

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

A Christmas Story and Quiz

The Answers

1. Reasons to use thought logs (or Dysfunctional Thought Records):
 - a. To help the client learn how to distinguish between thoughts and feelings.
 - b. To draw the client's attention towards their thoughts and feelings.
 - c. To reinforce the link between thoughts and feelings.
 - d. To have accurate real-life examples of incidents when negative automatic thoughts have been activated.
 - e. To provide the basis for helping the client engage in effective thought-challenging.

2. DBT = Dialectical behavior therapy

RET = Rational emotive therapy

ABV = Alcohol by volume [The Turkey!]

PCT = Personal construct therapy (use of repertory grids)

ACT = Acceptance and commitment therapy (part of the "third wave" of CBT)

3. The Negative Cognitive Triad is the constellation of *negative view of the self, the world and the future* that is often found in people with depression.

4. George Kelly

5. Think "DAMP DOG MESs" to remember the main thinking errors:
 - a. Dichotomous thinking ("black and white")
 - b. Arbitrary reasoning ("jumping to conclusions")
 - c. Moral imperatives ("shoulds, musts and oughts")
 - d. Personalisation
 - e. Discounting the positive ("reverse alchemy" – turning gold into lead)
 - f. Over-generalisation ("a single swallow does not make a summer")
 - g. Global judgements ("labelling and awfulising" and the use of absolutes)
 - h. Minimising the positive, maximising the negative
 - i. Emotional reasoning
 - j. Selective abstraction
 - k. s – spare!

6. Golden questions to help with effective thought-challenging:
 - a. What is the evidence to show this thought is true?
 - b. Is there any evidence to show that this thought is not true?
 - c. What would be so bad if the thought really is true? How could I cope with this?
 - d. What are the consequences (emotional and behavioural) for me if I believe this thought is true?
 - e. Is this true every time and /or in every situation?

7. Some negative automatic thoughts that might have troubled Joseph:
 - a. "I'm so stupid"
 - b. "I should have booked a room/got here earlier"
 - c. "It's not fair"
 - d. "It's ruined the whole holiday!"
 - e. "Everything goes wrong for me"
 - f. "The birth will be a disaster now"

8. The use of agenda setting. It ensures that client and therapist both have time to talk about what is important to them; it provides continuity with the previous and subsequent sessions; and it reinforces the collaborative and structured nature of CBT.

9. Common themes in OCD:
 - a. An exaggerated sense of personal responsibility
 - b. Fear of catastrophic consequences if the thought is not neutralised (either covertly by elaborate thinking rituals or overtly through behaviour – e.g., checking, repeating, ordering and aligning)
 - c. Thought-action fusion (the thought is as real as the action and there is difficulty in separating the two)
 - d. The world is dangerous, unpredictable and uncontrollable, but everything will be fine if I can have complete control over this small part (e.g., the labels on my tinned food are all facing forward and the clothes in my wardrobe are in the correct colour order)

Interventions – Exposure and Response Prevention

10. Leaving aside the sudden appearance of the angel, the intervention "Be not afraid" is not good CBT. It is far too directive, it is making an assumption about their emotional state, and it provides no rational basis on which they can start to challenge their unhelpful thoughts. It is the equivalent of telling someone who is depressed to "cheer up".

If the angel had been CBT- trained, they would have said something along the lines of:

“How do feel right now? What is going through your mind?” This would start to build a bit of rapport and also provide some useful information about their thoughts and feelings. The angel would then provide some factual information to help the shepherds re-evaluate their initial appraisal of the situation.

I would imagine that nervous shepherds would normally be troubled by thoughts of wolves taking their sheep, of sheep getting lost, about keeping warm at night, and red skies in the morning (“shepherd’s warning”).

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