SESSION

5

ANXIETY SYMPTOMS INTERVENTION

SESSION HANDOUTS

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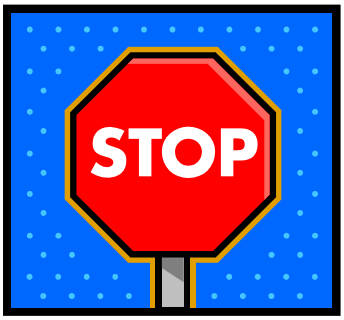
HANDOUT 5.1

When You Face Your Fears HEN YOU FACE YOUR FEARS… STOP!

It is very important to *stay in the situation* that makes you nervous or scared until you notice a decrease of fear.

If you leave the situation too early, you cannot experience that *the fear actually becomes less by itself.*

What can help you stay in the situation and face your fears?



We need to not run away or avoid. We need to **STOP** and stay in the situation. Also **STOP** stands for something very important:

- **SCARED**

  .

  You recognize that you are **S**cared and want to leave the situation.

- ■

THOUGHTS.

What are your **T**houghts when you are scared?

…OTHER THOUGHTS

…

What are Other Thoughts you can have when you are scared?

What Other Thoughts can help you feel less anxious?

- **OVERPOWER!**

  Stay in the situation, persist! Face your fears and **O**verpower them!

- **PRAISE.**

  Praise yourself for facing your fears.

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What makes it hard to face your fears?

THOUGHTS.

How can you change these thoughts that make you nervous or scared?

EXAMPLE: It is your birthday and you are having a party. It is 8 AM and you have not received your presents.

What are your THOUGHTS?

"My parents don't love me."
"My parents forgot my birthday."
"No one likes me."

What OTHER THOUGHTS can you have?

"My parents have not woken up yet."
"It is too early."
"It is not time for the party."
"My presents are hidden."
"If I don't get presents, it is not the end of the world."

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HANDOUT 5.2

Introduction to: Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Fears often cause us to avoid doing things we would otherwise like to be able to do. They often make us miss out on fun things and they make us feel bad. Fears are stubborn and they won't go away unless we actually stand up to them and face the situations that the fear tells us to avoid.

Do you remember your first day at school? You were probably very nervous and quite worried about what it would be like. Everybody starting school goes through these worries.

On the first day the worry is really high, about a 9 on the worry scale. If everything goes well on the first day, on the second day the worry is a little less, about a 7. By the end of the week it's only a 2. On Monday, because you're out of practice, the worry goes back up to a 5 –— not as high as it first was but not as good as Friday. On Tuesday the worry dives back down and it's only a 1 or it might even be gone altogether. By going to school every day and not letting the fear stop you from doing things, you were able to conquer the fear. So by facing the fear every day, slowly the fear disappeared.

Try to work Molly's problem out. Molly's best friend is having a farewell party before she moves to France. Of course Molly really wants to go but there is a problem. Molly is very afraid of heights and the party is at the top of Millennium Tower. Millennium Tower is 100 stories high. Molly doesn't think she would ever be able to go up that high. It's a 10 on her worry scale, but she doesn't want to miss out on saying good-bye. Molly has 4 weeks before the party to try to find a way to face her fear.

What do you think Molly could do to solve this problem?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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HANDOUT 5.3

The Keys to Stepladders

We have already looked at the way unrealistic thinking is linked to worrying about different situations and found out how to make our thinking more realistic, – but this isn't enough. If we continue to avoid the situations that we fear, we never really get an opportunity to put our realistic thinking to the test!

The next step in overcoming worries and fears is to gradually face the situations that we feel anxious about, just like Molly did. This skill is called "Stepladders."

The important things to remember about stepladders are:

- **It is gradual**. The first stage in stepladders is to make a list of all the situations that scare you. Then you put them in a step ladder where you can start with the things that make you just a little anxious (say a 2 or 3 on the worry scale) and then work up to things that are much harder (9 or 10 rating). This way, you get to feel comfortable at one level before moving on to the next level, which is much better than being thrown into the deep end!

- You use your **detective thinking** before, during, and after each step.

- It's is important that you **stay** in each situation **long enough for your anxiety to drop ,** - even though the first time you try, you might worry that you'll be too anxious to stand it.

- **Repetition** is important. - Do it again and again. - Once is never enough! Make sure you try each step lots of times, - until you get bored rather than worried.

- **Don't be discouraged** by setbacks. - There will be easy days and difficult days. Remember, by trying hard you are still fighting those fears.

- Be aware of sneaky ways that you might still be avoiding your feelings even though you are "in" the situation. Watch out for **"safety strategies"** that distract you from facing your fear. For example, listening to an I-pod or having the dog or a friend or a parent with you while you face the fear will mean that you don't know that you can do it on your own. It's important to face your worry fully.

- Most importantly, **- reward yourself!**

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HANDOUT 5.4

Making a Fears and Worries List

The first thing you need to do to be able to face fears is list all of the situations that cause you to worry. If you need some help in coming up with ideas, look at your detective thinking sheets. Try to think of as many situations as you can.

My Fears and Worries List

These things are really hard to do	
These things are hard to do	
These things make me a little worried	

. What seem to be your major worry areas?

_____

_____

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HANDOUT 5.5

Creating a Stepladder Plan

Remember, the most important thing about stepladders is that they are **gradual**. We do this by creating step-by-step plans that you can work through, just like Molly did to conquer her fear of heights.

You make one step-by-step plan for one of your fears and worries. For each plan you have a goal and each time you do a step you will earn a reward. The first step should have a worry rating of 2 or 3 and the highest step should have a rating of 9 or 10. You need to create lots of steps in between so that you break your fear down into small steps you can handle.

Some of the things you can change between steps are:

- The people who are with you, or how well you know them
- Whether you are in a familiar or unfamiliar place
- How long you stay in the situation
- How much time you have to prepare before hand
- How much of the scary thing is changed, like how dark it actually is

Choose one of the areas from your fears and worries list. If you have more than one, try the one that isn't the biggest worry first.

1. First, set a goal that is practical and something that can be achieved.

2. Then get some on scrap paper, and list all the possible steps you can think of to break the worry down. Include the ones that are on your fears and worries list as well as new ones that you come up with by changing some of the ways you do it (see above).

3. Give each step a worry rating.

4. Choose enough steps so that almost all of the possible worry ratings have a step next to them. You may have to leave some out or add some more so that there are no big jumps in the worry scale ratings and so there aren't too many steps with the same rating.

5. Then write your chosen steps in order of lowest to highest on your stepladder.

6. Finally, talk with your parent(s) about what reward will go with each step. Remember, small rewards go with little steps and bigger rewards go with the harder steps.

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Step by Step Plan

_____ Goal: _____

_____

Step 1: _____

Reward: _____

Step 2: _____

Reward: _____

Step 3: _____

Reward: _____

Step 4: _____

Reward: _____

Step 5: _____

Reward: _____

Step 6: _____

Reward: _____

Step 7: _____

Reward: _____

Step 8: _____

Reward: _____

Step 9: _____

Reward: _____

Step 10: _____

Reward: _____.

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HANDOUT 5.6

Fighting Fear by Facing Fear Instructions

This Handout is one that you will be doing many times over the coming months. It is time to start your first stepladder.

Take a look at the form called **Fighting Fear by Facing Fear** on the next page; this is where you will make your plans for doing steps during the coming week. There are two parts to the form, a planning side and a review side. On the planning side of the form (which is shaded grey for the example), you will write down:

- What step you will do and, when you will do it,
- What coping strategies you will use while doing the step, and
- What your worry rating is when you think about doing the step

On the review side of the form, you will record:

- What your worry ratings were before and after doing the step,
- What you learned from the experience (This might help you with your detective thinking next time), and
- Whether or not you received your reward.

You will fill out the planning side of the form at the beginning of each week, and you fill out the review sections each time you try the step.

Before you try a step for the first time, do a detective thinking sheet to make sure you have a realistic thought in your head about what will happen.

After you do a step, make sure you get your reward and make sure you reward yourself as well.

Remember, you have to do each step until either it gets boring or your worry rating comes down to less than 3. Only then will you be able to do you move on to the next step.

Work with your clinician to come to an agreement about when you will do the first step(s) on your stepladder during the coming week and, write your plans onto the planning side of the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form.

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HANDOUT 5.6 (CONT.)

Fighting Fear By Facing Fear Form

What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	Did I receive my reward?
E.G. Step 4: Go to shop and ask where an item is kept When: After school on Tuesday 5 times	People will not think I am stupid for asking where stuff is. I will practice what to say beforehand	**Today:** 5 **During:** 7 **After:** 3	That shop assistants are helpful and don't think that you are stupid for asking questions.	**Yes** ☑ **No** ☐
		Today: _ **During:** _ **After:** _		**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
		Today: _ **During:** _ **After:** _		**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
		Today: _ **During:** _ **After:** _		**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
		Today: _ **During:** _ **After:** _		**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

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