



SKILL BUILDING

Introduction:

Skill - special ability in a task... acquired by training

Opening Questions for Discussion:

- **Think about the first time you tried something new that required skill (like a sport, or fixing something, etc.) How did you feel when you didn't know what you were doing?**

- **Now think about how you felt after you obtained a level of skill at that same task. How did your feelings, confidence and motivation change?**

Obviously, once we get some skill in an area, usually our motivation, confidence, and enthusiasm increase. The same is true with regard to Building the skills to get what we need in our lives without drugs or alcohol. Gaining some skills can be extremely empowering in the change process. Learning to cope with anxiety, to manage stress and anger, or to overcome depression without relying on getting high could be the difference maker that ignites the flames of inspiration, hope and readiness for change.

“I really believe that everyone has a talent, ability, or skill that he can mine to support himself to succeed in life” – Dean Koontz





Look over the following: “**Skills for Change**” chart and rate each area based on this scale:

- 1- Beginner
- 2- Know the Basics
- 3- Proficient (You can do it well)
- 4- Expert (You can do it so well you can show or teach others)

<u>SKILL AREA</u>	<u>Example:</u>	Rate: (1-4)
Assertiveness	Saying “no”, Speaking up for yourself	
Coping with Anxiety	Relaxation, Positive Self-Talk, Deep Breathing	
Anger Management	Expressing anger without aggression, self-harm or acting out	
Resolving Conflicts	Handling interpersonal disagreements calmly and effectively	
Employment Skills	Finding a job, Interviewing, Getting a job, Keeping the job,	
Coping with Trauma	Effectively managing hurtful memories or losses	
Social Skills	Building new positive relationships, Meeting new friends	
Coping with Boredom	Learning new ways to use your time and still have some fun	
Managing Depression	Coping with feelings of sadness, overcoming negative thoughts	
Coping w/Cravings	Learning to get through urges consistently without giving in	
Self-Esteem	Feeling positive about yourself even when things are tough	
Mood Management	Regulating “high’s” and “lows” with emotions and behavior	
Impulse Control	Learning to resist the sudden urge to act w/o thinking	
Drama Avoidance	Staying away from people and situations that lead to trouble	
Money Management	Budgeting, avoiding overspending, paying bills responsibly	
Problem Solving	When obstacles get in your way, identifying <i>positive</i> alternatives	
Endurance	Developing the ability to keep going through the tough times	
“Life” Skills	Taking care of your home, your family, your responsibilities, etc.	
Decision Making	Thinking things through then choosing based in long term goals	
Relapse Prevention	Once you stop using, keeping from going back long-term	
<i>OTHER? List Here></i>		



DISCUSSION

Review and Process: Were there any other skill areas not on that list that you can think of? Discuss:

Strengths: What are your areas of strength when it comes to skills, (What are you already good at?) - Discuss:

- Can you share a brief story about how you have been able to use that skill in the past?

Weaknesses: What do you think you need to work on the most? - Discuss:

- Can you share a brief real-life example that explains one of the areas you struggle with?

Brainstorm: How can you start to learn these skills? (Some examples may include: seek counseling, read self-help books, build a support system of people who know how to help you, do research) List your ideas:

- What are you willing to do in order to start taking steps toward making progress with building these skills right now?

Action: What is one thing you are willing to commit to today in order to start working on one skill area? Share: