HANDOUT CT-1

HOLLIS

Hollis is turning his life around. He's been doing well at achieving his substance use goals, and he's just landed a new job. It's important to him and his family that he does well at it. He is acting as a receptionist and clerk for a drop-in center for disadvantaged kids. On Hol's second day on the job, one of the social workers tells him, very politely, that he has been putting that social worker's calls through to the wrong extension. Hollis mumbles an apology. Afterwards, while eating lunch, he thinks: *"Man, I am such a loser. I can't even put phone calls through right. That guy is probably going to tell everyone else — they're probably all laughing at me right now. And no wonder — I am just hopeless."*

HANDOUT CT-2

DESCRIPTION OF CONSTRUCTIVE SELF-TALK

Constructive Self-Talk can be used to counter destructive thinking patterns, and can be especially effective in dealing with *magnifying, all or nothing thinking, jumping to conclusions, and dwelling on negatives.* These destructive thinking patterns inflame you, making you feel worse about yourself. Constructive Self-Talk is designed to help you feel better about yourself and to counter the chain of destructive thinking and negative emotions that often lead to slips.

HANDOUT CT-3

GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE SELF-TALK

1. Catch your destructive self-talk as soon as possible, before you get too upset or want to drink/drug. Be alert to key phrases people use as part of destructive self-talk:

- I always…
- I never…
- Name-calling *(I'm such a jerk!*)

2. *STOP* yourself — interrupt or break the chain of destructive self-talk.

3. Re-label your distress — tell yourself the emotion you are thinking and feeling is a signal to use your coping skills, rather than a signal to get upset and drink/drug.

4. Substitute constructive self-talk. To do that, focus on:

- Focusing on the event, not yourself. Remember — everyone makes mistakes. Making a mistake does not make you a dumb person — just a normal person who has made a mistake.

- Recalling good things about yourself and your life.

- Challenging irrational beliefs (if you started by saying "*I never do well…",* identify situations that show that statement is false).

- Putting things in perspective. Even if something negative has happened, it is seldom a catastrophe, particularly if you bring constructive thinking into play.

- Hopeful thoughts, positive outcomes: "*I can handle this. This is just a bump in the road…"*

- Reminding yourself to stay "on-task." Focus on what needs to be done, not on what's happened already.

- Reinforcing your constructive thinking. When you've countered your destructive self-talk, give yourself the congratulations you deserve.

HANDOUT CT-4

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Role-Play One: Your group should create a scenario in which something upsetting has happened to the person playing the main character. Develop a brief role-play to show the upsetting event. You can use as many group members as you want in your role-play.

   - When you present this role-play to the other group, be prepared to first give them whatever information they'll need in order to understand the role-play. (For example, if you were role-playing the Hollis scenario, you'd need to tell observers that it is Hollis' second day on the job, and that he's a clerk/receptionist in a drop-in center).

2. Develop two more role-plays to show the impact destructive self-talk would have on your main character, after the upsetting event.

   - Role-Play Two: Show the character doing destructive self-talk out loud. You could do this as a solo scene, or for more fun — have the main character sitting silently, while another group member plays the destructive self-talk voice.

   - Role-Play Three: Show the impact the negative self-talk would have. (For example, in the case of Hollis, you might show what happens the first time Hollis sees the social worker after the destructive self-talk).

3. Develop two more role-plays, to show the impact positive constructive self-talk would have on your main character, after the upsetting event.

   - Role-Play Four: Show the character stopping the destructive self-talk and doing constructive self-talk instead. Again — you could do this as a solo scene, or for more fun — have the main character sitting silently, while another group member plays the positive self-talk voice.

   - Role-Play Five: Show the impact the constructive self-talk would have. (For example, in the case of Hollis, you might show what happens the first time Hollis sees the social worker after the positive self-talk.)