

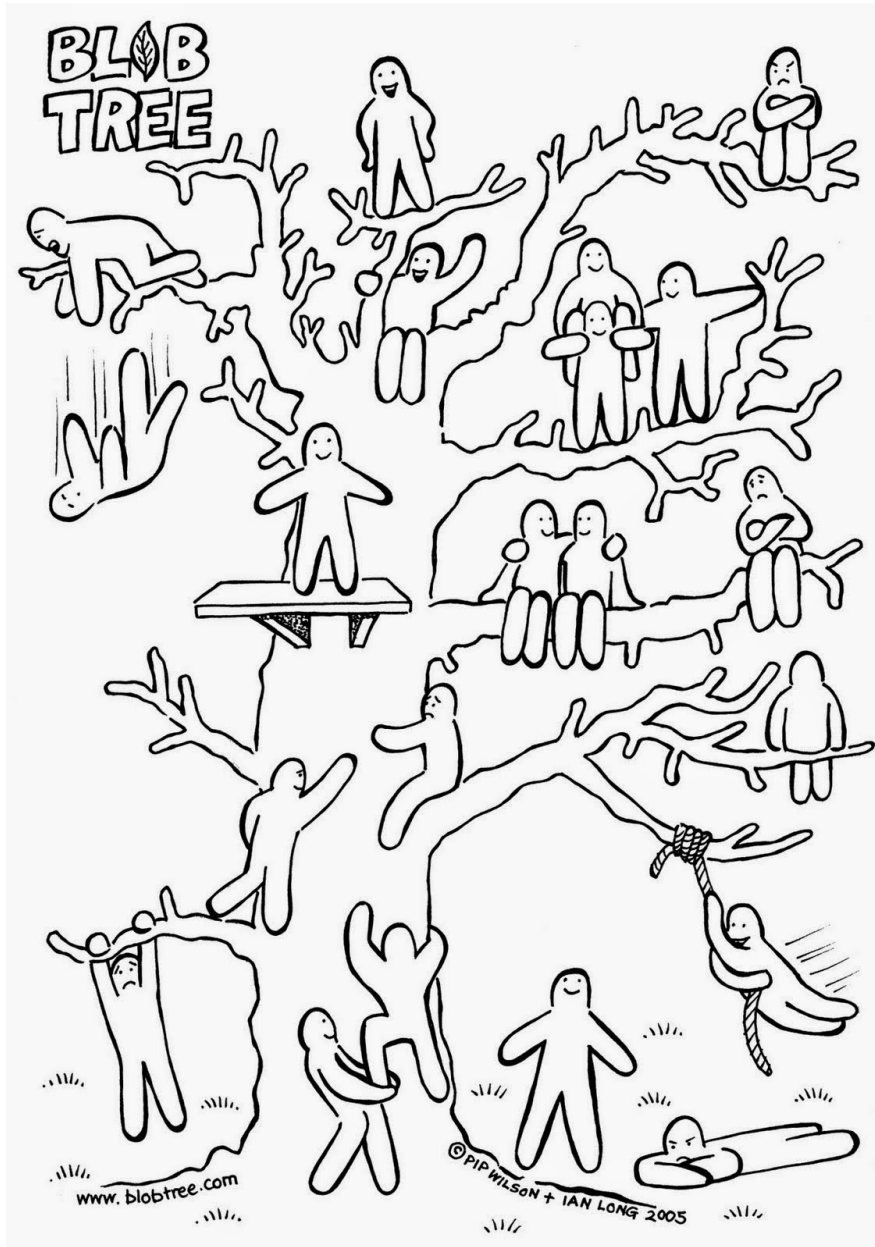
Breaking Barriers – Teen Group Counseling Outline

Introduction: Welcome to Teen Talk – Breaking Through the Noise

Goal: Introduce the session's purpose and set a positive tone for the group.

- Brief discussion on the challenges teens faces today (pressure to fit in, social media, schoolwork, etc.).
- Acknowledge that the group is there for support and positive change.

Icebreaker: 'The Blob Tree Choice' – Break Through the Noise!



Goal: Reflect on decision-making and how you feel in different situations related to the **Breaking Barriers** curriculum.

Instructions:

1. Introduction:

Show the **Blob Tree** and explain that each blob represents a different way we might react to situations in life.

2. Activity:

Read the following scenarios aloud. For each one, pick a blob on the tree that best represents how you'd react. Circle or check or color the blob that matches your answer.

Scenarios:

- **Someone offers you a vape at a party.**

(Do you confidently say "No" or feel unsure and give in?)

- **You're stressed about school or life.**

(Do you talk to someone, or keep it to yourself?)

- **Your friends start making fun of someone.**

(Do you speak up or stay quiet?)

- **You're invited to drink or vape with friends.**

(Do you say no or go along with it?)

- **You need to study but your friends want you to hang out.**

(Do you study or skip responsibilities?)

- **You want to stay substance-free, but everyone's drinking or vaping.**

(Do you stick to your goal or feel pressured?)

3. **Discussion:**

Ask a few teens to share their choices and why. Discuss how different choices affect us and the importance of making healthy decisions.

Activity 1: Let's Talk Thoughts – Are They Rational or... Not So Much?

Goal: Help teens identify and challenge irrational thoughts that affect their decision-making.

- **Purpose:** Teach teens how to recognize unhelpful thinking patterns and replace them with more realistic ones.
- **Instructions:**
 - Read each statement.
 - Discuss whether the thought is *rational* or *irrational* and why.
 - Encourage teens to write their thoughts in their worksheets for later reflection.
- **Examples of Statements:**
 - “I must be perfect.”
 - “Everyone should like me all the time.”
 - “If I mess up, it’s a disaster.”
 - “If I can’t go to this party, I’ll die.”
- **Goal:** Replace irrational thoughts with more rational ones that lead to healthier decisions.

Activity 2: Vaping & Other Substances – Myth vs. Fact

Goal: Educate teens about the risks and misconceptions around vaping, alcohol, and marijuana.

- **Purpose:** Provide accurate information about substances that teens may face pressure to try.
- **Instructions:**
 - Read each statement.

- Have the group decide if it's a *myth* or *fact*.
- Review correct answers and discuss the risks associated with each substance.
- **Example Statements:**
 - "Vaping is safer than smoking cigarettes."
 - "Alcohol will help me relax and forget my problems."
 - "It's no big deal if I try marijuana a couple of times."
 - "Teenagers who drink alcohol are more likely to have problems in school."
- **Goal:** Help teens understand the truth behind substance use myths and empower them to make informed choices.

Activity 3: Healthy Choices Journal

Goal: Encourage teens to reflect on the positive choices they're already making and their impact on the future.

- **Purpose:** Help teens identify healthy behaviors they're practicing and the long-term benefits.
- **Instructions:**
 - Have teens write about a healthy choice they've recently made.
 - Reflect on how it made them feel.
 - Discuss how this choice will benefit them in the future.
- **Goal:** Reinforce the importance of making choices that align with their long-term goals and health.

Activity 4: Goal Setting for Success – Dream Big, Act Bigger

Goal: Help teens set realistic and actionable goals for their future.

- **Purpose:** Guide teens through creating goals that motivate and challenge them while being achievable.
- **Instructions:**

- Have teens write down one big goal they want to achieve this year.
- Break that goal down into smaller, actionable steps.
- Encourage teens to identify a support system (family, friends, mentors).
- Discuss the obstacles they may face and strategies to overcome them.
- **Example Goal:**
 - *Goal: Stay substance-free this year.*
 - *Steps: Say no to vaping, avoid situations with alcohol, find healthy hobbies.*
 - *Support: Best friend, school counselor.*
 - *Obstacles: Peer pressure, FOMO (Fear of Missing Out).*
- **Goal:** Help teens create a clear, step-by-step path toward achieving their goals.

Activity 5: The Fork in the Road – Decision-Making Scenarios

Goal: Equip teens with skills to make thoughtful decisions when faced with challenges.

- **Purpose:** Practice decision-making by exploring common scenarios teens may encounter.
- **Instructions:**
 - Present scenarios (e.g., party with vaping, feeling stressed and tempted to try substances).
 - Discuss decision options and possible consequences of each choice.
 - Encourage group discussions on why one decision is healthier than the other.
- **Goal:** Help teens evaluate their options and choose actions that align with their values.

Activity 6: Personal Reflection Journal

Goal: Promote self-reflection on personal values, goals, and obstacles.

- **Purpose:** Help teens reflect on their current behavior and desired future self.
- **Instructions:**
 - Ask teens to write their top 3 goals for the next year.
 - Discuss what actions are required to achieve those goals.

- Identify potential obstacles and strategies to overcome them.
 - Encourage teens to think about who can support them in achieving these goals.
- **Goal:** Foster a sense of ownership and empowerment in goal-setting and personal development.

Closing Discussion: You Got This!

Goal: Reinforce the importance of making healthy decisions and staying true to oneself.

- **Purpose:** Provide encouragement and affirmation that making the right choices leads to personal growth.
- **Instructions:**
 - Invite teens to share one thing they're taking away from the session.
 - Encourage them to apply what they've learned to their daily lives.
 - End on a positive, empowering note that reminds them of their strength.
- **Goal:** Empower teens to break through the noise and make decisions that will lead to a healthier, happier future.

End of Session: Summary & Takeaways

- Review key points:
 - Identifying irrational thoughts and replacing them with rational ones.
 - Busting myths about vaping and other substances.
 - Setting goals and making decisions that align with personal values.
 - Understanding the impact of choices on long-term health and success.
- Provide handouts or resources for additional support.