

COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION

PART II: Lecture Notes for Instructors: Thoughts 4

Version 2000:May, 2000

THOUGHTS 4 - INCREASING YOUR HELPFUL THOUGHTS TO IMPROVE YOUR MOOD AND USING THOUGHTS TO LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT.

GOALS FOR LEADERS

- Review last week's main points (ways to decrease negative thoughts and improve mood).
- Conduct a general review of the concepts taught in the thoughts module.
- Help participants understand the relationship between healthy/positive thinking and improved mood.
- Introduce ways to increase healthy thinking (change internal reality).
- Talk about how to use thoughts as a way to live the life you want (i.e. changing both your internal and external reality).

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THIS SESSION

- 1) Pens
- 2) Dry erase board, chalkboard or large sheets of paper to present material to group

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SAMPLE SESSION OUTLINE

- I. Agenda and Announcements
- II. Review
- III. Personal Project Review
- IV. New Material: Ways to Have More Healthy Thoughts
- V. Take Home Message
- VI. Feedback and Goodbye to Graduating Group Members
- VII. Personal Project
- VIII. Preview

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I. AGENDA AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Go over the agenda and ask participants whether they have any topics they would like to add to the agenda. Make any announcements.

Make sure to announce which group members are graduating.

II. REVIEW

Review the material covered in Thoughts 3. Use the review to check on how much participants remember from the last session, reinforce what they have learned, and educate group members who were absent last session.

[sample review statement]

Last week we talked ways that we can begin talking back to and stopping harmful thoughts. We also talked about how we can add a “yes, but” to our thoughts as a way of making harmful thoughts more balanced. What are some of the things that you remember most from last week?

III. PERSONAL PROJECT REVIEW

Review the homework from the previous session. Ask group members the way they tried to decrease negative thinking (e.g. examine the evidence, do an experiment, find the antidote to the pattern of thinking, stopping thoughts, and adding “yes, but”). Have them share obstacles and successes to these methods.

As you review the personal project, touch on these key points:

- Relationship between mood and thoughts.
- Learning about talking back to your thoughts take practice and time.
- What works for one person may not work for another (just as different people have different thoughts).

WEEKLY PROJECT

- Mood Scale
- Track the positive and negative thoughts you have each day.

OPTIONAL PROJECT

Find out which optional personal project participants did and then review what they learned from doing the project.

- 1) Read through all the ways to decrease harmful thoughts.
- 2) Select two options and try them out.

BRIDGE (Approximately 5 minutes)

Introduce this week's material, linking it to material taught in previous sessions.

[sample bridge]

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In the last few weeks, we've talked about how to identify or recognize the thoughts that you have, and the differences between harmful and helpful thoughts. Last week, we talked about different ways to decrease harmful thinking as a way to decrease depressed mood. Another way to decrease depressed mood is to learn to increase your healthy thinking. In this session, we will focus on the relationship between positive/healthy/helpful thinking and mood.

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IV. NEW MATERIAL

A. HOW DO YOU THINK POSITIVE THOUGHTS AFFECT YOUR MOOD?

By increasing your healthy thinking, or by having more helpful thoughts, you can help to improve your thinking. Today, we'll discuss ways to increase thoughts that have a positive effect on our mood.

ACTIVITY 1: POSITIVE OBSERVATIONS EXERCISE

Purpose: To have members list positive virtues of other members, in order to increase positive thoughts about oneself. In this ways, members can mirror the process of eliciting positive thoughts that each person needs to do for himself/herself.

[Sample introduction to the activity]

Now, we are going to try an exercise called Positive Observations. You've all been in this group now for at least 3 weeks, some longer, and you've had a chance to observe one another and to get to know a little bit about each other. Now, we'd like for you to focus on the positive aspects of each person and let that person know one thing that you like about them. We'll go around the room and focus on one person at a time. Each of us will tell that person one thing they like about them (and it could be anything, maybe the way they smile, come on time, or encourage others to talk by commenting on what they say. . . .)

Proceed with activity until each person has had a turn (leaders included). Leaders should expect a lot of smiles and positive reinforcement from members to one another. Afterwards, leaders can process the exercise. If there are group members who are graduating, it may be especially important to focus on them as this can be an important part of the termination process.

What happened here?

How do you feel about yourself after having heard all of these positive things that people have said about you?

What are some of the thoughts you are hearing about yourself now? Are you feeling more positive about yourself? (Good then this exercise worked. In the same way that others' positive words or thoughts about you can make you feel good, we would like you to do the same for yourself. So when you start feeling depressed, talk to yourself in a positive way, and you will notice that your mood will improve).

OR, when you are hearing these positive things about yourself, are you discounting the positive thoughts that others are saying about you? In other words, are there any negative and automatic (or irrational) thoughts that are emerging? If so, what strategies are you using to fight them back? [remind of last week's strategies, if applicable here]

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Addressing abuse issues: Members may bring up a discussion that their parents/caregivers or partners were abusive (e.g., verbally) to them, and because of the abuse, members cannot feel good even when they hear positive things from others. If someone's parent always called them "stupid," "worthless" or worse, those labels have been drilled into them, and it will take systematic work to replace them with healthier ones. Specifically, one's negative thoughts overpower the positive comments from others. In this case, it will be important to acknowledge that past experiences can have an effect on current behaviors and mood. A group leader can choose to ask something like "just because your (mother/partner/abuser) said you were stupid, does that make it true? However, emphasize that although members cannot change their past, with relearning and recovery from the abuse they can change the future (the Time Project exercise below also makes this point well). Members can be aware of the past, and still change the present and future with the ways that they manage their internal and external reality.

Be sure to cover the following:

-Two ways to increase thoughts to feel good are:

1. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF HEALTHY/POSITIVE/PLEASANT THOUGHTS IN YOUR MIND

These are the thoughts that can improve your mood. Make lists of thoughts about yourself and your life .

(we've already done this in session 1 and session 2,-- note cards of positive things about myself, remind them of this). If members lost their cards, have them generate another one in group -- a minimum of 3 things; if members can't think of anything, have other members help them.

2. GIVE YOURSELF PATS-ON-THE-BACK

Most of the things we do are not noticed by others. Therefore, it is important for us to notice them and give ourselves credit for doing them. What are some of the ways that you can do this?

[elicit participation, and write on the board.]

Cover the following:

- Sometimes depression gets in the way of having positive thoughts (all-or-none thinking).
- Helpful/healthy/pleasant thoughts can affect mood positively.
- A different way of thinking takes time, and must be practiced (like the strategies discussed last week).
- More positive thoughts does not mean that one's life is peachy, rather emphasize the idea of balance helpful and harmful thoughts.

B. HOW CAN CHANGING YOUR THOUGHTS AFFECT YOUR LIFE?

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Purpose: to have members become aware that they have the ability to manage their reality, in part by being able to manage their internal reality (thoughts).

ACTIVITY 1: MENTAL TIME TRAVEL

Purpose: to have members be able to be more future oriented and enable them to have a sense of managing their reality, via a concept of the future-past.

Description: Ask group members to close their eyes and participate in a brief relaxation exercise. Then ask them to imagine a time in the future (e.g., one year, 5 years, 10 years) and pretend they are already there (e.g., today is 8/24/00, a year from now is 8/24/01). Have members imagine their lives in the future, the kind of life that they would like to have, with whom, what they are doing etc... After this exercise, have members discuss their future lives. Given that this future life has not yet happened, members can make it happen by changing their current internal and external reality in such a way that this future life is possible. It will be important to discuss the obstacles (real and changeable) that members will have to achieving the future life.

[Sample introduction to the activity]

Now, we will do another activity called mental time travel. The purpose of this activity is to have you imagine your future, and what it could be like. First, I'd like you to close your eyes and take a few deep breaths -- in and out, in and out.. . . . Try to relax and focus on yourself. Today is (date), and now I'd like you to move forward in time. Let's move to about a year from now. So now it is (date, 1 year later), it is one year later. I'd like you to imagine what your life is like in (year ____). What are you doing in (year ____)? Are there people in your life? Where are you living? Try to imagine your life as completely as possible. Let's take a few minutes for you to visualize your life in year (____). Now, let's fast forward your life a little bit more. It is now five years from today (year ____). I'd like you to imagine what you are doing in this year, where are you? Where are you living? Are there others around you? What types of activities are you engaged in? Again, let's take a few moments for you to imagine this....

Now while you are still in the future, think about what you had to do to get there. That is, think about the past you will have then, your "future past." Now, whenever you are ready, I'd like you to open your eyes and become more aware of the room.. . . . If you'd like to get up and stretch for a little bit, that's fine.

Now, this was a mental time travel exercise. Would someone like to share what they imagined for their future life? What was your life like in year ____? What did you do? If your mind created a positive future, how could you begin to move in that direction? If your mind created a negative future, how could you avoid it?

MAIN POINT:

Your future life has not yet happened. What this means is that you have the ability to mold your future, and your future reality. This means that you have a choice as to which futures (alternative futures) you want, and you can make that choice now and work toward that future.

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How? By changing your internal and external reality. This fits into the notion of a healthy management of reality. If you recall, to have a healthy reality (or positive mood), one must be able to be comfortable with one's internal and external reality. The internal reality is what we have been working on trying to change, and includes the thoughts and beliefs that you have about yourself, which can affect your mood. What we have been talking about in the past few weeks is how to change the kinds of thoughts that you have in order to change how you feel. So if you have been noticing that all of your thoughts are negative, then you are likely to feel depressed, and may behave in a way that makes you feel depressed (refer to examples of group members here), and others may respond to you as a depressed person. So your internal reality can have an effect on the external reality, on the people that are around you. By changing your internal reality, you can also change your external reality, and thereby be able to achieve your future life in the present, or to work actively toward the future life. So that, ultimately, you will be able to use thoughts to achieve the life that you want.

What are some of the obstacles to achieving your future life? [elicit discussion, write on board]

Internal reality obstacles (e.g. low self confidence, self doubt)

External reality obstacles (e.g. physical limitations, harmful others)

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V. TAKE HOME MESSAGE

You can improve your mood by improving your internal reality, by increasing helpful, healthy ways of thinking

You can plan for the future that you want by increasing healthy thinking and decreasing unhealthy/negative thinking.

“The best way to predict the future is to make it happen.”

VI. FEEDBACK

As this is the last session of the module, spend time reviewing material from the past 4 sessions. Use the feedback time to review key concepts, determine what messages group members have learned from the module, and highlight that it is possible to make positive changes in your life.

Possible questions to stimulate discussion include:

1. How have your thoughts changed since beginning the group?
2. What did you learn about thoughts that was most helpful, in terms of improving your mood?
3. What did you find least helpful?
4. What message will you take from this module?

It will also be important to discuss with group members who are leaving the group, how their reactions to leaving and what they have learned from the group. Possible questions to ask group members who are leaving include:

1. What did you learn from the group?
2. What are your plans after you leave the group?
3. How will you continue to get support?
4. What do you need to continue your progress in managing your mood?
5. What will happen the next time you feel that you are becoming depressed?

Allow time so that other group members can also provide feedback to those who are leaving regarding how they feel about their leaving and specific things they have learned from them. Make sure you have prepared something specific to say to each participant who is leaving about their unique contribution to the group and the changes you have seen them make.

VII. PERSONAL PROJECT ASSIGNMENT

WEEKLY PROJECT

1. Daily Mood Scale
2. Track thoughts and try out ways to increase healthy thinking.

Have members choose one or two ways that we've discussed today to try to increase healthy thinking. Have members note which method/activity worked best for them.

OPTIONAL PERSONAL PROJECT

1. Talk to someone about what you are learning.

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VIII. PREVIEW

[sample introduction to activity]

Next week we will begin another module. This means that we will be welcoming new group members and we will be introducing the new topic, which is how what we do affects how we feel. We will spend the next four weeks focusing on how our activities, or what we do, affects our mood and how we can improve our mood by doing more pleasant activities.

GROUP LEADER SELF EVALUATION FORM: THOUGHTS 4

INSTRUCTIONS

Content Covered: Rate the degree to which you feel this material was covered (0=not at all, 10=fully covered) If not done this session but done later, when it is done write in the date and rate how well you feel you covered it.

Satisfaction with Teaching: Rate the degree to which you are satisfied with the way you and your co-leader taught the material (0=not at all satisfied, 10=extremely satisfied).

Participant Process: Rate on average the degree to which participants seemed to participate, understand and complete the exercise (0=on average very poor no one understood or no one was able to complete exercise; 10=everyone seemed to understand keypoints and complete the exercise).

	Taught/ Done? (0-5)	Satisfaction with Teaching (0-10)	Participant Process (0-10)
Review	_____	_____	_____
Personal Project Review	_____	_____	_____
1. Positive observation exercise	_____	_____	_____
2. Increasing healthy/helpful thoughts	_____	_____	_____
3. Give yourself pats on the back	_____	_____	_____
3. Can we change the way we think?	_____	_____	_____
4. Mental time travel activity	_____	_____	_____
Take home message	_____	_____	_____
Feedback	_____	_____	_____
Personal Project Assigned	_____	_____	_____

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Preview

