

Anxiety & Depression Reduction Workbook

Student Workbook



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Welcome!

Welcome to **Anxiety and Depression Reduction Workbook**, a workbook intended to help increase your understanding and knowledge about anxiety and depression. The goal is to provide you with life-long tools you can use while facing anxiety or depression triggering situations and skills to recognize/manage symptoms you may be experiencing. Remember, this intervention is not intended to “get rid of” your anxiety/depression. Our hope is that these five sessions provide you with a jumping board from which to integrate skills into your daily life in the service of reducing anxiety.

By the end of this course, you will have received a lot of information and at times it may feel overwhelming. Remember that like any skill (e.g., learning to ride a bike), the skills you will learn in **Anxiety and depression Reduction Workshop** take time and practice to master. At times, you may encounter obstacles and/or find it difficult to integrate these skills into your daily life. That’s okay, it’s how change works, and as with all change, it’s important to practice as much as you can, even after encountering setbacks.

Think of your practice of these skills as a form of “mental health hygiene.” At the outset, it may seem tedious and you may question why you need to practice these skills so often. Think of it like dental hygiene—you brush your teeth multiple times a day to prevent the buildup of plaque and ultimately to prevent cavities. Similar to brushing your teeth, daily practice prevents a buildup of sadness and anxiety over time and can minimize and prevent long-term symptoms. The more you practice and use these skills as part of your daily routine, the less tedious they may seem because they simply become a regular part of daily life.

Should you wish to focus more in depth on any of your depression-related or anxiety-related concerns, you may call CAPS and request an initial consult appointment to discuss options.

If at any time you feel that you need additional support, please contact CAPS at (479) 575-5276. You may also find additional resources online at health.uark.edu/mental-health/.

SESSION 1:

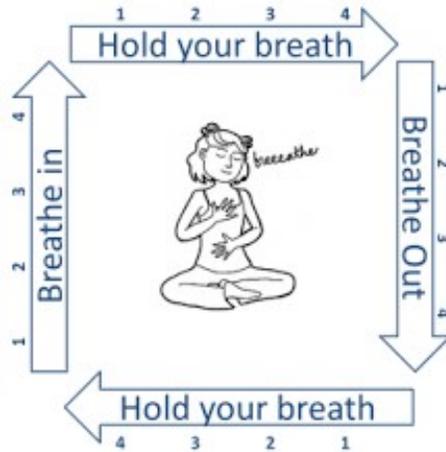
Understanding Anxiety/Depression

Introduction of Relaxation Strategies

Throughout this workbook and at the start of each session you will be learning relaxation strategies to add to your toolbox. One of the most effective coping strategies you can use for anxiety and depressive symptoms (particularly the physical ones) is to use deep breathing and relaxation techniques.

Square Breathing

1. Place one hand on our stomach and one on our chest. You want to feel the hand on our stomach move in and out more than the hand on our chest.
2. Take a deep breath in through your nose. As you inhale you count in your mind 1...2...3...4 and you imagine using the air you breathe in to push against your hand on your stomach.
3. Hold for a count of 4. Then you exhale through your mouth like you are blowing out a candle.
4. Exhale for a count of 1...2...3...4
5. Pause for a count of 4 before starting again.



In addition to deep breathing there are a variety of breathing and relaxation techniques that you can utilize to decrease your level of distress. Below you will find the handout “short relaxation techniques when you only have a few minutes”. Look at the list and select one technique that you would like to practice over the next week. When practicing these techniques here a few key reminders to increase your level of success:

- Practice these techniques daily.
- Choose a consistent time each day that is free from distractions and calm. (Before bed is a great time because it can also help with difficulties falling asleep)
- Practice these strategies in a calm environment and consistently in order to increase your ability to access them when you are stressed/anxious.
- The more you practice these strategies the easier they will be to access when you are anxious.

Short Relaxation Techniques: When you only have a few minutes	
Correct Breathing	Learn to always breathe using the diaphragm. Let the breath reach the bottom of the lungs, and let the chest and shoulders relax. High, shallow chest breathing is stressful and gives messages of stress to the brain.
Three-Part Breathing	Take a deep breath and imagine the lungs divided into three parts. Visualize the lowest part of the lungs filling with air; the chest should remain relatively still. Imagine the middle part of the lungs filling; visualize the rib cage expanding. Visualize the upper part filling with air as your shoulders rise slight and over backward. Exhale fully and completely; drop your shoulders, feel your rib cage contract, and force every bit of air from the bottom of the lungs. Repeat.
Stretching	Gently roll your head and shoulders many times a day. Also, gently stretch other areas of the body that may need it.
Tense-Relax Muscles	Tighten the muscles you want to relax and feel the tension. Let the muscles become loose and limp and feel the relaxation.
Body Scan	With your mind, briefly scan every muscle in your body from your toes to your head. Release any tension with a relaxing breath. Correct your posture and relax all the muscles you are not using.
Jaw Drop	Be aware of any tightness in your jaw. Allow your jaw to loosen by separating your teeth.
Heaviness and Warmth in Hands & Arms	Relax your body and feel heaviness in your arms and hands. Imagine a warmth flowing through them. Imagine and experiences your shoulders, arms, and hands becoming heavy, relaxed, and warm.
Mind-Quieting Meditation	Begin by focusing on your breathing. Use a special phrase that helps you focus on relaxation, and quiet your mind.
Attitudes & Perceptions	Pay attention to your perceptions and attitudes. Allow yourself to put a stress-reducing “frame” around the stressor. Remember, stress affects the body based on your perceptions of the outside world.

Why Combined Anxiety & Depression

Research shows that not only are anxiety and depressive disorders highly prevalent, they are also likely to co-occur and display similar or related symptoms. (Jacobson & Newman, 2017).

University of Arkansas Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has decided to combine our Anxiety and Depression workbooks due to the high comorbidity of these disorders, the overlapping coping skills helpful for both disorders, and in an effort to better meet the needs of our students who may be struggling with symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Reference

Jacobson, N. C. & Newman, M. G. (2017). Anxiety and depression as bidirectional risk factors for one another: A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 143(11), 1155-1200.

Sadness Versus Depression

Let's take a moment to talk about the difference between sadness and depression. Often, we use these terms interchangeably, but they are actually quite different.

Ways we distinguish between depression and sadness are:

- o Sadness:
 - o Is a normal, painful, response to challenging life events.
 - o Usually passes when the challenging event passes.
 - o Is something we all experience at some point in our lives.
- o Depression:
 - o May or may not include feelings of sadness.
 - o Is a **more persistent** experience.
 - o Includes a **cluster** of symptoms.
 - o May or may not arise out of a painful experience, so a person **might not identify a reason** for symptoms.

Understanding Depressive and Other Related Disorders

While some depressive symptoms (i.e., sadness) are a normal experience for everyone, depressive and other related disorders are characterized by significant distress or impairment in social, academic/occupational, or other important areas of functioning (e.g., your general ability to function in life).

Major Depressive Disorder:	Involves experiencing depressive episodes, which must last for two weeks, and include a minimum of 5 symptoms.
Persistent Depressive Disorder:	A less extreme depressive presentation that includes a depressed mood and at least 2 other symptoms that last for at least two years. May have episodes of major depression along with periods of less severe symptoms, but symptoms must last for two years.
Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder:	Several depressive symptoms present consistently during the week prior to menses.
Bipolar II Disorder:	Includes experiences of both depressive episodes as well as "mixed" or hypomanic episodes (i.e., elevated mood with other expansive symptoms).
Cyclothymic Disorder:	Persistent periods of alternating between "highs" and "lows" that are subthreshold for hypomanic and depressive episodes.
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder:	Recurrent temper outbursts and persistently irritable or angry mood for at least one year (present between ages 6-18).

Downward Spiral of Depression

Often times, people describe feeling that their depressive symptoms become this overwhelming mess and it feels like everything just keeps going bad, like a downward spiral. So for instance, you might make a mistake on an exam (which right now might feel like a minor event). However with depression, you may see the mistake, feel sad and irritable, feel hopeless about your academic skills, lose your appetite, and feel exhausted but can't sleep! In those moments, it might be hard to step back and see how the symptoms started or got to where they now are. Does that sound familiar to you?

Difference Between Stress and Anxiety

Now let's discuss what stress and anxiety are. Often times, we use the terms "stress" and "anxiety" interchangeably but they are actually different when it comes to diagnosable anxiety disorders. Clinical anxiety and everyday anxiety or stress often look similar and share the same arousal response. Arousal basically means being alert physically and mentally. So they both trigger people to become more alert. They also share many of the same symptoms. Below are ways we can distinguish between the two:

Everyday Anxiety (Stress)	Anxiety Disorder
In response to a known environmental factor	In response to an unknown source or in response to the experience of stress
Symptoms go away when the stressor goes away	Symptoms remain despite no identifiable stressor
Worry about living away from home for the first time, passing a class, a romantic breakup, or other important life events	Constant and unsubstantiated worry that causes significant distress and interferes with your daily life
Embarrassment or self-consciousness in an uncomfortable or awkward social situation; feeling nervous about meeting new people	Avoidance of social situations due to fear of being judged, embarrassed, or humiliated
Feeling nervous or sweating before a big test, class presentation, stage performance, or other significant event	Panic attacks that seem out of the blue and preoccupation with the fear of having another one
Realistic fear of a dangerous object, place, or situation (e.g. fear of poisonous snakes)	Irrational fear or avoidance of an object, place, or situation that poses little or no threat of danger (e.g. fear of elevators)
Making sure that you are healthy and living in a safe environment	Performing uncontrollable repetitive actions, such as excessive cleaning, checking, touching or arranging

Adapted from: <http://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety>

Understanding Anxiety Disorders

While anxiety is a normal and adaptive experience for everyone, anxiety disorders are characterized by significant distress or impairment in social, academic/occupational, or other important areas of functioning (e.g., your general ability to function in life).

Some of the most common anxiety disorders include:

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Chronic and unrealistic worry that feels difficult to control about everyday things (i.e., things that do not worry most people)

Social Anxiety Disorder: Chronic worry solely related to social situations

Panic Disorder: Characterized by episodes of “panic” that include things like: adrenaline surge, fear of losing control, chest pain, racing heart, shortness of breath, dizziness

Phobias: Specific fears that are excessive in nature and often lead to avoiding that which is feared (e.g., public speaking, heights, tunnels, etc.)

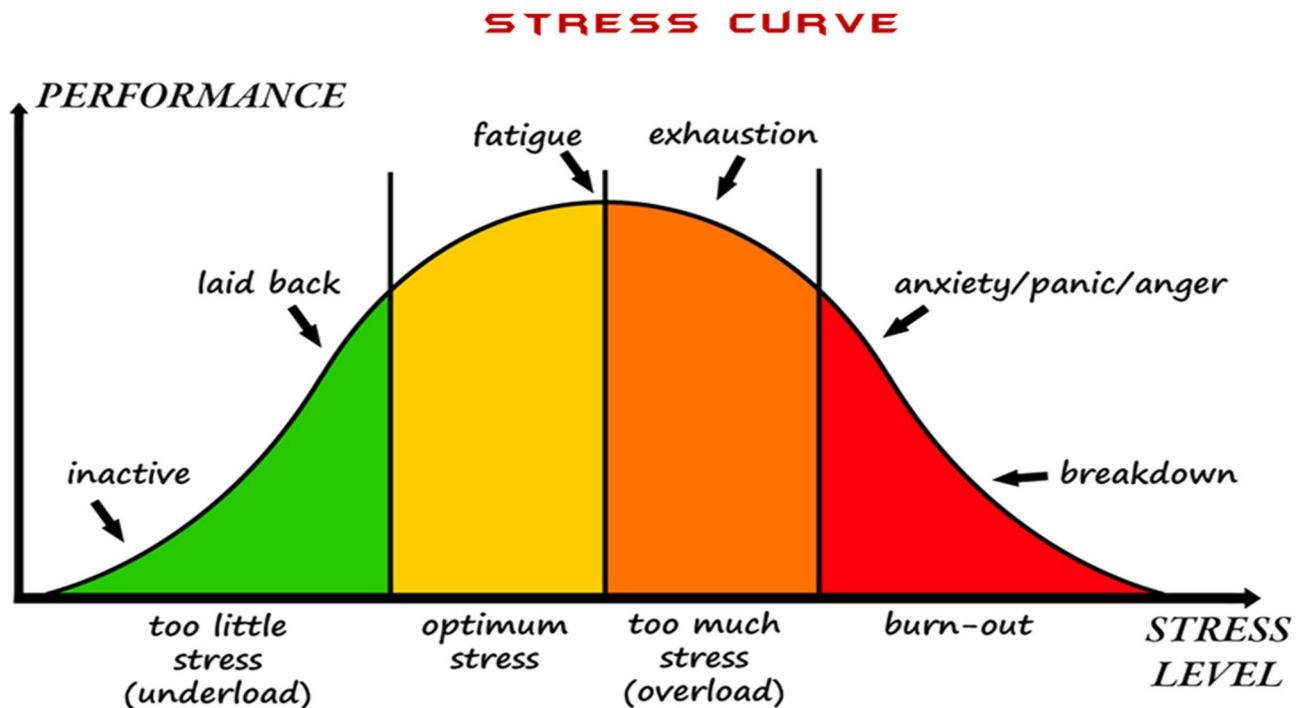
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: Excessive rumination (thinking) with repetitive behaviors to reduce anxiety

Yerkes Dodson Theory

Stress or everyday anxiety can be a motivator, however high levels of anxiety as a hindrance to performance. Below you will see a visual of the Yerkes-Dodson model of arousal and performance.

The idea here is that someone who has no stress or anxiety (aka no arousal) has little motivation to perform and keep up with their responsibilities. Whereas someone with too much anxiety or arousal may attempt to avoid the situation, or perform poorly due to their symptoms. When this occurs it can also cause feelings of depression and trigger our depressive spiral. However, with a **moderate level of arousal from stress or anxiety**, a person is likely to be motivated to prepare, concentrate, or do whatever is necessary for the situation without becoming debilitated or avoidant.

For example, some stress before a test or deadline may motivate and energize you to study. However, with minimal or no stress, you may say “why bother studying?” and decide to wing it. With too much anxiety you may feel overwhelmed, hopeless and avoid studying at all. Does this sound familiar?

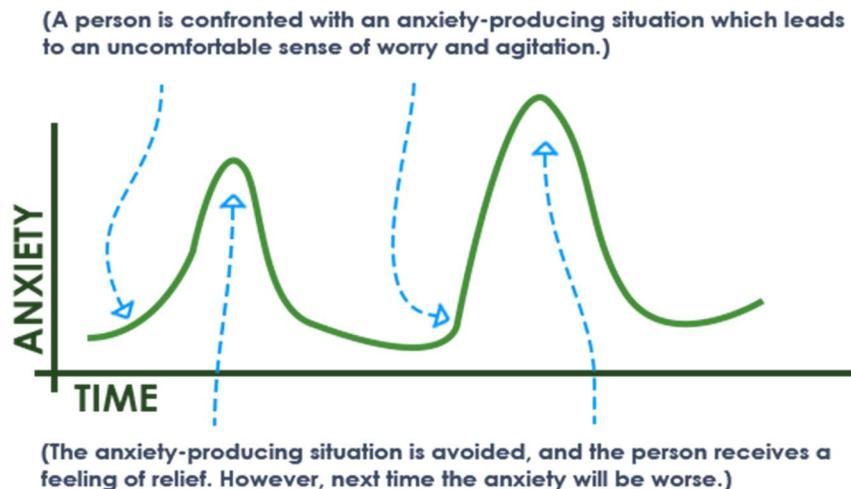


Avoidance and Exposure

Let's talk about avoidance, which is a common response to feelings of anxiety. Take a look at the graph below to help visualize how avoidance relates to anxiety. Often, when people have an anxiety-provoking situation, they experience numerous uncomfortable physical, emotional and cognitive symptoms. In an effort to avoid the uncomfortable experience of anxiety, people avoid the anxiety-provoking situation all together.

But the short term relief of **avoidance and escape comes at a high cost**. Avoidance and escape contribute to the persistence of anxiety and reduces a person's level of daily functioning. This is why **exposure** or doing things that you typically avoid because of anxiety is beneficial. Exposing yourself to the anxiety-provoking situation helps you to see the situations more realistically and increases your tolerance for anxiety.

Anxiety - Avoidance Roller Coaster



Adapted from- <http://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-guide/cbt-for-anxiety>

Fight, Flight, or Freeze Response

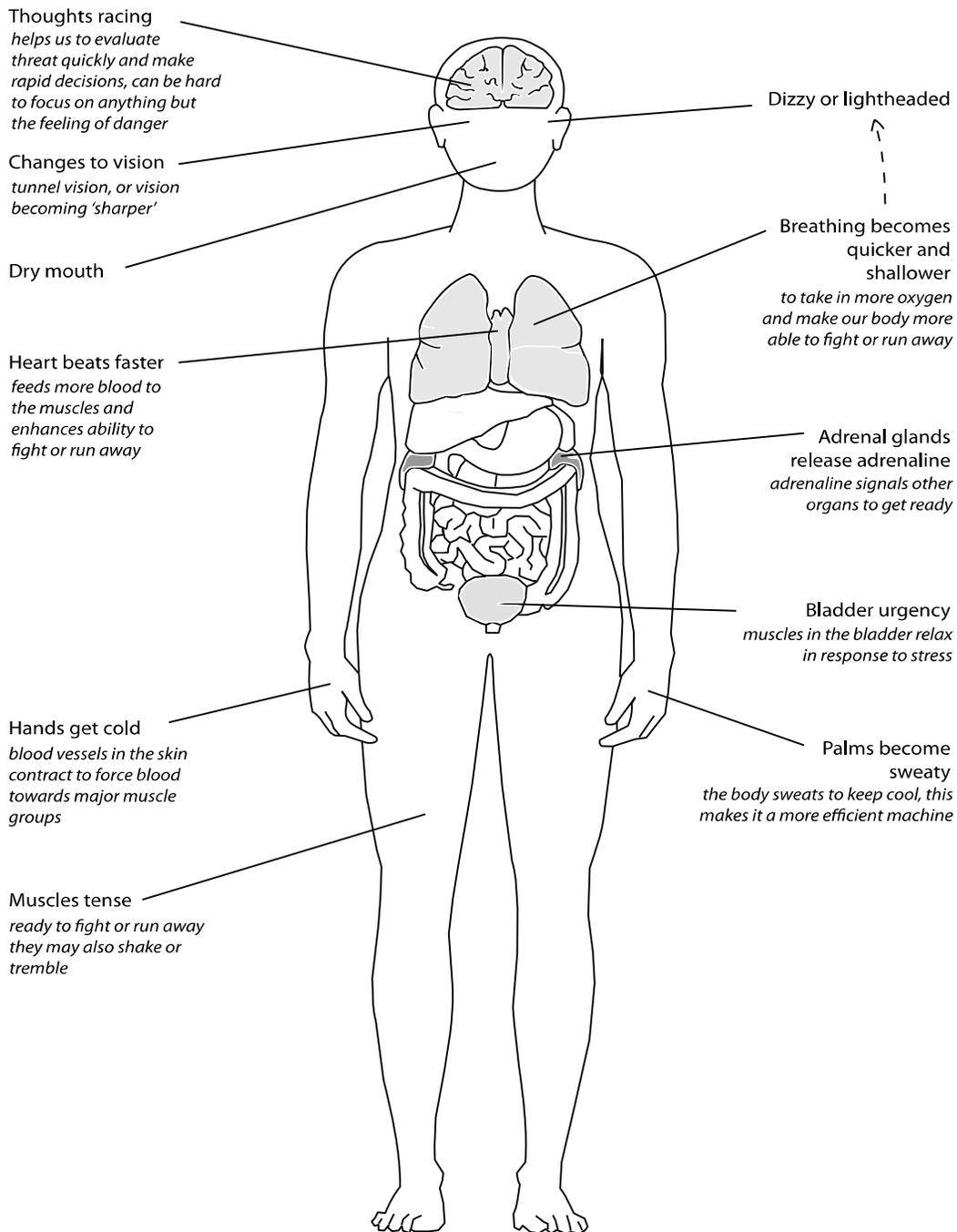
How can we increase exposure and get off the anxiety-avoidance roller coaster? First, we need to understand what's going for you when you experience anxiety. Let's start by looking at what's going on in your body when you experience stress or anxiety.

A big part of anxiety has to do with our physiological responses to stressors. Our amygdala is the part of our brain that triggers our anxiety switch. The amygdala has an evolutionary basis in protecting us from danger and triggers our fight, flight, or freeze response. However, when it comes to our anxiety the fight, flight or freeze system is getting mis-triggered and our amygdala gets stuck in the “on” mode, so we run away from or fight danger (our anxiety) all day long and tire ourselves out! Furthermore, the amygdala learns that this level of arousal and anxiety, this constant “on” mode, is the new norm and the amygdala adapts and adopts this new elevated level of anxiety for your body. This may be why you feel anxious all the time. Therefore, the fight, flight or freeze response triggered by the amygdala contributes to physiological symptoms of anxiety. These physiological symptoms are one of the uncomfortable things that we avoid when we avoid anxiety-provoking situations.

Look at the symptoms listed on the handout on the next page and put a check mark next to the ones you have experienced.

Threat System (Fight or Flight)

The 'fight or flight' response gets the body ready to fight or run away. Once a threat is detected your body responds automatically. All of the changes happen for good reasons, but may be experienced as uncomfortable when they happen in 'safe' situations.



SESSION 2: Self-Care

Breath-Counting Exercise

This exercise focuses on the use of counting with the rhythm of the breath. Start with a short period of time and gradually increase the time. Set a timer so that you do not have to worry about when to stop.

1. Find a comfortable position. Take several deep breaths and settle into yourself. You may either close your eyes or keep them open, depending on your own comfort. If you keep them open, fix them on an object or a spot on the floor about four feet in front of you. Your eyes may be either focused or unfocused.
2. Take deep, comfortable breaths. Notice your inhalation. The pause between inhaling and exhaling, your exhalation, and the pause before starting again.
3. As you inhale, count, “one...” As you exhale, count, “two...” Inhale, “three...” Exhale, “four...” Continue until you reach 10 then start over.
4. If you lose count, simply begin with “one” on your next inhalation.
5. If you notice your mind has wandered, gently notice this, and return your focus back to counting your breath

Self-Care

Engaging in pleasurable activities is important to maintain a healthy body and mind. Applying self-care is an easy strategy to reduce our symptoms of anxiety and depression. Self-care includes the various ways we look after ourselves physically, emotionally and mentally.

While self-care can look different from person-to-person, there are some types of self-care recommended for everyone: good sleep, physical activity, and attending to your own nutritional needs.

Self-Care: Sleep

Lots of important things happen in your brain and body while you sleep. Research shows that while you sleep, your brain is hard at work forming the pathways necessary for learning and consolidating the information you've taken in that day. Sleep deprivation will impact your mood, energy, memory, grades, ability to focus and your ability to concentrate in class and on homework.

Research shows you **need 7 to 8 hours of sleep consistently EVERY night** to be well-rested and perform optimally. Below you will find strategies to improve your sleep hygiene. **Circle one strategy that you would like to implement starting tonight.**



Sleep Hygiene

1. **Get regular.** Go to bed and get up at more or less the same time every day, even on weekends and days off!
2. **Get up and try again.** Try to go to sleep only when tired. If you haven't been able to get to sleep after about 30 minutes, get up and do something calming (not stimulating) until you feel sleepy, then return to bed and try again.
3. **Avoid caffeine and nicotine.** Avoid consuming any caffeine (coffee, tea, soda, chocolate) or nicotine (cigarettes) for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. These act as stimulants and interfere with falling asleep.
4. **Avoid alcohol.** Avoid alcohol for at least 4-6 hours before bed because it interrupts the quality of sleep.
5. **Bed is for sleeping.** Try not to use your bed for anything other than sleeping and sex, so that your body comes to associate bed with sleep.
6. **Electronics curfew.** Don't use back-lit electronics 60 minutes prior to bed, as the artificial light inhibits hormones and neurons that promote sleep.
7. **No naps.** Avoid taking naps during the day. If you can't make it through the day without a nap, make sure it is for less than an hour and before 3pm.
8. **Sleep rituals.** Develop rituals to remind your body that it is time to sleep, like relaxing stretches or breathing exercises for 15 minutes before bed.
9. **No clock-watching.** Checking the clock during the night can wake you up and reinforces negative thoughts such as, "Oh no, look how late it is, I'll never get to sleep."
10. **The right space.** Make your bed and bedroom quiet and comfortable for sleeping. An eye mask and earplugs may help block out light and noise.
11. **Keep daytime routine the same.** Even if you have a bad night's sleep, it is important that you try to keep your daytime activities the same as you had planned. That is, don't avoid activities because you feel tired. This can reinforce the insomnia.



Self-Care: Exercise

In addition to good sleep, exercise can lead to positive changes in our well-being. In the short term, exercise releases endorphins, which are powerful chemicals in your brain that can improve mood, energy levels, and concentration, often leading to feelings of euphoria. Over time, consistent exercise promotes long-term changes in the brain, resulting in improved memory, coping, cognitive functioning, mood, and self-esteem. Some people experience a sense of calm and happiness after a good hike or improved concentration after they went for a swim. **Have you ever experienced this feeling?** Look at the exercise tips below and circle one you can implement into your everyday routine.

- 1. Find an enjoyable activity.** Exercise doesn't have to be boring. Choose a pleasurable activity, like playing badminton or doing yoga. Aim for fun, not more work.
- 2. Start small.** Commit to 10 minutes of exercise a day or add exercise to your daily routine (like walking to school or doing push-ups in your room).
- 3. Get outside.** The sun provides a mood "pick me up" of its own, producing serotonin in the brain. Take a walk outside or go swimming.
- 4. Schedule it in.** It's easy to skip exercise when we don't plan. Put it in your phone as part of your daily to-do's and celebrate when you check it off.
- 5. Mix it up.** To avoid feeling bored with exercise, try a number of different activities.
- 6. Team up.** Depression can be isolating. Ask others to do team activities or find an exercise buddy for accountability and to increase social interaction.
- 7. Minimize equipment.** Equipment can be expensive. Identify activities that don't require you to have equipment or facilities, like walking, running, or dancing.
- 8. Follow your energy.** If your energy fluctuates throughout the day, try to plan to exercise when your energy is at its peak. Alternatively, exercise when feeling sluggish for an energy boost.
- 9. Set goals.** Achieving goals improves mood and self-esteem. Set specific achievable exercise goals and reward yourself when you accomplish them.



Self-Care: Nutrition

We would also like to take a moment to highlight the importance of nutrition in managing anxiety and depression. When experiencing anxiety and depression, many people notice changes to their appetites or eating patterns. Research shows that individuals experiencing depression often have deficiencies in vitamins (like B6, Thiamine) and minerals (calcium, iron) that are linked to mood and present in a well-balanced diet. Recommendations on appropriate nutrition are outside the scope of this workbook. However, we do recommend that individuals experiencing depression focus on staying hydrated and working towards a balanced diet. We also encourage students to speak with medical doctors about their vitamin and mineral levels and to follow-up with Health Education or the Registered Dietician, where you can obtain more personalized feedback on food and nutrition.

Values Clarification

Values clarification increases awareness of any values that may have a bearing on lifestyle decisions and actions. This process has shown to be helpful for self-improvement, increased well-being, and interactions with others. Values clarification techniques often help people learn more about themselves and develop reasonable goals, and therapy often allows for a safe environment in which people can understand and develop their own set of values and achieve realization of their motivations and characteristics.

We will be using values clarification to develop our self-care goals and plan. However first we must complete a *Core Values Assessment* to gain a better understanding of the values that guide us. Below you will find a *Core Values Assessment* worksheet. Select the 10 most important values to you and rank them in order. Ask yourself what kind of things you are doing every day to live in congruence with your values. What would you like to add? What might you need to subtract?

Once you have completed the *Core Values Assessment* complete your Self-Care plan on the following page.

Core Values Assessment

Common Personal Values		
Accomplishment	Good will	Quality over quantity
Abundance	Goodness	Quantity over quality
Accountability	Gratitude	Reciprocity
Accuracy	Hard work	Recognition
Achievement	Harmony	Regularity
Adventure	Healing	Relaxation
Approval	Holistic Living	Reliability
Autonomy	Honesty	Resourcefulness
Balance	Honor	Respect for others
Beauty	Improvement	Responsibility
Challenge	Independence	Responsiveness
Change	Individuality	Results
Clarity	Initiative	Romance
Cleanliness, orderliness	Inner peace	Rule of Law
Collaboration	Innovation	Sacrifice
Commitment	Integrity	Safety
Communication	Intelligence	Satisfying others
Community	Intensity	Security
Compassion	Intimacy	Self-awareness
Competence	Intuition	Self-confidence
Competition	Joy	Self-esteem
Concern for others	Justice	Self-expression
Confidence	Knowledge	Self-improvement
Connection	Leadership	Self-love
Conservation	Learning	Self-mastery
Content over form	Love	Self-reliance
Cooperation	Loyalty	Self-trust
Coordination	Meaning	Sensuality
Creativity	Merit	Service
Credibility	Moderation	Simplicity
Decisiveness	Modesty	Sincerity
Democracy	Money	Skill
Determination	Nature	Solitude
Discipline	Nurturing	Speed
Discovery	Obedience	Spirituality
Diversity	Open-mindedness	Stability
Education	Openness	Standardization
Efficiency	Optimism	Status
Environment	Patriotism	Straightforwardness
Equality	Peace, Non-violence	Strength
Excellence	Perfection	Success
Exploration	Perseverance	Systemization
Fairness	Persistence	Teamwork
Faith	Personal Growth	Timeliness
Faithfulness	Personal health	Tolerance
Family	Pleasure	Tradition
Flair	Power	Tranquility
Flexibility	Practicality	Trust
Forgiveness	Preservation	Trustworthiness
Freedom	Privacy	Truth
Friendship	Problem solving	Unity
Frugality	Professionalism	Variety
Fulfillment	Progress	Vitality
Fun	Prosperity	Wealth
Generosity	Punctuality	Wisdom
Genuineness	Purpose	

SELF-CARE WORKSHEET

Rate current use of wellness practices in your everyday life 0 (non-existent) to 5 (use every day).
Wellness practices can include, pleasant activities, yoga, meditation, journaling, etc.)

What are your current roadblocks to effective self-care? _____

What self-care/wellness practice would you like to implement? What values underline this goal? (see list) _____

TIPS TO IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE SELF-CARE:

- Choose what wellness practice you are going to implement (see the list below if you do not have activity you would like to implement)
- Create a schedule when you are going to implement the activity
- Stick to the same schedule everyday
- Identify how you will overcome a roadblock if it presents itself

What is your plan to implement effective self-care? _____

The smallest, easiest step I can begin with is: _____

The time, day, and date that I will take the first step is: _____

Pleasant Activities						
Acting	Amusing people	Attending a concert	Beachcombing	Being alone	Being with animals	Being at the beach
Being complimented	Being coached	Being counseled	Being in the country	Being at a family get-together	Being at a fraternity/sorority	Being with friends
Being with happy people	Being in the mountains	Being with my roommate	Being with someone I love	Being told I am loved	Being with my parents	Bird-watching
Boating/ canoeing	Budgeting my time	Buying things for myself	Buying something for someone I care about	Camping	Caring for plants	Canning/ Making preserves
Cheering for something	Collecting things	Combing/ brushing my hair	Completing a difficult task	Complimenting or praising someone	Cooking	Counseling someone
Dancing	Dating someone I like	Designing/ Drafting	Discussing my favorite hobby	Doing art work	Doing experiments	Doing favors for people I like
Doing housework	Dreaming at night	Driving long distances	Eating good meals	Exploring/ Hiking	Expressing love to someone	Feeling the presence of a Higher Power
Fishing	Fixing machines	Gardening/ Doing yardwork	Gathering natural objects	Giving gifts	Giving a party for someone	Getting up early
Getting massages	Giving massages	Going to an amusement park/ zoo	Going to a barber/ beautician	Going to a concert	Going to lectures	Going to a luncheon/ potluck
Going to a health club/ sauna/spa	Going to the movies	Going to a museum	Going on nature walks/ field trips	Going to a play	Going to a restaurant	Going to a reunion
Going to a spiritual/ peaceful place	Going to a sports event	Having coffee/tea with friends	Having daydreams	Having friends over to visit	Having a lively talk	Having lunch with friends
Kicking sand/ pebbles/leaves	Kissing	Knitting/ crocheting	Laughing	Learning something new	Listening to the radio	Listening to music
Looking at the stars/ moon	Making charitable donations	Making food to give away	Making a new friend	Meditating/ Doing yoga	Planning or organizing something	Playing sports
Playing cards	Playing music	Playing with a pet	Playing in nature	Playing a board game/ chess	Photography	Repairing things
Reading	Reminiscing	Riding in an airplane	Running/ jogging	Saying prayers	Seeing beautiful scenery	Seeing old friends
Sewing	Shaving	Singing	Sleeping late	Smelling a flower or plant	Seeing good things happen to people	Solving a puzzle/ crossword
Speaking a foreign language	Staying up late	Smiling at people	Taking a bath	Using my strengths	Watching TV	Writing in a journal

SESSION 3: The Cognitive Behavioral Model

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

- Sit back or, when you are at home, lie down in a comfortable position. Shut your eyes if you're comfortable doing so; if not, soften your gaze on a fixed point.
- Start by taking a deep breath and noticing the feeling of air filling your lungs. Hold your breath for a few seconds. One.....two.....three... Release the breath slowly and let the tension leave your body.
- Now, take another deep breath and hold it. One.....two....three.... Slowly release the air.
- Even slower now, take another breath in. Fill your lungs and hold the breath. One.....two.....three. Slowly release the breath and imagine the feeling of tension leaving your body with each breath out.
- We are going to begin progressively tensing and releasing our muscles. Let's start by clenching our fists, tighter and tighter. Hold. Study the tension in your fists, wrists and forearms as you hold the clenched fist. *(5 second pause)*. Now let go and relax your hands. Feel the looseness in your hands and notice the contrast between the tension and the feeling of relaxation. *(5 second pause)*
- Now bend your elbows and tense your biceps. Tense them as hard as you can and observe the feeling of tautness. Hold. *(5 second pause)*. Okay, relax. Straighten out your arms. Notice the feeling of relaxation in your hands, arms, and shoulders. Notice how your arms feel limp and at ease. *(5 second pause)*
- Okay, let's turn our attention to our head. Wrinkle your forehead as tight as you can. Hold. *(5 second pause)* Now relax and smooth it out. *(5 second pause)*
- Now close your eyes, squint them tighter. Feel the tension. *(5 second pause)*. Now, relax your eyes. Let them remain closed gently and comfortably. *(5 second pause)*
- Okay, still focusing on our heads, roll your head to the right and feel the changing locus of stress, roll it to the left. *(5 second pause)*
- Straighten your head and bring it forward. Press your chin against your chest. Feel the tension in your throat, the back of your neck. Hold. *(5 second pause)* Relax, allowing your head to return to a comfortable position. Let the relaxation deepen. *(5 second pause)*
- Next, tense the muscles in your back by bringing your shoulders together behind you. Hold them tightly. Tense them as hard as you can without straining and keep holding *(5 second pause)*. Now let go. Release the tension from your back. Feel the tension slowly leaving your body, and the new feeling of relaxation. Notice how different your body feels when you allow it to relax. *(5 second pause)*
- Now shrug your shoulders up to your ears and hold. *(5 second pause)* Relax your shoulders. Drop them back and feel the relaxation spreading through your neck, throat and shoulders. Give your body a chance to relax. Feel the comfort and the heaviness. *(5 second pause)*
- Next, breathe in and fill your lungs completely. Hold your breath. Notice the tension. *(5 second pause)* Now exhale. Let the air hiss out and let your chest become loose. Continue relaxing, letting your breath come freely and gently. *(5 second pause)*
- Now tighten your buttocks and thighs. Squeeze your thighs as hard as you can and hold. *(5 second pause)*. Release. Feel the difference as you let go. *(5 second pause)*
- Now let's move our attention to the calves and feet. Press your toes downward, making your calves tense. Study the tension. *(5 second pause)*. Relax. *(5 second pause)*.
- Now bend your toes towards your face, creating tension in your shins. *(5 second pause)*. Relax again. *(5 second pause)*.
- Okay. Finally, tense your entire body. Tense your feet, legs, stomach, chest, arms, head, and neck. Tense hard, without straining. Hold the tension. *(5 second pause)*. Relax. Feel the looseness and heaviness throughout your body as the relaxation deepens. Let go more and more. Experience the relaxation deepening. Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation, and how different it is from the feeling of tension *(Wait 10 seconds)*.
- Begin to wake your body up by slowly moving your muscles. Adjust your arms and legs. Stretch your muscles and open your eyes when you're ready.

The CBT Model

In this workbook, we'll use a model called "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy" or CBT, which is evidence-based in treating depression and anxiety. The **CBT model focuses on interactions between symptoms** in 3 areas: our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. When we talk about anxiety and depression, we add **physiological/physical sensations** because they are a major component of anxiety and depression. So, in the next sessions, we will focus on 4 symptom clusters: physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive responses.

Let's look at the symptoms of depression and anxiety and how they fit into those 4 categories. We like to highlight many of the symptoms because your experience might look very different from the person to person! Let's take a look on the next two pages at the common symptoms people experience. As you can see, each of the symptoms is either a behavior, thought, emotion, or physical sensation. Please take a moment to review the symptoms and check off/circle/highlight the symptoms that you have experienced.

Common Anxiety Symptoms

Physical Symptoms

- Increased heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain or pressure
- Choking sensation
- Dizziness, lightheadedness
- Sweating, hot flashes, chills
- Nausea, upset stomach, diarrhea
- Trembling, shaking
- Weakness, unsteadiness, faintness
- Tense muscles, rigidity
- Dry mouth
- Other: _____

Behavioral Symptoms

- **Avoidance** of threat cues or situations
- **Escape**, flight
- Pursuit of safety, reassurance
- Restlessness, agitation, pacing
- Hyperventilation
- Freezing, motionlessness
- Difficulty speaking
- Other: _____

Cognitive Symptoms

- Fear of losing control, being unable to cope
- Fear of physical injury or death
- Fear of “going crazy”
- Fear of negative evaluations by others
- Frightening thoughts, images, or memories
- Perceptions of unreality or detachment
- Poor concentration, confusion, distractibility
- Narrowing of attention, hypervigilance for threat
- Poor memory
- Difficulty in reasoning, loss of objectivity
- Other: _____

Emotional Symptoms

- Feeling nervous, tense, wound up
- Feeling frightened, fearful, terrified
- Being edgy, jumpy, jittery
- Being impatient, frustrated
- Other: _____

Common Depressive Symptoms

Behaviors	Thoughts	Emotions	Physical Sensations
Increased or reduced sleep	Reduced focus/ concentration	Low Mood or persistent sadness	Fatigue or low energy
Withdrawing from friends, family, pets	Suicidal thoughts or preoccupation with death	Loss of Pleasure for things you used to enjoy	Unexplained aches and pains
"self-medicating" with alcohol or other drugs	Self-criticism	Anger or irritability	"heaviness" in the body
Changes to eating or weight	Worry about something awful happening	Guilt	Appetite disruption
Suicide attempts	Fear of rejection	Numbness or feelings of emptiness	Gastrointestinal problems
Physical restlessness or slowing	Inability to make decisions	Hopelessness	Changes to sex drive
Poor hygiene			
Crying Spells			

Completion of Cross Sectional Formulation

In order to clarify our symptoms further we use the **cross sectional formulation**. This also allows us to see how each of the symptom categories interact with and impact the others. This CBT model is a fundamental part of this workbook and we will frequently refer to this diagram. Before filling out your own take a look at the two examples below. Once you have an understanding from the examples take a moment to complete your own. If you're having trouble thinking of symptoms, go back to the list of symptoms. Feel free to use feelings wheel located after the first blank diagram. We have included additional diagrams for practice.

Anxiety Cross Sectional Formulation

Situation (*When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel anxious about?*)

A student invited me to a party in my residence hall, but I didn't know her very well and felt anxious about going.

Physical (*When anxious, what physical sensations did you experience? What did you notice in your body?*)

Heart racing, tight chest, shallow breathing, hot

Emotional (*What emotions came up for you when you felt anxious?*)

Scared, ashamed, Lonely, agitated, nervous

Cognitive (*What went through your mind when you felt anxious? What did that say or mean about you or the situation?*)

I won't know anyone at the party and will feel awkward. No one will like me because I'm so socially awkward. I won't have fun. But if I say no, this person won't like me and I wouldn't make friends.

Behavioral (*What was your first instinct and/or automatic response? What did you do and/or avoid doing at the time?*)

My first instinct was to say no. I avoided saying no but telling her that I would think about it. I never got back to her. I didn't go to the party.

Depression Cross Sectional Formulation

Situation (*When? Where? What? With whom?*)

I have a group assignment due for my class. I asked a fellow classmate to be my partner, but she declined.

Physical (*When depressed, what physical sensations did you experience? What did you notice in your body?*)

Upset stomach, tired, lost my appetite, got really hot

Emotional (*What emotions came up for you when you felt depressed?*)

Sad, ashamed, embarrassed, rejected, lonely, irritable

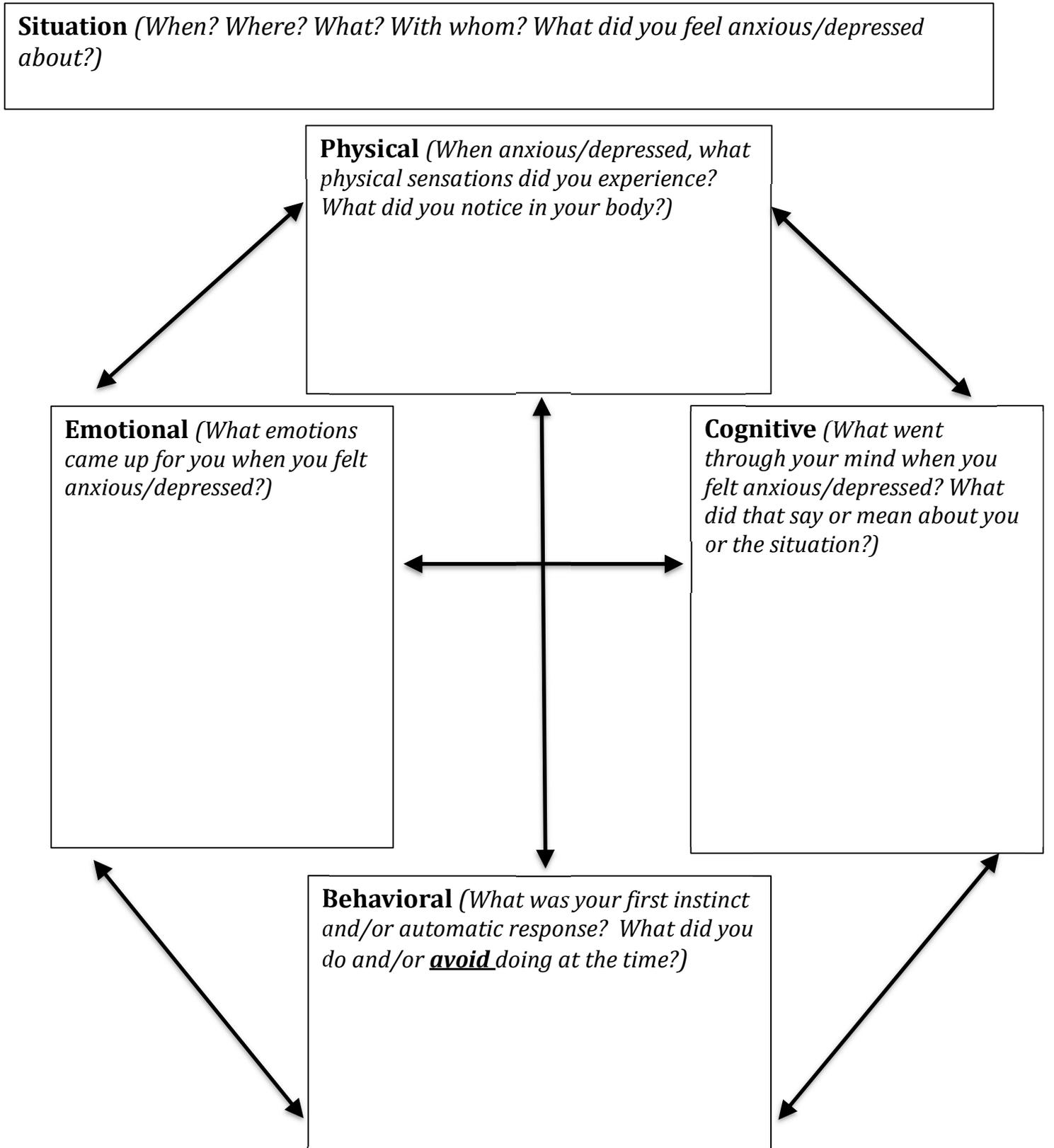
Cognitive (*What went through your mind when you felt depressed? What did that say or mean about you or the situation?*)

I knew I shouldn't have asked her; she's way smarter than me and she knows it. If we had worked together, I only would have brought down the grade. I'm so stupid. She must hate me.

Behavioral (*What was your first instinct and/or response? What did you do and/or avoid doing?*)

I want to avoid asking anyone else in case they say no. I left class early and haven't found a partner to work with. I'll avoid talking to her in the future.

Cross Sectional Formulation



Cross Sectional Formulation

Situation *(When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel anxious/depressed about?)*

Physical *(When anxious/depressed, what physical sensations did you experience? What did you notice in your body?)*

Emotional *(What emotions came up for you when you felt anxious/depressed?)*

Cognitive *(What went through your mind when you felt anxious/depressed? What did that say or mean about you or the situation?)*

Behavioral *(What was your first instinct and/or automatic response? What did you do and/or avoid doing at the time?)*

Cross Sectional Formulation

Situation (*When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel anxious/depressed about?*)

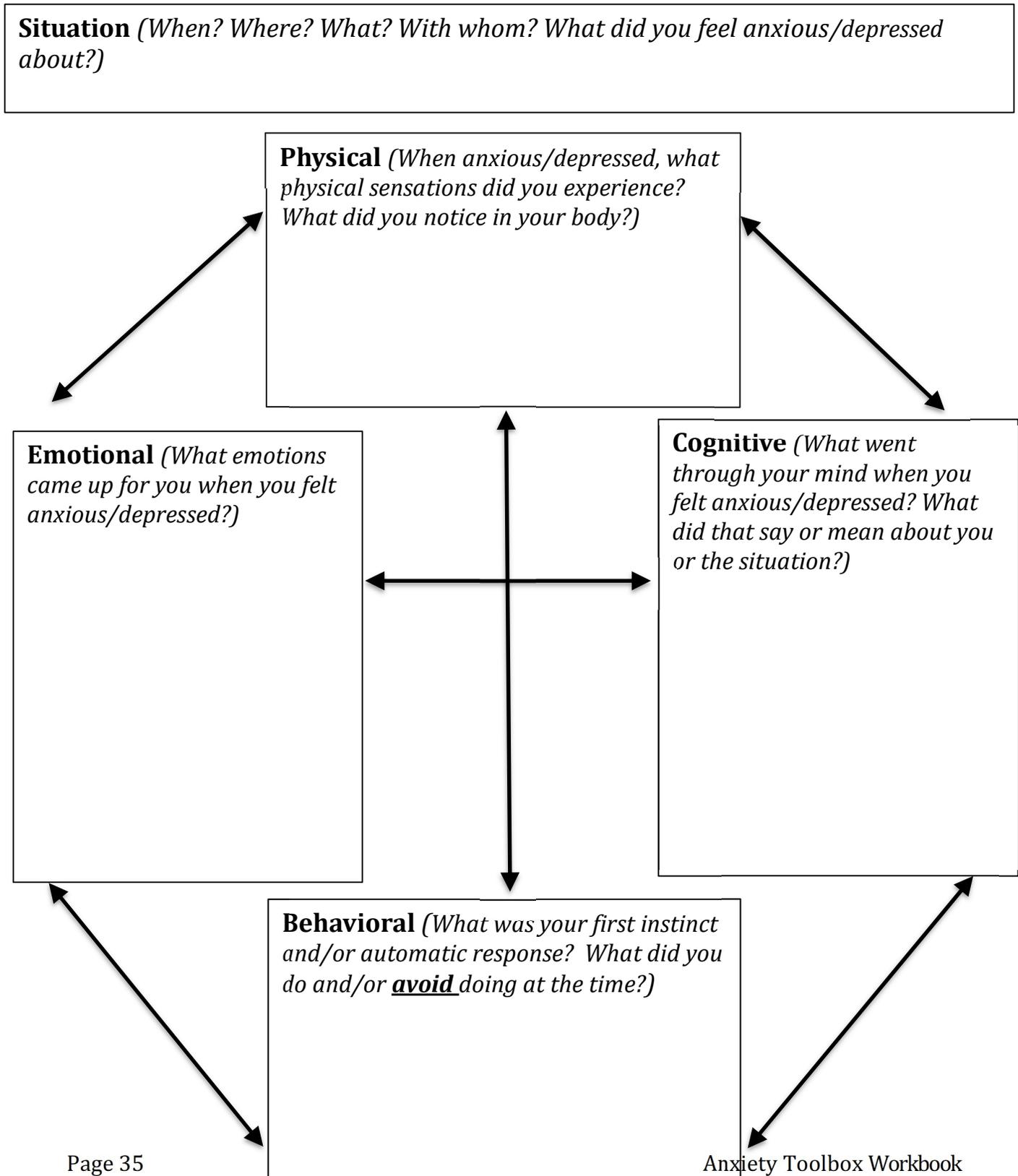
Physical (*When anxious/depressed, what physical sensations did you experience? What did you notice in your body?*)

Emotional (*What emotions came up for you when you felt anxious/depressed?*)

Cognitive (*What went through your mind when you felt anxious/depressed? What did that say or mean about you or the situation?*)

Behavioral (*What was your first instinct and/or automatic response? What did you do and/or avoid doing at the time?*)

Cross Sectional Formulation



**SESSION 4:
AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS
AND UNHELPFUL
COGNITIONS**

“54321” Grounding Exercise

- Name 5 things you can see in the room with you.
- Name 4 things you can feel (tactile; e.g. “chair on my back” or “feet on floor”)
- Name 3 things you can hear right now
- Name 2 things you can smell right now
- Name 1 you can taste or 1 good thing about yourself



***Additional grounding techniques can be found in the appendix

Thoughts & Behaviors

Now that we understand the CBT model and how our thoughts, physical sensations, behaviors, and emotions interact with one another, let's begin looking more intentionally in two areas: thoughts and behaviors. There are lots of things people think and do that perpetuate anxiety and depression.

Let's be clear that when we say "your thoughts and behaviors perpetuate depression and anxiety", we don't mean that you caused or are to blame for your depression or anxiety, but rather that **some of our habitual thinking patterns and behaviors may be keeping us from feeling that way.**

Below are some thinking and behavior patterns that keep people stuck:

- Imagining the future will be the same or worse than the past or present.
- Isolate; avoiding other people, including friends and family.
- Not pursuing hobbies, passions, or interests.
- Skipping class or avoiding obligations

Habits

There are probably a couple of things listed that you do, right? You may have said to yourself, "I know I should get out of bed and go to class but I just can't." You may have asked yourself, "Why do I keep doing this?"

Before you go further down the spiral of beating yourself up for feeling stuck, let's talk about habits. In general, whether one is anxious/depressed or not, many of our thoughts and behaviors are not driven by conscious intention, but by habits in thinking and behaving.

Habits are originally formed by what is immediately pleasurable, avoids pain, and what we've done in the past. Remember the avoidance roller coaster from session one? As we keep repeating a thought or behavior, the habit is strengthened more by repetition. Unfortunately, the part of our brain that controls habits does not distinguish between good and bad or helpful and

unhelpful thoughts or behaviors; thus, we maintain the thought or behavior even when we know that it is not helpful. In other words, **we get stuck**.

Automatic thoughts

Now that we have looked at the interactions between thoughts, emotions, and feelings, let's take a few minutes to focus more on our thought patterns and their influence on our symptoms. Our **thoughts can be conscious, intentional and/or purposeful**, like when you are purposefully working on a homework assignment and thinking about the content. Or our **thoughts can be automatic**, like a reflex.

Automatic thoughts are the thoughts and/or images that automatically pop into our heads. We don't choose for them to happen, they just do.

For example, you may be purposefully working on your homework when the automatic thought pops up that you suddenly need to clean your room or text a friend or call your mom back. These automatic thoughts can be helpful or unhelpful.

For example, if you're working on that homework assignment and you have the thought "I need to go to the bathroom," that's helpful. But if the automatic thoughts distract you from what you are trying to accomplish and you can't refocus on your homework, it is not so helpful.

Sometimes, automatic thoughts can impact the way we feel or further think about things. We're going to hone in on these automatic thoughts, particularly the unhelpful ones, because this is where we can start to see some difficulties when it comes to anxiety and depression.

Let's look at some examples of automatic thoughts and feelings that might go with them. Imagine you notice that your heart rate has accelerated. You may have the thought, "My heart is racing, I must be having a panic attack" or you may have the thought "My heart is racing, I'm so excited!" Can you see how the

same **internal experience** or stimulus (i.e., heart racing) can provoke different thoughts?

What *feelings* do you think you would have if you had the thought “My heart is racing, I must be having a panic attack?”

Okay, now what *feelings* do you think you would have if you had the thought “My heart is racing, I’m so excited!”

Can you see how different thoughts may provoke different feelings?

Here is another example. This time, our thoughts are in response to an **external stimulus**. Imagine you’re walking on campus and someone doesn’t acknowledge you when you say “hi.” You have the thought “they must not like me” or you have the thought “maybe they didn’t hear me.”

Can you see how having these two different thoughts might elicit a different emotional response? You may feel hurt if you think they don’t like you, or you might brush it off if you think they didn’t hear you. Does this make sense?

From just this one example, we can agree that it would be easy to feel sad, upset, hurt, etc. if we had the thought “they must not like me.” With anxiety and depression, this pattern of unhelpful automatic thoughts can occur repeatedly, as if you’re live-streaming your perceived flaws and mistakes. This pattern of unhelpful thinking can be incessant and very hard to turn off. It can lead to low emotions, behavioral changes, and physical sensations, all perpetuating the experience of anxiety and depression.

Considering everything above, let’s take a look at the cross sectional formulation you completed. Remember when we talked about how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors all interact; well, automatic thoughts can impact the way we feel or further think about things.

First, look at the examples from **pages 28 and 29** and identify unhelpful automatic thoughts that the person was having. Now taking a look at your personal example is it possible that any of the thoughts listed were unhelpful automatic thoughts?

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

When we think about automatic thoughts, we can often place them into a number of common categories of styles of thinking that everyone engages in. When we say everyone, we mean everyone, not just people who struggle with anxiety or depression. These ways of thinking are so common in fact that we have names for them.

One of the most used styles of thinking is what we call “**catastrophizing.**” This is when your thoughts snowball. For example, you start with the thought, “I’m going to fail this test”, which leads to the thought, “If I fail the test, I’ll fail the class”, and then, “I’ll fail out of U of A and never graduate,” and then, “I’ll never get a good job”, and finally, “I’ll be homeless and unable to support myself.” Notice how that went downhill pretty quickly. Sound familiar to anyone?

So that was just one example of many. Look at the handout below titled **Unhelpful Thinking Styles**. As you go through these styles of thinking, start to identify in some way (star, circle, or highlight, whatever works for you) the ones you tend to use. This may include all of them, it may be just a few.

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

All or nothing thinking



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalizing



Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

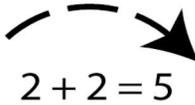
Disqualifying the positive



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

Jumping to conclusions



There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

- **Mind reading** (imagining we know what others are thinking)
- **Fortune telling** (predicting the future)

Magnification (catastrophizing) & minimization



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophizing), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

Emotional reasoning



Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should must

Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration

Labeling



Assigning labels to ourselves or other people

I'm a loser

I'm completely useless

They're such an idiot

Personalization

"this is my fault"

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.

Bring it back to the Cross Sectional Formulation

Let's practice identifying unhelpful thinking patterns by returning to the **sample party situation and group project situation on pages 28 and 29.** What do you think are some of the unhelpful thinking styles this person may have had? Go ahead and jot down the different thinking styles near the cognitive box.

Now let's turn back to the example you completed. Do any of the thoughts you wrote down in the cognitive box on **page 31,** fit into any of these unhelpful thinking categories? Go ahead and write the unhelpful thinking style near the corresponding thought in the cognitive box.

These unhelpful thinking patterns can trigger other anxiety and depressive symptoms. And as you may have noticed, we come back a lot to the interactions between thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and physical symptoms, and talk about how they each impact one another. Each of these types of symptoms (unhelpful thoughts included) can be triggers for other symptoms.

Behaviors as Perpetuators

Just as our thought patterns can reinforce anxiety or depressed mood, our behavior patterns can also keep us stuck in depression or feeling anxious. We already talked in the first session about the anxiety roller coaster. A behavior like avoidance brings immediate relief from our anxiety, however when the same situation occurs again our anxiety will be more heightened because we avoided the anxiety provoking situation.

Let's take a look at procrastination and its impact on our depression. Some people procrastinate by watching TV or going on the internet when faced with a task like homework or taking out the trash. We procrastinate and then berate ourselves for the procrastination. We may be thinking, "I am so stupid. Why didn't I do this sooner?" We may feel irritable and hopeless and

ultimately we have contributed to the downward spiral of depression. So why do we do this unhelpful behavior when we know it ultimately makes us feel worse?

Just like avoidance, initially, procrastination is pleasurable, as it provides relief from having to gather the energy and motivation to complete the task. So people keep procrastinating even though they know it's not helpful in the long run. With time, procrastination becomes a habit that we do without thinking.

Below is a list of unhelpful behavior patterns that keep people stuck. Take a moment to review the list and check off/circle/highlight the things that you do.

Unhelpful Behaviors

Get up at different times every morning	Go to bed at different times every night	Miss class	Don't do a homework assignment	Wait until the last minute to get something done	Stop washing your hair
Stop brushing your teeth	Skip a test	Stop going to team or club meeting	Ignore or decline invites to hang out	Skip a meal	Over eat
Eat lots of junk food	Binge drink	Smoke cigarettes	Stop talking to/actively avoid your friends	Stop talking to/actively avoid your family	Don't seek help when you are struggling
Stay inside all the time	Play video games for hours	Constantly monitor social media	Stay in your bed	Stay in your room; don't leave	Stop talking to your roommate
Stop completing tasks	Stop going to work	Stop exercising	Watch a lot of TV	Only eat one meal a day	Argue with other people
Stop doing your hobbies	Only focus on the negative	Complain a lot	Use recreational drugs	Sleep all day	Don't move
Only listen to music that makes you sad, angry or upset	Stop smiling and laughing	Stop going to church, meditating or praying	Let your room get really disorganized	Self-harm	Smoke marijuana

Good news about habits

We have been focusing on our unhelpful thought and behavior patterns and how they perpetuate feeling bad and anxious. You may feel kind of gloomy right now because we have been focusing on being stuck. Earlier we said that, "Unfortunately, the part of our brain that controls habits does not distinguish between good and bad or helpful and unhelpful."

Here is where things start to brighten up for us. It is a **fortunate** thing that our brain does not distinguish between good and bad in making habits because it means that our brain is not wired to keep us stuck **only** in bad habits. We can create and get stuck in good ones too!

Because habits are created by repetition, if you intentionally work to create new habits, despite the discomfort in the beginning, they will become easier and eventually will be automatic. **With repetition, you will get used to doing things that help you think and feel better.**

Chances are, you've been stuck in your current patterns for a long time. Since it has taken time to develop your current patterns, it is likely that it will also take time to create new patterns and there may be setbacks along the way. We encourage you to be patient with yourself.

Look at the handouts below to identify your current patterns of behavior. Then identify behaviors that can be helpful at create new habits.

Maintaining Depressed Mood

Your task is to be a curious investigator or scientist in the study of you for at least two days this week. What are your thought and behavior patterns that perpetuate feeling depressed? What perpetuates feeling okay or good? What is not working and what is working?

Things I think and do that maintain my depressed mood:

Examples of thoughts: Magnification, disqualifying the positive, emotional reasoning

Examples of behaviors: Skip meals, stop exercising, stay up late, stop showering, miss class, avoid friends

Day	Thoughts	Behaviors
1		
2 (Sat or Sun)		

Things I think and do that help me feel okay, good, and/or accomplished:

Examples of thoughts: Compliment yourself, give yourself credit for doing something, talk back to your negative thoughts, remind yourself to be gentle to yourself, think about a good memory

Examples of behaviors: Read a book for fun, go to a club meeting, brush my teeth at night, go to the library to study, clean/organize my room, eat breakfast, take vitamins, call a friend, go to a coffee shop, do a chore.

Day	Thoughts	Behaviors
1		
2 (Sat or Sun)		

Maintaining an Anxious State

Your task is to be a curious investigator or scientist in the study of you for at least two days this week. What are your thought and behavior patterns that perpetuate your anxiety? What perpetuates feeling okay or good? What is not working and what is working?

Things I think and do that maintain my anxious state:

Examples of thoughts: Catastrophizing, disqualifying the positive, black and white thinking.

Examples of behaviors: Canceling plans with friends, avoiding large gatherings, skip class.

Day	Thoughts	Behaviors
1		
2 (Sat or Sun)		

Things I think and do that help me feel okay, calm, and/or accomplished:

Examples of thoughts: Talk back to your negative thoughts, remind yourself that spending time with your friends makes you feel better.

Examples of behaviors: Utilize a deep breathing technique, practice 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 grounding, exercise, spend time with friends doing an enjoyable activity.

Day	Thoughts	Behaviors
1		
2 (Sat or Sun)		

SESSION 5: Alternative Responses

Relaxation Technique: Guided Imagery

Close your eyes and imagine your restful place. Picture it as vividly as you can: everything you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Just “looking” at it in your mind’s eye like you would a photograph is not enough. Visualization works best if you incorporate as many sensory details as possible. For example, if you are thinking about a dock on a quiet lake:

- **See the sun setting over the water**
- **Hear the birds singing**
- **Smell the pine trees**
- **Feel the cool water on your bare feet**
- **Taste the fresh, clean air**

Enjoy the feeling of your worries drifting away as you slowly explore your restful place. When you are ready, gently open your eyes and come back to the present. Don’t worry if you sometimes zone out or lose track of where you are during a visualization session. This is normal. You may also experience feelings of heaviness in your limbs, muscle twitches, or yawning. Again, these are normal responses.

Identifying triggers for automatic thoughts

Before we begin to identify alternative responses to our automatic thoughts it can be helpful to explore triggers that cause them.

Let’s talk about common triggers. Triggers can be external events (e.g., a test) or internal stimuli (e.g., lightheadedness or racing heart beat) that lead to anxiety and depressive symptoms.

Having one symptom can be a trigger for other symptoms. For example, lightheadedness is a symptom of anxiety. But lightheadedness can also be a trigger for other symptoms like thought or behavior symptoms.

Understanding your triggers is important because it helps you know yourself better. Understanding your triggers can also help you know when to use your toolbox before it feels overwhelming.

Look at the handout on the next page. Notice that there are several domains listed at the top of the page to help prompt you. This worksheet will help you learn about common triggers and **identify some of our own triggers**. Keep in mind that your triggers may or may not fit in these categories. Some examples of triggers might include actual events (e.g., being invited to a party), physical sensations (e.g., racing heart beat), or thoughts (e.g., worrying about the health and/or safety of others).

Take some time to complete this worksheet, identifying triggers you have noticed yourself experiencing.

Identifying Triggers Worksheet

While at times it may be difficult to identify a trigger, understanding your triggers for anxiety is an important step in helping you know when to implement and/or emphasize practice of the coping strategies you will learn in Anxiety Toolbox. Triggers can be external events (e.g., a test) or internal stimuli (e.g., a physical sensation or emotion) that led to your experience of anxiety (i.e., the emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms previously discussed during this workshop). Remember that sometimes the symptoms themselves can be a trigger that starts the cycle of anxiety.

The following are some typical categories in which triggers might appear with examples:

Responses to Internal Stimuli:

- **Emotions:** e.g., feeling down, fear or worry
- **Mental Images:** e.g., replaying interpersonal interactions or performance experience
- **Physical State:** e.g., racing heartbeat, lightheadedness, tightness in chest
- **Thoughts:** e.g., “I might fail this test”, “That person must not like me”, “If someone talks to me in class, I won’t be able to handle it.”

Responses to External Stimuli:

- **Presence of Others:** e.g., attending a social event, meeting with a professor, spending time with roommates, family interactions
- **Physical Setting:** e.g., a classroom, open areas on campus, inside a car
- **Social Pressure:** e.g., feeling pressured to make friends, feeling pressured to perform well in school (in comparison to your peers)
- **Activities:** e.g., a sports event, a party, going home for the weekend

List some triggers you experience related to your anxiety:

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

Modifying our Thoughts

We're going to explore some specific ways that we can begin to engage in **cognitive restructuring**, which is a fancy term for changing our thoughts. A big goal of cognitive restructuring is to slow down and pay attention to our thoughts so that we can **more intentionally make choices** about what to do next. The good news is that over the last few sessions you have already begun to do this by looking more meaningfully at your current thoughts and how they perpetuate anxiety and depression.

We will introduce several techniques for beginning to approach thoughts more intentionally. Remember that your current thoughts are a pattern. We can use your brain's skill for creating habits to begin to create new thought habits! New habits can take some time and practice so be gentle with yourself as you try on these new techniques.

Affirmations

Just as our unhelpful thinking patterns reinforce other anxiety and depressive symptoms, research has shown that **drawing attention to our positive qualities can inhibit or stop the downward spiral**. Additionally, attending to our positive characteristics makes it easier to change and move towards goals. While anxious or depressed, it is easy to see all the things that we believe are "wrong" with ourselves and it can be a challenge to identify our positive traits. We are going to practice the skill of focusing on our positive qualities. Look at the handout below to start creating self-affirmations. Take a moment to write one self-affirmation for yourself using these guidelines and following the examples provided. If this is a new skill, it might take some time to get good at it.

Tips for affirmations:

- Say them daily
- Say them at a specific time
- Keep them in a place where you can see them (on your desk, mirror or on the lock screen of your phone)

Self-Affirmations

This cheat sheet should help you create self-affirmations that are effective and personalized. Affirmations can focus on several categories, including character traits, physical attributes, and skills and/or accomplishments.

1. Start your affirmations with “I am” (e.g., “I am a good friend”)
2. Keep them short (we don’t need a novel)
3. Keep them positive (avoid saying “not”)
4. Use feeling words when you can (e.g., “I am proud of myself”)
5. Keep them focused on you (after all, they are **self**-affirmations)

Examples: “I am proud that I am hard-working” or “I am thankful for my strong legs”

My Self-Affirmations:

Feeling stuck? Ask yourself questions like these:

- When was a time that you felt proud of yourself and why?
- Have you ever forgiven someone who has hurt you?
- Have you ever received a compliment that you agree with?
- What would your best friend or a loved one say about you?

Feeling Guilty? Consider this:

- We are socialized to ignore or minimize our positive characteristics.
- Unfortunately, we then just dwell on our “negatives.”
- Practicing self-affirmations helps bring balance and improve mood.

Alternative Response Formulation

By now, you are probably an **expert on the cross-sectional formulation** and can probably explain it to your friends, but let's take another look at it before incorporating the next component. You begin the simple cross-sectional formulation by identifying an anxiety or depression provoking event and then noting the interactions of your symptoms.

We have found that the **cognitive component is heavily weighted** such that the way you think about or interpret a situation can perpetuate our depression/anxiety and then trigger other symptoms. Last session focused on the impact of automatic and unhelpful thoughts. You may be asking yourself, so now what? What do I do about it? Remember that we have been doing activities to address the physical symptoms directly through our relaxation strategies and that by addressing the physical symptoms directly you are freeing up mental energy to address other symptoms. Also, remember that completing the cross-sectional formulation is a tool. It requires that you slow down and detangle the symptoms you are feeling.

Okay, so now let's focus on how to address the thoughts directly through **cognitive restructuring**. Remember from earlier in the session that cognitive restructuring involves purposefully slowing down, challenging your automatic and unhelpful thinking patterns, and giving yourself a **broader perspective on the situation**. This takes time and lots of practice. So be patient with yourself.

Here is how it works. When you start to notice depression or anxiety symptoms, think to yourself: "**Stop, pay attention and get perspective.**" This means, stop, pay attention to **what is going on in your mind and body** and then **be intentional** about what happens next.

What we want to do here is to slow down the process so that you don't get caught up in your symptoms and so that you feel more in control. The ultimate goal is for the "stop and pay attention" mantra to become second nature so that you use it even before experiencing your symptoms. That is going to take time and lots of practice.

To better understand this "stop and pay attention" mantra, let's work through an **example of alternative responses** to anxiety and an example for depression. We want to highlight that when we are doing the alternative response we are **not saying "just think positive"**, because you have probably heard that before and it's not that simple. What we are saying is, let's look at the situation from a broader perspective.

For example, using the same anxiety provoking situation of being invited to a party and feeling anxious about going, one of the alternative responses is "I might still have an okay time." It is important to remember that you are probably not going to jump from the thought: "I'm going to have a terrible time" to the thought: "I'm going to have a blast." Make sure your alternative thoughts are **realistic and believable**. Don't try to jump to the positive extreme as this would be an example of an unhelpful thinking style of black and white thinking.

Review the two examples below. Once you have an understand of how to complete the worksheet fill out the blank Alternative Response Worksheet on **page 60**.

Use pages **61 and 62** if you're having trouble as a guide. These questions are intended to guide you to think of alternative responses until they become second nature, which is going to take a lot of time and practice.

Alternative Response Worksheet

Situation: *(When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel **anxious**/depressed about?)*

A student invited me to a party in my residence hall, but I didn't know her very well and felt anxious about going.

Alternative Thoughts and Images: *(Are these thoughts helpful? Are the anxious/depressed thoughts 100% true/accurate, 100% of the time? What are other ways of looking at this? What is the bigger picture?)*

I may not be as socially awkward as I think.

If she invited me, she probably wants me there.

I might still have an okay time even if I am anxious

Alternative Behaviors: *(What could you do that would be more helpful for you, others, &/or the situation? What are coping strategies that might be helpful?)*

Coping Strategies I Can Use:

- Deep breathing
- Distract myself
- Seek support from a friend/ family member
- Do a pleasurable activity
- Use alternative response worksheet

Alternative Feelings: *(What are feelings that are more helpful? What if you acted and thought differently about the situation? How might these changes help you feel differently?)*

- Excited***
- Wanted***
- Liked***
- Hopeful***

Original Outcome: *(What was the original outcome?)* ***I stayed in my room and watched Netflix.***

Desired Outcome: *(Using these new alternatives, what would you like the outcome to be in the future?)* ***I want to go to the party so that I can make friends. If I feel too uncomfortable, I can always leave.***

Alternative Response Worksheet

Situation (*When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel anxious/depressed about? I have a group assignment due for my class. I asked a fellow classmate to be my partner, but she declined.*)

<p>Alternative Thoughts and Images: (<i>Are these thoughts helpful? Are the anxious/depressed thoughts 100% true/accurate, 100% of the time? What are other ways of looking at this? What is the bigger picture?)</i></p> <p><i>She might already have a partner.</i></p> <p><i>I've done well in this class so far, so I might not be stupid.</i></p> <p><i>Not everyone is going to like me and that is okay.</i></p>	<p>Alternative Behaviors: (<i>What could you do that would be more helpful for you, others, &/or the situation? What are coping strategies that might be helpful?)</i></p> <p>Coping Strategies I Can Use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing <input type="checkbox"/> Distract myself <input type="checkbox"/> Seek support from a friend/ family member <input type="checkbox"/> Do a pleasurable activity <input type="checkbox"/> Use alternative response worksheet 	<p>Alternative Feelings: (<i>What are feelings that are more helpful? What if you acted and thought differently about the situation? How might these changes help you feel differently?)</i></p> <p>Content</p> <p>Calm</p> <p>Reassured</p>
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Original Outcome: (*What was the original outcome?)* I feel stupid, I don't join a group and wait for the professor to assign me one. I don't work on the project because I am embarrassed that professor had to assign me into a group.

Desired Outcome: (*Using these new alternatives, what would you like the outcome to be in the future?)*

I am able to feel reassured and find another group to join. I complete the project and do well on it.

Alternative Response Worksheet

Situation (*When? Where? What? With whom? What did you feel anxious/depressed about?*)

Alternative Thoughts and Images: (*Are these thoughts helpful? Are the anxious/depressed thoughts 100% true/accurate, 100% of the time? What are other ways of looking at this? What is the bigger picture?)*

Alternative Behaviors: (*What could you do that would be more helpful for you, others, &/or the situation? What are coping strategies that might be helpful?*)

Coping Strategies I Can Use:

- Deep breathing*
- Distract myself*
- Seek support from a friend/ family member*
- Do a pleasurable activity*
- Use alternative response worksheet*

Alternative Feelings: (*What are feelings that are more helpful? What if you acted and thought differently about the situation? How might these changes help you feel differently?*)

Original Outcome: *(What was the original outcome?)*

Desired Outcome: *(Using these new alternatives, what would you like the outcome to be in the future?)*

If you're having trouble, ask yourself these questions:

Whenever we recognize an anxiety-related thought, feeling or behavior, it can be very helpful to ask ourselves the following questions:

Alternative THOUGHTS:

1. What are other ways of looking at this situation?
2. Am I looking at the whole picture?
3. What might be a more helpful way of picturing this situation?
4. What unhelpful thinking styles might I be using here (see below)?
5. What is the evidence that my thoughts are true? Is there an alternative way of thinking about this situation that is more true?
6. What is the probability that my thoughts will happen? What are some other things that could happen that are equally, if not more, probable?
7. Have I had any experiences in the past that suggests that this thought might not be COMPLETELY true ALL of the time?
8. Can I really predict the future? Is it helpful to try? What is more helpful?
9. Am I exaggerating how bad the result might be? What is more realistic?
10. Can I read people's minds? What else might they be thinking (that's not so negative)?
11. If a friend or loved one were in this situation and had this thought, what would I tell them?

<i>Common Cognitive Distortions (Unhelpful Thinking Styles)</i>	
All or Nothing Thinking: thinking in absolute, black and white categories	Over-generalizing: seeing a pattern based upon a single event or being overly broad in conclusions we draw
Mental Filter: only paying attention to certain types of evidence (e.g., dwelling on the negatives)	Disqualifying the positive: discounting the good things that have happened
Jumping to Conclusions: Mind reading: imagining we know what others are thinking Fortune telling: predicting the future	Magnification (catastrophizing) and minimization: blowing things out of proportion or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

Emotional Reasoning: assuming because we feel a certain way, what we think must be true	Should/Must Thinking: Using words like “should”, “must”, “ought to” or “have to”
Labeling: assigning labels to ourselves or others	Personalization: blaming yourself for something you weren’t entirely responsible for OR blaming others and overlooking ways you may have contributed to the outcome

Alternative BEHAVIORS:

1. What could I do in the moment that would be more helpful?
2. What’s the best thing to do (for me, for others, or for the situation)?
3. If my feared situation happens, how will I cope? What coping skills can I use to handle my feared situation? What have I done in the past that was successful?
4. Am I needing to work on acceptance, letting go of control, being okay with less than perfect, or having faith in the future and myself?
5. Breathe: Focus your attention on your breathing. Imagine you have a balloon in your belly, inflating on the in-breath, deflating on the out-breath.

Alternative FEELINGS:

1. What might it feel like if I acted/thought differently?
2. When I’m not feeling this way, do I think about this situation differently?
3. Are there any strengths or positives in me or the situation that I might be ignoring?
4. What else might this anxiety be related to? Is it *really* about feeling _____?
5. Tell yourself: “This feeling will pass. It’s a normal body reaction.”

Other Thought Techniques

In addition to self-affirmations and alternative responses, there are several other little tricks that we can use to begin to shift our patterns of thinking. Look at the list below and review these techniques. As you review them, remember that it takes time to build new habits because you are training your mind to think differently. We encourage you to try each of them **at least 3 times with intention** before deciding if you like them. You might find that some of these tricks work better than others or at different times or in different ways. We would like you to build ample techniques for shifting your thoughts.

Other Helpful Thought Tips

1. **Stopping.** Interrupt a thought as it begins. Use a strong image or a word to interrupt the thought. Strongly state it, either internally or aloud.



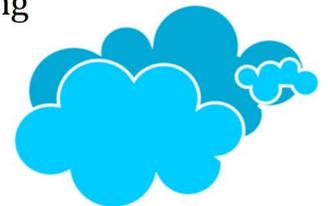
2. **Distracting.** Redirect your mind to something else internally or externally, preferably something pleasant and engaging.



3. **Mindful Observing.** Watch, label, or log your thoughts. Use the language "I am thinking ..." or "My mind is having the thought that..." to distance yourself from the thought.

4. **Understanding.** Begin to understand where thoughts come from by asking a number of questions, including: What is the purpose of this thought? Does it tie to a specific schema?

5. **Mindfully Letting Go.** Use imagery or words to visualize thoughts passing by. Good examples are clouds in the sky or leaves on a stream.



6. **Gratitude.** Try to focus on something that you are grateful for from the past, present, or future.

Putting it all together

Now let's put everything we have learned into an **action plan for managing anxiety or depression**. On the next page there are several questions about recognizing symptoms and triggers and implementing some of the coping strategies you have learned. Take your time completing this.

It may be helpful to review your plan in the morning, before you go to bed, or before an anxiety or depression provoking situation. Some people find it helpful to take a picture of their plan and have it easily accessible in their phone. You could write post-it notes of your goals and keep them visible. Maybe you could ask a friend to check-in with you about your goals.

What are some ways that you can remind yourself about your plan? Please write them on the bottom of your plan.

7. One sleep and one exercise tool I plan to use: [pgs. 17, 19]
8. Two thought exercises I plan to use are: (e.g., alternative responses (what specific questions from page 47), self-affirmations)[27, 44, 47, 48, 50]
9. MY GOALS: Name 2 goals you would like to achieve **over the next few months**, related to depression/anxiety and self-care. Think: **specific, achievable, and measurable**.
- a. Name 2 goals you would like to achieve related to ANXIETY/DEPRESSION (e.g., Thinking about the strategies you find most helpful, what would you like to try, how often, when, etc.?)
- i. _____
- ii. _____
- b. Name 2 goals you would like to achieve related to SELF-CARE: (What will your self-care look like over the next few months? These could be goals related to nutrition, exercise, sleep, schoolwork, leisure activities, etc.) [pg. 17, 19, 20, 55, 56]
- i. _____
- ii. _____

10. Reminder about plan and goals:

Summary / Conclusion

Okay, so let's talk about what we learned in these 5 sessions. We discussed anxiety and depressive symptoms while focusing on the ways in which thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and physical symptoms interact. We also increased awareness of your triggers and unhelpful thinking styles and identified coping strategies for dealing with these symptoms.

Remember that we have to **practice these strategies regularly** to effectively manage anxiety and depression. Remember that **some amount of anxiety and sadness is normal** in the human experience. With consistent practice, the coping strategies we learned in this seminar will help maintain our ability to manage anxiety and prevent feeling overwhelmed from anxiety.

We created a personalized action plan to continue to practice in the future. Make sure to use your plan even when your anxiety and depression symptoms are low as a maintenance measure. In fact, it can be more helpful to practice when your symptoms are low because practicing when they are low, makes the skills become more second nature so that when you do feel anxious or depressed, the skills come more easily. It is our hope is that, with continued practice, these skills will minimize the overwhelming experience of depression and anxiety.

Thank you for utilizing our workbook. Remember that if you need additional support you can always reach out to CAPS at 479-575-5276.

Thank you!

Online Resources

Mayo Clinic Stress Reduction Website

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mindfulness-exercises/MY02124>

Meditation Oasis www.meditationoasis.com

Mindful www.mindful.org

Mindfulness Research Guide <http://www.mindfulexperience.org/>

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center- Guided Meditations

<http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

Apps for your Smartphone, Tablet, or Computer

ACT Coach

Breathe2relax

Breathing techniques by Hemalayaa

CBTi-Coach

Mindfulness Coach

Mindshift

T2 Mood Tracker

Take a break!

Helpful Behavioral Tips

The following lists of ideas are meant to get you thinking about possibilities for helpful behaviors. The activities do not have to be huge commitments; focus on small baby steps. Choose activities that are do-able for you when you are feeling down. The more success you have in doing the little things, the more likely you will be motivated to try more things.

Ideas for Socializing

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch a movie with a friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a gym class, dance class, martial arts class, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to an intramural or CP game | <input type="checkbox"/> Go eat free samples at Farmer's Market |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the library, UU, or dorm lounge to study | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan to eat a meal with a roommate/friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Ideas for Pleasant Activities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play with a pet | <input type="checkbox"/> Color/Paint/Draw/Sculpt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go shopping or window shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a poem, music, play, story |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fix/tinker with something | <input type="checkbox"/> Read for fun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch the sunset/rise at the beach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Ideas for Mastery Activities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wash a dish or two (even if they aren't yours) | <input type="checkbox"/> Read a chapter or a page of your homework assignment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do laundry | <input type="checkbox"/> Take out the trash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Return a phone call | <input type="checkbox"/> Pay a bill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write that email to your professor | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Other Helpful Behavioral Tips for Managing Depression

1. **Get sunlight:**

Aim for 5 to 15 minutes of sunlight a day.



Sunlight increases the brain's release of serotonin, which is associated with boosting mood.

2. **Get a massage:** Massage boosts serotonin and decreases stress hormones. Try giving yourself a massage by lying on or leaning against a tennis ball or rolling it against your muscles.

3. **Practice Yoga:** Yoga works to improve mood and has benefits similar to that of exercise and relaxation techniques.



Yoga poses that incorporate back bends and opening the chest help to increase positive emotions.

4. **Stand up straight:** Your body tells your brain how to feel. Stand up straight and open your chest to feel more confident.

5. **Smile** (*even if you're faking*): When you smile, you are more likely to perceive positive emotions in other people, which can positively impact your mood.



Smiling will lead your brain to believe that you are happy.

6. **Laugh** (*even if you're faking*): Your brain does not distinguish



between real and fake laughter. If your brain gets signals from your body that you should feel happy, then it is more likely to feel happy.

7. **Do Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Flex a tight muscle for a few seconds and release. Pay particular attention to your facial muscles as those have the largest effect on emotion.

8. **Create/listen to music:** Music can help regulate your emotions. It can be soothing and help you feel calm and/or it can be energizing and pump you up.

9. **Dance:** Dancing combines music and physical activity so it is a double whammy.



10. **Journal:** Labeling your emotions and writing your story can be cathartic and help you organize your thoughts.

Adapted from Alex Korb's "The Upward Spiral"

Grounding Exercises

When people become overwhelmed with distressing thoughts or feelings, including intense anxiety, activities that keep your mind and body connected (called “grounding”) can be helpful in regaining a sense of stability and mental focus. The following are a number of grounding exercises to choose from to help firmly anchor you in the present moment and provide you with space to choose where to focus your energy. **You may need to try multiple different exercises to find one or two that work best for you.**

1. Remind yourself of who you are now. State your name, age and where you are right now.
2. Take ten slow deep breaths. Focus your attention on each breath on the way in and on the way out. Say the number of the breath to yourself as you exhale.
3. Splash water on your face or place a cool wet cloth on your face.
4. Pay purposeful attention as you hold a cold (non-alcoholic) beverage in your hands. Feel the coldness, and the wetness on the outside. Note the taste as you drink. You can also do this exercise with a warm beverage.
5. Find a “grounding object” to hold, look at, listen to, and/or smell. This could be a soft object such as a pillow or stuffed animal, a smooth stone you found on the beach, a picture of a beautiful scene or loved one, and/or any other object that represents safety or comfort.
6. Listen to music. Pay close attention and listen for something new or different.
7. If you wake up suddenly during the night and feel disoriented or distressed, remind yourself who you are and where you are. Look around the room and notice familiar objects and name them. Feel the bed you are lying on, the softness of the sheets or blankets, the warmth or coldness of the air, and notice any sounds you hear. Remind yourself that you are safe.
8. Feel the clothes on your body, whether your arms and legs are covered or not, and the sensation of your clothes as you move in them.
9. While sitting, feel the chair under you and the weight of your body and legs pressing down on it.
10. If you are lying down, feel the contact between your head, your body and your legs, as they touch the surface you are lying on. Starting from your head, notice how each part feels, all the way down to your feet, on the soft or hard surface.

11. Stop, look, and listen. Notice and name what you can see and hear nearby and in the distance.
12. Look around you, notice what is front of you and to each side, name first large objects and then smaller ones.
13. Get up, walk around, take your time to notice each step as you take one then another.
14. If you can, step outside, notice the temperature, the sounds around you, the ground under your feet, the smell in the air, etc.
15. “54321” Grounding Exercise:
 - Name 5 things you can see in the room with you.
 - Name 4 things you can feel (tactile; e.g. “chair on my back” or “feet on floor”)
 - Name 3 things you can hear right now
 - Name 2 things you can smell right now
 - Name 1 good thing about yourself
16. Write and/or say grounding statements
 - This situation won’t last forever
 - This too shall pass.
 - I can ride this out and not let it get me down.
 - My anxiety/fear/sadness won’t kill me; it just doesn’t feel good right now.
 - These are just my feelings and eventually they’ll go away.

Adapted from: <http://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/grounding-exercises/>