**What is Depression / What is the Cycle of Anxiety, Protective Factors, Miracle Question**

*Prior to starting, ensure that you have viewed the homefun assignments so you can confidently review them with client.*

***Hi \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

Welcome back to the session today. We are currently in session 3 of 12 sessions. Today we will talk about depression, anxiety, and protective factors. Before we begin with our warm up exercise, I would like to check in with you. How are you feeling in this moment, what sensations, thoughts, and emotions come up for you right now? Can you rate your mood from 1-10?

***Let’s start off with our warm-up based on positive psychology….***

* *The reason why we do this is to help us focus, highlight, and identify some of the positive things that you do and are doing to manage your social-emotional well-being (\*Pick a different question to last session to ask the client\*)*
  + *How has another person shown that they care about you within the past week?*
  + *What has happened this week that has been exciting?*
  + *Describe something fun that you did today.*
  + *What was something nice you said to someone this week?*
  + *Describe something that made you laugh this week.*
  + *Describe something you were thankful for this week.*
  + *What was a challenge you overcame this week?*
  + *What was something that made you feel happy this week?*

**Ok so let’s spend some time discussing the videos and the homefun.**

**Review prior week worksheets:**

* Self care tips
* Self care assessment

**We discussed self-care last week and had two worksheets to look at on self-care.**

**Q) I am curious to hear about your findings based on the self-care assessment - how did you find your self-care to be overall and in each specific category? \*Take time to discuss their self-care routine, any areas they would like to improve in...etc\***

Last week we also talked about noticing times when a problem is non-existent, or when it appears to be less severe. Specifically, paying attention to what is different about these times.

***Q) What differences did you notice about your thoughts or behaviours leading up to these times?***

* (If the client did not do this, let the client know that is fine, but that perhaps there may be opportunities in future for them to do consider that **or** explore what got in the way to facilitate doing the homefun for the next session).

Okay, let’s spend some time discussing the videos. **(If a client is on video, the coach can choose at their own discretion to watch some videos with clients in session, time permitting. Can be handy if there are short videos and the client did not watch during the previous week.)**

**Summary of What is Depression Video?** **4 MINS** <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-video/what-is-depression>

**Q) What were some of the takeaways you learned in the video about depression?**

* Depression is a disorder that affects more than **10% of the population** over the course of their lives, but it continues to be poorly understood.
* Those with depression, and their loved ones, struggle to understand what they are experiencing.
* It can be comforting to learn that they are not alone in their thoughts and feelings.

Depression is **defined by symptoms** that **affect feelings**, **thoughts**, and **behaviour** including: 

* Symptoms of depression last a week and are often cyclical, meaning recurring over time.
  + Symptoms of depression can be misinterpreted as the person being lazy or having a bad attitude.
  + A person’s thoughts, behaviours and attitudes are influenced by a complex series of chemicals in their brains (as well as external and internal experiences)
  + Exact causes of depression are poorly understood.
* Factors to depression are:
  + Hormones called neurotransmitters.
  + Medication.
  + Genetics.
  + Environmental factors.
* Treatment for depression include:
  + Therapy.
  + Medication.

**Summary of What is the Cycle of Anxiety?** **4.5 MINS** <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-video/cycle-of-anxiety-video>

***Q) When you feel anxious or believe a situation is scary, what thoughts, feelings, and behaviours do you have?***



Video review:

* What is the ‘cycle of anxiety’?
* The cycle of anxiety is a process where a person avoids their fears, and as a result, those fears grow increasingly powerful.
* Anxiety
  + begins when you’re first confronted with something (stimuli) that makes you feel nervous or scared.
* Avoidance
  + From the feelings of fear… a natural physical response is avoidance
  + We want to remove ourselves from the situation
  + we use emotional avoidance, we may face the fear but suppress the uncomfortable emotions.
* Short term relief from anxiety
  + Occurs when we make the decision to not face the fear; we receive a short-lived relief with possible missed opportunities.
  + We reinforce the perception of fear by fearing the fear (we fear it by conditioning ourselves to fear)
* Long term anxiety growth
  + After we have avoided that thing that caused the anxiety with short-lived relief, we create a pattern or cycle that happens over and over again
  + Reinforcing the anxiety to become more intense and last longer over time and it begins to affect our mood and how we see ourselves.
* Avoidance becomes increasingly difficult to resist, and the anxiety continues to grow worse. Many anxiety treatments work by breaking this cycle.
  + They focus on facing fears, rather than avoiding them.
  + Breaking the cycle of anxiety. The goal of counselling is learning to face your fear and reduce your anxiety. Every time you face your fear your brain learns the opposite lesson. “I faced my fear, and it was ok.”

**Now let’s talk about the protective factors**:

* It is important to understand what protective factors are and how they can help you and your well-being.
* Protective factors can be understood as positive influences that can improve the lives of individuals and their community. Specifically, a protective factor can be defined as “a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, or community (including peers and culture) level that is associated with a lower likelihood of problem outcomes or that reduces the negative impact of a risk factor on problem outcomes” (Youth.gov).
* In order to fully understand protective factors, it may help to consider what a risk factor is. A risk factor is defined as “a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precedes and is associated with a higher likelihood of problem outcomes” (Youth.gov).
* We are concentrating on noticing what you feel are your protective factors since they are things that contribute to a positive mental health and allow someone to be resilient in the face of challenges.

**Q) Did you have any questions about the definition or what protective factors mean?** (\*Be prepared to offer your own example or a hypothetical example should they need further explanation\*)

**Now let’s talk about the mood chart:**

* Before we dive into discussing the mood chart, I want to acknowledge the significance of this technique.
* Mood tracking is another positive psychology technique with the goal of improving your overall mental health through one’s recording of their mood, generally at set times, which is useful in identifying patterns in how their mood changes.
* There are lots of different ways that someone can track their mood, through the worksheet we provided, or if that didn’t fit, there are apps such as the Happiness App or you could do your own journaling too.

**Q) Did you have any questions about the purpose of a mood chart?** (\*Be prepared to offer your own example or a hypothetical example should they need further explanation\*)

**Miracle Question**

We are near the end of the session, so it is time to facilitate another short exercise with you, one that you can ideally continue to incorporate into your day-to-day activities. Like previous exercises, these activities are based on positive psychology or mindfulness principles.

**Exercise: Miracle Question and how it could affect your depressive or anxious thoughts**

**(\*Use the technique in session with the client\***

**Sometimes it can be hard to make a change or see how something can change. I want to show you one way to imagine or see what a change in your life can mean or look like…**

* Let’s talk about a technique in counselling called **‘the miracle question.’**
* The miracle question is a technique that counselors can use to assist clients to **think “outside the box”** regarding new possibilities and outcomes for the future.
* The miracle question helps you focus on your own solutions to a problem at hand, and let’s you come up with exactly the ideal situation that you’d like to happen. Don’t worry if the question feels challenging and you are not entirely sure what to say – that is normal too. This technique is about the here and now, it is about what is possible and emphases’ change. Once it is identified what can be done to change, it is a lot easier to make those changes and have success.
* *The miracle question has been asked thousands of times throughout the world. It has been refined as practitioners have experimented with different ways of asking it. The question is best asked deliberately and dramatically:*
* ***Now, I want to ask you a strange question. Suppose that while you are sleeping tonight and the entire house is quiet, a miracle happens. The miracle is that the problem which brought you here is solved. However, because you are sleeping, you don't know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning, what will be different that will tell you that a miracle has happened and the problem which brought you here is solved?***
* **Let’s pick one situation where we have anxious or depressive thoughts (on a scale of 1 to 10 – at a 5) and let’s together ask the question and write down how life could be different if the miracle occurred. Let’s write how that could change how we feel.**

**HOMEFUN**

**Video:**

**Anger Warning Signs and Anger Thermometer**- **4.5 MINS**

<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-video/anger-warning-signs-video>

**Fair Fighting Video**- **5.5 MINS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpYDTpQxq50&ab_channel=TherapistAid>

**Read and work on:**

* Protective Factors
* Weekly Mood Chart

**If time permits, you can review the worksheets with clients per below:**

* **Protective Factors** and **Weekly Mood Chart (**Therapistaid.com)
* “Mood tracking can be a powerful technique to identifying the source of negative emotions. Patterns in moods might be difficult to detect during the hurry of day-to-day life, but they jump out from a completed mood chart.
* You may wish to consider using the Weekly Mood Chart
  + Jot down a few notes in each square.
  + Entries can be as simple as "anxious", "happy", "can't sleep (worrying)", or "neutral".
  + Write down a short reminder of what you did each day so that we can see if there are any patterns.”

**Check out –** Mood 1-10 Takeaways

**End of Session 3**

# EMAIL Client

**MFFS 12-Week CBT course – Session 3 Homefun**

Hi \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

It was great to be with you for session 3 today. The goal of this program is for you to obtain skills and strategies to manage and reduce depressive and anxious feelings and thoughts so that you gain confidence and mental wellness in your day-to-day life.

**Our homefun assignment this week is:**

1. Watch: (each video is less than 5 mins)
   1. **Anger Warning Sign and Anger Thermometer -4.5 MINS** <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-video/anger-warning-signs-video>
   2. **Fair Fighting Video -5.5 MINS (\*can apply this to all relationships, not just partners\*)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpYDTpQxq50&ab_channel=TherapistAid>

**Reflect on:**

* + 1. ***What are the main points of this video?***
    2. ***What skills/strategies did I learn?***
    3. ***How can I apply these skills to my own situation?***

1. **Read and work on the:** 
   1. Protective Factors
   2. Weekly Mood Chart

Instructions: Write down a few notes in each square about what you did and what you felt. Entries can be as simple as "anxious", "happy", "can't sleep (worrying)", or "neutral". Also write down a short reminder of what you did in each square so that we can discuss what you experienced.

1. **Try out the Miracle Question:**
   1. “*Suppose that while you are sleeping tonight and the entire house is quiet, a miracle happens. The miracle is that the problem which brought you here is solved. However, because you are sleeping, you don't know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning, what will be different that will tell you that a miracle has happened and the problem which brought you here is solved?”*
   2. Write out what would be different and how that could affect what you feel and think about your situations? Does it create any positive ideas to make changes? What down your possible solutions.

**Do what you can, you do not need to do all of it at once. Breaking it down and doing about 5-10 mins a day can sometimes make it easier. Please reach out to your counsellor if you need support.**

Warm regards,

Your Name