**APPENDIX A**

**Session 1: Orientation Session**

***Purpose:* Introduce group participants and NICE**

*What Is This Group About?*

This is a group that teaches people how to ask for help when they are lost. Knowing how to ask for help to find your destination is an important skill. Everyone gets lost and after brain injury it may occur more frequently.

*Group Activity*

Have you ever been lost? Share your experience with the group. How did you feel? What did you do?

*What is Communication and Why Do We Need Good Communication for Help-Seeking when Lost?*

Communication skills are necessary for effective help-seeking when lost. Help-seeking involves interacting with other people. You need to be able to ask for and use information. Good communication skills are needed to do this.

Communication includes being able to express your thoughts and needs while listening to others. If you have good communication skills, you have a better chance of asking for help in the community. If a person does not have good communication skills, it may be difficult to ask other people for help when lost.

*Good Communication Skills Require*

• Paying attention (maintain eye contact with the helper).

• Expressing the right ideas (ask your navigation question clearly and concisely).

• Being polite (use words and tone that make people feel comfortable).

• Maintaining appropriate space (use personal space that makes people feel comfortable).

• Having social confidence (use your affirmation statement and positive self-talk).

Brain injury can cause problems in any of these areas. Many people who have had a brain injury report difficulty communicating when they need to ask for help.

The purpose of this group is to help people with brain injuries learn about how to ask for help, improve communication skills and work to reach these goals. We do this in a group because people can learn from each other’s experiences, offer each other support and give each other feedback about how they are doing.

Each week, we will have a little time to reconnect with each other, review homework and discuss new topics.

Today we will introduce NICE. We will focus on the **N** = Notice you have a problem. How do you know when you are lost?

***Session competencies***

1. Identify NICE.

2. Identify purpose of group.

**Homework**

Talk with a family member or friend about your experience in group today. Tell that person how you felt being in the group and what you expect to gain from being a part of this group experience. Let your family member or friend look over the homework if possible. Write down any questions that you or they may have about the group.

**What is NICE?**

**Notice you have a problem**

**How do you know when you are lost? Were you walking too long? Do you not know where to go next?**

**1. WHAT happened?**

**2. WHY did it happen?**

**3. WHERE did it take place?**

**Identify the information you need for help**

**Where are you going (building, location, floor, room number)? Remember your goal (where am I going).**

**Most importantly, be a great communicator when asking for help. How?**

**• Paying attention (maintain eye contact with the helper).**

**• Expressing the right ideas (ask your navigation question clearly and concisely).**

**• Being polite (use words and tone that make people feel comfortable).**

**• Maintaining appropriate space (use personal space that makes people feel comfortable).**

**• Having social confidence (use your affirmation statement and positive self-talk).**

**Compensatory strategies**

**What strategies will you use to remember the route (directions)?**

**• Write it down?**

**• Say it out loud?**

**• Ask if the person is heading in that direction or at least part of the way?**

**• Ask the helper to repeat/clarify information?**

**• Draw?**

**Evaluate progress**

**Are you getting closer? If not, do you need to ask for help again?**

**• Are you still lost? If yes, go back to N = Notice you have a problem.**

**• Do you need to ask for help? If yes, go back to I = Identify the information you need for help.**

**• Are you using your strategies? If no, go back to C= Compensatory strategies.**

**Sessions 2 and 3: Skills of a Great Communicator**

***Purpose*: Practise how to ask for help, review NICE**

*Review*

Last time we shared how to notice when you have a problem. What does ‘N’ stand for in NICE? Let’s do a role play together to practice the **N** part.

*The Great Communicator*

Can you think of someone who is a great communicator? Try to think of someone you know who is really good at communicating. Now, think about what makes that person a great communicator. What skills or behaviours does that person display that make him or her easy to understand and enjoyable in conversation?

*Why is Communication Important When You are Lost and Need to Ask for Help?*

Sometimes directions fail and you may get lost. You may need to ask for help. If you want to improve or change a skill, it is important to first take a look at what you are doing right now. How do you ask for help? What things do you do well? What things are difficult for you?

**Be a great communicator when asking for help. How? This is the I part of NICE.**

*Good Communication Skills Require*

• Paying attention (maintain eye contact with the helper).

• Expressing the right ideas (ask your navigation question clearly and concisely).

• Being polite (use words and tone that make people feel comfortable).

• Maintaining appropriate space (use personal space that makes people feel comfortable).

• Having social confidence (use your affirmation statement and positive self-talk).

***Session competencies***

1. Identify good communication skills.

2. Identify **I** in NICE.

**Homework**

As part of the homework, I will be asking you to take this form home and get some feedback from your family/friends as well. Share strengths and challenges when getting lost.

**Session 4: Developing Social Confidence with Positive Self-talk**

***Purpose*: Identify what is confidence and self-talk, introduce C in NICE**

*Group Activity*

Let’s review **N** and **I** in NICE. Did anyone use **N** or **I** this week when lost? Please share your experience with the group. How did you feel? What strategies worked well to remember the route? This is your **C** in NICE.

*Confidence*

Today we are going to talk more about feelings when lost and what to do. Remember when we talked about the skills of a great communicator last session? Think again about someone who is a good communicator. One of the attributes of someone who communicates well is social confidence. What is this? People who feel socially confident usually ask more questions, smile more often, are polite and approachable. Social confidence is affected by how you feel about yourself. One way to improve your confidence is through positive self-talk.

*Self-talk*

Most of us make little comments to ourselves from time to time. This ‘self-talk’ happens so automatically that we may be unaware that we are doing it. Sometimes it is quiet and sometimes it is something we say out loud. This self-talk can be positive (‘I did it!’) or negative (‘I am stupid’). Self-talk can influence how we feel about ourselves and how we communicate. Social confidence may influence our desire to ask for help and willingness to interact with other people.

**Negative self-talk** is when we say things to ourselves that attack us as a person and stop us from asking for help from others.

**Positive self-talk** is when we say nice things to ourselves, giving ourselves a pat on the back.

*Exercise 1: Changing Negative Self-talk*

Let’s come up with a list of situations that trigger negative self-talk. We will discuss why this happens and what needs to change about each situation so negative self-talk is decreased.

*Exercise 2: Role Play Negative Self-talk*

Partner up and role play an actual negative self-talk situation and together discuss how you feel. Switch roles.

***Session competencies***

1. Identify social confidence.

2. Identify self-talk.

3. Identify **C** in NICE.

**Homework**

1. Share with your family or friend what you have learned about confidence and self-talk. Come up with a positive self-talk statement that you can use.

2. Post your positive self-talk statement where you can see it (on your mirror, wall). Practice using positive self-talk during the week.

3. Make a list of positive things you can say to improve your social confidence.

**Sessions 5 and 6: Video-taping and Evaluation**

***Purpose*: Learn to give and accept feedback, introduce E in NICE**

*Group Activity*

We have been videotaping encounters with people each week. Today we are going to watch some videos together. Does anyone want to volunteer to share their video with the group?

Most people are uncomfortable being video-taped. If you feel a bit nervous about this session, you are not alone. Let’s talk about some rules when watching videos together.

*Rules for Giving Feedback*

1. Point out improvements on individual goals.

2. Be specific.

3. Try to word your feedback in a positive and supportive manner.

4. Be honest.

5. Focus on positive behaviours rather than mistakes.

*Video Feedback*

Video feedback is a powerful tool for improving communication skills. Video feedback helps us see and hear how we come across to other people. Watching yourself on video-tape provides concrete and unbiased feedback. This kind of feedback is particularly useful when someone is not very aware of his communication skills, has difficulty accepting feedback from others or has difficulty understanding information. It also helps us learn from prior experiences of getting lost. This is our **E** = Evaluate progress in NICE.

***Session competencies***

1. Identify **E** in NICE.

2. Complete video feedback.

**Homework**

Write about what you learned from the video feedback session. Did you agree with the feedback you received? How will you use this information to improve your communication skills when asking for help if you get lost? Share with a family member or friend what you learned today.

Adapted from: Hawley, L.A., & Newman, J.K. (2010). Group interactive structured treatment (GIST): A social competence intervention for individuals with brain injury. *Brain Injury, 24*(11), 1292–1297.