

Chapter 10

COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

PART 2: CHALLENGING AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

Timeline: Typically 1-2 sessions

Reading: Chapter 6 in Client Workbook

Photocopies needed from Client Workbook:

Figure 6.1 List of Thinking Errors

Figure 6.2 Disputing Questions

Figure 6.3 Practice Using Anxious Self/Coping Self Dialogue

Figure 6.4 Cognitive Restructuring Practice

Session Outline for Chapter 6 in Client Workbook

- I. Review homework
 - A. Review self-monitoring
 1. Point out any patterns that are developing
 2. Troubleshoot any problems
 - B. Review completed Figure 5.3 from the Client Workbook (Monitoring Your Automatic Thoughts)
 1. Save extended discussion for later exercises in the session
 2. If not completed, do so now in session for a recent anxiety-provoking situation
- II. Explain the identification of Thinking Errors in cognitive restructuring
 - A. Review steps of Cognitive Restructuring so far
 1. Identify ATs and the emotions they cause

2. Next step is to identify Thinking Errors in the ATs

B. Thinking Errors are what make ATs “irrational”

1. “Irrational” means something is illogical or does not make sense when the AT is considered objectively

2. Some patterns in logical errors have been identified and these appear on the List of Thinking Errors in Figure 6.1 of the Client Workbook.

C. Review List of Thinking Errors in Figure 6.1 of the Client Workbook

1. Give examples of thoughts that exemplify each Thinking Error

2. Many ATs may contain more than one thinking error

3. Clients who personally identify with several Thinking Errors are not more severely impaired than others

4. Note that some thoughts are not illogical but are still Maladaptive as defined by the last item on the list of Thinking Errors

D. Practice identifying Thinking Errors with a case vignette (Beth)

1. Beth is interviewing for a job she really wants

2. Beth’s ATs that made her feel anxious and hopeless about getting the job

a) *“I must make a good first impression or they won’t hire me.”*

(1) Should Statement

(2) All-or-Nothing Thinking

(3) Fortune Telling Error

b) *“They are going to think I don’t have enough experience.”*

(1) Mind Reading

(2) Disqualifying the Positive

(3) Fortune Telling Error

c) *“I’ll never find another job as perfect as this one would be.”*

(1) Catastrophizing

(2) All-or-Nothing Thinking

E. Practice identifying Thinking Errors in the client’s ATs recorded for homework on the Monitoring Your Automatic Thoughts form (Figure 5.3 in the Client Workbook)

III. Explain challenging ATs using Disputing Questions

A. Review steps in cognitive restructuring so far

1. Identifying ATs and the emotions they cause
2. Identifying Thinking Errors in the ATs
3. Next step is to use the Disputing Questions to ask and answer questions to challenge the logical errors in the ATs

B. Becoming a scientist who analyzes the ATs

1. Analyze what ATs mean and determine whether they are logical
2. Conduct experiments to see if the ATs are true

C. Disputing Questions (Figure 6.2 of the Client Workbook)

1. Some all-purpose questions that can be used to challenge ATs

2. Use Disputing Questions by putting ATs in the blank
3. Emphasize that it is essential to answer the question. It is the answers to the questions that matter.

D. Practice using Disputing Questions for case of Beth

1. Help client challenge the three ATs used for the Thinking Errors exercise
2. Follow through with several Disputing Questions and answers with one thought until a more rational, adaptive point of view is reached
3. Point out how emotions change as thinking becomes more adaptive

E. Practice using Disputing Questions for homework ATs

1. Use Anxious Self/Coping Self worksheet (Figure 6.3 in Client Workbook) to guide challenge of 2-3 ATs from homework
2. Follow through with several Disputing Questions and answers with one thought until a more rational, adaptive point of view is reached
3. Point out how emotions change as thinking becomes more adaptive
4. Assure that the Disputing Question is answered, not just asked

IV. Explain using Rational Responses in cognitive restructuring

A. Review steps in cognitive restructuring so far

1. Identifying ATs and the emotions they cause

2. Identifying Thinking Errors in the ATs
3. Use Disputing Questions to ask and answer questions to challenge the logical errors in the ATs
4. Next step is to develop a Rational Response to combat the ATs when they occur

B. Rational Response is a coping statement that summarizes dialogue with the Disputing Questions

1. Use Rational Responses to respond to ATs when they occur in anxiety-provoking situations
2. Qualities of a good Rational Response
 - a) Positive (or at least neutral) view of the situation or symptoms
 - b) Short
 - c) Realistic, not overly positive
3. Do not need to believe the Rational Response at first, but if the client keeps an open mind, it will help chip away at anxious beliefs
4. Examples
 - a) ___ does not equal ___.
 - b) "The worst that can happen is ___, and I can live with that."
 - c) "The worst that can happen is ___, and that is unlikely."
 - d) Reasonable goals such as "I only have to say hello."
5. Practice developing Rational Responses for ATs from vignette

6. Practice developing Rational Responses for homework ATs

V. Assign Homework:

A. Continue self-monitoring of daily mood and two situations

B. Practice first 4 steps of cognitive restructuring using Figure 6.4 in Client Workbook (Cognitive Restructuring Practice).

1. List several ATs and emotions for an anxiety-provoking situation during the week

2. Identify Thinking Errors for all ATs

3. Pick 1-2 ATs and do Anxious Self/Coping Self dialogue using Disputing Questions

4. Develop 1-2 Rational Responses

5. If no situations arise, imagine one from the past

C. Read Chapter 7 in Client Workbook if in-session exposures are to begin in the following session. If a second session is devoted to this material, withhold the assignment of that reading for a week.

VI. Anticipation of Exposure Next Session

A. Inform client that the next session (either session 7 or 8) will include a role played exposure in the session

1. Exposure is graduated so it will not be the highest situation on the Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy

2. Will use cognitive restructuring skills before, during, and after to help cope with anxiety

3. Moving to exposure is a sign that treatment is “on schedule” and that the client is making appropriate progress

B. Address anticipatory anxiety about exposure

1. Acknowledge that anticipatory anxiety is normal
2. Encourage coping with anticipatory anxiety through the use of cognitive restructuring skills
3. Emphasize the need to attend next session as it is easy to avoid