

# **Downward Spiral**

Adolescent Version

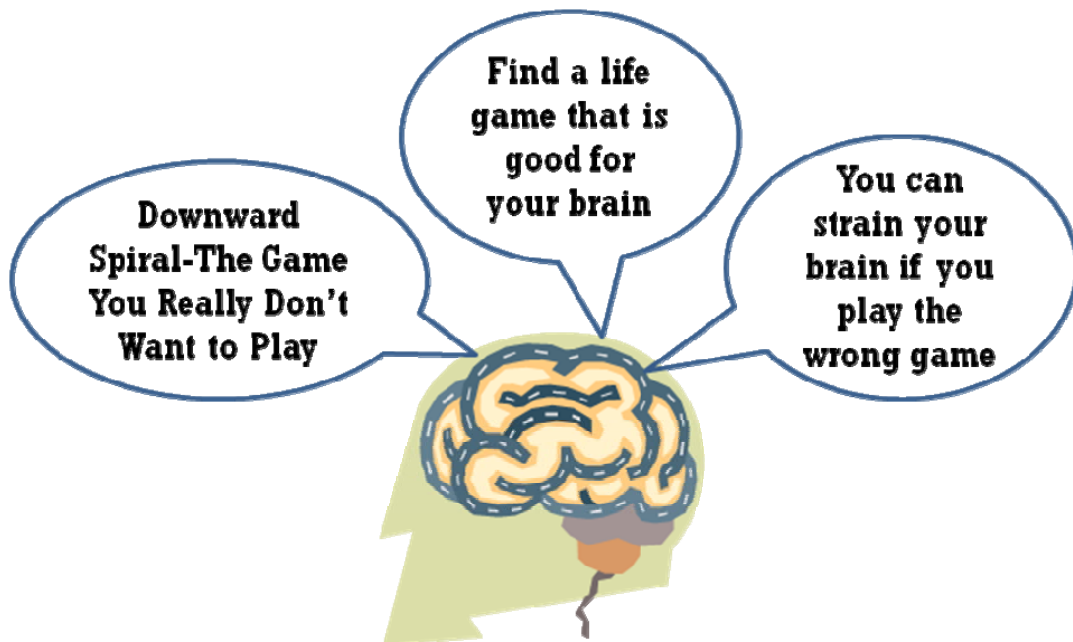
Appendix G:  
Downward Spiral  
TRIP Chapters 5 & 6

Chapter 5

# Downward Spiral

## Part 1

***THINKING ABOUT  
WHAT'S REAL***



## ***Part One: Thinking About What's Real***

### **Leader Notes for Module**

#### **As general objectives for this module, participants will:**

- Play an experiential game on the perils of drug abuse
- Explore consequences that follow drug life styles
- Gain perspectives from "senior" peers in the program

### **Rationale**

The *Downward Spiral* game used in this session has been widely implemented in drug treatment programs around the country. Using a monopoly-like game to engage adolescents' interest, players move across a board fraught with realistic scenarios depicting personal, social, financial, and health consequences associated with drug abuse. The game is facilitated by senior peers who take a role in engaging participants in the game and leading discussions using "reflection cards" to help picture a future that is not a "downward spiral."

### **Activities**

Quick "Check In"	10 minutes
Game Introduction Senior peers	5 minutes
Downward Spiral Game (Peer led game session)	50 minutes
Reflection Cards (Process activity)	15 minutes
Wrap Up/Thinking assignment	5 minutes

### **Materials needed for this session**



#### ***Opening Board***

Copy the brain map on the front cover of this session on erasable board or flip chart so participants can read it as they come in

#### ***Senior Peers***

Make arrangements for your senior peer facilitators to be available for this session  
Note: If your group is small, you may want to arrange for senior peers to join in playing the game

#### ***Downward Spiral Game and materials***

Downward Spiral "Quick Rules" (page 92)  
One or two *Downward Spiral* game sets (each game allows for 6 players)  
Refer to "Downward Spiral Set-up" (page 93) for set up needs

#### ***Mapping materials***

Make sure you have plenty of pencils, pens, markers, colored map pencils, crayons, and mapping paper for the group

#### ***TRIP Session Evaluation***

Provide copies of the Session Evaluation (page 94)

# **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1**

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## **STEP ONE**

**Welcome participants to the group. Take a minute to acknowledge any new members with a quick introduction:**

*If this is your first TRIP group - Welcome! In this group, we take some time to think about thinking. You heard right - it's all about learning more about the thinking process. It will be a little different from some of the other groups you attend here, but every session is different, so you won't have any trouble joining in.*

**Go around the room quickly and ask group members to introduce themselves to any new members.**

**Ask participants:**

*What has been on your mind the last few days?  
What have you found yourself really thinking about?*

**Use erasable board or flip chart to make a map of participants' thoughts or issues that they volunteer.**

**Summarize the check-in activity:**

*As always, it looks like there has been a whole lot of thinking going on over the last few days. Brains have been active. I have made a map or layout of your thoughts or the ideas you all have been having. We'll leave these posted here, and see what kind of influence today's activities might have on everyone's thinking before we leave.*

## **STEP TWO**

**Introduce "senior peers" that will help facilitate the game and discussion:**

*Today is what we call Game Day - so to allow more time for playing we aren't starting with a thinking trick today. You are going to play a game, but it is hard to say it's a "fun" game. It's called Downward Spiral. We have a few of your senior peers joining us for the game. These folks are farther along in the program and in their recoveries and can add some*

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1**

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*perspective to the game. They will be the "game masters" and keep the game flowing along.*

**Allow "senior peers" to introduce themselves and say a few words about themselves.**

### **STEP THREE**

*Leader note: If you are able to have extra tables set up with Downward Spiral game laid out, this would be great. Participants could move chairs and be ready to play. Otherwise, you will need to take a moment to set up the game.*

**Use Downward Spiral "Quick Rules" (page 92) to briefly explain the rules and process of the game (a copy also is contained in the game set box).**

*Here's how you play in a nutshell. You will each choose a playing piece and then use the dice to move around the board. You will land on different colored spaces. Depending on what it is, you will draw a card and do what it says. You will have a Score Sheet for keeping up with your money and possessions - which will be a challenge...because this is the Downward Spiral.*

*Remember, in the game, you play the part of someone who continues to abuse drugs and alcohol, even when there is everything to lose.*

*Now I'm going to turn things over to the game masters. They will explain the rules in more detail and get everyone playing. Good luck!*

**Turn the further explanation of the rules and facilitation of the game over to the senior peers. Monitor senior peers as they facilitate the playing of the game. Allow about 40-45 minutes of play, depending on group size. (Refer to the *Peer Facilitation Handbook* in the Appendix)**

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1**

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### **STEP FOUR**

**Reassemble group and briefly process participants' experiences with game. Encourage senior peers to participate by asking for their observations, as well, using some of the following questions:**

*What did you think of the game?*

*What did you like best? Least?*

*What scenario was most realistic to you?*

*What scenario scared you the most?*

*Who do you think "won" the game? What do you base that on?*

*Was there a "biggest loser" in the game? What's that based on?*

**Ask senior peers to pass out a "Reflection Card" to each player and to take one for themselves. Allow a minute for participants to reflect:**

*Take a minute to read over the scenario on your card and to think hard about the reflection question that is asked. Imagine that the person in the card is you. Let yourself think about your strengths and possibilities when you aren't burdened with all the hassles of getting high.*

*Once you've had a chance to think and reflect, we'll go around the room and talk about our cards and our thoughts.*

**Go around the room and allow players and peers to share their scenarios and their thoughts about a more positive future. Use probes, as needed to encourage participants to share their reflections.**

**Summarize the game and discussion:**

*The Downward Spiral game was designed to give players a feel for what happens when drugs and alcohol hijack the brain. Thinking suffers, and when thinking suffers, people can make really stupid decisions and choices. The games give plenty of examples. It truly is a Downward Spiral.*

*And we've also had a chance to reflect on the "upward spiral" - the way thinking and behaving can change once people get a handle on recovery.*

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1**

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*Getting high can make people feel lousy, in part, because it gets in the way of taking care of the little things that can make all the difference. Sometimes when people are high they forget about all the strengths and possibilities that they possess.*

### **STEP FIVE**

**Summarize the Downward Spiral game and briefly review the opening map reflecting things participants stated they had been thinking about.**

*You were joined today by senior peers to experience a game called Downward Spiral. Also titled - The Game You Don't Want to Play.*

**Ask for discussion:**    *What did you learn from Downward Spiral?  
How is it a useful "brain tool"?  
How did it help your thinking?*

*Before we break for the day, let's review some of the things you were thinking about when you first arrived (**review each point on the map**).*

**Ask:** *What is something from the game that you could use to help with what was on your mind when group started?*

*So here is your take away question to think about:*

**Ask:**    *What did this game teach you about how you are going to avoid your own personal downward spiral?*

**Distribute copies of the *Session Evaluation* (page 94) and ask participants to complete and hand in before leaving.**

**Thank members for their participation and encourage them to attend their next TRIP group.**









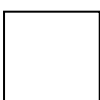

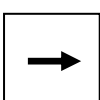


## ***DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1***

# **QUICK RULES TO PLAYING.... DOWNWARD SPIRAL**

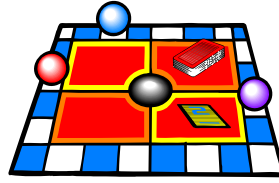
You play the role of someone who decides to continue abusing drugs (alcohol is a drug). Your goal is to outlast the other players or recover.

- Get a game piece, a score sheet, a copy of quick rules to playing, a pencil, and \$200 from the Reader/Banker.
- Roll all three dice and move your game piece.
- Draw a card with the same icon/color as the square you land on (see below for details).
- Read the card out loud or hand it to the Reader/Banker to read to everyone, and then he/she gives it to you. Keep each card (except the Opportunity Card) until the end of the game.
- Keep track of your score, possessions, and jail time on your score sheet.

Land on this		→	Get a Health Card
Land on this		→	Get a Self-Concept Card
Land on this		→	Get a Chance Card
Land on this		→	Get a Social Card
Land on this		→	Get a Financial/ Legal Card
Land on this		→	Get an Opportunity Card (see additional rules if necessary)
Land on this		→	Get a Recovery Card (you win)
Land on this		→	Get a Death Card (you lose)
Land on this		→	Safe Square (roll again)
Land on, or pass this		→	Collect \$200
Land on this		→	Move up or down one level in the spiral. This is also a Safe Square (roll again)

## DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1

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### ***Downward Spiral Set-Up***

(6 players per game set)

Unroll board and lay out with weights (books) to help flatten. You may want to mount your board(s) on cardboard or foamboard using a spray adhesive

#### ***When ready to play:***

Set out decks of cards by color for easy reach by players

Remove "Reflection Cards" (Hot Pink) and keep separate. These are used at the end of the game for processing

Set up bank, with money arranged for easy access by players

Unpack dice and playing pieces

Make a copy of Downward Spiral Score Sheet for each player

Make a copy of Downward Spiral Quick Rules for each player

Have pencils available for Score Sheets (there may be a need to erase)

# ***DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 1***

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## **Session Evaluation** ***Downward Spiral Part 1***

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please take a minute to give us some feedback about how you liked this session.

1. Use one word to describe your feelings about today's class \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the most important thing you learned today?

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate today's class? (Circle your rating.)

<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>10</u>
Poor				Pretty Good					Excellent

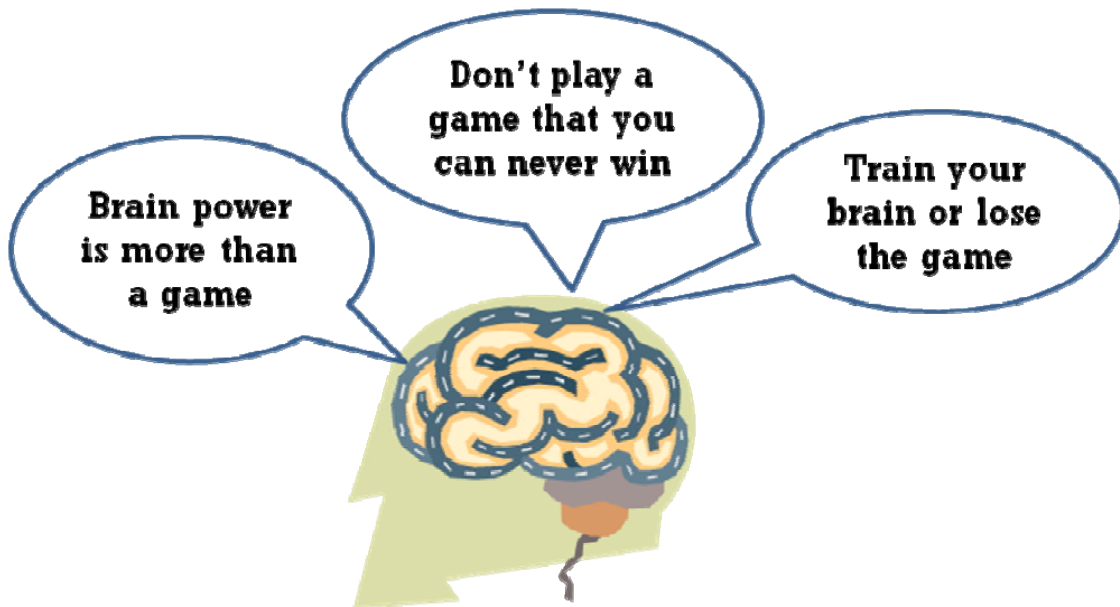
4. Do you have any suggestions to help make this class better?

*Chapter 6*

# **Downward Spiral**

## **Part 2**

***THINKING ABOUT  
WHAT'S REAL***



## ***Part Two: Thinking About What's Real***

### **Leader Notes for Module**

#### **As general objectives for this module, participants will:**

- Consider personal scenarios that resulted from drug involvement
- Bolster awareness of consequences by creating prevention messages for peers
- Gain perspectives from "senior" peers in the program

### **Rationale**

Looking at drug-related issues from a personal perspective allows teens to engage in discussions about real-life consequences. Building on the *Downward Spiral* game used in a previous session, participants are asked to create their own game cards reflecting “realistic” scenarios they have encountered. In conjunction, participants work together to create a poster-sized group map to help convey prevention and recovery messages to other teens. This session is co-facilitated by senior peers who take a role in engaging participants by serving as team leaders and keeping discussions focused on the value of peer-to-peer outreach.

### **Activities**

Quick “Check In”	10 minutes
Magic Trick Triangles	15 minutes
Personal Spirals (Review and game card creations)	35 minutes
Writing on the Wall (Group mapping poster)	25 minutes
Wrap Up/Thinking assignment	5 minutes

### Materials needed for this session



#### *Opening Board*

Copy the brain map on the front cover of this session on erasable board or flip chart so participants can read it as they come in

#### *Senior Peers*

Make arrangements for your senior peer facilitators to be available for this session

#### *Cognitive Magic Trick: Triangles*

"Oh" shaped oat cereal (or round flat candies). Have enough pieces for each participant to have 10 pieces for the activity. You can have these pre-packaged in snack-size plastic bags.

#### *Personal Spiral Cards*

*Downward Spiral* game set with cards, score sheet, etc. for demonstration

Squares of colored paper (2 colors), so that participants get one of each color (cut 8"X11" sheets into quarters)

Drop box for collecting cards

#### *Writing on the Wall*

Pieces of flip chart size paper for participants to use

#### *Mapping materials*

Make sure you have plenty of pencils, pens, markers, colored map pencils, crayons, and mapping paper for the group

#### *TRIP Session Evaluation*

Provide copies of the Session Evaluation (page 107)

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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### **STEP ONE**

**Welcome participants to the group. Take a minute to acknowledge any new members with a quick introduction:**

*If this is your first TRIP group - Welcome! In this group, we take some time to think about thinking. You heard right - it's all about learning more about the thinking process. It will be a little different from some of the other groups you attend here, but every session is different, so you won't have any trouble joining in.*

**Go around the room quickly and ask group members to introduce themselves to any new members.**

**Ask participants:**

*What has been on your mind the last few days?  
What have you found yourself really thinking about?*

**Use erasable board or flip chart to make a map of participants' thoughts or issues that they volunteer.**

**Summarize the check-in activity:**

*As always, it looks like there has been a whole lot of thinking going on over the last few days. Brains have been active. I have made a map or layout of your thoughts or the ideas you all have been having. We'll leave these posted here, and see what kind of influence today's activities might have on everyone's thinking before we leave.*

### **STEP TWO**

**Introduce *Triangles* by asking participants if they have confidence when it comes to solving puzzles**

*Most people enjoy puzzles, depending on how difficult.*

**Ask:** *How many of you have played puzzle games or solved different kinds of puzzles?*

## DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2

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**Discuss types of puzzles participants may have enjoyed. Introduce Triangles puzzle:**

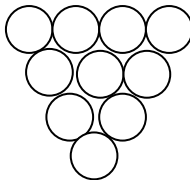
*We are going to start today doing a puzzle "with benefits." The benefits are you can eat the puzzle if you want - AFTER you solve it.*

**Introduce "senior peers" as helpers who will help facilitate the session:**

*We have some "senior" program members joining today to help with the puzzle and today's mapping work. These are folks who are further along in the program and can offer you some good ideas.*

*For today's puzzle, I will give you the instructions and (names/senior peers) will serve as "puzzle masters" and will be available to check your work and see if you solved it.*

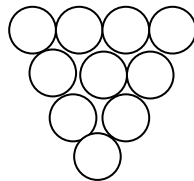
**Distribute oat cereal or candy packets and have senior peers go around the room and help each person create a triangle using the circle shapes so that base is on top (like so):**



**Instruct participants to not touch their triangle until given their instructions.**

**Demonstrate on erasable board or show example of what participants have in front of them and what the "solved" puzzle should look like:**

**START**

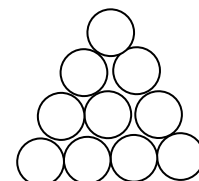


Make your triangle look like this



YOU CAN ONLY MOVE  
**3** CIRCLES/PIECES

**FINISH**





## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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*Here are the rules. The triangle in front of you has the base on the top (little end down). You need to copy it exactly so that the base is now on the bottom (little end up).*

*You can only move 3 of the "ohs" or pieces to make this happen. It can be done. Take a stab at solving the puzzle.*

*You can move a piece as a "trial" to help you think, if you want. But once you have moved it and taken your hand off, it counts as an official "move."*

*Call over one of the "puzzle masters" once you think you have it solved. He/she will move it back and then watch you solve it by moving **ONLY 3** of the round pieces. Once verified, you are a winner. Sit quietly and see who comes in next.*

**Allow time for participants to work on the puzzle. Senior peers are checking work by asking participants to duplicate their solution and verifying a win.**

***Leader note: This process allows senior peers to interact with new comers. Also, in the enthusiasm to solve the puzzle, some may move more than the allowed 3 pieces. This allows verification of a Winner.***

**Once someone has solved the puzzle, they are asked to sit quietly. Senior peers keep track of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place puzzle solvers. At this point, call time on the game. Invite the Winner to demonstrate for those who have not solved it, how they did it.**

**Ask:** *How did you figure it out?  
Did you take some "practice" moves?  
Did you look around for clues?  
Who else finished? Who was close?*

**Recognize 1st, 2nd, & 3rd finishers. Summarize the activity:**

*The triangle puzzle shows an example of different ways of looking at something. Sometimes, the longer we stare at something, the more*

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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*difficult it becomes. People usually figure this out by making more than 3 moves, then taking them back, until the solution "Jumps Out."*

*Today, we are going to put our heads together to solve another kind of puzzle - how do we help our friends (or maybe our brothers, sisters, cousins) either avoid using drugs in the first place or be like you and get into recovery.*

### **STEP THREE**

***Leader note: Have Downward Spiral game set and cards available for demonstration.***

**Begin by introducing the Downward Spiral game:**

*We are going to use ideas from the Downward Spiral game to help us develop ideas for helping our friends who might still be thinking that drug use, and all of the hassles it brings with it, is something "cool." Let's start with a review of Downward Spiral.*

**Ask group members that have played the Downward Spiral to comment on the game:**

*What do you remember about the Downward Spiral game?  
What did you like best about playing it?  
What was most realistic to you?*

**For benefit of those that have not played the game, and for review for those that have, ask senior peer to review the rules of Downward Spiral game and how it is played. This brief explanation should cover:**

Showing board and pointing out how players move around it  
Review game cards - scenarios and consequences  
Read a few cards aloud as examples  
Review score sheet - how players lose points

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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### Showing the board

Tape or clip a game board to the erasable board or flip chart (or other allowable means for display). Briefly explain rolling dice, movement around the board, and drawing cards. Mention that participants start out with money and get money when they pass the \$ sign. Point out that “Jail” is a feature of the game, as is the likelihood of Death.

### Review game cards – scenarios and consequences

Explain that as players move around the board, they must draw a card, based on the color of square they land on. These cards reflect parts of life that are hurt by drug use, for example, health, social relationships, self-worth, and legal problems. Explain that at the bottom of each card, there are consequences to be paid related to the scenario. There is also an interesting quote or saying that has to do with the situation.

Read a couple of cards, with scenarios, consequences, and quote.

### Review score sheet – how players win and lose points and money

Walk group through the areas that cost points (health, relationships, legal, etc.) and how points are lost. Use the cards that were read aloud as example to demonstrate how points are lost. Point out that players have possessions (TV, phone, laptop, car) that can be sold if the player needs money, to get out of jail or pay a lawyer or other pitfalls of drug use.

### **Introduce “Personal Spirals” activity by distributing a couple of game cards from Downward Spiral game set to each of the participants.**

*Today we are going to play a shorter version of Downward Spiral using games cards that we create ourselves. There’s a lot of experience and a lot of creativity in the group that we can call on.*

*Take a minute to read over the game cards you were given. These will give you the layout and some ideas about making your own cards.*

**Ask senior peers to distribute two colored paper squares to each participant. Invite them to write out a scenario from their own lives (something that happened to them, or to a friend or family member) on each square, just like the example cards they have.**

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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*You have some blank cards, like those in the Downward Spiral game. I'd like for you to try writing some scenarios like those in the game, based on something you have experienced personally or something a friend or family member experienced or something you heard about. The only rule is that it has to be related to problems or bad consequences caused by alcohol or drug use.*

*You may have to think for a minute, but most of us know of "reality" cases where drugs or alcohol (or both) caused trouble. If you can't think of a real life situation then be creative and make one up or write down one you heard about on TV or in a movie.*

*After we use these "reality" cards to play a game, we can send them to the researchers at TCU who created the game.*

*At the bottom, just like the sample card you have, show how many points the situation will "cost" the person (what they lose).*

*And if you want, you can put your own favorite quotes on the back. This might be song lyrics that have meaning for you, or something you've heard in a movie or read in a book. Take some time with it - I'm looking forward to seeing what you come up with.*

*We are joined again today by our "game-masters" or senior peers and they are available to help you if you get stuck or just want to bounce an idea.*

*Don't show your cards to anyone else while you work, as we will play a game with them when we are done.*

**Allow participants time to work on their cards. Senior peers are encouraged to walk around and offer advice and encouragement, if needed and to help participants who get stuck.**

***Leader Note: If group is small, ask senior peers to also take part in making cards and joining in the next step of sharing cards.***

## DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2

Create a mock-up of the Downward Spiral score sheet on erasable board or flip chart. It should resemble the score sheet from the game set, but is adapted to meet the needs of the activity. See thumbnail below:

	Health	Family	Social	Self	Legal
Mary	-5			-3	
Dee		-3	-3		-3
Dona					
Abby					
Grace					
T'meka					
Louise					
Molly					

Once participants have completed their cards, play an informal "game" to share the cards with each other. A senior peer is appointed to keep score on the erasable board.

*Now we'll play a quick game with the cards you have created. We will go around the room, and when it is your turn, you take a card from another player. Read it aloud and see what the consequences are, as well as the quote, if there is one. Your score will be recorded on the board.*

*We'll see who draws the most serious or difficult scenario.*

Go around the room once, with participants reading each other's cards. Senior peers are there to help with the reading, if needed. When the round is completed, process with a few questions:

*Who lost the most, in terms of points? What was the scenario about?*

*(To the card's author) How did you come up with the scenario?*

*Which scenarios seemed really "true" or "real" to you?*

*What makes them seem so "real?"*

*When you were writing your scenario, how did you decide on the "consequences?"*

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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**Invite participants to send their cards to the "game developer." Have a drop box or envelope available.**

*There were some very good scenarios created. If you would like to send yours along to the developers of the Downward Spiral game at TCU, you can drop them in the box on the way out. Just make sure that your name is NOT on the cards (to protect your privacy).*

### **STEP FOUR**

**Ask participants to get into groups of two or three. Distribute flip-chart sized (poster sized) pieces of paper and mapping materials. Invite participants to work in their group to create a "prevention" poster for other teens.**

**Instruct them to use mapping to connect ideas on the poster. Encourage them to use ideas from the game cards they created to add to the posters.**

**Allow groups time to complete their posters.**

**Once posters are completed, have each group "show off" their poster to other group members, explaining how they organized their ideas.**

**Conclude the activity with some of the following ideas:**

*We did a couple of activities today to help you realize what you know about consequences related to drug use and drug life styles. You created some original game cards based on your personal experiences – things you heard about or saw for yourself related to the consequences of drugs.*

*Then you used some of those ideas to create a poster for others that might help them avoid negative consequences.*

***Leader note: If allowed, based on program policy, find a place where the posters can be displayed for everyone in the program to see and let participants know that will occur.***

## **DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2**

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### **STEP FIVE**

**Summarize the usefulness of the Downward Spiral game and briefly review the opening map reflecting things participants stated they had been thinking about.**

*You were joined today by senior peers to create “true-to-life” game cards for the Downward Spiral game. Also titled - The Game You Don't Want to Play.*

**Ask for discussion:** *What do you think about the scenarios and posters that you created?  
How useful are they as “brain tools”?  
How did they help your thinking?*

*Before we break for the day, let's review some of the things you were thinking about when you first arrived (**review each point on the map**).*

**Ask:** *If you were to make a “game card” for this issue, what would it look like?*

*So here is your take away question to think about:*

**Ask:** *What kinds of things am I seeing and hearing about every day that would make a good game card?*

**Distribute copies of the *Session Evaluation* (page 107) and ask participants to complete and hand in before leaving.**

**Thank members for their participation and encourage them to attend their next TRIP group.**

## ***DOWNWARD SPIRAL PART 2***

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### **Session Evaluation** ***Downward Spiral Part 2***

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please take a minute to give us some feedback about how you liked this session.

1. Use one word to describe your feelings about today's class \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the most important thing you learned today?

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate today's class? (Circle your rating.)

<u>01</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>10</u>
Poor				Pretty Good				Excellent	

4. Do you have any suggestions to help make this class better?



# Triangles Solution

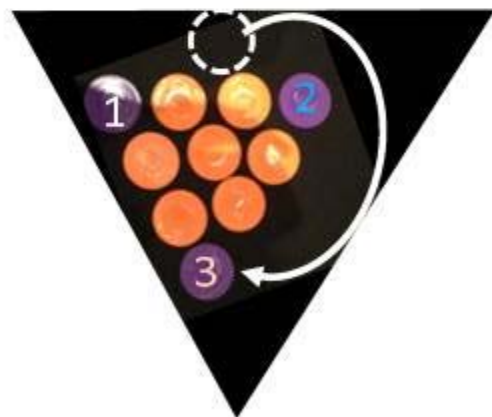
From the TRIP Manual  
*Downward Spiral - Part 2* (pp. 4-7)



*Moves 1 and 2* – move chips 1 and 2 to the ends of the row just under chip 3.



*Move 3* – move chip 3 to the bottom of the figure.



**SUCCESS!!!**