

Session 7: Challenging Beliefs and Introduction of Modules

Practice Assignment:

Use the Challenging Beliefs Worksheets (Handout 8.1) to analyze and confront at least one of your Stuck Points each day. Also, please read over the Safety Issues Module (Handout 8.1), and think about how your prior beliefs about safety were affected by your traumatic event. If you have issues with safety pertaining to yourself or others, complete at least one Challenging Beliefs Worksheet to confront those issues. Use the remaining sheets for other Stuck Points on your Stuck Point Log (Handout 6.1) or for distressing events that have occurred recently.

Session 7 Handouts:

8.1: Challenging Beliefs Worksheet (6 copies included)

8.1(A-E): Examples of completed Challenging Beliefs Worksheets

8.3: Safety Issues Module

HANDOUT 8.1
Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

Date: _____ Client: _____

A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
	<p>C. Emotion(s) Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p>	<p>Evidence for?</p> <p>Evidence against?</p> <p>Habit or fact?</p> <p>Not including all information?</p> <p>All-or-none?</p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated?</p> <p>Focused on just one piece?</p> <p>Source dependable?</p> <p>Confusing possible with likely?</p> <p>Based on feelings or facts?</p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts?</p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions:</p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing:</p> <p>Ignoring important parts:</p> <p>Oversimplifying:</p> <p>Overgeneralizing:</p> <p>Mind reading:</p> <p>Emotional reasoning:</p>	<p>G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p>H. Emotion(s) Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p>

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A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
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	<p>C. Emotion(s) Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p>	<p>Evidence for?</p> <p>Evidence against?</p> <p>Habit or fact?</p> <p>Not including all information?</p> <p>All-or-none?</p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated?</p> <p>Focused on just one piece?</p> <p>Source dependable?</p> <p>Confusing possible with likely?</p> <p>Based on feelings or facts?</p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts?</p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions:</p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing:</p> <p>Ignoring important parts:</p> <p>Oversimplifying:</p> <p>Overgeneralizing:</p> <p>Mind reading:</p> <p>Emotional reasoning:</p>	<p>G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p>H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p>

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HANDOUT 8.1A
Sample Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
<i>I have to ride on a plane.</i>	<i>Air travel is dangerous.—75%</i>	<p>Evidence for? <i>People have been killed.</i></p> <p>Evidence against? <i>Airport security has been increased.</i></p> <p>Habit or fact? <i>It is a habit.</i></p> <p>Not including all information? <i>The fact that planes fly every day and nothing happens to them.</i></p> <p>All-or-none? <i>Yes, I am making a statement that all flights are dangerous.</i></p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated? <i>Yes. I am exaggerating the risk.</i></p> <p>Focused on just one piece? <i>I notice in the news when there is a crash, but I don't pay attention to all of the flights that travel safely every day.</i></p> <p>Source dependable? <i>No, I misinterpreted turbulence.</i></p> <p>Confusing possible with likely? <i>Yes, I have been saying that it is likely that the plane will crash.</i></p> <p>Based on feelings or facts? <i>I am letting myself believe this because I feel scared and not because it is realistic.</i></p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts? <i>Many people I know have flown and haven't crashed.</i></p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions: <i>Yes, I assume that if I fly, the plane <u>will</u> crash.</i></p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing: <i>I am exaggerating the possibility.</i></p> <p>Ignoring important parts: <i>All the thousands of planes that fly every day and don't crash.</i></p> <p>Oversimplifying:</p> <p>Overgeneralizing:</p> <p>Mind reading:</p> <p>Emotional reasoning: <i>Just because I am anxious on flights doesn't mean that flying is dangerous</i></p>	<p><i>The chances are very small that I will be killed or hurt while flying.—95%</i></p> <p><i>Even if the plane blew up, I could not do anything about it.—80%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Afraid—100%</i></p> <p><i>Helpless—75%</i></p> <p><i>Anxious—75%</i></p>			<p style="text-align: center;">G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>15%</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Afraid—40%</i></p> <p><i>Helpless—5%</i></p> <p><i>Anxious—10%</i></p>

HANDOUT 8.1B
Sample Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
I led my company into an ambush, and many of my men were killed.	I should have prevented it.—100%	<p>Evidence for? <i>People were killed.</i></p> <p>Evidence against? <i>There was no way to know that there was going to be an ambush—that's the nature of an ambush. To think I should have known it was coming is to ignore the fact that it was an ambush.</i></p> <p>Habit or fact? <i>A habit. I have been saying this for years.</i></p> <p>Not including all information? <i>It was an ambush. We had no intel that there were insurgents in that area.</i></p> <p>All-or-none? <i>No one else would have led their company into an ambush.</i></p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated? <i>Extreme to say I should have prevented it when I didn't know.</i></p> <p>Focused on just one piece? <i>That I am responsible for my men.</i></p> <p>Source dependable? <i>I am the source of the self-blame. No one else blamed me.</i></p> <p>Confusing possible with likely?</p> <p>Based on feelings or facts? <i>Feelings.</i></p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts? <i>That I was their leader. I couldn't predict the future.</i></p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions: <i>That I could have prevented it.</i></p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing: <i>Exaggerating my control in the situation.</i></p> <p>Ignoring important parts: <i>I haven't been paying attention to the fact that it was an ambush. There was no way I could have known.</i></p> <p>Oversimplifying:</p> <p>Overgeneralizing:</p> <p>Mind reading:</p> <p>Emotional reasoning: <i>Because I feel guilty, I <u>am</u> guilty.</i></p>	<p><i>There was no way to see it coming at the time.—85%</i></p> <p><i>I did the best I could, given the circumstances.—90%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Guilty—100%</i></p> <p><i>Helpless—100%</i></p> <p><i>Anxious—75%</i></p>			<p style="text-align: center;">G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>10%</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Guilty—40%</i></p> <p><i>Helpless—80%</i></p> <p><i>Anxious—40%</i></p>

HANDOUT 8.1C
Sample Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
I am putting off doing my therapy practice assignment.	If I let myself feel angry, I'll be out of control.—50%	<p>Evidence for? <i>I have acted aggressively in the past when I felt angry.</i></p> <p>Evidence against? <i>I have never been really destructive when I was angry. It is my choice how I act when I feel angry. I can always take a break or leave the situation.</i></p> <p>Habit or fact? <i>Habit.</i></p> <p>Not including all information? <i>That I am not totally out of control. I am still making choices on how to behave.</i></p> <p>All-or-none? <i>Yes, no control.</i></p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated? <i>It is exaggerated to say that I would be out of control, I have some control.</i></p> <p>Focused on just one piece? <i>That if I do my out-of-session therapy assignment, I will be angry and out of control.</i></p> <p>Source dependable? <i>No, my assumption.</i></p> <p>Confusing possible with likely? <i>Not likely I will lose control just from filling out a worksheet.</i></p> <p>Based on feelings or facts? <i>Feelings.</i></p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts? <i>It's just a worksheet, not the trauma.</i></p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions: <i>I am jumping to conclusions to assume that I will have no control if I feel my feelings.</i></p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing: <i>I am equating anger with rage instead of what it is—unpleasant.</i></p> <p>Ignoring important parts: <i>I am disregarding the times I have felt angry and maintained control.</i></p> <p>Oversimplifying: <i>Yes, feeling angry is bad.</i></p> <p>Overgeneralizing: <i>Just because I have been aggressive in the past doesn't mean I will do it with a worksheet.</i></p> <p>Mind reading:</p> <p>Emotional reasoning: <i>Anger always leads to aggression.</i></p>	<p><i>Anger can be expressed without aggression.—60%</i></p> <p><i>Anger is an emotion like sadness. I can let myself feel that and still maintain control over my behaviors.—60%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Angry—50%</i></p> <p><i>Afraid—95%</i></p>			<p style="text-align: center;">G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>20%</i></p>
				<p style="text-align: center;">H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Angry—30%</i></p> <p><i>Afraid—35%</i></p>

HANDOUT 8.1D
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A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
A friend wants to set me up for a date with someone she knows.	I can't get involved with anyone and let anyone close enough to see how restricted my life has become.—75%	<p>Evidence for? <i>One person I told about the assault while we were dating was very supportive at the time, but became more and more distant after that and finally stopped calling altogether.</i></p> <p>Evidence against? <i>My friends and family have been supportive.</i></p> <p>Habit or fact? <i>Habit.</i></p> <p>Not including all information? <i>My friend wouldn't set me up with a mean person.</i></p> <p>All-or-none? <i>Most healthy people would not run from a relationship.</i></p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated? <i>I am making assumptions about how other people will react.</i></p> <p>Focused on just one piece? <i>That he will judge me.</i></p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions: <i>Yes, assuming that it will go badly.</i></p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing: <i>Because one date may have had problems, this doesn't mean that others will.</i></p> <p>Ignoring important parts: <i>That person was not healthy or secure.</i></p> <p>Oversimplifying: <i>If I tell someone who can't deal with it, it is not necessarily bad, because I could find out something important about the relationship.</i></p> <p>Overgeneralizing: <i>Same as above. One bad experience doesn't mean that everyone is the same. I don't have to talk about my restricted life.</i></p> <p>Mind reading: <i>Yes, I am assuming what he thinks, and I haven't even met him yet.</i></p> <p>Emotional reasoning: <i>Because I am scared, I assume that it will go badly.</i></p>	<p>A date could tell me they don't want anything to do with me because I am dealing with having been assaulted.—60</p> <p><i>Some people have been very supportive.—70%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Fearful—50%</i></p> <p><i>Sad—80%</i></p> <p><i>Angry—50%</i></p>	<p>Source dependable? <i>Coming from past negative experience and from an unhealthy person.</i></p> <p>Confusing possible with likely? <i>It is possible that he won't like me, but it is possible I won't like him either.</i></p> <p>Based on feelings or facts? <i>Feelings.</i></p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts? <i>Just because I was a victim before doesn't mean that everyone will judge me. Maybe they would judge the rapist.</i></p>		<p style="text-align: center;">G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>50%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Fearful—25%</i></p> <p><i>Sad—40%</i></p> <p><i>Angry—10%</i></p>			

HANDOUT 8.1E
Sample Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

A. Situation	B. Thought/Stuck Point	D. Challenging Thoughts	E. Problematic Patterns	F. Alternative Thought(s)
Describe the event, thought, or belief leading to the unpleasant emotion(s).	Write thought/Stuck Point related to situation in section A. Rate your belief in this thought/Stuck Point from 0 to 100%. (How much do you believe this thought?)	Use Challenging Questions to examine your automatic thought from section B. Consider whether the thought is balanced and factual, or extreme.	Use the Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet to decide whether this is one of your problematic patterns of thinking.	What else can I say instead of the thought in section B? How else can I interpret the event instead of this thought? Rate your belief in the alternative thought(s) from 0 to 100%.
<p><i>My lieutenant sent us down a road that he knew was filled with insurgents. Four friends were killed because of him.</i></p>	<p><i>He got them killed.—100%</i></p>	<p>Evidence for? <i>They are dead!</i></p> <p>Evidence against? <i>He was probably given an order to send us there because they needed the supplies.</i></p> <p>Habit or fact? <i>He didn't actually kill them.</i></p> <p>Not including all information? <i>Insurgents killed them.</i></p> <p>All-or-none? <i>Yes.</i></p> <p>Extreme or exaggerated? <i>I guess. The order didn't seem to make sense, though—why did we have to go then? And there was a pretty good chance we all could have made it.</i></p> <p>Focused on just one piece? <i>I guess I don't know if he had pressure (orders) to send us there right then.</i></p> <p>Source dependable? <i>My assumption.</i></p> <p>Confusing possible with likely?</p> <p>Based on feelings or facts? <i>Outrage at not understanding why he made that call.</i></p> <p>Focused on unrelated parts? <i>That it was his fault. He didn't intend for them to get killed.</i></p>	<p>Jumping to conclusions: <i>I guess I don't know what he was thinking when he ordered us there.</i></p> <p>Exaggerating or minimizing: <i>Yes.</i></p> <p>Ignoring important parts: <i>I don't really know why he made that call.</i></p> <p>Oversimplifying: <i>We had made the run before there, even though it was really dangerous.</i></p> <p>Overgeneralizing:</p> <p>Mind reading: <i>I am mind-reading his intentions.</i></p> <p>Emotional reasoning: <i>I was angry and blamed him.</i></p>	<p><i>I hate that my friends died, and although it didn't seem critical to make that run, I don't know what the lieutenant was thinking or responding to —95%</i></p> <p><i>It was really risky, but we had made it safely four times previously.—90%</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Specify your emotion(s) (sad, angry, etc.), and rate how strongly you feel each emotion from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Angry—100%</i></p>			<p style="text-align: center;">G. Re-Rate Old Thought/Stuck Point</p> <p>Re-rate how much you now believe the thought/Stuck Point in section B, from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>40%</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">H. Emotion(s)</p> <p>Now what do you feel? Rate it from 0 to 100%.</p> <p><i>Relieved, not as angry—60%</i></p>

HANDOUT 8.3
Safety Issues Module

Safety Beliefs Related to SELF: The belief that you can protect yourself from harm and have some control over events.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Negative	Positive
If you repeatedly experienced dangerous and uncontrollable life situations, you may have developed negative beliefs about your ability to protect yourself from harm. A new traumatic event may seem to confirm those beliefs.	If you have had positive prior experiences, you may develop the belief that you have control over most events and can protect yourself from harm. The traumatic event may have shattered this belief.
Symptoms Associated with Negative Safety Beliefs about the Self	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic and persistent anxiety • Intrusive thoughts about themes of danger • Irritability • Startled responses or physical arousal • Intense fears related to future victimization 	
Examples of Possible Stuck Points	
<p>“I can’t protect myself from danger.”</p> <p>“If I go out, I will be hurt.”</p> <p>“When I feel fear, that means I am in danger.”</p>	

POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS

If you previously believed that . . .	A possible alternative thought may be . . .
“It can’t happen to me,” then you will need to resolve the conflict between this belief and the traumatic event.	“It is unlikely to happen again, but the possibility exists. Even if it does, I have more skills I can use to manage my reactions.”
“I can protect myself from any harm,” then you will need to resolve the conflict between your prior beliefs and the traumatic event.	“I do not have control over everything that happens to me, but I can take precautions to reduce the risk of future traumatic events.”
“I cannot protect myself,” then the new traumatic event will seem to confirm these beliefs. New beliefs must be developed that are more balanced regarding your ability to keep yourself safe.	“I do have some ability to keep myself safe, and I can take steps to protect myself from harm.”

(continued)

Safety Beliefs Related to OTHERS: Beliefs about the dangerousness of other people and expectancies about the intent of others to cause harm, injury, or loss.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Negative	Positive
If you experienced people as dangerous in early life, or if you believed violence to be a normal way of relating, the new traumatic event will seem to confirm these beliefs.	If you experienced people as safe in early life, you may expect others to keep you safe and not cause harm, injury, or loss. The traumatic event may have caused a disruption in this belief.
Symptoms Associated with Negative Safety Beliefs about Others	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidant or phobic responses • Social withdrawal 	
Examples of Possible Stuck Points	
<p>“The world is very dangerous everywhere.”</p> <p>“People will always try to harm me.”</p> <p>“There is nowhere safe to be.”</p>	

POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS

If you previously believed that . . .	Possible alternative thoughts may be . . .
“Others are out to harm me and most people will hurt me if they can,” then you will need to modify this belief, or it will be impossible to have trusting, happy relationships with others.	“There are some people out there who are dangerous, but not everyone is out to harm me in some way.”
“I will never be hurt by others,” then you will need to resolve the conflict between this belief and the victimization.	“There may be some people who will try to harm me, but not everyone I meet will hurt me. I can take precautions to reduce the likelihood that others can hurt me.”