

Removing the Mask of Stress, Frustration & Anxiety Lesson 1

Recognizing the Symptoms of an Emotion Handout

Cognitive	Belief in danger, belief in inability to cope, confusion, rigidity, obsession...
Behavioural	Avoidance, stuttering, word finding difficulty, reduced motor coordination, fainting, poor performance on tasks, lack of energy, losing control, poor concentration, escape, unhealthy/risky behaviour, extreme attachment to another person or object, compulsion...
Physiological	Blushing, increased heart rate, chills, stomach upset, diarrhea, constipation, perspiration, trembling, dry mouth, rapid and shallow breathing, high blood pressure, numbness, tingling in extremities, blurry vision, weakness in parts of the body, pain in parts of body, tightness in throat, choking, fainting, lack of/increased appetite, sleeplessness...
Perceptual	Derealisation (detachment from one surroundings), depersonalisation (detachment from oneself)...
Emotional	Frustration, anger, edginess, uneasiness, fear, increased arousal...

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Emotionally Evoking Situations Handout

Date	Situation	Symptoms of anxiety, anger or other emotion	Intensity of emotion 0-100	My thoughts about the situation

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Coping with Anxiety Practice Handout

Select ways to stay present focused instead of worrying about the future

- Seek the company of other people and engage in conversations with them.
- Start a chore such as cleaning your office or your closet.
- Pay attention to your breath. Notice the air as it comes in and out of your nostrils. Pay attention to the rhythm of your breath without trying to control it.
- Notice a pet or children playing.
- Observe an object that is in front of you using all your senses and as if it is the first time you see this object. Do not judge. Just observe and sense.
- Give yourself a hand massage with your favorite lotion, paying attention to the sensations as you engage in it.

The Cue Controlled Worry Method

- Instead of having your worry thoughts interrupt your activities and interfere with your productivity and your mood during the day, identify a specific time during the day when you can dedicate 45 minutes to your worries. Throughout the day when you have worry thoughts, instead of engaging in them, remind yourself that you will give yourself permission to worry about these during your designated worry time.
- Prior to starting your worry time, turn off your phone and computer and remove potential distractions (put a do not disturb sign on your door).
- Spend 45 minutes to worry about anything you choose. This is your worry time. Devote all your energy and attention to worrying. Only worry during this time. Do not try to solve problems, minimize problems, or try to make yourself feel better.

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Acceptance

- Instead of trying to push the worry away, accept the fact that you have the worry, do not judge it as good or bad. Sometimes, things happen in ways that make us feel uncertain.
- Accept the worry as a part of your life for now, and shift your attention to a present task that needs doing.

Cognitive Restructuring

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Cognitive Restructuring Handout

- This strategy is also called informed reframing. It requires the use of a thought record. It involves identifying the problematic thought, the emotion linked to the thought, its intensity, looking at the evidence for the thought (facts that support the thought), examining the evidence against the thought (facts that do not support the thought), identifying a realistic and more balanced thought, and rating the intensity of the emotion again. Usually, this exercise leads to a reduction of the emotional thought.
- If the emotional thought is based on fact, examine the probability of it occurring and assess alternative options.

Date	Situation	Thought	Name the emotion Worry? Anxiety?	Intensity of the emotion 0-100	Facts that support the thought	Facts that do not support the thought	Realistic and more balanced thought	Intensity of the emotion 0-100

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Practice Record

Record your daily practice of coping with anxiety.

Date and time	Name of coping strategy	Duration of the practice	What I noticed during and after the practice

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Lesson 3

Managing Intense Emotions - Distraction Handout

Distraction strategies can be very useful to manage intense emotions only when it is not feasible to address the prompts for the intense emotions at the moment.	
Focus on a task which has to be done, giving yourself permission to address the intense emotions and their prompts when feasible. Remind yourself of the benefit of working on the task.	What helps me refocus is:
Search for competing thoughts which can stimulate other thoughts (redecorating a room in your home, planning a vacation, planning a meal or a social activity...).	Thoughts which capture my attention are:
Compare your situation in a non judgemental way with those of others who are not coping as effectively or who are less fortunate than you.	Comparisons that work for me are:
Engage in an activity not compatible with focusing on these intense emotions and their triggers (sing, solve an enigma, play a game with someone, run, swim, ride a bike, dance, cook...).	The activities I can engage in and which are not compatible with focusing on intense emotions and their triggers are:
Seek social support . Phone, visit, or text a friend who is of support or distraction to you.	The people I can reach for support when I experience intense emotions are:
Increase your knowledge of something unrelated to the prompts of intense emotions. Read a book, magazine, watch an information program on a topic unrelated to the prompts for intense emotions you are currently experiencing.	The activities unrelated to the prompts for intense emotions that I can engage in to increase my knowledge are:
Remind yourself of pleasant events in your life to help shift your emotional focus.	The pleasant events which I find distracting from intense emotions are:
Redirect your intense emotions with sublimation (Paint, write poetry, sculpt, compose a piece of music, clean, mow the lawn...)	The sublimation activities I can engage when I experience intense emotions are:

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<p>Give your time, care, or attention to others who typically do not demand from you.</p>	<p>The people and place I can give of "me" or volunteer are:</p>
<p>Visualise a stop sign, a brick wall as a reminder to stop the thoughts that lead to the intense emotions. Imagine a bubble or a helium balloon taking the intense emotion away.</p>	<p>The visualisations that work for me are:</p>
<p>Replace the emotions with more positive or manageable ones until you can focus on what initially derailed you. Try to elicit the opposite emotions.</p>	<p>I can usually elicit emotions with:</p>
<p>Activate sensations to offset the intense emotions you are experiencing. If stress make you sweat, place a cool cloth where you experience heat. If the intense emotions depleted you of energy, get up and jump around. Use the basic senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch) to help shift sensations and emotions.</p>	<p>The senses which are helpful to me are:</p>

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Lesson 3

Managing Intense Emotions - Senses to Relieve Handout

Various senses can help with managing intense emotions	
<p>Sight Look around you and notice what is pleasing and calming. Visit an art gallery or nature area. Look at flowers, clouds, stars, images in a magazine...</p>	<p>The sights helpful to me are:</p>
<p>Hearing Various sounds generate different sensations and emotions. Try relaxation music or sounds. Listen to calming, invigorating and exciting music and songs. Listen to the voice of a support person.</p>	<p>The hearings helpful to me are:</p>
<p>Taste Some tastes can engender tranquility. Try herbal teas, hot milk, Ovaltine, fresh juices or cold water. Chew your favorite gum.</p>	<p>The tastes that appease me are:</p>
<p>Smell Activate your favorite scents, which are often associated with specific situations. Use aroma therapy, lotions, spray a fragrance in the air, light a scented candle, put lemon oil on wood in your home, smell flowers, your favorite food, walk in nature to smell the air.</p>	<p>The scent I can use to comfort me are:</p>
<p>Touch Carry an object which you can touch when needed to relieve the intensity of emotions. Try different fabrics and objects. Try a bubble bath, get your favorite blanket, feel the fur of your pet, have a massage...</p>	<p>The various touches that help me are:</p>

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Lesson 3

Managing Intense Emotions - Emotion Record Handout

Emotion name	Intensity of the emotion 0-100	What you did that was skillful	What you did that was not skillful	What a skillful person would have done

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Lesson 4

Breathing Exercises Handout

Prior to engaging in the breathing exercises, consult with your family physician if you have high blood pressure or a heart condition. Your physician may recommend that you do not to hold your breath during these exercises.

Turn off your phone and other electronic equipment. Go to a room where you will not be disturbed and place a sign on the door stating "do not disturb". Put away what you have on your knees and in your hands. Place both feet on the ground and keep your back straight but not stiff. Sit in a comfortable position, adjusting your posture if needed.

Diaphragmatic breathing

1. Take a deep breath through your nose on a count of 4 as you focus on your body sensations as the air comes in your body.
2. Gently hold your breath for 2 seconds.
3. Slowly exhale from your mouth on a count of 4 seconds.
4. Lightly hold your breath for 2 seconds.
5. Again, take a deep breath through your nose on a count of 4 as you focus on your body sensations as the air comes in your lungs.
6. Breathe from the deep part of your abdomen (not from your throat).
7. Gently hold your breath for 2 seconds.
8. Slowly exhale from your mouth on a count of 4 seconds.
9. Lightly hold your breath for 2 seconds.
10. Notice your abdomen as it goes up and down with each breath.
11. Remember to relax your shoulders as you breathe in and out.
12. Start back at #1 and continue for about 2 minutes.

If you have high blood pressure, do not hold your breath until you have checked with your family physician.

Counting your breath

- Breathe in and out 3 times at your own rhythm.
- Take a slow deep breath through your nose.
- As you exhale slowly through your mouth, count "1" to yourself.
- Pause 2 seconds.
- Take another deep breath through your nose slowly.
- As you exhale slowly through your mouth, count "2" to yourself.
- Pause 2 seconds.
- Take a slow deep breath through your nose.
- As you exhale slowly through your mouth, count "3" to yourself.
- Pause 2 seconds.
- Take another deep breath slowly through your nose.
- As you exhale slowly through your mouth, count "4" to yourself.
- Pause 2 seconds.
- Take another deep breath slowly through your nose.
- As you exhale slowly through your mouth, count "5" to yourself.
- Start back to #1.
- If you get lost in the counting, just return to #1.
- Engage in this exercise for about 4 minutes.

If you have high blood pressure, do not hold your breath until you have checked with your family physician.

Equal breathing (adapted from Shakeshaft, 2015)

- Gently inhale through your nose on a count of 4 seconds.
- Slowly exhale through your nose on a count of 4 seconds.
- Gently inhale through your nose on a count of 4 seconds.
- Slowly exhale through your nose on a count of 4 seconds.
- ... Continue for about 4 minutes

You can practice this exercise twice daily for about 5 minutes. After 8 weeks of daily practice, try practicing inhaling and exhaling on a count of 5 seconds.

Alternate nostril breathing (adapted from Bourne, 2015)

1. Close your right nostril with your right thumb.
2. Slowly inhale through your left nostril.
3. Pause for 1 second.
4. Close your left nostril with your ring finger and release the right nostril.
5. Gently exhale through your right nostril.
6. Slowly inhale through your right nostril.
7. Pause for 1 second.
8. Start back to #1 through 7.

While this exercise helps "clear" the mind, it tends to increase energy so it is best not to practice it in the evening. If you have high blood pressure, do not hold your breath until you have checked with your family physician.

The 4-7-8 practice (adapted from Well, 2015)

1. Take a deep breath.
2. Exhale through your mouth making a whoosh sound.
3. Close your mouth and inhale with your nose on a count of 4 seconds.
4. Hold your breath on a count of 7 seconds.
5. Exhale through your mouth making a whoosh sound on a count of 8 seconds.
6. Start back to #1 through #5 three more times.

This exercise is best practiced just before going to sleep. If you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, do not hold your breath and do not engage in this exercise until you have checked with your family physician.

Follow your breath while listening to sounds

- The sounds could be a slow, relaxing music, or the sound of a clock.
- Regulate your breathing to the rhythm of the music or the clock.

Try to engage at home in a breathing exercise by Jon Kabat-Zinn in the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZijDtHUsR0>

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Mona Lisa smile practice

- Take two gentle and deep breaths.
- Notice the muscles of your face.
- Relax your face by putting a half smile similar to that of the Mona Lisa.
- Keep the smile until the end of this exercise.
- You may notice that the muscles around your temples become more relaxed.
- With each breath the Mona Lisa smile brings you into a calmer state.
- The muscles around your mouth may be more relaxed.
- The muscles around your eyes may be more relaxed.
- Notice your face as it becomes more relaxed.
- Stay aware of your Mona Lisa smile.
- When you are ready, you may choose to keep your Mona Lisa smile or return to the expression you wish.

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Lesson 4

Awareness Exercises Handout

Awareness of the body position

- Throughout the day, notice the different positions of your body.
- Notice the comfort and discomfort with each position.

Awareness while scanning the body

- Take a deep breath and, with an open mind, focus your attention on your scalp.
- Do not judge your experience as "good" or "bad", just notice...
- Notice the different sensations you may have as you become aware of your scalp.
- Accept the sensations with an open mind...
- You may become aware of warmth, coldness, pressure, discomfort, tension...
- Notice your scalp...
- Next, notice your forehead...
- With an open mind, focus your attention to your forehead.
- Do not judge your experience as "good" or "bad", just notice...
- Notice the different sensations you may have as you become aware of your forehead.
- Accept the sensations with an open mind...
- You may become aware of warmth, coldness, pressure, discomfort, tension...
- Notice your forehead...
- Next notice your eyes...
- ...
- Continue with the different parts of the face.
- Then move to the neck, shoulder, arms, hands, torso.... proceed until you reach the toes...

Awareness of heartbeat exercise

- Take a deep breath.
- As you breathe out, become aware of your heartbeat.
- Do not try to control it and do not judge it.
- Notice the different sounds of your heartbeat.
- Notice the sensations around your heart as it beats.
- Notice the speed of your heartbeat.
- Do not judge it as slow or fast.
- Pay attention to your heartbeat.

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- Your heart is beating at its own rhythm.

Awareness while washing dishes

- Take a deep breath and pay attention to the dishes that need to be washed.
- Notice their position and shape.
- Become aware of the water touching the dishes...
- Observe the water touching your hands....
- Notice the smell of the dishwashing soap...
- Pay attention to the bubbles, their shape, their fragrance...
- Notice the sensations of the warm water as it touches your skin...
- Become aware of the sensations as you take the dishes in your hands to wash them...
- Observe your hand which scrubs...
- Notice the different sounds as the water touches the dishes... as you wash the dishes...
- Notice the sounds and sensations as you rinse the dishes...
- Notice the clear water coming out of the clean dishes...
- Observe the sensations as you place the clean dishes in the dish rack...