

## Appendix 1

Cognitive Restructuring Protocol

Partially adapted from Block (2003) and Burns (1999)

**1. Introduction (2 minutes)**

- a. Fear of public speaking is one of the most common fears in the United States. Most people try as best as possible to avoid this. One study indicates that approximately 85% of people in the United States report some discomfort related to public speaking.
- b. Therapists do not have a magic wand and anxiety cannot be eliminated in one session. However, if you stick with it and incorporate lessons, you can learn to manage the anxiety so that it is no longer a problem in your life.

**2. Rationale for Cognitive Approach (5 minutes)**

- a. Definition of fear (adaptive response to a threatening situation) versus anxiety (future-oriented; response to a situation that is not objectively dangerous).
- b. Cognitive Component of Anxiety: How you think about a situation will influence your emotional response, which will influence your behavioral response. The goal of this technique is to help you understand that the ways that you think about a situation might not be adaptive, and give you tools to help you think in ways that are adaptive (i.e., we need to change the negative thinking).

**3. Cognitive Restructuring (8 minutes)**

- a. Think for a moment about your upcoming speech. Write down and negative thoughts you might have just before you give your talk today. (Hand participant a worksheet titled “negative thoughts”- similar to 3-column thought record in CBT).
- b. Hand the participant a “checklist of cognitive distortions” (see below) and explain the idea of a cognitive distortion.
- c. Go over a sample thought: “If I’m nervous, I won’t be able to present my ideas very clearly.” Explain how that relates to both “all or nothing thinking” and “fortune telling.”
- d. Ask participant to review the thoughts he/she put down on the sheet (thought record) and to identify which cognitive distortions they related to and to provide some suggested rational alternatives. Suggestions and encouragement will be provided in formulating the rational alternatives. Instruct participant to utilize the thought record sheet and list of cognitive distortions during preparation for the upcoming speech.

Checklist of Cognitive Distortions

(Adapted from Burns, 1999)

1. **All-or-nothing thinking:** You look at things in absolute, black-and-white categories.
2. **Overgeneralization:** You view a negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.
3. **Mental filter:** You dwell on the negatives and ignore the positives.
4. **Discounting the positives:** You insist that your accomplishments or positive qualities “don’t count.”
5. **Jumping to conclusions:** (A) Mind reading; you assume that people are reacting negatively to you when there’s no definite evidence for this; (B) Fortune-telling; you arbitrarily predict that things will turn out badly.
6. **Magnification or minimization:** You blow things way out of proportion or you shrink their importance inappropriately.
7. **Emotional reasoning:** You reason from how you feel: “*I feel* like an idiot, so I really must be one.” Or “I don’t *feel* like doing this, so I’ll put it off.”
8. **“Should statements”:** You criticize yourself or other people with “should” or “shouldn’ts.” “Musts,” “oughts,” and “have tos” are similar offenders.
9. **Labeling:** You identify with your shortcomings. Instead of saying “I made a mistake,” you tell yourself, “I’m a jerk,” or “a fool,” or “a loser.”

10. **Personalization and blame**: You blame yourself for something you weren't entirely responsible for, or blame other people and overlook the ways that your own attitudes and behaviors might contribute to a problem.

## Appendix 2

### Acceptance Protocol

Partially adapted from Block (2003) and Eifert & Forsyth (2005)

#### **Introduction (2 minutes)**

- Fear of public speaking is one of the most common fears in the United States. Most people try as best as possible to avoid this. One study indicates that approximately 85% of people in the United States report some discomfort related to public speaking.
- Therapists do not have a magic wand and anxiety cannot be eliminated in one session. However, if you stick with it and incorporate lessons, you can learn to manage the anxiety so that it is no longer a problem in your life.

#### **Rationale for Acceptance Approach (5 minutes)**

- It is apparent that most of us try very hard to control our emotional experiences; we link thoughts and feelings to goals and outcomes. However, maybe it is not that we have not figured it out, but that in a real sense, they cannot be consciously controlled (for example, sometimes we cannot prevent our hands from shaking, or voice from trembling; and in the same way, we cannot make our anxious thoughts go away). Maybe we are dealing with an unworkable agenda. Maybe we are trying to do something that cannot be done.
- Now I am going to tell you a metaphor that I would like you to relate to your thoughts and feelings. It is called the Quicksand Metaphor (hand out copy of metaphor- see below). *Read this aloud slowly to the participant.*

Quicksand Metaphor: We have a problem here, and that is that our minds tell us to do what doesn't work, because it doesn't see anything else to do. It is like as if you were stuck in quicksand. Naturally, you would try to get out. But, everything that you have learned about how to get out causes problems in quicksand. If you try to walk, jump, run, you just end up pushing down on the sand. If you struggle, crawl, or push with your hands, you just sink deeper. Often as people sink in quicksand, they get panicky and start flailing around, and down they go. In quicksand, the only thing to do is to create as much surface area as possible, to lay out on the quicksand, getting everything that you have in full contact with it. Our relationship with our thoughts and feelings is like that. We need to get everything that we have in full contact with what we have been struggling with, but without more struggle. This may be hard. Not hard meaning effortful, but hard meaning tricky. It is tricky because our minds tell us to do what doesn't work because we can't see anything else to do. And we have learned this so well that we can't just tell ourselves to stop and expect that we will. So what I am telling you is to make as much contact with your anxiety as you can in a public speaking situation. **Do not try to decrease anxiety in any way.**

- Anxiety is what it is, in many instances a perfectly adaptive response, and in other instances a nuisance—either way, it is a part of being a fully functioning human being.
- Anxiety is a part of living rather than a cause of not living.
- To live a valued life, one must be willing to take the totality of human experience along for the ride.
- In summary, it is very important to behave in the way that you want to behave even with the anxiety you might feel. It is important to focus on what you want to do and not what you want to feel.

#### **ACT-style Exposure (8 minutes)**

- Before you begin practicing for your speech, I would like us to practice together putting the above principles to work. I would like you to close your eyes for a moment and think about your upcoming speech (pause script for 5 seconds). Notice your thoughts (brief pause)... Notice your feelings (brief pause)... and notice any bodily sensations (10 second pause)... Notice how you can experience all of these thoughts, feelings, and sensations without needing to change anything about them. In a moment, I will ask you to describe out loud whatever you are experiencing. I am going to ask that you label each experience

what it is (e.g., “*I am having the thought that people will think I am stupid;*” or “*I am having the sensation that my heart is racing.*”) Now, you tell me what you are experiencing (*Individual describes experiences out loud. Jot down comments on a separate piece of paper.*) (*Then reflect these ideas back to them, and switch to using the proper language in identifying the experience they described.*)

- We think this type of talk can be helpful, as people tend to get very caught up in their experiences. Labeling thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations as thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations may allow us to gain a little distance from these experiences. Labeling thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations as what they really are, as opposed to what they say they are may allow you to accomplish the desired behavior. For example, when we label our bodily sensations as anxiety, we may be more likely to avoid it than if we label it as my heart is racing fast, I am breathing quickly; as those are actual experiences.
- \_\_\_\_ (person’s name), is it ok that you are having these thoughts, feelings, sensations- that you can notice them and just let them be? (STOP and wait for the answer). Are you willing to try and go forward with this speech while accepting these experiences? (pause and wait for the answer). Instruct participant to utilize the exposure sheet and the Quicksand Metaphor during preparation for the upcoming speech.