

- **Coping More Effectively**

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Problems with Regulating Affect and Impulses

- Emotions run high (angry, sad, afraid)
- Easily set off or triggered
- Have difficulty calming down
- Self-destructive behavior
- Excessive risk taking
- Problems with sexual involvement
- Suicidal preoccupation, parasuicide

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Emotional and Behavioral Dysregulation

- Poor impulse control
 - Self-destructive behavior
 - Aggression against others
 - Harmful self-soothing behaviors
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Eating disorders
- **Substance abuse**
 - **Excessive compliance**
 - **Oppositional Behavior**
 - **Difficulty understanding and complying with rules**
 - **Reenactment in day to day behavior or play (sexual, aggressive, etc).**

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Coping Styles

- Distracter vs. Attenders

Some people cope better by distracting themselves from thinking about the traumatic event, while others cope better by focusing on the event

- Active information seekers vs. avoiders

Cancer Survivors & Compliance

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Coping Styles

- Immediately after a trauma the specific way the person copes with a stressor is often less important than the extent to which coping has been successful
- Successful coping must protect the ability to:
 - Continue task oriented activity
 - Regulate emotion
 - Sustain positive self-value
 - The capacity to maintain and enjoy rewarding interpersonal contacts

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Coping Styles

- Different coping mechanisms may be necessary for the waxing and waning course that typify violent families: “anticipatory” period of tension building, the violent incident, and the periods of reconciliation
- “Attenders” may cope less well during violent episodes than “distractors;” however, many attenders become more distressed if discouraged from direct involvement with family problem
- Children with active styles will respond well to getting a maximum of information, rehearsal, and information on safety planning
- Coping Rooms in Israel

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QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT COPING

- How well do they believe they are coping
- Who, if anyone, helps them do this
- What they have found to be most effective and ineffective in dealing with violence/stress
- What they believe would be most helpful in assisting them in dealing with future incidents

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Psychoeducation with Caregivers and Child

- Common Reactions through
 - Shared drawings
 - Handouts
- Bottle about to Burst

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Psychoeducation with Caregivers

- social support is key mediating factor in determining adaptation to victimization
 - Believing and validating experience
 - Tolerating affect
 - Managing own emotional response

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When MUPs are causing problems:

LET' M GO

SOS BeMindful SOS BeMindful SOS BeMindful

Losing it	Why am I losing it? What are my triggers?
Emotions	What am I feeling?
Thoughts	What am I thinking?
Meaning	What is really important to me?
Goals	What do I want?
Options	What are my choices?

SOS BeMindful SOS BeMindful SOS BeMindful

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Purpose of LET' M GO

“The goal is to re-discover the personal ability that has been lost in the symptom.

Not to “get rid of” the symptom, nor to “substitute” more adaptive ways of coping, but...

.....to find and rebuild adaptive skills that the survivor possesses and values within her/himself.” -Julian Ford

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QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE USED TO TEACH DECATASTROPHIZING

- DECATASTROPHIZING: accurately evaluating the implications of the stressor
- ask the following about stressful situations:
 - What is the worst thing that might happen?
 - What is the one thing that can be done to help stop the worst thing from happening?
 - What is the best thing that might happen?
 - What is the one thing that can help make the best thing happen?
 - What is the most likely thing that will happen?
 - What can be done to handle the most likely thing if it happens?

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INTERVENTIONS (continued)

- POSITIVE SELF STATEMENTS

- a number of positive self-statements that can be repeated when afraid:

- appraisal: I handled this successfully before the same thing that happened last time will probably happen again ”

- self-efficacy: “I know what to do”

- positive expectation: “I know how to get through this, and how to figure out what is in my power to control”

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Cultivating Awareness

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Problems with Attention or Consciousness

- Amnesia
 - Trauma & Life events
- Dissociation
- Depersonalization

Sample questions:

Do you space out when you feel frightened or under stress?

Has there ever been a time when you felt so unreal that it felt like you were living in a dream or not really there?

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Benefits of Cultivating Awareness

- Slowing down, being aware and mindful can give clients more information & facilitate active, adaptive coping

- Can help to address problems with
 - Dysregulation & impulsivity
 - Attention & dissociation
 - Self-concept
 - Rated as most helpful

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What you can't put into word,
you can't put to rest...

Bruno Bettelheim

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Mindfulness Practice: Changes in Brain Function

- Mindfulness Practice “can produce increases in relative left-sided anterior activation that are associated with reductions in anxiety and negative affect and increases in positive affect” (Davidson, et al., 2003)
 - EEG & Self-report measures Still evident 4 months later
- Activates the neural structures involved in attention and arousal/autonomic control” of the nervous system (Lazar et al., 2000)

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Mindfulness Practice: Changes in Brain Function

- Rated as most helpful by teens diagnosed with BPD (Miller et al., 2000)
- Improvements in general mood and decrease in stress (Baer, 2003)
- Decrease in anxiety (Baer, 2003)
- Decreased rate of relapse and recurrence of MDD (Baer, 2003)

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SOS

SLOW DOWN

Take a breath; one thought at a time

ORIENT YOURSELF

Bring your mind & body back to the present time and place

SELF-CHECK

Rate how upset you are & how in control you feel

Ford et al., 2005

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Mindfulness

Paying attention in a particular way:

On purpose,
in the present moment,
and nonjudgmentally

Kabat-Zinn, 1994

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Observing

- Just notice the experience
- Watch the sensations, thoughts, feelings, urges come and go
- Having a “Teflon Mind”

Linehan, 1993

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Describing

- Use words for the experience
- Labeling
- Just the facts

Linehan, 1993

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Participating

- Becoming “one” with the activity
- Being spontaneous
- Without self-consciousness

Linehan, 1993

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Mindfulness: How Skills

Don't Judge
Stay Focused
Do What Works

Linehan, 1993

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Mindfulness: Treatment of Depression

“Metacognitive Awareness”

They hypothesize that the mechanism of change is not simply changing the negative content or belief system, but rather, metacognitive awareness changes one's *relationship* to negative thoughts. It changes the way that the negative thoughts are experienced. Negative thoughts and feelings “are experienced as mental events, rather than as the self.”

Teasdale et al., 2002

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Mindful Awareness

- It's not just WHAT you're thinking but HOW you're experiencing it.
- What you're thinking is separate from who you are.

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Session 12, Handout 1: Triggers

Triggers

You're minding your own business, a song comes on, and suddenly you want to punch something, cry, or run...



WHY? The song might be a "trigger," reminding you of an upsetting time. Triggers can change how you feel, think or act—until you unlock them.

EXAMPLES OF TRIGGERS "OUTSIDE" OF YOU

People, Places, Events:

People who were with you when the trauma happened, the place where it happened, news stories, TV/movies, memorial services, sad or violent events, seeing (or hearing about) someone being hurt, reading about something similar

Sights, Sounds, Smells:

Police cars, ambulances, fire engines, sirens, loud noises, yelling, firecrackers, smoke, doors slamming, food, perfume, flowers

Times or Dates:

Morning, midday, evening, specific hour when bad (or good) things happened, seasons, months, dates, days

Changes in Routine:

Changes at home or at school (e.g., schedule, new rules)

Activities:

What you were doing right before something bad or traumatic happened, physical movements similar to your movements during the event

EXAMPLES OF TRIGGERS "INSIDE" OF YOU

Physical feelings:

Fast heartbeat, breathing fast, aches and pains, feeling sick

Emotions:

Feeling angry, scared, guilty or anxious

Thoughts:

Blaming yourself, situations that are unfair, thinking about being alone



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(adapted from Lavne, Saltzman, Pynoos, et al., 2001)

Identifying Triggers

- Helps child feel more in control
- Can begin to anticipate & plan
- Faster return to baseline when upset
- Opportunity to examine automatic thoughts

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The Three P's Layne & Saltzman

- In preparing for events that will likely trigger painful reminders
 - Predict that the event will be potentially difficult
 - Permission:
 - Give yourself permission to experience strong feelings
 - Plan
 - Come up with a coping plan for before, during, and after the event

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Creating Awareness

Labeling Emotions

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Somatization

- Chronic Pain
- Digestive,
- Cardiopulmonary,
- Sexual,
- and Conversion Symptoms

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Health Problems and Domestic Violence



- Children living in homes with domestic violence use health services six to eight times more often than controls
- Battered women more likely to :
 - Define their health as poor
 - have been diagnosed with STDS and other gynecologic problems
 - Say they needed medical care but did not get it
 - Have twice the number of days in bed due to illness than other women

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Connection

- Building Relationships
 - Trust
 - Building Social Support
 - Problems Not My Job To Fix
 - Interpersonal Effectiveness

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Problems with Interpersonal Relationships

- Has Difficulty Trusting Others
 - Reciprocity
 - Assertiveness (friends & strangers)
- Re-Victimization
- Victimizing Others

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Problems with Attachment

- Uncertainty about the reliability and predictability of the world
- Problems with boundaries
- Distrust and suspiciousness
- Social isolation
- Difficulty relating to others
- Difficulty empathizing

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Five Steps To Getting Support

1. What do I want?
2. Whom should I ask?
3. Find the right time to ask
4. Request with an “I” message:
 - Tell them what I am feeling
 - Tell them what happened (outside and inside)
 - Tell them what I want them to do
5. Express sincere appreciation

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What Kind of Support Do I Want?

- Emotional closeness
- Social connection
- Feeling needed
- Reassurance of self-worth
- Being there for me when I need you
- Information (feedback and advice)
- Physical assistance
- Material

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Problems that are NOT my job to fix STRATEGIES FOR DETRIANGULATION

Let's talk about a common hurtful thought that makes a lot of teenagers unhappy: "It's my job to fix everyone's problems." Has that thought gone through your mind before?... Teenagers often tend to have this type of hurtful thought because they care about so many people and really want to help. They care about their parents' problems, their brothers' and sisters' problems, their relatives' problems, their friends' problems...there is a very long list of people they care about and want to be happy. And, unless they are careful, teenagers may overextend themselves in their desire to help, and end up not helping very much at all, and make themselves miserable in the process. Does this sound familiar?....

- *Let's talk about a situation that many of you might find yourself in quite often. Let's say that you go home tonight and find your parent / sitting in front of a pile of bills, looking really sad and anxious. How do you think you would feel in response to this sight?... (Invite a few examples...sad, bad, worried about her, wish I could get a job to help...etc.)*

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What can you do to show your support without trying to take over their job?

- Give them a hug.
- Do something thoughtful that shows you are thinking about them, like leaving them a card, doing something helpful without being asked, or polishing their shoes.
- Tell them you hope they feel better.
- Compliment them on things they are doing well.
- Reassure them that they've handled this in the past and that they can do it again.
- Encourage them to keep on trying.
- Use your listening skills and let them "get it off their chest."
- Reassure them that things will get better.
- Tell them you wish there was more that you could do to help.
- Work on something that IS your job. Do you think it would help a parent who is anxious and worried to feel a little better, for example, if you did your chores and your homework without being reminded? (This will give them something to remind themselves that everything is not going badly!)

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Problems with Self-Perception

- Feel ineffective and permanently damaged
- Guilt, responsibility, shame
- Sense of alienation
- Minimizing the impact of trauma
 - For both self & others

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Some Thoughts on Guilt vs Shame

- Social psychology research has consistently found that individuals are more comfortable with feelings of behavioral guilt than feelings of shame (Janoff-Bulman)
 - Research on crime victims who blame their behavior vs those who blame perpetrator
- Concept of relative contribution as possible therapeutic strategy

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Creating Meaning

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Making Meaning

Meaning is the sense that, no matter what is going on in your life, you can hang onto the things that really matter to you. It is the belief that there are elements and people and views that cannot—no matter what—be taken from you.”

-Viktor E. Frankl

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The thing that upsets people is not what happens but what they think it means.

Epictetus

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Meaning

- A focus on meaning is a core part of trauma focused psychotherapy
 - Found to be central contributor to recovery
 - Trauma disrupts the process of belonging and finding a sense of purpose, finding meaning is a central ingredient in reconnecting to family, friends and community

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Meaning and High Risk Behaviors

Life Events and Substance Use Among Adolescents : Mediating Effects of Perceived Loss of Control and Meaninglessness in Life, By: Newcomb, Michael D., Harlow, L. L., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 00223514, September 1, 1986, Vol. 51, Issue 3 Database: *PsycARTICLES*

- High risk behaviors in adolescents such as alcohol and drug use have been found in the research literature to be the result of:
 - depression and a general lack of well-being
 - alienation
 - lack of religious belief system
 - lack of purpose in life
 - lack of future plans .
- All of these specific factors may reflect a general lack of direction or *meaning* in life
- This meaninglessness apparently creates an uncomfortable disequilibrium, which motivates a search for a way to relieve the tension and stress. Drug use and other MUPS are often used to dampen frustration

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Making Meaning out of Loss

Cohen & Mannarino, CBT Manual for traumatic grief

1. If you met another individual who was newly diagnosed what would you want to tell them about what you have learned?
2. What would you want them to know that might help them?
3. If they thought therapy would be too hard, what would you say to them?
4. What do you think about yourself now that you've gone through this?

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Making Meaning

- 1) Help them identify underlying sustaining beliefs and values driving behavior or goals

What was most important to you in this situation?

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TECHNIQUES FOR IDENTIFYING BELIEFS

Wilkes, Belsher, Rush & Frank: *Cognitive Therapy for Depressed Adolescents*, Guilford, '94

- **DOWN ARROW:** Series of questions about emotional significance of event by asking variant of “so what?” until underlying belief emerges
- **GENOGRAM PROBE:**
 - What do other family members believe?
 - How does it conflict with adolescent’s beliefs?
 - How might this give rise to depressogenic thoughts?
 - Family members often unaware of beliefs about issues such as anger, or autonomy
 - Helpful questions include “How does one become a hero in your family”?, “How do you get in the doghouse”?, family bumper sticker
- **OFFERING HYPOTHESES**
 - Therapist offers suggestions about possible beliefs held by adolescent or family

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Making Meaning

- 2) Help them identify what went well.
Tie it to making things better for themselves, friends, family, community.

How did you make things better? What is the contribution that you made/are making to your life? To the lives of others?

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Making Meaning

- 3) Help them look to the future to understand what what they want

Six months from now, how do you want this relationship/ situation to be?

How can you get there from here?

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Other Cognitive Strategies

- In circumstance that are not amenable to problem solving controlling meaning may be the only response that is in the control of the individual
- Shifting from threat to “challenge”; crisis as danger and opportunity
- Humor as making nothing out of something, art as making something out of nothing
- Reordered priorities; deeper understanding of life
- Power of doing good (camp story)

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