

Being a Pro

The Prosocial Model for Problem-Solving



Teen Workbook

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Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become your character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.
—Frank Outlaw, President Bi-Lo Stores

Dedication

This Workbook is dedicated to the youths with whom I have had the great privilege to work in the past 35 years. I appreciate their candor, humor, and the opportunity to be part of their development as prosocial individuals.

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First Edition

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Note to the Counselor

Initial validation studies of the effectiveness of the ***Being a Pro*** workbook as an intervention with at-risk youths have been conducted at four field sites with 39 teenage subjects, ages 12 to 17. The facilitators used the workbook in weekly sessions over a period of 10 weeks, using the first five chapters, one each week, and then the exercises in chapter 6, one per week for an additional five weeks. The ***Being a Pro*** workbook was designed to be administered in this way, but purchasers are free to use it as they think best.

The field site facilitators administered a pretest and posttest to each individual subject before and after completion of the 10 weeks. Results of this study showed improvement in prosocial attitudes and reasoning, which was encouraging. The present plan is to submit these findings to a peer review process, and then publication.

Related Resources

My report on the results of the initial validation studies along with the following three professional resources are available as free downloads from the Safer Society Press website (www.safersociety.org/press).

1. ***Being a Pro Counselor's Manual***

This document provides guidance and suggestions for the counselor for using the workbook with teen clients.

2. ***Being a Pro Research and Theory Manual***

This document describes in greater detail the research and theory connected with the development of the workbook. Through this document, the interested professional will gain greater depth and understanding of the basis for the approach used, which in turn will provide a more sophisticated basis for using the workbook.

3. Pretest and Posttest

Regardless of whether the Being a Pro workbook is used in individual therapy or a group setting, the pretest and posttest were designed to be administered to each individual teen participant, before and after completion of the intervention. Completing the pretest and posttest will help you with program evaluation and with documenting your practice or program outcomes, should this be desired or required.

In addition to the free resources listed above, there is a 1.5-hour online workshop in which I discuss the research, theory, and practical implementation of the Being a Pro intervention. As a complement to the print resources described above, I appear in an online workshop that provides similar information, but in an interactive format. One and a half continuing education credits may be obtained upon completion. The workshop is available at <https://psychacademy.net>.

Using Being a Pro as a Structured Evidence-Based Intervention

Use of the *Being a Pro* workbook as structured evidence-based intervention requires additional instruction, materials, and information. Scoring is also available for the pretest and posttests. Please contact Dr. Ralph (dr.n.b.ralph@gmail.com) if you're interested in using the workbook in this fashion.

- Dr. Norbert Ralph

Introduction

This workbook was designed to help teens like you develop more prosocial thinking, behaviors, and relationships. Why would you be interested in this? Because there is research showing that when teens use prosocial thinking skills and behaviors they are more likely to be successful in life. Most teens want to have positive relationships with friends, parents, and teachers. They want to be able to learn new things and have the things they want. Likewise, they want to stay out of trouble at home, at school, and in the community. The purpose of this workbook is to help you be more successful by learning prosocial behavior so that you will have more of the “good things” in life.

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook has several parts that all go together and include both **readings** and **exercises**. The **readings** explain the prosocial model upon which this workbook is based. The **exercises** are the learning and practice parts of the model. *The exercises are printed in boldfaced italics, which looks like this sentence.* Both the readings and exercises are to be discussed with your counselor. Be prepared to give about as much to the discussion as you give to the reading and writing. Take as much time as you need to do the reading and exercises, and be sure not to rush. Talk about the issues raised by the reading and exercise materials with your counselor, and if you are in a group, with the other teens in your group. Also, your counselor can help explain the material and talk with you about other important issues.

The workbook has an introduction and six chapters. Chapters 1 through 5 may take about one week each, and chapter 6 can be done over a longer period. Completing the workbook will usually take at least 10 sessions. Do-

ing the work slower is better for some. Your counselor will tell you when to read and fill out the material. Most of the reading and writing you can probably do on your own, but if you are stuck or need help, ask your counselor. If you are using the workbook in a group, your counselor may ask other teens in the group to help you. You will be asked to discuss and get feedback about any written assignments with your counselor, and if you are in a group, also with other group members.

All the chapter material should be read and all the written assignments filled out and reviewed by the counselor. After each chapter or week's assignment is completed, your counselor will sign off on it. Follow your counselor's directions about when and where to do the work.

To summarize:

1. Do each chapter at the pace your counselor sets.
2. Do all the reading and writing assignments, 100%.
3. All written work will be discussed or presented.

What is Prosocial?

The word prosocial describes how people think, reason, and behave in ways that create more positive situations for themselves and others. Positive means that the outcomes benefit all parties and no person or thing is harmed. It also means that family values and the community's rules and laws are followed. One important example of prosocial interactions is business relations. If you want a pizza delivered and you can pay for it, you can get it. The store owners are happy because they get money for the pizza they made and you are happy because you get to eat the pizza. You know this store's pizza is safe to eat because the City Health Department Inspection sticker is displayed on the store window. You may order again from that store because you know you get a good product from them, and they will stay in business because they are making money. That is success for everybody.

Another example of a prosocial relationship is a friendship. If you are nice and supportive to friends, give practical help, and treat them respectfully, they will usually treat you the same way. That is the important thing about friendships and prosocial relations-everybody wins!

Can you think of examples of prosocial relationships in your life?

Think of relationships where you and others benefit and all relevant rules and laws are followed. It can be shopping, working with businesses, friends, family, at school, church, or in other situations in your life.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

There are positive behaviors that go along with prosocial relationships. Some of them are: being respectful, keeping promises, apologizing, and listening. Can you give some examples from your own experience of prosocial relationships in which people show these behaviors? It might be a friend, parent, teacher, coach, or other important person in your life.

Who behaves in these ways with you?

Being respectful:

Keeping promises:

Apologizing:

Listening:

Relationships in which both parties do not benefit are not prosocial. If someone doesn't treat a friend respectfully and kindly, then that is not a prosocial relationship. Also if relationships aren't mutually beneficial or laws or rules are broken, that those relationships are not prosocial. There are some behaviors, such as bullying and lying that do not belong in prosocial relationships.

Why are the following behaviors NOT prosocial?

Saying insulting or disrespectful things:

Being physically aggressive:

Bullying:

Lying:

Interrupting others:

Chapter 1

The Prosocial Model

Researchers who study human development have described how human beings develop prosocial thinking. As children, we think only about what we want to do or have now and not about what might happen later—that is, we do not think about the consequences of our behaviors. As we mature physically from childhood to adolescence to adulthood, our brains also mature and we develop more complex ways of thinking. Our thinking begins to include more details, such as all the things going on in a situation, all the rules, how other people are thinking and feeling, and the long term effects of our behavior.

In other words, as our brains mature, we become more capable of prosocial thinking. As teens and young adults we may not practice prosocial thinking, but we are capable of it.

The Reactive Model

Many teens and some adults do not practice prosocial thinking even though they are capable of doing so. Instead, they continue to think like someone younger. They don't think of choices when faced with problems—they just react. This approach to problem solving can be shown in a simple diagram.

Problem  *Reaction*

This approach can be called the reactive model. In this model, when a problem comes along, we just react to it. For a lot of simple routine situations in life, the reactive model works just fine. But every teen deals with situations that are not so routine and simple.

Let us say that a teenage boy had an agreement to meet with his English teacher after school to get extra help. But earlier that day, a girl he likes asked him to come over to hang out at the coffee shop with other kids after school for a while. On the one hand he would like to go with the girl, but on the other hand he's afraid to break his promise to the teacher because he needs help from that teacher. This is typical of problems that routinely come up for teens. It requires some thinking and planning to find solutions that enable you to do the things you want in ways that will not get you in trouble while respecting others, promoting good relationships with all, and helping yourself in the long run.

Describe some ways that a younger, less experienced teen might handle this situation by just reacting and not thinking it through:

Can you think of examples of why this might not be good?

Now consider the same situation, but with an older, more experienced teen. This teen thinks, “On the one hand I’ve got to think about this, but on the other hand I’ve got to think about that.” He knows he has to stop and think things through to have the best outcome. In the situation described above, the teen made an agreement with a teacher to meet after school for help. If he doesn’t keep his agreement with the teacher, that might not be so good.

If he wants to meet with the girl, is there anything he can work out with the teacher?

If he decides to meet with the teacher and not meet the girl, what can he say or do to make things better with the girl?

The Prosocial Model

For more complicated situations, which happen every day, let's look at a different model called the prosocial model. This model is more likely to lead to positive outcomes. To review, prosocial means that all the parties are more likely to have positive outcomes and not violate any rules or laws. This approach to problem solving can be shown in the diagram below:



Here is the model in more detail:

STOP: Stop and think before acting.



PROBLEM: Figure out what is going on in the situation.



CHOICES: What are your choices?



REVIEW: Review the outcome and look for improvements.

The main idea of the prosocial model of problem solving is not just to react, but to think things through. First you stop; then you think about the problem and situation and figure out what's going on. Some problems may not be so simple and you may need to look a little more closely. Then you can review your choices and decide the best way to go. We will look at each of the steps in the prosocial model in more detail in the next four chapters.

Introduction and Chapter 1 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature

Chapter 2

STOP: Stop and Think Before You Act

A simple way to describe the contents of this chapter is this: sometimes you have to stop before you go. As we discussed above, if you just react, it sometimes makes situations and relationships worse. If you can stop, think things through, and figure out what would be best for you and others, then you can have better outcomes. But you cannot do this unless you are able to stop first. Being able to stop and slow things down is the first important step in going from the **reactive model** to the **prosocial model**. Another way to say this is that in life you cannot go far unless you can also stop when you need to.

THE PROSOCIAL MODEL

Stop ➡ *Problem* ➡ *Choices* ➡ *Review*

“Stop” may be the hardest part of the prosocial model. There are many reasons why it is hard to stop. Let us look at some of these. For each of these reasons below, a problem is described, followed by a solution. The solution is not the only way the problem can be solved, but just one idea. You may discover other ways to handle problems that work even better for you. If you need more help with these, your counselor can give you additional suggestions. The idea here is just to think about options and what might work.

Habits

The problem: If you have always handled situations by jumping right in without thinking, then that will usually be the way you keep handling them. Even when there is a reason to change, you may keep handling problems the same way because that approach has become your habit.

The solution: There are ways to deal with habits. You can develop a new habit, which can be to stop and think how to handle things better. This is the way most athletes, like Olympic track stars, or major league baseball players think about their sport. They want to learn from every performance, review videos of it, get coaching, and figure out how to do it better.

Emotions

The problem: People's emotions can be one of the main reasons that it is hard for them to stop and think before they act. When our emotions are strong, it's difficult to slow things down. This is just part of how people behave. If you are angered by something your friend says and just snap back at him, it probably will not lead to the best outcome.

Also when people are feeling scared, it is hard to slow down and think things through. When you are experiencing strong feelings, like being mad or scared, these feelings are often running the show in your brain rather than the thinking part of your mind. Your anger or fear is in charge, not you.

The solution: What can you do to deal with emotions that make it hard to stop and think? Adolescents usually tell me that the best way to calm down after they are upset is to just take a break or walk away from the situation that is getting them upset. What also helps is doing something else, and almost anything else works. This might include physical activity, like doing push-ups, or talking to somebody, listening to music, or watching TV. Many things can work as long as they distract you and don't get you more upset. If you focus on and think a lot about upset feelings, and do not do anything else, they tend to stick around longer or even become more powerful.

Your attention is like a spotlight. You can choose to direct your attention toward something other than what is upsetting you and then the feelings get less upsetting. If emotional distress is making it hard for you to deal with life generally, your counselor can talk with you further about other things that can help.

Social Pressure

The problem: Another important factor that makes stopping hard is social pressure. If friends expect you to do something, it is hard to go against that. Teens do not want to “look bad” in front of friends or do something that might be disapproved by other teens. For example, if a teen is insulted, he may feel pressure from his friends to do something about it, including insulting back, threatening, or fighting.

The solution: What helps for some teens is to realize that what others expect from them may not be the best choice. Sometimes the best choice for you may not be the popular choice. Many times, teens find that their so-called friends are making bad choices and encouraging others to do the same. If your friends are not helping you make good choices, then you may have to find other friends. Making bad choices can be like a contagious disease. If your friends have this disease, you can catch it and also end up making bad choices.

Drugs and Alcohol

The problem: Using drugs and alcohol is another thing that makes it difficult for teens to stop and think. When people are high on drugs or alcohol, their brains are not working well, especially their ability to stop, think, and plan. Also people using substances do not recognize that they are making mistakes and using bad judgment. A lot of humor in movies involves people acting silly when they are high. This is sad and even dangerous in real life because people end up doing things they later wish they had not done.

Often, people using drugs or alcohol end up not only harming themselves, but also others. That is why there is such a big focus on preventing drunk driving. If you drive when drunk, you and others are much more likely to be harmed.

People are also more likely to get in trouble with the law when they are using drugs or alcohol. A lot of people are in jail or prison because of bad decisions they made while using drugs or alcohol and associating with people who use these substances. Making bad choices is even more contagious when everybody is high.

The solution: The easiest way not to have this problem is to not use drugs or alcohol. For many teens, substance use can become a habit. It can also involve social pressure. If everybody uses drugs and alcohol to be social or cool, then it is hard to say no. This may mean finding a different set of friends. There is also professional help for dealing with substance abuse. If you need more help with this problem, you can talk to your counselor about that.

Practicing “Stop”

Now let’s practice stopping. Think of a situation or feeling that often bothers or upsets you. Now stop and count to ten. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten. Wasn’t that easy? When I talked to one youth about counting to ten, he said that never worked. When I asked him what happened, he said that he could only make it to five, then forgot what the problem was. So actually counting to ten worked so well for him that the problem was gone by the time he got to five.

Counting to ten is just one technique. In the future, you may come up with ways that work even better. But as we have discussed, sometimes it is hard to stop even after you have counted to ten.

***Can you think of examples of problem situations where it's hard to stop?
See if you can list some below:***

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

In each of the situations above, list what could you do to make it easier to stop.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Chapter 2 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature

Chapter 3

PROBLEM: Figure Out What is Going On in the Situation

Before we begin, let's review what we have discussed so far about the pro-social model and "Stop."



You can't figure out what is going on in a situation unless you use "Stop."

"Problem" then helps you figure out what is going on in a situation. Often our first impression of a situation isn't the most accurate. When we have a better idea about what's going on in a situation we can make better decisions. For example, if we see water on the floor in a bathroom, it could be there for several reasons. Somebody could have spilled a glass of water on the floor; a pipe could be leaking under a faucet; there could be steam from a shower dripping on the floor or even water leaking from the ceiling. The same is true in medicine. Doctors don't treat a problem before diagnosing it.

Here are four important questions to ask about a situation:

1. What happened before the situation?
2. What is going on in the situation?
3. What are people thinking and feeling?
4. What rules or laws apply?

Here are more detailed descriptions of the questions.

1. What happened before the situation?

This question refers to what was going on before the situation happened and what may have led up to it. If someone is getting mad at you, that's unpleasant, but it's also important to understand what led up to it. Does he feel you just put him down? Did you insult his family? Is a teacher getting mad at you because you promised to bring in missing homework today? Did your girlfriend "fly off the handle" at you for no reason you can identify? Maybe she had an argument with someone else, or maybe she is having a bad day and you just happen to be there.

Give some examples of situations in which it would be helpful to know what happened before:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. What is going on in the situation?

What is going on right now in the situation? Are you sure you understand what others are saying and what the facts are, or do you need to double check? There's an expression, "measure twice, cut once." That means be sure you know what's going on before you act, especially in a situation in which there will be no easy way to take back what you say or do.

3. What are people thinking and feeling?

It's important to know what people are thinking and feeling in the situation. This is another way of understanding the situation and how to handle it better. For example, if your teacher just sent another student to the office for

causing problems in class, is this the best time to ask the teacher for a favor or make a funny remark? For another example, if your parents are very tired after working for 16 hours, or stressed about money, is this be a good time to tell them about any more problems, hassles, or things you want?

4. What rules or laws apply?

Are you aware of any rules or expectations people have in a situation such as this one? For example, are your friends talking in a place where people are not supposed to talk, such as in class or a library? Some rules, like school rules or traffic laws, are written. Other rules are things that everybody is expected to know even though they are not written. For example, if your teacher is lecturing about a subject, you know you shouldn't interrupt and start talking about something unrelated like a dance or basketball game. Or if a friend is telling you about a break up with his girlfriend, you don't let yourself get distracted and not listen to him. You try to be a good friend and listen and be sympathetic.

SAMPLE SITUATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Let's look at some situations and think about how we might use some of the ideas above. Look at the drawings below. For each drawing you will be asked to give some answers. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers should be those that make the most sense to you.

Situation 1



1. What happened before?

2. What is going on now?

3. What are these people thinking and feeling?

4. Do any rules or laws apply?

5. What will the outcome be?

Situation 2



1. What happened before?

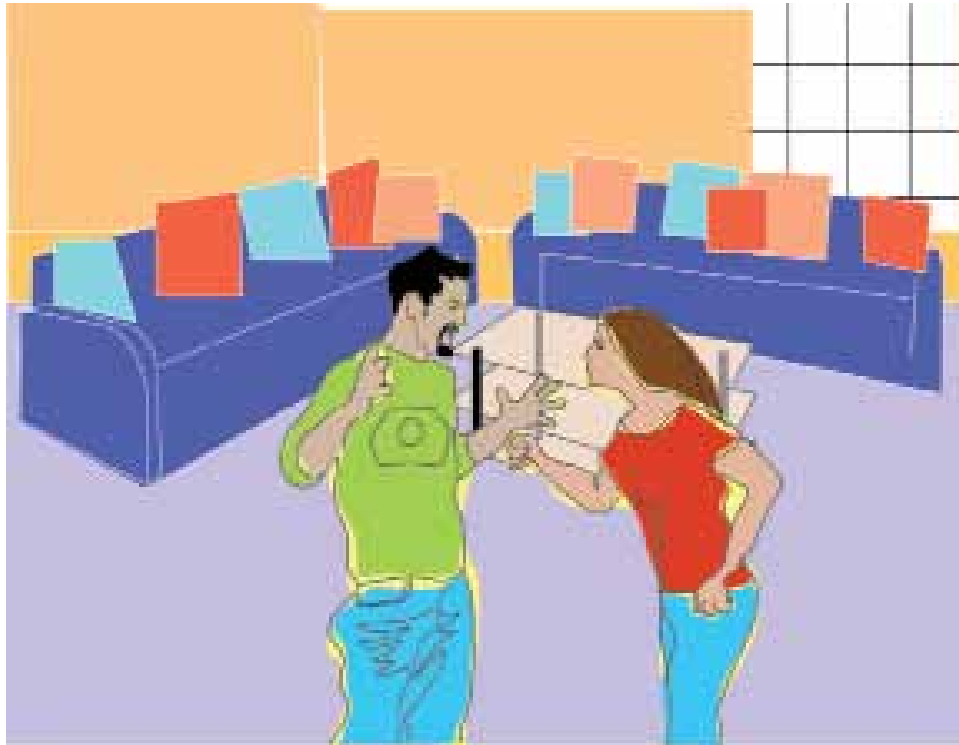
2. What is going on now?

3. What are these people thinking and feeling?

4. Do any rules or laws apply?

5. What will the outcome be?

Situation 3



1. What happened before?

2. What is going on now?

3. What are these people thinking and feeling?

4. Do any rules or laws apply?

5. What will the outcome be?

Chapter 3 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature?

Chapter 4

CHOICES: What are Your Choices?

Before we begin our discussion of “Choices,” let’s review the Prosocial Model up until now.



As we discussed above, before you “go” you usually want to “stop” and think things through. If you don’t stop, then you may make the wrong decision by just reacting. The best choices usually don’t happen when you just react. That is why “Stop” is so important. Then once you use “Stop,” you can use “Problem” and figure out what is going on in a situation. You need to think about what was going on before in a situation, what is going on now, what people are thinking or feeling, and what rules or laws apply.

Now that you have completed your work on “Stop” and “Problem,” we are ready for “Choices.” This is where we begin to look at our options in a situation. Some situations do not really offer many choices. If you begin crossing the street and a car is coming fast, your only real choice is to just get out of the way and stay safe. But in many situations we have several choices and some are better than others.

We are learning about prosocial choices because these are more likely to have better outcomes for us and others. One thing to think about is how to make choices that are prosocial.

Win-Win Outcomes

As you remember, prosocial outcomes are “win-win” outcomes. That means that as much as possible we try to think of outcomes or solutions where both parties benefit. Both parties in an interaction benefit when they both get something they want and are treated respectfully. If we think that we will have these types of relationships with a person, family, or organization, life is a lot easier. We don’t have to always worry about being mistreated and not getting what we want. Imagine if every time you went into a store to pay for something you weren’t sure they would give you what you paid for, or they would want to charge you more after taking your money. That would make life a lot harder.

In any situation, we also have to know what the rules or expectations are. We know what these are if we have done a good job with understanding the “Problem” described above. Prosocial choices follow the rules which lead to better outcomes. For example, if you want to get something from your parents or guardian, you also have to think about the rules they have in a situation.

If you want to go out with friends on a weeknight, you might have to make a deal that all your homework gets done before you leave. When you make that kind of a deal, then you get what you want and your parents get what they want. If you just demand to go out, without thinking of what your parents want and their rules, this usually will not be as successful. If you didn’t even ask and just went out, this would be even worse. In some families, teens cannot go out under any circumstances for social activities during school nights. So in this case you would not even think of asking your parents about going out until you have discussed changing the rule with them.

Another way to think about “Choices” is to use some guidelines. Some of the guidelines below are adapted from Rotary International, an international service club that uses rules they call the Four-Way Test. You can find a number of groups that have similar types of principles. Here is our version, which I am calling the Prosocial Principles.

The Prosocial Principles

Before we say or do anything the prosocial principles require us to ask:

1. Is it true?
2. Is it fair and does it benefit all?
3. Will it build cooperation and better relationships?
4. Is it playing by the rules?

These Prosocial Principles do a good job of defining prosocial choices. Notice that the principles apply not only to things we do but to things we say. People build trust and good relationships by both what they say and what they do. What we say to others matters, whether it's a promise, a kind word, or a not-so-kind word. It also matters what we do. Most people know the difference between those who say they'll do the right thing and those who actually do it.

Can you think of examples where someone kept their promise, even for something small?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Let's look at these prosocial principles one by one.

1. Is it true?

It matters that what you think, say, or do is based on "truth." If you don't start out with the truth, then people won't trust you. Usually people don't say the truth because they want to look better, avoid embarrassment, get something, or gain some type of advantage or benefit. If others can't trust that you are telling the truth, they won't want to have a relationship with

you. You may then be missing out on a relationship in the future that might help or benefit you.

Of course truth is not always a black and white thing, and some things are shades of gray. You may have some ideas about what is “true” but often you have to take a little time and figure it out. Sometimes your first take on a situation is correct, but sometimes it is not. That’s why all the steps in “Problem” are important. Remember, if you are not sure of something, the “true” thing to say is that you are not sure.

Can you think of a problem or situation in your life where you had to take a little time to figure out what was true?

2. Is it fair and does it benefit all?

This is a key part of a prosocial solution. It means that you do not try to take advantage of a situation for your benefit, if it is unfair to the other person. This isn’t always easily done, but you can always try to give it your “best shot.” For example, if you’re sharing a pizza with friends, a fair decision is to divide it up equally. However, it is not always easy to cut a pizza so that all the slices are the same size. Giving it your best shot means involving the others in deciding who gets the larger and smaller slices. Why you should make things “fair” goes to the heart of why you should think, talk, and act prosocially.

If things are “fair,” then that means everybody’s needs are reasonably respected, people feel treated fairly, and the outcome will likely help out each person in the future. That type of outcome is as “good as it gets” for most of us. There are always exceptions. For example, if you are playing sports, then

being “fair” means you can play to win, but you’re playing within the rules of the game. If you’re playing basketball you can steal the ball from the other team but you can’t trip, push, or hit them. You can still play a game to win and also follow the Prosocial Principles.

Can you think of someone who treated you fairly in a large or small way?

How did that make you feel?

Why would you want to cooperate or do things with someone who treated you fairly?

3. Will it build cooperation and better friendships and relationships?

If you make a decision that others think is unfair, then they are not going to be too happy. They are not going to want to cooperate with you in the future, and this won’t build better relationships. From a purely selfish point of view, doing something unfair means that rather than having someone who can help you, you will have someone who doesn’t trust you and you may have to deal with in the future. Getting other people’s help or at least not their resistance makes life much easier, just as it is easier to walk downhill than uphill. If we have more positive relationships, it’s easier for us to feel positive about life. Part of having a positive view on life is knowing that there are people around who will help you. It doesn’t have to be everybody, but we all need some important people in our lives.

Can you think of examples in your life in which you had good trusting relationships, and because of this were able to get something you wanted?

Can you think of an example in your life in which you might build better relationships that in turn may help you in the future?

4. Is it playing by the rules?

If you make a deal with someone that is fair but is violating a rule or law, it is likely that it will not have a good outcome. For example, you might convince a friend to divide a big sandwich evenly, which appears to be a “fair” agreement. But if you are doing it during your math class, you are probably breaking a no eating or talking rule in the class. Both of you may end up in detention, and your friend may not be willing to cooperate with you in the future. Decisions that follow the rules cause fewer problems, and in the end are more beneficial to you.

Can you think of an example in your life in which you might have been better off if you had played by the rules?

Let's put it all together and think about some situations and see if they meet the tests described above in the "Prosocial Principles."

Situation 1

Some teens decide to go to a concert about an hour's drive away. They decide to go in the van of one of the older teens.

Should the teens that are just riding offer to help pay for the gas?

Yes No

Why did you answer in the way you did?

What Prosocial Principles apply here?

Situation 2

Omar has a paper due in English class next week. His friend Freddy wrote a paper for the same class last year. Freddy agrees to let Omar use the paper, and in exchange Omar will pay for both of them to do Go Karting the next week. Omar gets what he wants, and Freddy gets what he wants.

In this example, do Omar and Freddy follow the Prosocial Principles?

Yes No

Is it fair and does it benefit all?

Yes No

Why did you answer in the way you did?

Will it build cooperation and better friendships and relationship?

Yes No

Why did you answer in the way you did?

Is it playing by the rules?

Yes No

Why did you answer in the way you did?

Situation 3

Maria and her friend Elijah are planning a high school graduation party for their friends. There is a total of 12 teens attending, including Maria and Elijah. The parents all gave their permission. They want to find a safe and quiet place for playing music, eating food, and dancing. They are able to rent the party room of the apartment complex they both live in. There is a \$100 cleaning deposit needed to make the reservation. If the room is left clean, they get the \$100 back. Maria and Elijah feel it's fair to charge each of the other 10 teens \$10 to cover the \$100 deposit for the place. That way they wouldn't have to pay any money. After all they found the place and made the arrangements and put work into this.

Is this an agreement that is fair and benefits all?

Yes No

Give your argument either way.

Would it be fair if Maria and Elijah didn't tell the other teens that they themselves weren't going to pay?

Yes No

Give the reason for your answer.

Would it be “fairer” if they told the other teens that they aren’t paying because they put the work in for making the arrangements?

Yes No

Give the reason for your answer.

Situation 4

David is 16 and Luis is 14. Luis has been helping David wash, vacuum, and detail his car. David is grateful for the help and wants to pay back Luis by letting him drive them both to the pizza place three blocks away. David and Luis both think that this is “fair.”

Does this follow the Prosocial Principles described above?

Yes No

If no, which principles doesn’t it follow?

Is there any way they could change things a little so that David could reward Luis for his help?

Situation 5

Robert found a new iPhone in a coffee shop and decided to take it home. He wanted to sell it to his friend Janet. He told Janet it was a spare phone his family had, and asked if she wanted to buy it. They both agreed on a price they thought was fair.

Does this situation follow Prosocial Principles?

Yes No

If no, which principles doesn't it follow?

Are there any other options that Robert has so that he can follow Prosocial principles.

Situation 6

Raymon wants to buy a bike from Veronica. It is a boy's dirt bike that Veronica doesn't want to use anymore. Raymon knows that a friend of his wants to buy the bike too. Raymon doesn't tell Veronica that the other boy wants to buy it. They both agree on a price, both think it's fair, and feel positive about it.

Does that follow Prosocial Principles?

Yes No

If no, which principle doesn't it follow?

Is there anything that Raymond can do to follow Prosocial Principles in a better way?

Chapter 4 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature

Chapter 5

REVIEW: Review the Outcome and Look for Improvements

REVIEW is the last part of the Prosocial Model. But before we go into review, let's go over the parts of the Prosocial Model.



Let's look again at the three parts of the Prosocial Model we have covered so far.

STOP: Stop and think before you act.

Why is STOP an important step before making Choices?

Why might STOP be hard?

PROBLEM: Figure out what is going on in the situation.

Why is PROBLEM an important step?

What are some things to keep in mind about figuring out what the problem is?

CHOICES: Use the Prosocial Principles to make the best choices.

Describe why asking each of the following questions is important in making choices.

Is it true?

Is it fair and benefit all?

Will it build cooperation and better friendships and relationships?

Is it playing by the rules?

If you follow the Prosocial Principles with others why might they help you more in the future?

REVIEW consists of reviewing outcomes and looking for ways to make improvements. It involves reviewing the choices you have made and seeing if the results are what you want. All sports teams from the high school level on up review their performances on the field and figure out ways they can improve. They watch tapes of the whole game, take notes, and find ways to play better. Why shouldn't you use this approach in the most important game you will ever play-your life?

One way to REVIEW is to ask the following questions:

1. Were goals met?
2. If goals were not met, what were the causes?
3. Where there any other problems that came up?
4. What can be done to improve outcomes or fix problems?

Let's look again at the example of Maria and Elijah and see how they might have used REVIEW. Maria and Elijah were planning a party for themselves and 10 friends. They ended up charging everybody \$10 for a cleaning deposit on a party room in an apartment complex, which was okay with everybody. They developed a plan for music, food, clean up, and security with their parents. Great! How did it work? Put yourself in the role of both of them to think these issues through.

1. Were goals met?

Imagine that you were Maria or Elijah. What would your goals for the party have been? (Some possible goals could be for everybody to have fun, be safe, have no conflicts, or get the cleaning deposit back and return the \$10 to everybody.) In describing your goals, give some examples of goals that were met and also some that were not met.

Goals met:

Goals not met:

2. If goals were not met, why?

Again imagine that you are Maria or Elijah. For “Goals not met” above what might be some of the causes? Keep in mind that you might use the ideas from Chapter 3: Problem. Be sure to think carefully about causes of problems.

3. Where there any other problems that came up?

List some problems that may not have been expected. They can be large or small ones.

4. What can be done to improve outcomes or fix problems?

If there were some problems you couldn't fix, that is okay to say. After all, you can't please everybody all the time, but you should do what you can. Also keep in mind that any fixes or solutions should follow prosocial principles described in Chapter 4: Choices, above.

Let's imagine some problems that might have occurred at Maria and Elijah's party and imagine how each problem might have been fixed.

Some of the people at the party are complaining that there is not any music that they like. How might this be fixed?

Some of the people are complaining that there isn't food they like at the party. How might this be fixed?

Maria and Elijah got the \$100 security deposit back and returned \$10 to everybody. But some people left the party without helping to clean up. To get their deposit back, they were required to make sure the room was swept, garbage was put in the trash area, and everything was put back the way it was before. Maria and Elijah ended up having to do most of the work for the clean-up. They didn't feel this was fair.

What could Maria and Elijah have done differently?

In summary, the REVIEW step means that even after we've gone through the other parts of the Prosocial Model (Stop ⇒ Problem ⇒ Choices), we might be able to think of ways to improve things for ourselves and others. There is an expression that "life is 5% chance and 95% choice." This means that while things do come up that are unexpected or we can't control, much of what happens to us in life relates to the choices we make, large and small. Prosocial choices over the long run tend to have better outcomes not only for yourself, but for others.

Chapter 5 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature?

Chapter 6

Practicing Prosocial Thinking

In this last chapter, you will practice using prosocial thinking to solve the problems of characters in short stories. After each practice story and the exercises that follow it, you will solve a problem of your own using a form called the Pro-Log (short for prosocial log).

About the Practice Stories

The practice stories are based on real life situations and are similar to the examples you worked with in previous chapters. Any skill—whether it is music, sports, speaking another language, or using prosocial thinking—isn't going to be learned well unless it is practiced.

Each exercise following a practice problem has three parts:

- Part I Describing a Practice Problem
- Part II Thinking About the Practice Problem
- Part III Using Prosocial Thinking with the Practice Problem

Each of these exercises begins with a short description of a problem. the description is followed by questions for you to answer as you think about about the problem. You will then use Prosocial Thinking to solve the problem. The purpose of doing this is to practice using the Prosocial Model.

About the Pro-Log (The Prosocial Log)

After you solve each practice problem, you will complete a Pro-Log. The Pro-Log is a way for you to think about and practice using the Prosocial Model in your daily life. There are five blank Pro-Log forms in this chapter. Use each one to help you think about an important situation or problem that occurred during the last few days or past week that you want to get help with or would like to improve. Let's look at each part of the Pro-Log form. The first part is:

<i>Describe the Problem/Situation</i>			
What? (Briefly)	Where	When? (Time, day)	Who? (Who was there?)

This gives information about the situation that may be important. Things can be different if something happened at 11 p.m. on a school night with people you barely know, compared with 9 a.m. on a Saturday with a family friend. If something happened at school rather than at home, that could also be important. If you were with people that maybe weren't so friendly and an argument happened, that could be a different matter than if you were among friends.

The second part of the Pro-Log follows the Prosocial Model:

APPLY THE PROSOCIAL MODEL <i>Stop</i> ➡ <i>Problem</i> ➡ <i>Choices</i> ➡ <i>Review</i>
STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?
PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?
CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?
REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?

EXERCISE 1 David's Problem

Part I Describing David's Problem

David is a 15-year-old who is staying the night at his friend Edgar's house. Edgar got a text from a girl, Laura, who lives within walking distance, and who has a friend Jane visiting there. Laura's parents are gone for the night and she is there alone with her friend Jane. David knows the girls and likes them. Edgar asks his parents if they can go over and visit the girls and they say "Yes," but he doesn't tell his parents that Laura's parents aren't at home. Edgar asks David to go over with him to visit the girls.

Part II Thinking About David's Problem

Why would David say he will go over to visit the girls with Edgar?

How would he feel if he did this?

What might happen?

Why would David tell Edgar he doesn't want to come over with him?

How would he feel then?

What might happen then?

Part III Using the Prosocial Model with David's Problem

***STOP:** Did David stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for him to stop?*



***PROBLEM:** What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?*



***CHOICES:** What were David's choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?*



***REVIEW:** Was the outcome prosocial? What could David have done to ensure a better outcome?*





Pro-Log

The Prosocial Log

Teen Initials:	Date:
----------------	-------

Describe the Problem/Situation

What?

Where?

When? (time, day)

Who? (Who was there)

Apply the Prosocial Model

Stop ⇨ **Problem** ⇨ **Choices** ⇨ **Review**

STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?



EXERCISE 2 Noah's Problem

Part I Describing Noah's Problem

Noah is a 15-year-old who was playing pick-up basketball at a local park. He is good at playing defense and the teen he was guarding was getting mad because Noah was not letting him score. Noah's team won the game and he was done playing for the day. When he was leaving, the teen that got mad at him said if he was so good, then he should come over to the parking lot where his friends were. Noah's friend Jacob heard, and said he would go with him if he wanted, and asked him what he wanted to do.

Part II Thinking About Noah's Problem

Why would Noah want to go with Jacob to talk to the other guy?

How would he feel if he did this?

What might happen?

Why would Noah not want to go to talk to the other guys?

How would he feel then?

What might happen then?

Part III Using the Prosocial Model with Noah's Problem

STOP: Did Noah stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for him to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were Noah's choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could Noah have done to ensure a better outcome?





Pro-Log

The Prosocial Log

Teen Initials:	Date:
----------------	-------

Describe the Problem/Situation

What?

Where?

When? (time, day)

Who? (Who was there)

Apply the Prosocial Model

Stop ➡ **Problem** ➡ **Choices** ➡ **Review**

STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?



EXERCISE 3 Kayla's Problem

Part I Describing Kayla's Problem

Kayla is a 14-year-old who has to go to summer school but is in a new type of program. She has to check in everyday at 9 a.m. at summer school. The assignments are online and Kayla just needs to turn the work in when she arrives in the morning and then she can leave. Kayla has a friend Adrian who is good with school work and also owes her \$100.

Part II Thinking About Kayla's Problem

Why would Kayla want Adrian to do some of the assignments for her?

How would she feel if he did this?

What might happen?

Why would Kayla want to do the work herself?

How would she feel then?

What might happen then?

Part III Using the Prosocial Model with Kayla's Problem

***STOP:** Did Kayla stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for her to stop?*



***PROBLEM:** What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?*



***CHOICES:** What were Kayla's choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?*



***REVIEW:** Was the outcome prosocial? What could Kayla have done to ensure a better outcome?*





Pro-Log

The Prosocial Log

Teen Initials:	Date:
----------------	-------

Describe the Problem/Situation

What?

Where?

When? (time, day)

Who? (Who was there)

Apply the Prosocial Model

Stop → **Problem** → **Choices** → **Review**

STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?



EXERCISE 4 Roger's Problem

Part I Describing Roger's Problem

Roger is a 16-year-old. On the way home from school today, he found \$200 in an envelope in front of a bank. The envelope had a person's name, address, and phone number on it.

Part II Thinking About Roger's Problem

Why would Roger want to keep the \$200 and not tell anyone?

How would he feel if he did this?

What might happen?

Why would Roger want to call the person listed on the envelope or police about the \$200.

How would he feel then?

What might happen then?

Part III Using the Prosocial Model with Roger's Problem.

STOP: Did Roger stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for him to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were Roger's choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could Roger have done to ensure a better outcome?





Pro-Log

The Prosocial Log

Teen Initials:

Date:

Describe the Problem/Situation

What?

Where?

When? (time, day)

Who? (Who was there)

Apply the Prosocial Model

Stop ⇨ **Problem** ⇨ **Choices** ⇨ **Review**

STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?



EXERCISE 5 Rueben's Problem

Part I Describing Rueben's Problem

Rueben is a 16-year-old who just got his driver's license. The license says he may not drive with anyone under 18 years old as a passenger. His friend Jeff, who is 16, asks him for a ride to a job interview after school and says he will pay him \$25 because he is running late.

Part II Thinking About Rueben's Problem

Why would Rueben want to give his friend a ride?

How would he feel if he did this?

What might happen?

Why would Rueben want to say "no" and not drive his friend?

How would he feel then?

What might happen then?

Part III Using the Prosocial Model with Rueben's Problem

STOP: Did Rueben stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for him to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were Rueben's choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could Rueben have done to ensure a better outcome?





Pro-Log

The Prosocial Log

Teen Initials:	Date:
----------------	-------

Describe the Problem/Situation

What?

Where?

When? (time, day)

Who? (Who was there)

Apply the Prosocial Model

Stop ➡ **Problem** ➡ **Choices** ➡ **Review**

STOP: Did you stop and think before acting? What may have made it hard or easy for you to stop?



PROBLEM: What happened in the situation? What were people thinking and feeling? Were there any rules that applied?



CHOICES: What were your choices? Were they fair and beneficial to all? Did they promote better friendship or goodwill? Did they follow rules or expectations?



REVIEW: Was the outcome prosocial? What could you have done to ensure a better outcome?



Chapter 6 Checklist

The teen and the counselor should fill out this checklist together. Discuss each question, decide on the answer, and use the space below the question for any comments.

1. Were all the materials read and all the exercises completed?

Yes No

2. Was cooperation between the teen and the counselor satisfactory?

Yes No

3. Was the presentation and discussion of the written assignments satisfactory?

Yes No

4. Did the teen understand the material?

Yes No

5. Did the counselor behave in a prosocial way?

Yes No

Counselor “sign off” indicating that the youth satisfactorily completed the work in the chapter.

Date:

Counselor signature