people in your life who are like that?
Class 2: The Problem Cycle

Purpose

- to introduce the Problem Cycle
- to show the similarities between the Anger Cycle and the Problem Cycle
- to see how the Problem Cycle works with a real problem

Overview

In the Problem Cycle, the first three stops on the cycle remain the same as the Anger Cycle:

- Cruising Along: everything is going fine
- Invitation: something happens
- Clear or Risky Thinking: process used before making a choice

The next two stops are different. In the Problem Cycle, “Choice” replaces “Anger” and “Upshot” replaces “Consequences”:

- Choice: there are many possible choices
- Upshot: how things turned out for the person

Both end with:

- Back To Normal.

In the program, both Leonardo and Kaye discuss problems they had and diagram them on the Problem Cycle.

Watch Efficacy class 2: The Problem Cycle

Discussion & Activities

- Using the Problem Cycle can be awkward at first, but will help you learn to see how problems develop and how choices are made.
  - in your journal, draw a blank Problem Cycle
  - diagram in a problem you recently had
  - before next session, diagram two other problems
**A New Beginning**

The more you practice diagramming problems on the Problem Cycle, the more clearly you will see the structure of a problem and where other choices could have been made along the way. That insight is the first step towards developing personal power.
Class 3: Owning Up

Purpose

- to learn what it means to fully take responsibility for a choice
- to examine the 3 components of owning up

Overview

In this class, Kyle tells about a problem he had with a member of his band. He ultimately punched her and quit the band. John applies several examples of Kyle’s story to the Problem Cycle. Kyle owns up to some of his choices but not all of them. John points out how Kyle’s choices led him to giving up his power and not getting what he wanted.

Owning Up Means:

- admitting what you did or what you felt and, ideally, admitting it to the person who was harmed in the situation
- accepting the upshot of your choice--not blaming anyone or anything else and accepting the consequences

When you own up, you are communicating that you are sorry for how your behavior affected the other person, you accept that you were in charge of your choice, and you admit you chose badly.

Watch Efficacy class 3: Owning Up

Discussion & Activities

- Owning up is hard.
  - Look back at your journal entry from Class 2. In the problems you diagrammed on the Problem Cycle, think about if you owned up.
  - If you did own up, what happened?
  - If you didn’t, how is your relationship with the other person now? How do you feel about the situation?

A New Beginning

Often, by owning up, you and the other person find you are both willing to negotiate a different outcome that leaves you both more satisfied. Owning up takes courage and courage is a component of power. Build your courage by owning up to a problem, and remember to stay calm, focused, and positive.
Class 4: Risky Thinking

Purpose

- to learn the difference between clear and risky thinking
- to learn the types of risky thinking

Overview

John defines Risky Thinking as “thinking that can lead us in a direction we don’t want to go.”

- risky thinking leads to poor choices that are hard to own up to
- clear thinking leads to positive choices that are easy to live with

There are 4 types of Risky Thinking:

- right mirror thinking: seeing things as they aren’t
- black and white thinking: seeing only the extremes, like good/bad, right/wrong
- crystal ball thinking: predicting the future
- blame game: inappropriately blaming yourself or others

Watch Efficacy class 4: Risky Thinking

Discussion & Activities

- Risky Thinking in a situation can be motivated by values and desires we aren’t always aware of, like a desire to control others or a desire to hurt others.
  - Either look back to the problems you diagrammed in your journal, or think of a more recent problem, and try to figure out what kind of risky thinking you used.
  - Why do you think you thought that way?
  - Had you thought differently, do you think you would have made a different choice for how to act?

A New Beginning

We are seldom aware of why we think the way we do and how we make choices, especially when we are upset. That awareness can be developed by diagramming problems on the Problem Cycle, paying special attention to the thinking behind your choices.
Class 5: Costs & Benefits (of Choices)

Purpose

- to learn to use the Costs & Benefits chart

Overview

The Cost of a choice the downside; it’s what you pay or give up. The Benefit of a choice is the upside; it’s what you gain. Every choice, whether it is the result of Clear or Risky Thinking, will have some cost and some benefit, but in most cases Risky Thinking that leads to a poor choice will have more costs than benefits and most of the time Clear Thinking that leads to a good choice will have more benefits than costs. Sometimes, the costs are paid much later, and affect your big picture.

Watch Efficacy class 5: Costs & Benefits (of Choices)

Discussion & Activities

- in your journal, draw two Costs and Benefits charts
  - Use one chart to examine the Costs and Benefits of choice you made that was a good choice with a positive outcome.
  - Use one chart to examine the Costs and Benefits of a choice you made that was a bad choice with a negative outcome.

- Now examine the two charts and think about the situations. Then pick the situation that had the most possible choices. Think about another choice you could have made and plug that choice into a Costs and Benefits chart.
  - How was the chart different this time?
  - Compare the likely upshot for the pretend choice to the outcome in the real choice. How does that make you feel?

A New Beginning

The Costs & Benefits chart, or test, can be applied to many things in life. Think about the Costs and Benefits as you move through your day, for big and little choices, to get in the habit of thinking before acting. Even using the test to plan a driving route during rush hour or to make a grocery list when money is tight can help you to learn to slow down and think before acting.
Class 6: Values & Attitudes

Purpose

- to define values
- to learn the difference between values and attitudes
- to explore how values guide thinking and choices

Overview

Values are deeply held, stable, fundamental principles that define what we believe, like kindness or honesty or the Golden Rule. Attitudes reflect a way of acting or feeling and can change with our moods. Both values and attitudes go into making choices.

Sometimes, a bad attitude can cloud our thinking and cause us to make a choice that goes against our values. Obstacles to valuing our values can include stress, lack of confidence, peer pressure, fear, or not knowing how to deal with a situation.

Watch Efficacy class 6: Values & Attitudes

Discussion & Activities

- in your journal, make a list of your deepest values
- In the past week or so, have you made any choices that were against your values?
  - Why did you make that choice?
  - If you could have a “re-do,” what would you choose?

A New Beginning

Staying true to your values takes strength and courage, two traits you will need to meet your big picture goal. If you blow it, examine why you lost sight of your values and think of strategies to stay strong next time.
Class 7 Review: The Big Picture

Purpose

- to review the concept of the Big Picture
- to review the Problem Cycle
- to introduce the process of change

Overview

The Big Picture is knowing how you want to live your life. Many choices are involved in reaching your Big Picture, and Efficacy is making effective choices that help you get there.

The parts of the Problem Cycle are:

- Cruising along
- Invitation
- Clear or Risky Thinking
- Choice
- Upshot
- Owning Up (or not)

In the exercise “Changing for Good,” Radish outlines the 5 steps of change. They are:

- floating along--unaware that there is a problem
- waking up and buying in--accepting that change is necessary
- building a plan--concrete steps to break a bad habit or develop a good habit
- acting on the plan--following through on the plan
- retaining the change--taking steps to prevent relapse

Watch Efficacy class 7: Review: the Big Picture
Discussion & Activities

- Review your journal entries on the Problem Cycle.
  - Do you fully understand all parts of the cycle?
  - As you go through your life, are you starting to see problems as part of a process, or cycle?
  - Pick a recent problem, or make one up, and plot it on the Problem Cycle, just for review.
- Radish used the five steps of change to stop smoking. Is there anything in your life you would like to change?
  - Do you think that following the steps of change might help you?

A New Beginning

The overall point of the Efficacy program is to give you the skills to take control of your life and reach your goals. It takes time and effort to learn these skills, but the more you practice, the more you will accomplish.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is therefore not an act, but a habit.” -- Aristotle
Class 8: Empathy

Purpose

- to learn what empathy is
- to learn how to effectively express empathy

Overview

Sympathy is when you feel sorry about something bad that happened to somebody. Empathy is understanding what someone else feels from their point of view. John explains that making good choices includes having empathy for the way your choice will affect everyone else.

When you choose badly and your choice impacts others, it is important to express empathy for your victims.

There are 3 parts of an empathetic statement:

- point of view--recognizing the other person’s feelings
- validation--acknowledging the problems you caused and reassuring the other person that you won’t do it again
- support--telling the person what you will do make things right

Watch Efficacy class 8: Empathy

Discussion & Activities

- Expressing empathy is a part of owning up. It is important when expressing empathy to not blame the other person. Be direct, be sincere, and offer a concrete plan for fixing the problem you caused--then follow through.
  - Think of a time your actions have caused problems for someone else. Using the above guideline for empathetic statements, write an empathetic statement.
  - Examine your statement. Is it sincere? Do you accept full responsibility for the problem? Do you respect the other person’s feelings? Do you offer a solution?
  - If you were the other person, how would the empathy statement make you feel?
A New Beginning

It can be scary to express empathy because the other person might respond in a way that makes you feel worse. But after, regardless of the outcome, you will feel relief because unsolved problems leave us feeling like we’re waiting for the other shoe to drop. When we own up and express empathy to our victims, AND we take actions to make it better, we regain control.
Class 9: Active Listening

Purpose

- to learn the purpose of active listening
- to learn active listening skills

Overview

Active listening is using verbal and non-verbal techniques to show you are interested in what is being said.

Listening skills include:

- restating and summarizing
- asking questions about what you don’t understand
- body language and eye contact
- showing support and giving feedback

Watch Efficacy class 9: Active Listening

Discussion & Activities

Restating and summarizing is when you say in your own words what the other person said, which shows you understand what was said. These restatements typically begin with a phrase like, “What I hear you saying is . . .” “So if I understand you correctly . . .” “Let me see if I got it right . . .”

Asking questions is just that, asking the speaker to clear up your misunderstanding or confusion.

Body language and eye contact provides cues about whether you are listening or not and how you feel about what is being said. When a listener crosses his arms and legs, leans back in his chair and looks away, it’s clear he isn’t interested in what is being said and is choosing to refuse to listen. When a listener leans forward and nods, he is showing agreement or interest and is encouraging the speaker to keep talking. A listener who is easily distracted from the conversations isn’t paying much attention and doesn’t want to listen. Maintaining eye contact indicates you respect the person and want to hear and understand what he is saying.

Showing support and giving feedback is when you ask questions, express empathy or sympathy, or say things like, “and then what happened” or “tell me more.”
Role play using the above techniques. Make up a story (possible topics could include getting rude service at a restaurant, having a fight with a relative, or an embarrassing event) and then retell it several times while the other person uses one or two active listening skills. You can take turns being the listener. Practice negative skills as well as positive skills. Notice how different responses by the listener impact the conversation.

A New Beginning

Over the next week, pay careful attention to how a listener’s verbal and non-verbal responses affect the speaker. Notice how you feel when someone isn’t really listening to you while you talk. Pay attention to your own body language when you are listening to someone.
Class 10: Refusal Skills

Purpose

- To learn effective refusal skills

Overview

Refusal skills are used to say “no” to invitations that work against your values and goals, even when you are under pressure to go along. John explains that successful refusal skills include taking a stand, offering a suggestion, using Clear Thinking, and remembering your values. When refusing, it is important to stand firm, to remember your big picture, and to not give in.

Watch Efficacy class 9: Active Listening

Discussion & Activities

- Saying “no” is often just the beginning of refusing an invitation. A person who is very eager for you to join in on something you feel is wrong can pressure you or trick you into going along, like the guy who got John to go along with breaking into the principal’s Escalade. It helps to plan ahead and practice refusing invitations
  - Think of an invitation you accepted, but should have turned down. If you could redo that moment, what would you have said or done differently? How could you have changed the outcome?
  - Think of an invitation you could imagine getting, like an invitation to break a law or hurt someone. In your journal, write:
    1. the invitation
    2. all of your values that the invitation violates
    3. how you would say “no”
    4. what you could say or do to defend your “no” if the other person pressures you
    5. some possible outcomes of your refusal

A New Beginning

When you live your life in a way that honors your values, your true friends will respect you for your conviction. When saying “no” means you lose a friend, you didn’t really lose a friend, you lost a problem waiting to happen.
Class 11: Negotiation Skills

Purpose

- to learn how to negotiate solutions that work for all involved

Overview

Negotiation is using the communication skills you have learned in this class to work out a solution that works for everyone involved. The process includes:

- talk out the problem
- both sides use active listening skills
- employ empathy
- brainstorm solutions
- select a solution—which will include compromise for one or both parties

The process of negotiation includes give and get, you give up some of what you want to get some of what you want, as does the other person. In a fair negotiation, both sides should get some of what they are after. When both parties remain calm and try to be fair, the outcome is win-win for everyone.

The negotiation process can be wrecked by anger, sarcasm, criticism, pushiness, or disinterest in the other person's position.

Watch Efficacy class 11: Negotiation Skills

Discussion & Activities

- Negotiation is used in all parts of life--at work, at school, and in personal situations--but we don’t tend to think of it as a formal process with a title, we tend to think of it as just “talking things over.”
  - Think of a time you “talked things over” with a teacher or a boss, and it went really well. Try to remember what parts of the negotiation process (see the Overview) you used.
  - Let’s say you want to talk with a teacher about getting more time for a project, or you want to go to a party but your parents say you can’t because you didn’t finish your homework. With your partner, role play, or act out, the negotiation.
A New Beginning

There will be lots of negotiation and lots of compromise on your way to achieving your Big Picture goals. The only people who never have to compromise are the people who only want very unimportant things in life.