

## **Session 2: Examining the Impact of Trauma**

### **Practice Assignment:**

Please complete the A-B-C Worksheets (Handout 6.3) to become aware of the connection among events, your thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Complete at least one worksheet each day. Remember to fill out the form as soon after an event as possible and if you identify any new stuck points add them to your log (Handout 6.1). Complete at least one worksheet about the traumatic event that is causing you the most PTSD symptoms. Also, please use the Identifying Emotions Handout (Handout 6.2) to help you determine what emotions you are feeling.

### **Session 2 Handouts:**

6.1: Stuck Point Log

6.2: Identifying Emotions

6.3: A-B-C Worksheet (six copies included)

6.3 (A-C): Examples of completed A-B-C Worksheets

6.4: Stuck Point Help Sheet

**HANDOUT 6.1**  
**Stuck Point Log**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

We will be using this Stuck Point Log throughout therapy, and you will always leave it in the front of your therapy binder or workbook. You will add to this log as you recognize Stuck Points after writing your Impact Statement. Throughout therapy, we will add to it or cross off thoughts that you no longer believe.

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## HANDOUT 6.4

# Stuck Point Help Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

### What is a Stuck Point?

Stuck Points are thoughts that you have that keep you stuck from recovering.

- These thoughts may not be 100% accurate.
- Stuck Points may be:
  - Thoughts about your understanding of why the traumatic event happened.
  - Thoughts about yourself, others, and the world that have changed dramatically as a result of the traumatic event.
- Stuck Points are concise statements (but they must be longer than one word—for example, “trust” is not a Stuck Point).
- Stuck Points can often be formatted in an “if–then” structure. Here is an example: “If I let others get close, then I will get hurt.”
- Stuck Points often use extreme language, such as “never,” “always,” or “everyone.”

### What is *not* a Stuck Point?

- **Behaviors.** For example, “I fight with my daughter all the time” is not a Stuck Point, because it is describing a behavior. Instead, consider what thoughts you have when you are fighting with your daughter.
- **Feelings.** For example, “I am nervous whenever I go on a date” is not a Stuck Point, because it is describing an emotion and a fact. Instead, consider what you are telling yourself that is making you feel nervous.
- **Facts.** For example, “I witnessed people die” is not a Stuck Point, because this is something that actually happened. Instead, consider what thoughts you had as this happened and what you think about it now.
- **Questions.** For example, “What will happen to me?” is not a Stuck Point, because it is a question. Instead, consider what answer to your question is at the back of your mind, such as “I will not have a future.”
- **Moral statements.** For example, “The criminal justice system should always work” is not a Stuck Point, because it reflects an ideal standard of behavior. Instead, consider how this statement pertains to you specifically, such as “The justice system failed me,” or “I can’t trust the government.”

### Examples of Stuck Points

1. If I had done my job better, then other people would have survived.
2. Because I did not tell anyone, I am to blame for the abuse.

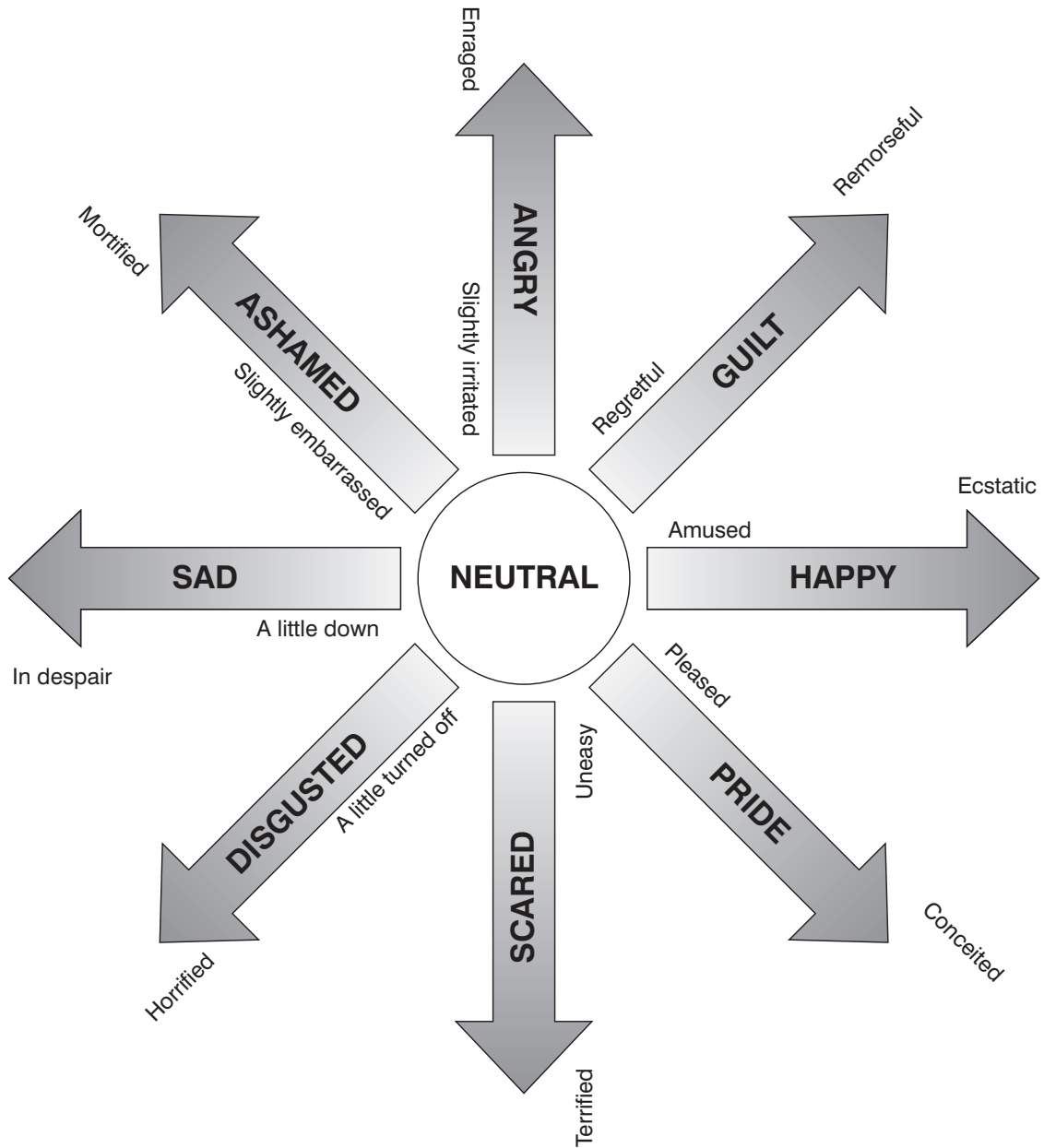
(continued)

**HANDOUT 6.4** (p. 2 of 2)

3. Because I did not fight against my attacker, the abuse is my fault.
4. I should have known he would hurt me.
5. It is my fault the accident happened.
6. If I had been paying attention, no one would have died.
7. If I hadn't been drinking, it would not have happened.
8. I don't deserve to live when other people lost their lives.
9. If I let other people get close to me, I'll get hurt again.
10. Expressing any emotion means I will lose control of myself.
11. I must be on guard at all times.
12. I should be able to protect others.
13. I must control everything that happens to me.
14. Mistakes are intolerable and cause serious harm or death.
15. No civilians can understand me.
16. If I let myself think about what has happened, I will never get it out of my mind.
17. I must respond to all threats with force.
18. I can never really be a good, moral person again because of the things that I have done.
19. Other people should not be trusted.
20. Other people should not trust me.
21. If I have a happy life, I will be dishonoring my friends.
22. I have no control over my future.
23. The government cannot be trusted.
24. People in authority always abuse their power.
25. I am damaged forever because of the rape.
26. I am unlovable because of [the trauma].
27. I am worthless because I couldn't control what happened.
28. I deserve to have bad things happen to me.
29. I am dirty.
30. I deserved to have been abused.
31. Only people who were there can understand.

**HANDOUT 6.2**  
**Identifying Emotions Handout**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_



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**HANDOUT 6.3**  
**ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
*“Something happens”*

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
*“I tell myself something”*

**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

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What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

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**HANDOUT 6.3**  
**ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
*“Something happens”*

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
*“I tell myself something”*

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**ABC Worksheet**

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**Activating Event**  
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**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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**ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
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**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

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\_\_\_\_\_

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What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**HANDOUT 6.3**  
**ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
*“Something happens”*

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
*“I tell myself something”*

**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

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What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

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**HANDOUT 6.3**  
**ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
*“Something happens”*

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
*“I tell myself something”*

**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**HANDOUT 6.3A**  
**Sample ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Activating Event</b> <b>A</b> <i>“Something happens”</i>	<b>Belief/Stuck Point</b> <b>B</b> <i>“I tell myself something”</i>	<b>Consequence</b> <b>C</b> <i>“I feel something”</i>
<i>Shooting a Vietnamese woman while in combat</i>	<i>“I am a bad person because I killed a helpless civilian.”</i>	<i>Guilt and anger at myself</i>

Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? *No. One mistake does not make me a bad person. People make mistakes, and high-stress situations, like combat zones, increase the probability of such mistakes.*

What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? *“I may have made mistakes in my life, but that does not make me a bad person. I may have done things that I regret, but I have also done good things in my life.”*

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**HANDOUT 6.3B**  
**Sample ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
*“Something happens”*

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
*“I tell myself something”*

**Consequence**  
**C**  
*“I feel something”*

<i>My uncle raped me</i>	<i>“I let it happen and didn’t tell anyone.”</i>	<i>Guilt and shame</i>
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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**HANDOUT 6.3C**  
**Sample ABC Worksheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Client: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activating Event**  
**A**  
"Something happens"

**Belief/Stuck Point**  
**B**  
"I tell myself something"

**Consequence**  
**C**  
"I feel something"

<i>I build a porch and the railing comes loose.</i>	<i>"I can never do anything right."</i>	<i>Anger at myself and sadness</i>
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Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? *No. It wouldn't hold up in a court of law, because I do some things right.*

What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? *"There are some things that I do all right. It is not true that I 'never do anything right.'"*

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