

Chapter 8 Resources

Graduate Student Support Programs



Preparation Steps for Chapter 8 Discussion and Activity

- This *Facilitator's Guide* will lead you step-by-step through the chapter 8 discussions and activities.
 - Duplicate as appropriate the needed handouts for the activity section.
 - During the group activity, participants will need to take notes. Arrange to have a pen available for each participant.
- Return to the [chapter 8 homepage](#).
 - Watch the chapter 8 video and download it in preparation for leading the session.
 - To **download** the video, scroll to the bottom of the chapter 8 homepage and click on the .mp4 link under “Additional Files.”

Chapter 8 *Facilitator's Guide*



→ Summary of facilitation steps:

1. Lead the discussion of chapter 8
2. Prepare the group for the chapter 8 video
3. Watch the chapter 8 video
4. Lead the chapter 8 video discussion
5. Lead the chapter 8 group activity

Practical Points

- The time estimations provided for the discussions and activities may vary significantly, depending on the number of students and the group dynamics.
- Information contained in this document that is intended to be read verbatim to the participants is italicized.

Step 1. Lead the chapter 8 group discussion (15 minutes)

→ Read aloud and discuss with the participants.

1. *What stories did you find most interesting in this chapter and why?*
2. *What responsibilities do you have as a teaching assistant in helping students find the appropriate resources on campus?*
3. *If you are teaching a class as a TA, how would you handle a situation in which a student becomes belligerent and you suspect mental illness might be a factor? What if the student shows signs of becoming violent?*

Step 2. Prepare for the chapter 8 video

→ Read the following video introduction to the participants.

Jarrick Monroe brings Stacia Pendleton into one of the university's counseling offices because he wants her to see a counselor about a problem she is having. Stacia is a second-year graduate student and Jarrick's girlfriend. Take a look at the video titled 'The Choice.'

Step 3. Watch the chapter 8 video (6 minutes)

Step 4. Lead the chapter 8 video discussion (10 minutes)

→ Ask the participants the following questions.

1. *On a scale of one to five, if denial is a one and seeing a counselor is a five, where is Stacia on this scale? What do you think is wrong with Stacia? Why do you think she is apprehensive about seeking help?*
2. *What role is Jarrick playing in helping Stacia make the choice to obtain help?*
3. *Jarrick is also confronted with the prospect of seeing a counselor. What do you think his issues are?*
4. *Thinking back over your time in college and even in high school, can you recall individuals who could have benefited from counseling? Without mentioning names, describe the situation. Was the person aware that he or she had a problem that needed attention?*

Step 5. Lead the chapter 8 activity (20 minutes)

→ Read the following activity objective to the participants.

In this activity, you will interview each other in pairs. The interview questions, which are listed on the handout that will be distributed, ask about a particular problem that could impair a person's ability to do well in graduate school. Before beginning the interviews, each of you will choose one problem that will be the subject of your interview. That is, you will pretend, for the purpose of the exercise, that this is a problem you have. It is suggested that you choose a problem you can relate to, but avoid choosing any problem that you would feel uncomfortable discussing. If you don't resonate with any problems on the list, feel free to use a problem of your creation.

After the interviews (which should take us no more than 10 minutes), we'll come together as a group and talk about the issues.

- **Distribute one handout to each person.** Divide the group into pairs. Ask each person to select a problem. Allow everyone a few seconds to get ready.
- **Ask the students to begin the interviews within their pairs.** Plan to have each person finish his or her interview in 5 minutes, which will allow all the interviews to be completed in 10 minutes. [Note: The reason for having the students break into pairs for interviews is to allow each person about 5 minutes to reflect on the critical aspects of his or her chosen problem without distraction.]
- **Bring the students together in one group and lead the general discussion.** [Note: It is helpful to be able to write down and display the responses that you receive from the group. Use a laptop with projector, blackboard, whiteboard, or flip chart to record and display responses for discussion.]
- **Group discussion questions:**
1. *What problems were reported during your interviews?* [Note: Try to group the problems into categories to help make the discussion manageable.]
 2. Run down the list of problems reported in question 1 and record how serious the group believes these problems are. Ask the respondents to say a few words about how the problem negatively affects their ability to function well in graduate school.

3. *For the purpose of this discussion, imagine that the problem under discussion is one that you are experiencing. Would you feel comfortable talking about this problem with a counselor? [Note: As a variation, ask about how participants would feel about talking to a friend or relative, a very very close friend, and a fellow student with the same problem. Discuss privacy boundaries.]*
4. Open the floor for a general discussion about each of these problems. Ask if anyone has had to deal with a friend or classmate who has struggled with any of these problems. Have them share the challenges and outcomes.

Chapter 8 Activity Handout (one copy per participant)



PROBLEMS

- Smoking
- Obesity
- Eating disorder (anorexia or bulimia)
- Insomnia
- Alcohol addiction
- Marijuana consumption
- Procrastination of research paper writing
- Disorganization and lack of time management
- Memory problems: lack of retention of assigned readings
- Financial problems: money for tuition and/or fees; living expenses; health insurance
- Relationships (choose one): breakup; loss of a loved one
- Family problems (choose one): child's difficulties in school, child's illness, parents' divorce, elderly parents
- Anxiety, perhaps most notably associated with taking exams
- Insecurity, feelings of inadequacy
- Recurring thoughts of suicide
- Fear of speaking in public or in class
- Feelings of isolation
- Having difficulty making friends
- Having an abrasive personality, arrogance, aggressiveness
- Use of profanity
- Cultural insensitivity
- Anger management difficulties
- Violent or abusive behavior

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kind of problem are you dealing with? Elaborate as appropriate.
2. How does this problem affect you?
3. On a scale of one to five (with five being the highest), how much is your problem bothering you or causing you distress?
4. Would you consider talking about your problem with a counselor? Why or why not?
5. Do you think there are others on campus who struggle with this problem? If so, about how many? Would you feel comfortable talking with another student who is dealing with the same problem?
6. On a scale from one to ten, what level of privacy would you want to maintain in association with this problem? Assume that one would imply absolute secrecy and ten would imply a willingness to appear on Dr. Phil?