

# Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Voices and Worries

## *Veteran's Workbook*

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**VA**  
HEALTH  
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Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

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## EMERGENCY OPTIONS

Ways to get help if you're in a mental health emergency:

- Call the Veterans Crisis Line or go to [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net):



- Go to your nearest VA
- Go to any hospital's Emergency Department
- Call 911

Please make every effort to attend each session of therapy. If you cannot make it to a session, please let your therapist know beforehand.

Your Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Session 1 – Introduction to CBT

## Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Structure of sessions
3. How was it coming here today?
4. What is CBT?
5. What will we do in these sessions?
6. What are voices and worries?
7. What are my goals for therapy?
8. Take-Home Points (summary)
9. Action plan (at home practice)

### 1. Introductions

- What is one thing you like about yourself or that other people like about you?

### 2. Structure of therapy sessions

- We will meet regularly for approximately 15 sessions
- Each session will have the same structure:
  - a) Check-in on how you've been since the last session
  - b) Review last session and at-home practice ("Action Plan")
  - c) Discuss new topic
  - d) Decide on a new Action Plan
  - e) Review today's session

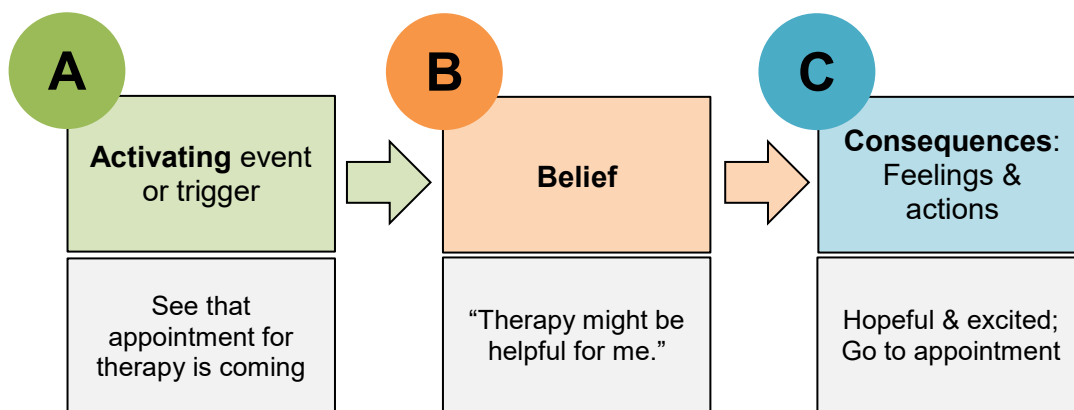
### 3. How was it coming here today?

- How did you feel about coming in today?
- Sometimes...
  - People feel anxious about coming to therapy.
  - If they hear voices, the voices may tell them not to come in, or may get louder during the session. The voices may also become quiet or even go away.

- They may be unsure if therapy will work for them.
- They may have hope that therapy can help them.
- Did you experience these things today?
- Do you want to share any other experiences of coming today?
- Good job for coming in today!

#### 4. What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)?

- CBT is a type of talk therapy that helps people to feel better and achieve their recovery goals by teaching them how to adjust their thinking (cognitive part) and their actions (behavioral part).
- It's based on the idea that how we **think** about things affects how we **feel** and what we **do**. This is the **ABC** system:
  - **A**ctivating event: Something happens
  - **B**elief: How we think about it or make sense of the thing that happened
  - **C**onsequence: How we feel and act because of our belief
- CBT has been shown to help with depression, anxiety, voices, worries/suspicion, and many other problems.
- Research shows that CBT can help by:
  - Teaching people skills to reduce worries, including suspicious thoughts
  - Teaching people skills to cope with and reduce voices
  - Teaching people skills to live a quality life despite having worries or hearing voices
- What were some thoughts and feelings you had about coming in today?



## 5. What will we do in our sessions?

- Here's what we're planning for our sessions:
  - Learn about voices and worries. What are they? How do they affect people? How can you cope with them?
  - Figure out how this therapy can help you achieve your recovery goals.
  - Learn and **practice** new skills for managing voices and worries during sessions and at home.
  - Plan for continuing to use what you learned in therapy.
- At-home **practice** (the Action Plan) is very important!
  - Helps you to learn new skills.
  - Prepares you for using these new skills after therapy is over.
  - Compared to people who don't practice at home, people who do practice improve *more* in this kind of therapy and improve *faster*.

## 6. Voices and worries

- Voices and worries are two common problems that cause stress and make it hard to live the life we want.
- What are **voices**?
  - Hearing words, sentences, or commands that other people don't seem to be able to hear.
  - Sometimes what voices say is harmless. Other times they can say critical things or insults, or they may command people to do things they don't want to do (e.g., hurt themselves).
- Some people don't like the word "voices." What do you like to call them?  
Examples of other peoples' answers:
  - Noises
  - Associates
  - Spirits
  - Headaches
  - Loved ones
  - Voice-thoughts
  - ?
- What are **worries**?
  - Being concerned that something bad has happened or could happen.

- There are many kinds of worries. A common one is **suspicion**, which other people have described as:
  - “Thinking and acting like people are out to get you or harm you when they might not be.”
  - “False fear”
- What are some of your own worries?

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## 7. What is my intention for therapy?

- What would you like to get out of therapy? Here are some examples of past Veterans’ intentions:
  - “To live a good life despite voices and worries.”
  - “To feel in control of my own life.”
  - “To have more control over my voices.”
  - “To learn how to tell when a threat is real, and when I am being too suspicious.”
  - “To have suspicious thoughts less often.”
  - “To be less bothered by the voices.”
  - “Even when I have a worry, I’d like to be less threatened by it and to be able to continue my activities.”

***My Intention for Therapy***



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ It is very important to **practice** the new skills you learn in our sessions at home.
- ✓ **Voices** are hearing words, sentences, or commands that other people don't seem to be able to hear.
- ✓ There are many kinds of **worries**. One example is **suspicion**, which is thinking and acting like people are out to get you or harm you when they might not be.
- ✓ This class is based on CBT, an effective type of therapy that looks at how our thoughts can affect our feelings and actions.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- If your therapist gave you any questionnaires, please complete them.
- If you didn't already do it, write down what your goals are for therapy in the box on the previous page.
- Anything else?



## Session 2 – A Closer Look at Voices and Worries

### Agenda

1. Continue to get to know each other
2. Review what voices and worries are and what we will do in therapy
3. Review Action Plan
4. How do voices and worries affect my life?
5. What do voices and worries look like for me?
6. What will I learn to reduce my voices and worries?
7. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Getting to know each other

- What is one activity you like to do?

### 2. Review

- What are voices and worries
- What is CBT and what will we do in our sessions

### 3. Review of Action Plan

- What are your goals for therapy?

### 4. How do voices and worries affect my life?

- Are there any positive consequences of voices and worries—e.g., do they help you with anything or make you feel good?
- Common negative consequences of voices and worries:
  - They can interfere with our goals
    - *Examples: Cause problems with work, housing, relationships*
  - They can affect us psychologically
    - *Examples: Make us feel depressed, anxious, angry, scared, suicidal, down on ourselves*

- They can affect our day-to-day activities
  - Examples: *Make it hard to concentrate; don't want to leave home; don't want to share in group*



**EXERCISE: A picture's worth a thousand words**






What comes to mind when you think about your voices or worries?  
On the next page, draw what they "look like" to you. If you can't think of pictures, write words that describe them or how they make you feel.  
Use your imagination!

**Draw what your voices and/or worries “look like” to you.**

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

## 5. What will I learn to manage my voices and worries?

- There are 5 main types of strategies we will learn to help cope with and reduce voices and worries:

5 Ways to Manage Voices and Worries	
	<p><b>Working on recovery goals</b></p> <p>It can be tough to keep working toward life goals when voices or worries come up. But with the right tools and support, working toward goals can be a powerful way to reduce these problems because you shift your attention and energy to something more positive and productive and become more empowered.</p>
	<p><b>Relaxation and stress reduction</b></p> <p>Voices and worries can be stressful, and stress can make them worse. So, learning stress reduction/relaxation strategies can not only reduce the <b>stress</b> that voices and worries cause but can even reduce the voices and worries.</p>
	<p><b>Social activities and support</b></p> <p>Voices and worries can make it hard to want to be around people, but socializing and having people to talk to can be a big help in making life with voices and worries happier and more meaningful.</p>
	<p><b>Refocusing</b></p> <p>When voices and worries come up, it can be hard to stop thinking about them, which in turn can make them worse. Learning simple techniques to refocus and distract your mind can therefore take power away from the voices and worries, causing them to reduce so you feel better.</p>
	<p><b>Changing thinking</b></p> <p>How we <b>think</b> about voices or worries has a lot to do with how much they bother us. We will spend a lot of time in this class learning how to adjust our thinking so that it is more balanced, accurate, and helpful. This is a very powerful way to not only cope better with voices and worries, but to reduce them too.</p>



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ Voices and worries can affect peoples' lives both positively and negatively.
- ✓ We will be learning 5 types of strategies for managing voices and worries in this therapy.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- Write down **3 ways your life might be better** if you learned ways to reduce voices/worries:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- Write down **3 things that might make it hard** to reduce your voices/worries:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- Anything else?

## Session 3 – Managing Voices and Worries

### Agenda

1. Review of what we've learned so far
2. What causes voices and worries and what protects us from them
3. Famous people who have experiences voices or worries
4. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- Voices and worries:
  - What they are
  - Why we should talk about them
  - How they affect my life
- 5 strategies we will learn to reduce voices and worries

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- 3 ways your life might be better if you learned ways to reduce voices/worries
- 3 things that might make it hard to reduce your voices/worries

### 3. What causes or worsens upsetting voices and worries (also known as *triggers*)?

- Examples of past Veterans' answers:
  - High stress
  - Using marijuana, meth, cocaine, or other drugs
  - Traumatic experiences (like abuse)
  - Certain psychological conditions and problems with brain functioning
  - Not taking the right medications or taking them improperly
  - Inaccurate or unhelpful, negative thinking
- What else could trigger voices and worries, in your experience?

- **Heredity** plays a role in who has voices and worries; these experiences tend to run in the family.
- **Stressful experiences** in our lives can make us more vulnerable to developing voices or worries:
  - Stressful living situation
  - Separation, loss, grief
  - Rejection and failure experiences
  - Trauma, abuse
- Even people who don't have a mental health diagnosis can experience voices and worries:
  - Studies suggest that up to about **19%** of these people experienced suspicion in the past year<sup>1</sup> and about **13%** have heard voices<sup>2</sup> at some point.
  - People without a mental health diagnosis can experience voices and worries in a number of situations, such as:
    - Sensory deprivation, long-term isolation
    - Illicit drug use
    - Not sleeping (sleep deprivation)
    - Conflict situations such as war zones
    - Brain injury or neurological conditions
    - Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
    - Sexual abuse
    - Solitary confinement in prison

#### **4. How can upsetting voices and worries be managed?**

- Working on positive things that bring us joy, meaning, and a sense of purpose (goals)
- Staying active and having a routine
- Socializing; connecting with positive, supportive people
- Managing stress
- Exercising and living healthy (including avoiding drugs and alcohol)
- Finding the meaning inside voices and worries and dealing with that

- Being kind and compassionate with ourselves
- Keeping our thinking healthy (accurate and balanced, not overly negative)
- Taking the right medications at the right dosages

## 5. Famous people who have experienced voices or worries

### Anthony Hopkins



Welsh actor of film, stage, and television.

Has won numerous awards for his acting, including two Oscars and two Emmys.

"I've always had a little voice in my head pulling me down, particularly when I was younger and less grounded...My school days were not always happy and I wanted to get away from Wales and be someone else. I was stupid at school, I just didn't know what was going on. I thought I was on Mars, I didn't know what they were talking about. While onstage, during classical theatre the voice would suddenly say, 'Oh, you think you can do Shakespeare, do you?' Recently, I was being interviewed on television and the voice inside my head said to me, 'Who the hell do you think you are. You're just an actor, what the hell do you know about anything?'"



## John Forbes Nash



**American Princeton mathematician and Nobel prize winner. His ideas have influenced many areas, including: economics, computing, biology, artificial intelligence, accounting, and politics.**

**He was diagnosed with schizophrenia and was later the subject of the 2001 movie, *A Beautiful Mind*.**

Nash's illness compelled him to do many things. He believed that aliens were trying to contact him through the *New York Times*, he travelled around Europe trying to achieve refugee status and renounce his US citizenship. When he later returned to Princeton, he became known as "the Phantom," a figure seen scribbling away on blackboards late into the night. It led to him being sidelined by the academic community and to divorce from [his wife] Alicia in 1963. **Yet, he gradually learned to ignore the voices.** He eventually remarried Alicia in 2001.

"I began to tire of certain types of irrational thinking. I was doing things at the time, studying or doing some calculations. So it may be that the delusional thinking began to come unsatisfying. I think people become mentally ill when they're somehow not too happy—not just after you've won the lottery you go crazy. It's when you don't win the lottery."

## Dr. Elyn Saks



**Associate Dean and Professor at the University of Southern California Gould Law School, and an expert in mental health law.**

**Elyn lives with schizophrenia and has written about her experience with the illness in her award-winning best-selling autobiography, *The Center Cannot Hold*.**

Elyn first experienced symptoms of mental illness at 8 years old, and had severe episodes when she attended Oxford University and Yale Law School. She has described periods of losing touch with reality when going off her medication, secluding herself in her home for long periods of time, unable to eat or sleep, sometimes hearing voices and seeing people (“a man standing over me with a knife”), and suffering from paranoia and sheer terror. Eventually, Elyn found the proper medication and therapy. She now dedicates her career to advocate for people with severe mental illnesses.

“One question that I get a lot is how did I manage to do well given such a grave prognosis. I want to list the things in the hope that other people can take advantage. One is excellent treatment, both pharmacological and intensive psychotherapy...Second, I have wonderfully supportive friends and family. That gives my life a sense of depth. And I also have a great work environment that is intellectually stimulating and accommodating. When I’m writing an argument or counter-argument, the psychotic thoughts recede to the sideline. I’ve come to think that my mind is my best friend and my worst enemy. It gives me abilities and motivations and pleasure from using those abilities.”

## Dr. Eleanor Longden



**British psychologist, researcher, and mental health advocate**

Eleanor spent years in psychiatric treatment before earning her degrees in psychology. She draws from her own experiences of recovery from psychosis to advocate for more creative approaches to helping people with mental health problems recover, that emphasize their needs and lived experiences. She has published and lectured internationally about voice hearing and trauma. A 2013 [TED talk](#) she gave about voice hearing was named by the Guardian newspaper as one of the “20 Online Talks That Could Change Your Life.” In its first year online, it was viewed 2.5million times and translated into 33 languages. Eleanor serves on organizations that aim to advocate for and help people with mental health difficulties.

“A major turning point was encountering individuals from the Hearing Voices Network, who were willing to acknowledge and understand the experiences of trauma and abuse I'd endured as a child and young adult, and how these horrors from the past were still being enacted in the present. It was a long, torturous journey, but once I started to interpret my terror and despair in terms of what I'd survived, I could begin to recover: that my so-called symptoms of schizophrenia weren't random products of a chemical imbalance, rather meaningful messages from my mind about the unbearable things I'd gone through.

“A favourite mantra of mine is 'the best revenge is to live well' and that's what I ultimately aim for - living well. For me, an important aspect of recovery has been to move beyond surviving my past and instead try to create a peaceful, positive, and rewarding future. Family and friends are a huge part of this, but my professional work is also very valuable to me.”

## Lionel Aldridge



Football player

A defensive end for Vince Lombardi's legendary Green Bay Packers of the 1960's, Aldridge helped lead the Packers to victory in two Super Bowls. He played for the Chargers between 1972-1973. In the late 1970's, he started having symptoms of schizophrenia and was homeless for two and a half years. Until his death in 1998, he gave inspirational talks on his battle against paranoid schizophrenia. His story is the story of numerous newspaper articles.

"I could be mad at somebody because I got sick. It was society that allowed me to become a bum and pull cigarette butts off the streets and out of ashtrays. And I could be angry at God for giving me this disease. But I've made a decision not to be bitter. I have done it for one reason. I didn't get well until I quit blaming God and society—and took the responsibility for myself."

"Here I am, a black man, (lecturing) white college students, but I feel very deeply about this. You—all of you—are responsible for you. Nobody is going to ride up and rescue you...I know...I've made it back because I learned to lean on myself—and because I learned to like myself."

"Whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...think on these things."  
"Think on the beautiful," he said, "not the untrue."

Photo of Lionel Aldridge reprinted with permission from Rod Luhn,  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/grogley/2613284700>



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ There are common causes for voices or worries. It's important to discover what my triggers are and what helps to protect me from upsetting voices and worries.
- ✓ Anyone can hear voices or feel worries under the right circumstances.
- ✓ Many people without a mental diagnosis and famous people have experienced voices and worries.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- Write down 3 triggers and helpers of your voices/worries in the coming week:

**Triggers:** Things that caused my voices/worries to increase:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Helpers:** Things that helped reduce my voices/worries or the negative effect they had on my life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- Anything else?

## Session 4 – The Healing Power of Goals

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Setting goals
4. My recovery goals
5. My goals for this class
6. Take-Home Points and Action Plan



### 1. Review

- There are common triggers and helpers for voices and worries
- Many people have experienced voices and worries

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- What were your 3 personal triggers and 3 helpers of voices and worries in the past week?

### 3. Setting goals

- Why set goals and work toward them?
  - Puts you in charge of your own recovery
  - Helps you to focus on what's important
  - Allows you to measure your progress
  - Maintains hope
  - Achievement, no matter how small, is great!

**Working toward goals that are important to you can help reduce voices and worries because the more time and energy you devote to the goals, the less you will have for the voices and worries. Also, the sense of achievement and happiness that comes from working toward goals neutralizes the negative effect of voices and worries!**

- The best goals are **SMART**:
  - **Specific**: Clear and specific instead of vague.
  - **Measurable**: So that you know exactly when the goal is achieved.
  - **Attainable**: The goal is something you can actually do.
  - **Relevant**: The goal really matters to you at this point in your life.
  - **Time-bound**: Set a date for by which you'd like to achieve the goal.



### Exercise: Design a Recovery Plan

A Recovery Plan is a way to write down and break down our goals so that it's easier to accomplish them. To help you design your Recovery Plan, ask yourself: What is important to you and what do you value? If voices and worries went away tomorrow, what would your life look like?

My Recovery Plan		
<b>Long-Term Goal:</b> <i>Think about an exciting big picture goal you have.</i>		
Now break that goal down into up to 1-2 <b>SMART short-term goals and small steps</b> that you can take every day or every week toward those short-term goals.		
<b><u>Short-Term Goal 1:</u></b>		<b><u>Target dates</u></b>
Step a:		
Step b:		
Step c:		
<b><u>Short-Term Goal 2:</u></b>		<b><u>Target dates</u></b>
Step a:		
Step b:		
Step c:		



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ Setting recovery goals is important for several reasons.
- ✓ The best goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
- ✓ Your goals for this class should connect to your larger recovery life goals.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- Name 1 small step you will take this week toward your goals and do it.

**In the next week I wil:**

- Anything else?



## Session 5 – Stress Reduction and Relaxation

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Relationship between stress and voices/worries
4. Stress reduction/relaxation techniques
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan



### 1. Review

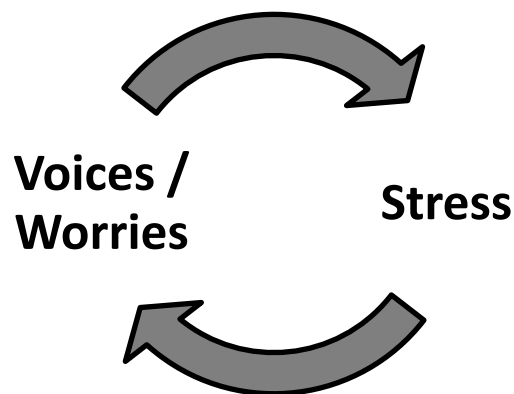
- Setting and working toward recovery goals is very important and can help reduce voices and worries.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Taking 1 small step toward a recovery goal. How did it go? What happened to the voices/worries?

### 3. Relationship between stress and voices and worries

- Voices and worries can cause stress, *and...*
- People are more likely to hear voices or feel worried when they are stressed.
- This can create a vicious cycle!
- So, reducing stress and learning to relax can make it easier to cope with voices/worries AND make them decrease. Stress reduction can break the cycle.



#### 4. How do you relax?

- What relaxation/stress reduction techniques work for you?

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#### 5. Some other stress reduction techniques to try

- Below are a few stress reduction techniques that our Veterans have found helpful for dealing with the stress that often comes with voices and worries.
- Like any new skill, these will take time to learn. Practice them 3 times/day between sessions, starting with non-stressful situations. Then when you get the hang of them, you can also use them during stressful situations, like when you're experiencing voices or worries.

##### **Soothing Rhythm Breathing**

- When we are stressed, our breathing tends to get too shallow and quick and our nervous system goes into threat mode. By intentionally slowing down and deepening our breathing, we can feel less stressed and calmer.
- Soothing Rhythm Breathing is a simple way of doing this. It helps to switch us from threat mode to soothing mode.
- By reducing stress, Soothing Rhythm Breathing can calm voices and worries and help us to think more clearly.

##### **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

- When we are stressed, we often hold our tension in our body, without even realizing it.
- PMR is an effective technique for stress reduction that works by tightening and relaxing different muscles of the body.
- The idea is that when you tense and then relax your muscles, the physical relaxation leads to mental calmness.

- PMR is especially good if you have muscle tension or insomnia; doing it before bed can help you to fall asleep. It can also distract you from voices and worries.

### Loving Kindness Meditation

- Loving Kindness Meditation is a type of meditation designed to increase positive feelings by strengthening feelings of kindness and connection toward others and ourselves.
- It can help to counteract the negative feelings that often come with voices and worries. It has been shown to help with recovery.

### Self-Compassion Break

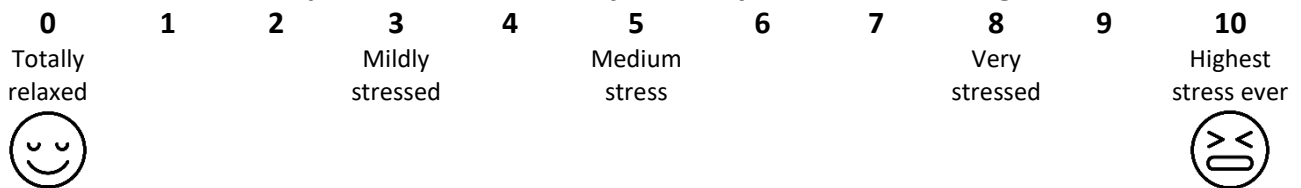
- Self-compassion means being kind and understanding toward ourselves when we are suffering.
- The Self-Compassion Break is a brief exercise designed to tap into self-compassion when you are hurting, like when voices are upsetting you or you're feeling afraid, anxious, or self-critical.
- Self-compassion has been shown to have a lot of benefits for mental health, including for people with voices and worries.



### Exercise: Practice Stress Reduction Techniques

Choose 1 or 2 that you'd like for us to practice together today.

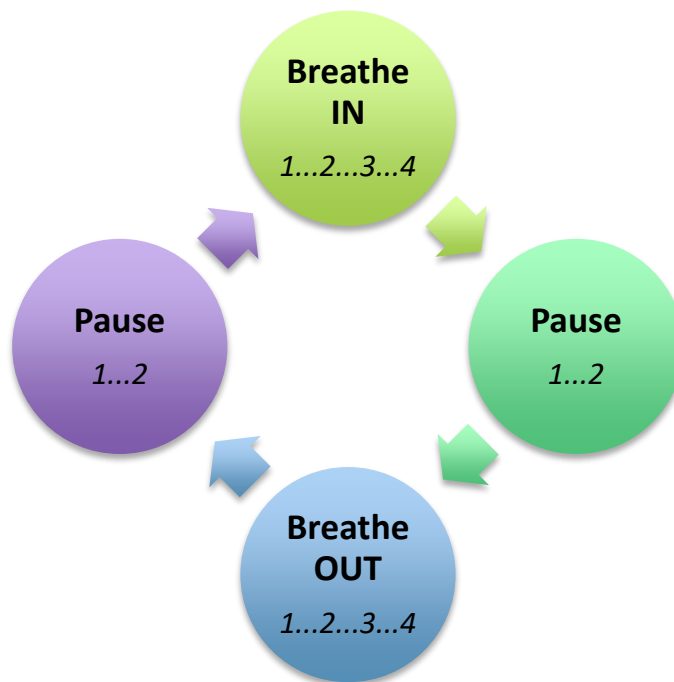
Before we practice, how would you rate your stress level right now?



## Soothing Rhythm Breathing

Making our breathing slower and deeper is a simple technique for reducing stress, making us feel safer and better able to deal with voices and worries.

1. **Put your hand on your stomach.**
2. **BREATHE IN slowly and deeply while counting to 4.**  
*You should feel your stomach pop out.*
3. **Pause for a count of 2.**
4. **BREATHE OUT slowly and deeply while counting to 4.**  
*You should feel your stomach go down.*
5. **Repeat this cycle 4 more times, or about 1 minute.**



## Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

A technique for reducing stress and increasing relaxation that by tensing and releasing muscles in the body.

1. **Get comfortable and take 3 deep breaths. Tune out all thoughts.**

**Tense each muscle group for 10 seconds and the release for 15-20 seconds:**

2. **Fists** (clench them)
3. **Biceps** (flex arms)
4. **Triceps** (extend arms in front of you)
5. **Forehead** (raise eyebrows)
6. **Eyes** (clench them shut)
7. **Jaw** (open mouth)
8. **Neck** (gently pull it back)
9. **Shoulders** (shrug)
10. **Shoulder blades** (pull shoulders back)
11. **Chest** (puff it out)
12. **Stomach** (suck it in)
13. **Lower back** (arch it back)
14. **Buttocks** (pull them together)
15. **Thighs** (tighten as though you're about to get out of the chair)
16. **Calves** (pull toes toward you)
17. **Feet** (curl toes downward)
18. **Mentally scan** your body and **repeat any muscles** that are still tense.



## Loving Kindness Meditation

A technique for increasing positive emotions, which can counteract the negative emotions that can be caused by voices and worries.

1. Think of someone who makes you happy (relative, friend, pet).
2. Notice how they make you feel.
3. Wish them well. Say:

*“May you be safe and protected from danger. May you be happy and peaceful. May you be healthy and strong. May you have ease and wellbeing.”*



4. Concentrate on how you feel.
5. Imagine that they send you the same wishes. Imagine them telling you:

*“May you be happy. May you be peaceful and at ease. May you be safe and protected from all danger. May you have joy and wellbeing.”*

6. Concentrate on how you feel.
7. Send loving kindness to yourself. Tell yourself:

*“May I be safe and protected from danger. May I be healthy and strong. May I be happy and peaceful. May I accept myself just as I am. May I have [say anything you need to be happy here; e.g., friends, work, etc.]”*

8. Concentrate on how you feel.
9. Imagine someone you’d like to send loving kindness to. Tell them:

*“May you be happy and peaceful. May you be free from all stress, anxiety, grief. May you have joy and wellbeing.”*

10. Imagine your loving kindness expanding and spreading out in all directions, touching everyone. Say:

*“May everyone everywhere be happy, peaceful, and at ease. May we all experience great joy.”*

## Self-Compassion Break

You can practice this exercise whenever you feel suffering in daily life. It is a way to comfort and care for yourself—to practice *self-compassion*, which includes: 1. Being mindful of your pain; 2. Realizing that we all suffer at times; 3. Being kind to yourself.

Think of a situation in your life that is difficult, that is causing you stress. Call the situation to mind, and see if you can actually feel the stress and emotional discomfort in your body.

Now, say to yourself:

### **1. This is a moment of suffering.**

That's mindfulness. Other options include:

- *This hurts.*
- *Ouch.*
- *This is stress.*



### **2. Suffering is a part of life.**

That's common humanity. Other options include:

- *Other people feel this way.*
- *I'm not alone.*
- *We all struggle in our lives.*

Now, put your hands over your heart, feel the warmth of your hands and the gentle touch of your hands on your chest. Or use the soothing touch that you feel is right for you.

### **3. May I be kind to myself.**

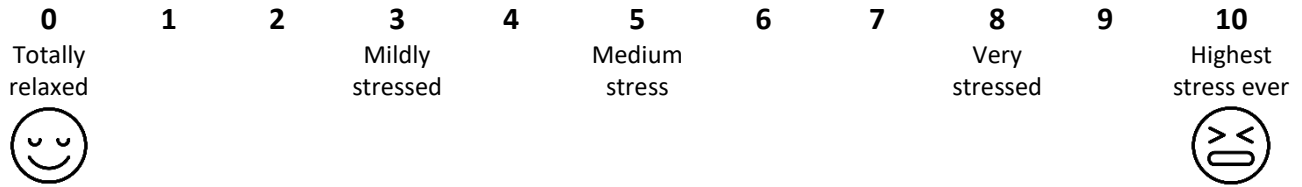
You can also ask yourself, "What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?" Is there a phrase that speaks to you in your particular situation, such as:

- *May I give myself the compassion that I need.*
- *May I learn to accept myself as I am.*
- *May I forgive myself.*
- *May I be strong.*
- *May I be patient.*

This practice can be used any time of day or night, and will help you remember to evoke the three aspects of self-compassion when you need it most.

From Dr. Kristin Neff, [www.self-compassion.org](http://www.self-compassion.org)

Now that we have practiced, how would you rate your stress level?



**6. Other stress reduction and relaxation techniques**

- The following techniques work for many people. Put a check mark next to the ones that work for you or that you'd like to try:

Stress Reduction and Relaxation Techniques		
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk	<input type="checkbox"/> Cook	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music
<input type="checkbox"/> Pray	<input type="checkbox"/> Meditate	<input type="checkbox"/> Read
<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Take a nap	<input type="checkbox"/> Stretch/do yoga
<input type="checkbox"/> Play with a pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Create art	<input type="checkbox"/> Use the computer
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch TV	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to church	<input type="checkbox"/> Play a game
<input type="checkbox"/> Shower/bathe	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean/do chores	<input type="checkbox"/> Be in nature
<input type="checkbox"/> Visualize a pleasant scene/daydream	<input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with loved one	<input type="checkbox"/> Go somewhere pleasant
<input type="checkbox"/> Deep Breathing	<input type="checkbox"/> Progressive Muscle Relaxation	<input type="checkbox"/> Window shopping
<input type="checkbox"/> Feel or squeeze something with your hand(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Smell something pleasant	<input type="checkbox"/> Use a stress reducing app*
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Go to <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/mental-health> for a list of free VA apps.





## Take-Home Points

- ✓ Voices and worries can cause stress and stress can trigger more voices and worries.
- ✓ Reducing stress and doing things to relax can help improve how I cope with voices and worries and can prevent them from happening in the first place.
- ✓ Deep Breathing and Progressive Muscle Relaxation are 2 of many effective stress reduction techniques.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Practice one of the above stress reduction techniques once per day.
- Practice other stress reduction/relaxation activities that I marked above. Keep track of both below and pay attention to whether voices or worries decrease.
- Anything else?

Day	What Stress Reduction Technique(s) Did You Try?	How Much Did the Voices/Worries Bother You?
Monday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Tuesday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Wednesday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Thursday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Friday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Saturday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Sunday		<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse

## Session 6 – Social Activities and Support

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Reducing voices and worries by socializing
4. Take-Home Points and Action Plan



### 1. Review

- Voices and worries can cause stress and be caused by it
- Stress reduction and relaxation techniques (like Soothing Rhythm Breathing and PMR) can help us cope with voices and worries and can help prevent them from happening in the first place.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Working toward goals.
- Daily stress reduction practice.

### 3. Reducing voices and worries by socializing



#### Exercise:

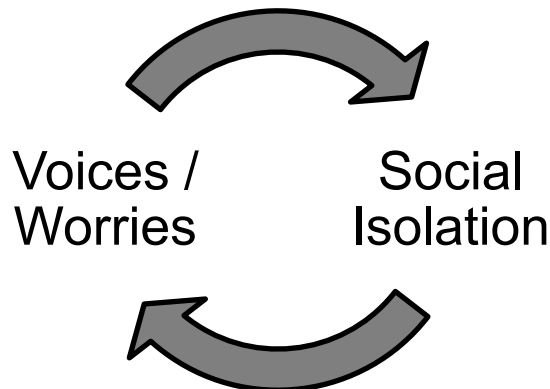
List the **PROS** and **CONS** of socializing (spending time with people, talking to people, seeking advice, helping others, etc.)

CONS of Socializing

PROS of Socializing

- There are a number of benefits of socializing with people, including:
  - ✓ Helps reduce depression and increase positive emotions
  - ✓ Helps you feel like you're not alone
  - ✓ Increases stimulation; more chances for having fun
  - ✓ Gives you a chance to check your upsetting thoughts with others, who might notice something you missed (a fresh perspective)
  - ✓ They may give you suggestions on new ways to cope or reach goals
  - ✓ Gives you a chance to help/support others, which feels good
  - ✓ Other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

- When people experience voices or worries, they often respond by isolating from other people, but this can end up making voices and worries worse in the long-run.



- But why?
  - ✓ Social isolation can increase negative emotions (depression, anxiety, hopelessness), which can make voices and worries worse.
  - ✓ Not socializing often results in having less things to do. Being less active can give us more time to listen to voices or think about worries, which can increase their negative impact.
  - ✓ When we don't socialize, we don't give ourselves the chance to get advice or suggestions on new ways of thinking about voices or worries, so we stick with our old ways, which may not be the most helpful.
  - ✓ What else? \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 4. Ideas for increasing socializing and social support

- It's helpful to have trustworthy people in your life that you can spend time with, as well as people you can turn to for support. These don't necessarily have to be the same people.
- Think of one or more people who you **can spend time with** (e.g.: chat, do fun things):

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 <h3 style="margin: 0;">Social Activities</h3> <p style="margin: 0;">Select the ones that you've found helpful or that you're willing to try.</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit/call friend/relative <input type="checkbox"/> Plan an outing <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter or email <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a party <input type="checkbox"/> Have coffee <input type="checkbox"/> Plan a get-together <input type="checkbox"/> Play with kids <input type="checkbox"/> Help someone with a problem <input type="checkbox"/> Teach someone <input type="checkbox"/> Join a clubhouse <input type="checkbox"/> Connect with people on Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/> Invite someone over <input type="checkbox"/> People watch <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk <input type="checkbox"/> Play game <input type="checkbox"/> Join a hobby group <input type="checkbox"/> Go to church <input type="checkbox"/> Go to lunch/dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Go dancing <input type="checkbox"/> Join an organization <input type="checkbox"/> Ask someone on a date <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a café, mall, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Compliment someone <input type="checkbox"/> Play sports <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help/advice	Other:

- Think of one or more people who you can **turn to for support** (e.g., talk to about problems, talk to about voices and worries, ask advice, call during emergencies):

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- Other sources of social support:
  - ✓ **NAMI Helpline:** Volunteer resource specialists provide information and support to callers and visitors, including consumers, family members and professionals. (800) 950-NAMI (6264), or [info@nami.org](mailto:info@nami.org).
  - ✓ **Recovery International** is a mental health self-help organization that provides self-help training for mental health and wellness available to anyone, anywhere, anytime. They offer meetings across the country in person, by phone, and online. Go to <https://recoveryinternational.org/> or call (866) 221-0302.
  - ✓ **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s National Helpline:** A confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information. Call (800) 662-HELP (4357) or go to [www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline).
  - ✓ The **Hearing Voices Network:** "A partnership between individuals who hear voices or have other extreme or unusual experiences, professionals and allies in the community, all of whom are working together to change the assumptions made about these phenomena and create supports, learning and healing opportunities for people across the country."  
<http://www.hearingvoicesusa.org/>
  - ✓ **Schizophrenia and Psychosis Action Alliance** offers a free information helpline with specially trained team members who can provide personalized information and resources to people with schizophrenia-related illnesses and their families. Call (800) 493-2094 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or go to <https://sczaction.org/>.

- ✓ **Alcoholics Anonymous:** A fellowship that aims to help its members stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve recovery. They hold groups around the world. Find local groups at <https://www.aa.org/>
- ✓ **Narcotics Anonymous:** A fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem and who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. Find local groups at <http://na.org/>
- ✓ Call the **Veterans Crisis Line** to talk to someone during an emotional crisis (24/7): Call (800) 273-8255 and press 1, text 838255, or chat online at [www.veteranscrisisline.net/](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/).
- ✓ Go to the **Emergency Department** of your nearest VA
- ✓ Go to any **Emergency Department**
- ✓ Call **911**
- ✓ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ When people experience voices and worries, they often socially isolate. But this can cause problems in the long-run.
- ✓ There are many benefits to socializing and seeking support from people, including reduced voices and worries.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques.
- Select and do 1 social activity in the coming week. Complete the following questionnaire:

## SOCIAL ACTIVITY QUESTIONNAIRE

What social activity will you do? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Before the activity:**

How much do you expect to enjoy it, 0–10 (10=max. enjoyment)? \_\_\_\_\_

How well do you think it's going to go, 0–10 (10=best)? \_\_\_\_\_

### **After the activity:**

How much did you enjoy it, 0–10? \_\_\_\_\_

How well did it go, 0–10? \_\_\_\_\_

What changes did you notice in your voices/worries? Please explain.

Bothered me less       Bothered me the same       Bothered me more

**What did you learn?** \_\_\_\_\_

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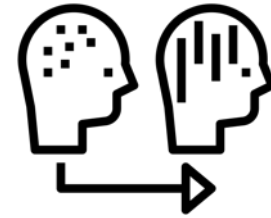
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## Session 7 – Taking Power Away from Voices and Worries

### 1. Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Paying attention to voices and worries
4. Ways to take power away from them (refocusing strategies)
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan



### 2. Review

- Socializing and seeking support from people can help reduce voices and worries.

### 3. Review of Action Plan

- Working toward goals and practicing stress reduction/relaxation.
- Which social activity did you do, and how did it go?

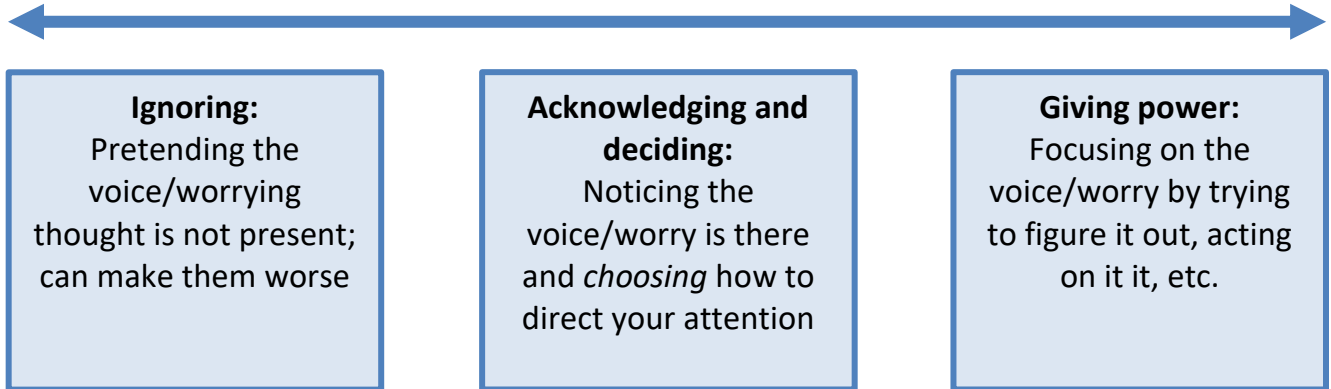
### 4. Attention to voices and worries<sup>1</sup>

- When people hear voices or experience worries, they often focus a lot of their attention and energy to the voices or whatever is making them feel worried or suspicious.
- This can make the voices or worries more intense, increase stress, and can stop you from working on your goals. It's like giving power to the voices/worries.
- So, a good coping strategy is doing something to shift your focus away from the voices/worries—i.e., take power *away* from them. These are called **refocusing techniques**.
- Taking power away from voices and worries does not mean ignoring them. It means acknowledging and deciding what to do next without letting them control you.
- The key point is that in acknowledging and deciding—you are actively choosing whether the voice/worry is helpful and how to respond. In both ignoring and giving power, you are not evaluating whether the voice or worry are helpful.
- When you acknowledge and decide, you are taking power away from the voice/worry and giving it back to yourself.

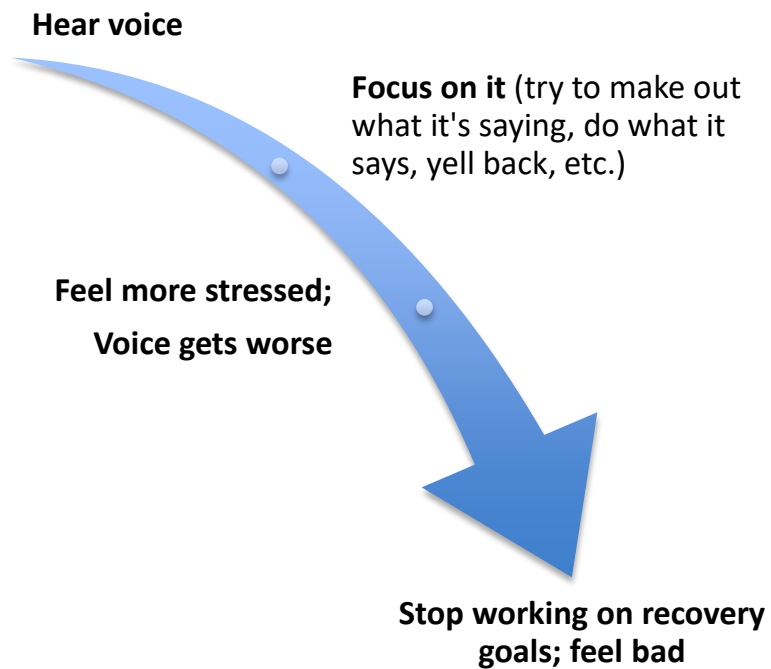


- What strategies along this continuum have you tried? Which have been most effective for you?

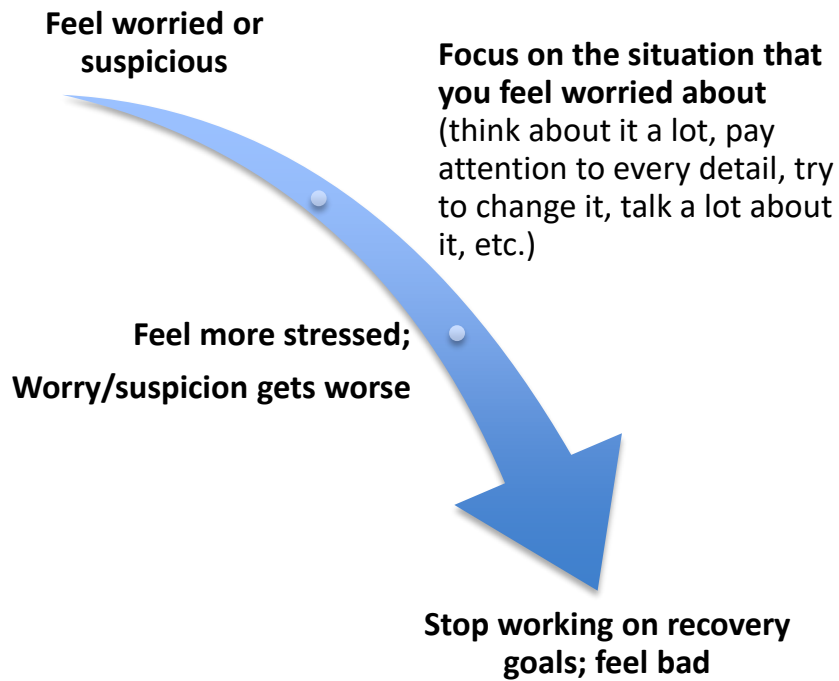
## Continuum of Responding to Voices/Worries



## Giving Power to Voices



## Giving Power to Worries








### 5. Refocusing techniques

- What are some things you already do that effectively refocus you from voices and worries—that let you take your power back?
  
- The following techniques work for many people. Put a check mark next to the ones that work for you or that you'd like to try:

<b>Refocusing Techniques</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music	<input type="checkbox"/> Hum	<input type="checkbox"/> Sing or dance
<input type="checkbox"/> Read softly	<input type="checkbox"/> Play a game	<input type="checkbox"/> Work on a goal
<input type="checkbox"/> Draw or paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Work on a hobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk to people
<input type="checkbox"/> Use the computer	<input type="checkbox"/> Play with a pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Do chores
<input type="checkbox"/> Puzzles or word games	<input type="checkbox"/> Study	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise
<input type="checkbox"/> Mindfully doing mundane activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- The Look Point Name Game is a simple refocusing technique for voices. Try doing it both inside and outside:

<b>Look Point Name Game</b>		
A technique that can temporarily make voices quieter or make them stop.		
1.		<b>Rate the voices on a scale of 0-10.</b>
2.		<b>Look at an object.</b>
3.		<b>Point to it.</b>
4.		<b>Name it out loud. Repeat steps 2-4 until you run out of objects.</b>
5.		<b>Rate the voices again on a scale of 0-10.</b>

<sup>1</sup>Thanks to Samantha Reznik, Ph.D. for assistance with this session.



## Take-Home Points

- ✓ Voices and worries attract our attention but spending too much time and energy focusing on them is not helpful and just gives them power.
- ✓ Activities that distract us from the voices and worries and shift our attention and energy to more positive, constructive things help us take our power back.
- ✓ The Look Point Name Game is one of many such refocusing techniques.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

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- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep doing stress reduction/relaxation activities.
- If you hear voices that bother you or have worries, practice the Look Point Name Game (for voices) or other refocusing activities that you marked above. Track your practice in the chart below.
- Anything else?

Day	Did Look Point Name	Did Other Refocusing Technique (Which One?)	How Much Did the Voices/Worries Bother You?
Monday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Tuesday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Wednesday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Thursday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Friday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Saturday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse
Sunday			<input type="checkbox"/> Better <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse

## Session 8 – Beliefs and Feelings

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. What are feelings?
4. What are beliefs?
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan



### 1. Review

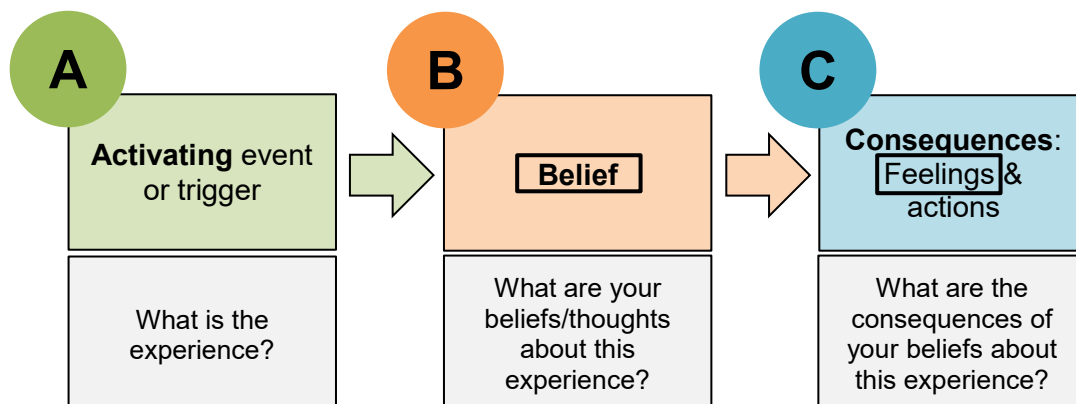
- Taking power back from voices and worries by shifting our attention to other activities.
- Look Point Name Game and other refocusing techniques.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Working toward goals and practicing stress reduction/relaxation.
- Practicing Look Point Name game and other distraction techniques.

### 3. ABC of CBT

- Remember CBT is based on the idea that what we BELIEVE affects how we FEEL and what we DO. This is the ABC system:
  - a. **Activating event:** Something happens
  - b. **Belief:** How we think about it or make sense of the thing that happened
  - c. **Consequence:** How we feel and act because of our belief
- Today we will look more closely at *beliefs* and *feelings*.



#### 4. What are feelings?



- Also called emotions
- A physical or emotional sensation in our bodies
- Experienced in our heart or chest or other parts of the body
- Can be described in one word

### Feelings Wheel



## 5. What are beliefs?

- Also called thoughts
- Words going through our mind
- Images going through our mind
- Stories we tell ourselves
- Memories
- Experienced in our head
- Can be described with lots of words, in sentences

Is it a Feeling or a Belief?	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Feeling</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Physical or emotional sensation in our body</li><li>✓ Experienced in our heart, chest, or other parts of the body</li><li>✓ 1 word</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Belief</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Words, images, or stories going through our mind</li><li>✓ Experienced in our head</li><li>✓ Lots of words</li></ul>



### Take-Home Points

- ✓ **Feelings** are emotional and/or physical sensations that we experience in our bodies and are 1 word.
- ✓ **Beliefs** are words, images, or stories that go through our mind, are experienced in our head, and are many words.

- ✓ How we *feel* and what we *do (or not do)* in a situation depends on how we *think* about the situation—our *beliefs*.
- ✓ Our thinking is very powerful and in our control!
- ✓ Other:





## Action Plan

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- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques and refocusing techniques.
- Write down some beliefs and feelings you have in the coming week below.
- Anything else?



## Feeling and Belief Log

<b>Feeling</b>  <p>Emotional and/or physical sensations that we experience in our bodies and are 1 word.</p>	<b>Belief</b>  <p>Words, images, or stories that go through our mind, are experienced in our head, and are many words.</p>
Example: <i>Depressed, angry</i>	<i>These voices will never go away.</i>
Example: <i>Hopeful, happy</i>	<i>I am starting to learn helpful things in therapy.</i>

## Session 9 – How Beliefs Affect Feelings and Actions

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. How beliefs affect feelings and actions
4. 2 ways of responding: reasons/logic and intuition/feelings
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

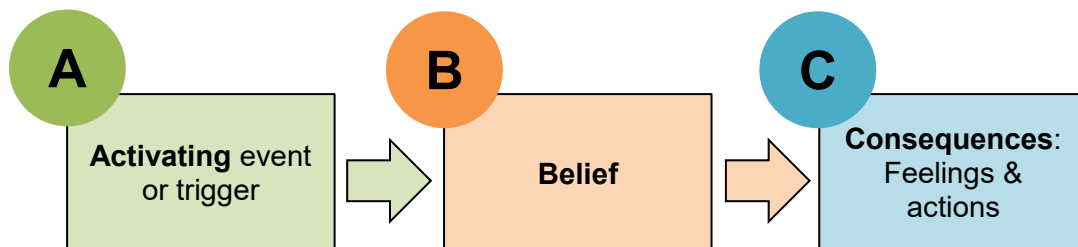
- **Feelings** are emotional and/or physical sensations that we experience in our bodies and are 1 word.
- **Beliefs** or thoughts are words or stories that go through our mind, are experienced in our head, and are many words.
- How we feel and what we do (or not do) in a situation depends on how we *think* about the situation—our beliefs.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Practice stress reduction/relaxation, working toward goals, and refocusing techniques.
- Record examples of beliefs and feelings.

### 3. How beliefs affect feelings and actions

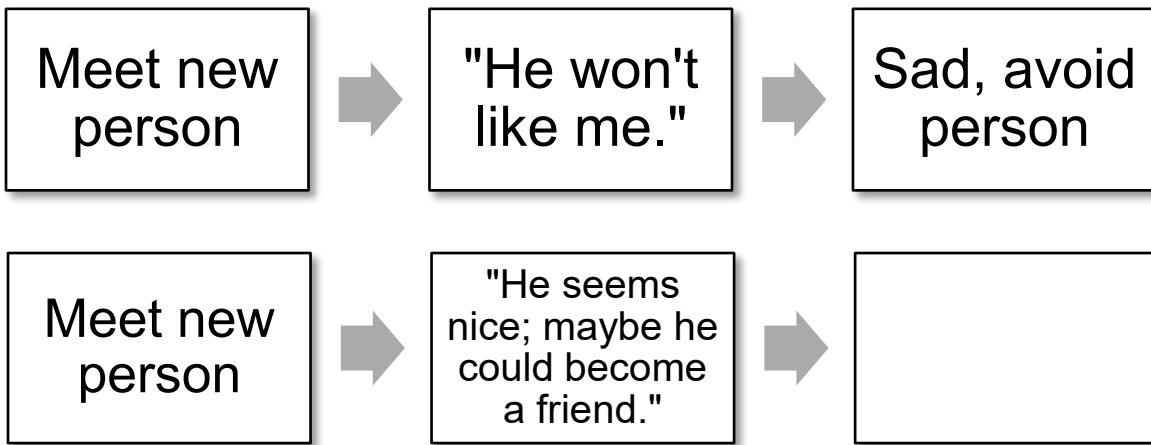
- Remember the ABC model of CBT says that when a situation happens (A) how we *react* to it (the C) depends on how we *think* about it (B).



- Study the following examples. Pay attention to how different beliefs/thoughts lead to different feelings and actions and if the beliefs help or interfere with the person's goal.

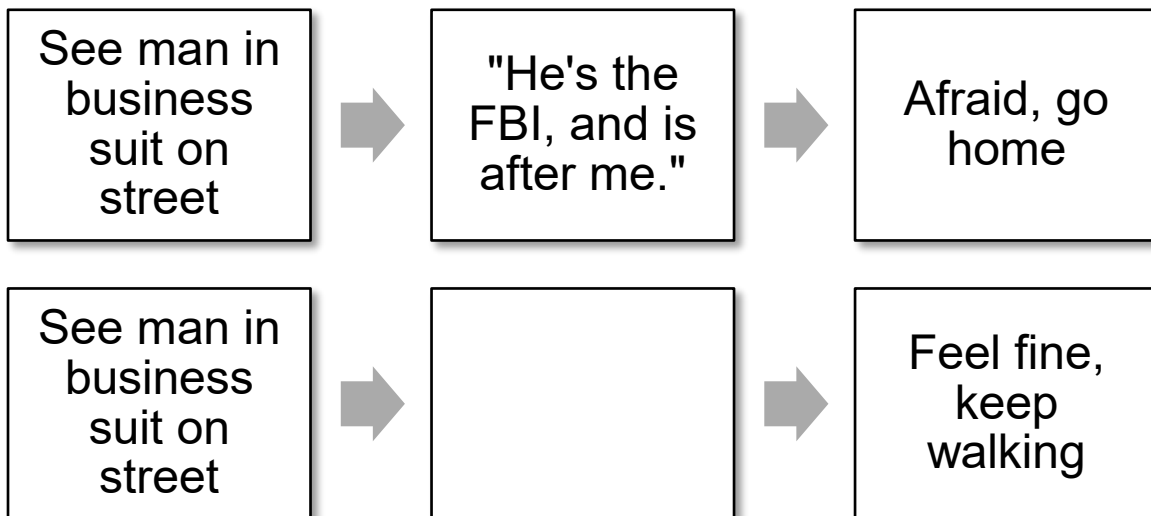


**GOAL: Make new friends**



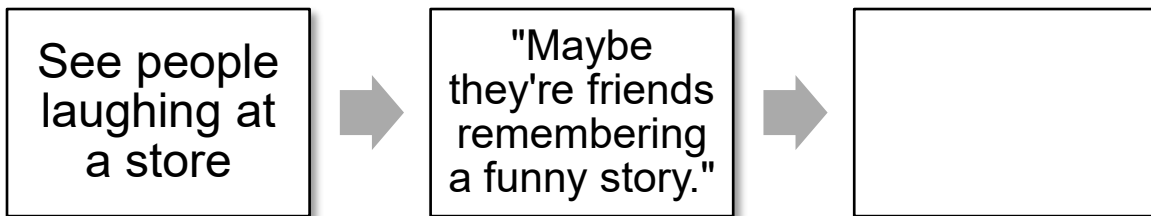
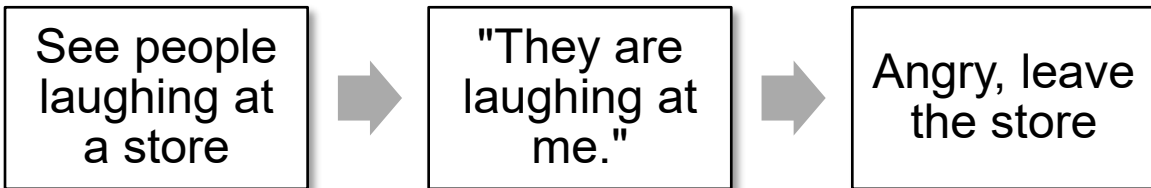
- Sometimes our thinking can make us feel suspicious...

**GOAL: Take a walk for exercise**



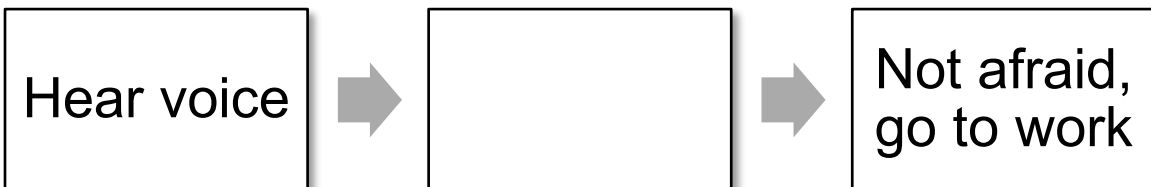
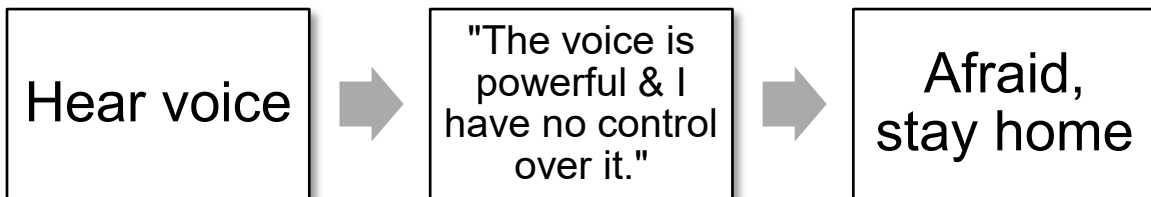


**GOAL: Do grocery shopping**



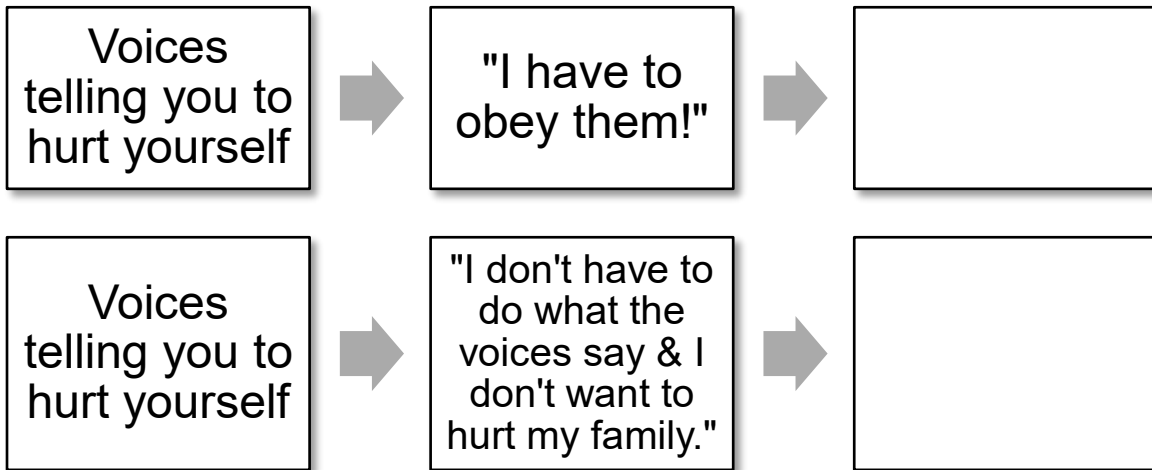
- And, voices don't directly affect how we react to them: what we believe about the voices affects our reaction:

**GOAL: Work successfully**

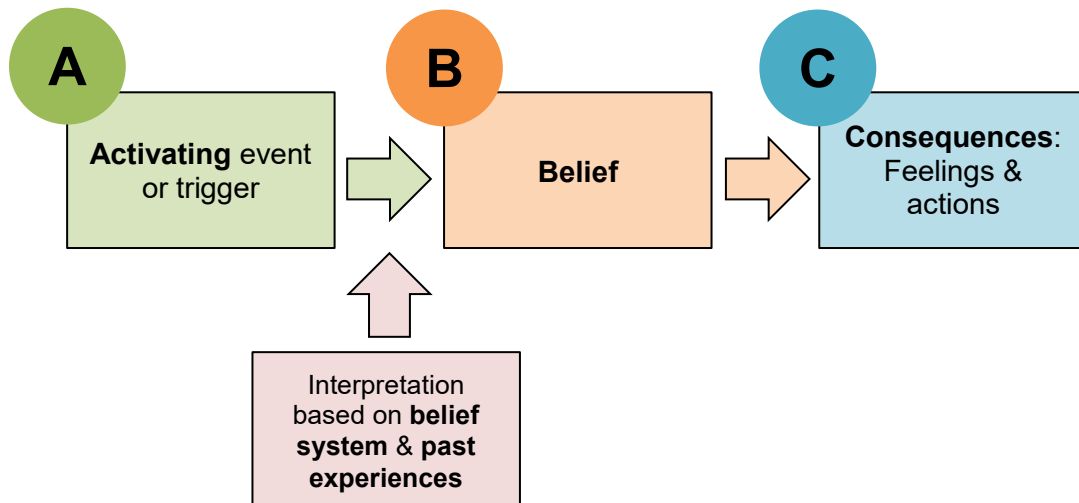




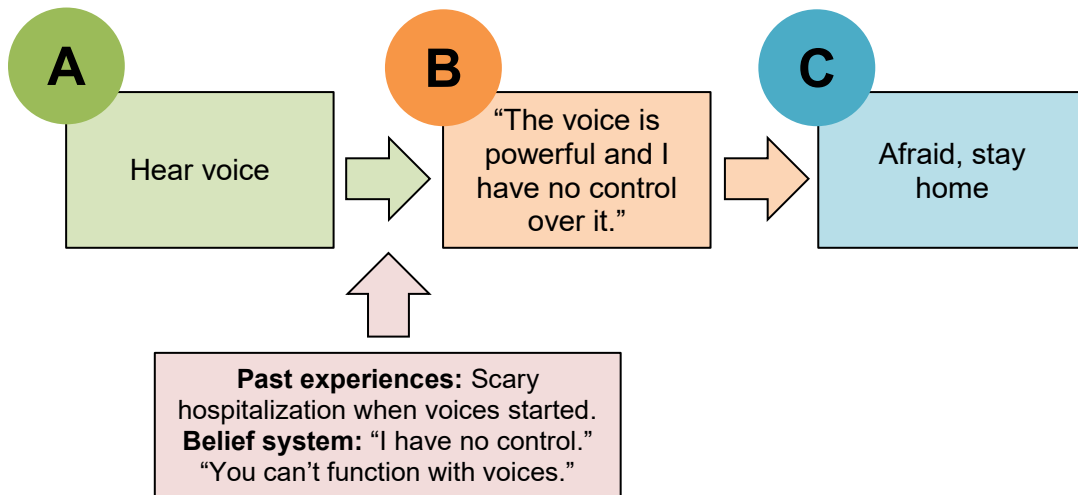
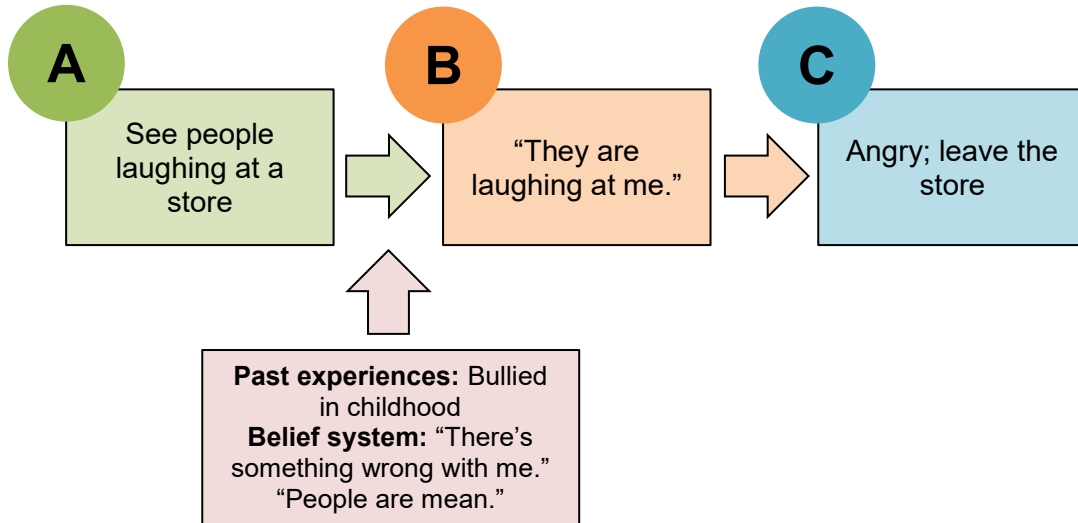
GOAL: Have a closer relationship with my family



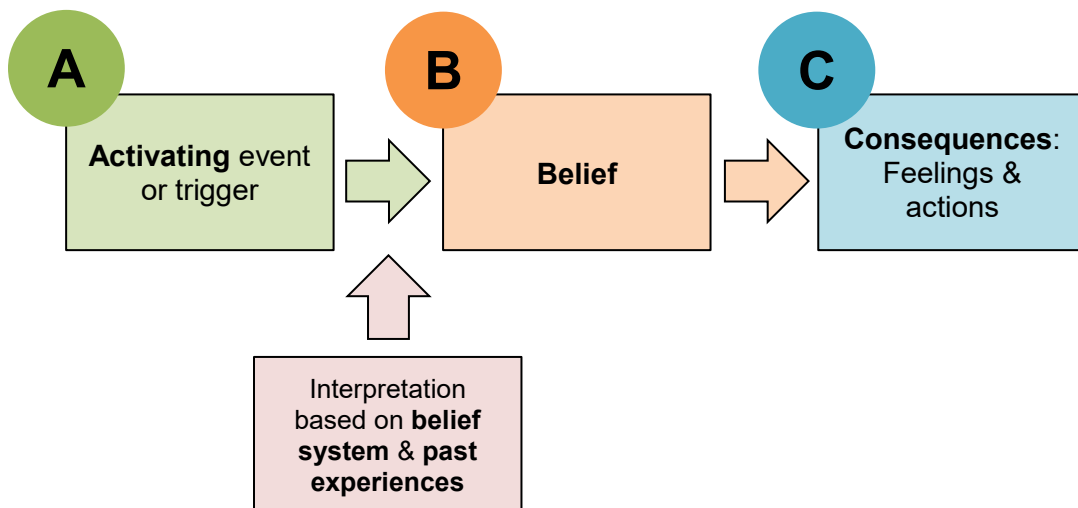
- But our beliefs don't come from nowhere. They come from our **belief systems**—beliefs we have about ourselves, other people, and the world. These are often shaped by our **past experiences**; see the examples below.



- **Examples:**



- **Can you think of a personal example?**





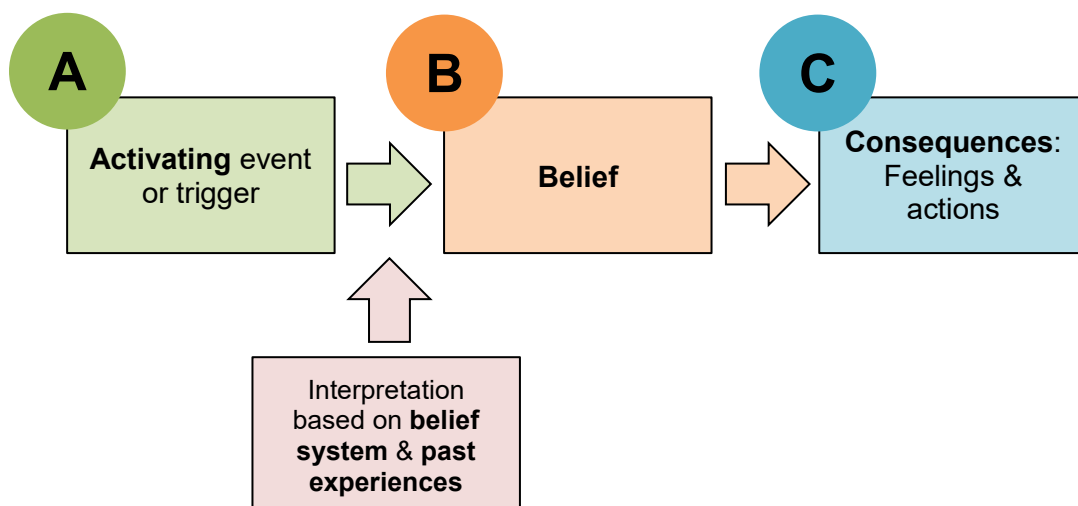
## Take-Home Points

- ✓ How we *feel* and what we *do* (or *not do*) in a situation depends on how we *think* about the situation (our beliefs).
- ✓ Our thinking can be helpful for our goals or interfere with them.
- ✓ How we think about situations is shaped by our belief systems and past experiences.
- ✓ Our thinking is very powerful and in our control!
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques, and refocusing techniques.
- Try to apply the ABC method to your own personal situations.
- Anything else?



## Session 10 – Catching Thoughts

### Agenda

1. Review of last sessions
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Review how thoughts lead to feelings and actions
4. 3 Cs
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- When a **situation** happens (the A) how we **react** to it (the C) depends on how we **think** about it (the B).
- Our thoughts come from our belief systems and are often shaped by past experiences.



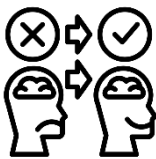
### 2. Review of Action Plan

Were you able to apply the ABC method to your personal situations?

### 3. Managing your thinking with 3 Cs

- It is easy to slip into thinking that is inaccurate or unhelpful. These kinds of thoughts can make voices more stressful and can lead to increased worries.
- The 3 Cs is a tool for managing our thinking that has several benefits:
  - a. It helps to slow down our thinking. When we're stressed or upset, our thinking can get *too fast*, which leads to mistakes and misinterpretations.
  - b. It helps to make sure our thinking is accurate and balanced.
  - c. It helps to prevent voices and worries from making us feel bad and blocking our goals.



3Cs Method of Managing Thinking <sup>1</sup>	
<p><b>CATCH IT</b></p> 	<p><b>Catch your thoughts/beliefs.</b></p>
<p><b>CHECK IT</b></p> 	<p><b>Are these thoughts accurate or inaccurate? Helpful or unhelpful?</b></p>
<p><b>CHANGE IT</b></p> 	<p><b>Correct and change any inaccurate/unhelpful thoughts into more accurate/helpful ones.</b></p>

#### 4. Catch it

- Common thoughts people have the worry of **suspicion**; mark the ones you've had below:

<input type="checkbox"/> People can't be trusted.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can trust some people.
<input type="checkbox"/> It's better to always be on guard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes I could relax and let my guard down.
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm helpless.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am learning ways to feel better and achieve my goals.
<input type="checkbox"/> Others have power over me.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am in control of my life.
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone is out to get me.	<input type="checkbox"/> Most people are good.
<input type="checkbox"/> People don't like me.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some people like me a lot.
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm a bad person.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have several good qualities.
<input type="checkbox"/> It's best to avoid people and activities when I'm feeling suspicious.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can still work on my goals even when I'm feeling suspicious.

- Common thoughts about **voices**; mark the ones you've had:

<input type="checkbox"/> I have no control over the voices.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am learning ways to control them.
<input type="checkbox"/> The voices are very powerful.	<input type="checkbox"/> The voices may <i>feel</i> powerful, but they really aren't.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have to obey the voices.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can do what I want, not what the voices want.
<input type="checkbox"/> If I don't do what they say, they'll hurt me.	<input type="checkbox"/> The threats they make are empty and false.
<input type="checkbox"/> I can't live my life with these voices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Many people live with voices; I can too.
<input type="checkbox"/> It's best to avoid people and activities when I hear the voices.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can still work on my goals even when I'm hearing voices.
<input type="checkbox"/> The voices will never get better.	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm learning ways to make them better.
<input type="checkbox"/> The voices are evil.	<input type="checkbox"/> Just because they <i>feel</i> evil sometimes doesn't mean they are.
<input type="checkbox"/> Having voices means I'm "crazy."	<input type="checkbox"/> I am <i>not</i> alone in hearing voices, and it doesn't mean I'm "crazy."
<input type="checkbox"/> The voices are coming from outside of me.	<input type="checkbox"/> They're just my own thoughts and memories that <i>sound</i> like voices.

## 5. When to catch it?

- How do you know *when* to use the 3Cs? Keep an eye out for these situations:

When to Use the 3 Cs	
4 situations in which it can be helpful to use the 3 Cs	
Situation	Examples
1. When you feel a difficult emotion.	Feeling anxiety, fear, sadness, anger, shame

<p><b>2. When you can't stop thinking about something that's upsetting you or interfering with your life.</b></p>	<p>Thinking constantly about suspicions about people being against you or a past memory that makes you feel bad</p>
<p><b>3. When you feel stuck trying to do something that's important to you.</b></p>	<p>Feeling unmotivated to get out of the house, go to the gym, school, work, socialize</p>
<p><b>4. When you're doing something that is harmful to yourself or others.</b></p>	<p>Drinking excessively or using drugs that make your voices or worries worse</p>

<sup>1</sup>Granholtm et al., 2016



**Exercise: Practice Catching Thoughts**  
Think of a recent situation like one of the 4 above and try to catch the thought you had.

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

---



## Take-Home Points

---

- ✓ The 3 Cs is a tool to help us make sure our thinking is accurate and balanced, to prevent voices and worries/suspicion from making us feel bad and blocking our goals.
- ✓ The 3 Cs are: Catch it (the thought), Check it, and Change it.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques, and refocusing techniques.
- Practice CATCHING thoughts below.
- Anything else?

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

---

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

---

## Session 11 – Checking Thoughts

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Check it: 3 ways of checking thoughts
4. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- 3Cs method for managing thinking, to make sure it is accurate and helpful.
- Common thoughts about voices and suspicion

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Practicing the first C—**Catch It**. What thoughts did you catch?

### 3. CHECK IT: 3 ways of checking thoughts

- Thoughts can be accurate or inaccurate and helpful or unhelpful.
- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> step of the 3 Cs, **Check It**, we check our thoughts to make sure they are both accurate and helpful.
- You can check a thought by asking yourself 3 questions:
  1. **What is the evidence for and against the thought?** One way to check whether a thought is accurate is to act like a lawyer or judge and look for evidence and facts for or against the thought.
  2. **Could this be a thinking habit?** These are quick shortcuts that all of us tend to make in our thinking (see next page for a list). They can cause us to have unhelpful or inaccurate thoughts that block us from our goals.
  3. **Is the thought helpful?** In other words, does thinking it make you feel better and help you to reach your goals?
- If there is evidence against the thought, the thought contains mistakes in thinking, or it is not helpful to you, then you should **Change It** (we'll cover this later).

## Thinking Habits

These are shortcuts of thinking that we all make sometimes. They can block us from our goals and living the life we want when we overuse them. Whenever you're having a hard time moving toward a goal or you're feeling bad, ask yourself, "Could this be a thinking habit?"



### Jumping to Conclusions

Coming to a conclusion (usually a negative one) without enough evidence



### Mind Reading

Thinking that you know what others are thinking



### Fortunetelling

Predicting that things will go badly in the future



### Personalizing

Thinking that something is all about you when really, it's not



### Emotional Reasoning

Making decisions that are based only on feelings rather than facts



### Externalizing

Thinking that internal thoughts and feelings are really coming from outside



### Selective Abstraction

Focusing on a detail taken out of context; not looking at the whole picture



### Missing the Positives

Not noticing the good parts of a situation, or not giving yourself credit for positive things you or others do



### Intentionalizing

Thinking that others are doing things on purpose to harm you





## EXERCISE: Spotting Thinking Habits

What thinking habit(s) can you find in these thoughts?

(Hint: There could be more than one.)

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Jumping to Conclusions (JTC)</b> | 1. My best friend hasn't called me in a week; even though we have been getting along well, she actually must hate me. _____ |
| <b>Mind Reading (MR)</b>            | 2. I feel really anxious today; I <i>must</i> be in danger. _____   |
| <b>Fortunetelling (F)</b>           | 3. Even though I've gotten lots of compliments at work, I was late today, which means I'm a bad worker. _____               |
| <b>Personalizing (P)</b>            | 4. The cop had a tough look on his face, which means he had it in for me. _____   |
| <b>Emotional Reasoning (ER)</b>     | 5. I lost my concentration; it's because an evil spirit is trying to frustrate me. _____                                    |
| <b>Externalizing (E)</b>            | 6. The guy on the bus bumped into me on purpose because he was trying to threaten me. _____                                 |
| <b>Selective Abstraction (SE)</b>   | 7. My voices make me feel really scared, therefore they must be able to hurt me. _____                                      |
| <b>Missing the Positives (MP)</b>   | 8. The people outside my apartment are talking; it must be about me. _____  |
| <b>Intentionalizing (I)</b>         | 9. I can't find my wallet—someone must have broken in and stolen it, even though there are no signs of a break-in. _____    |

## Catch it and Check it—Suspicion Example

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

Walking to store on Thursday afternoon. A man was walking in the same direction across the street.

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

Scared

**Actions:** *What did you do?*

Walked fast, went home, didn't go grocery shopping

---



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

He is following me and monitoring me.

---



### Check it

Evidence **For** the Thought

- He's walking in the same direction.

Evidence **Against** the Thought

- He didn't follow me when I turned back.  
- He was holding an empty shopping bag.  
- He never looked at me.  
- There's no good reason why anyone would want to follow me.

Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personalizing |

Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No

---

# Catch it and Check it—Voices Example

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

In bed Friday night, trying to fall asleep. Heard voice saying "You're a loser."

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

Angry, depressed

**Actions:** *What did you do?*

Tossed and turned

---



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*

The voice is right, I am a loser.

---



## Check it

Evidence **For** the Thought

- The voice says so.

Evidence **Against** the Thought

- I'm a kind person.
- I proud about serving in the military.
- My family cares about me.
- The voices often say things that aren't true.

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?*  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning          | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?*  Yes  No

---



### Exercise: Practice the 3 Cs!

Choose a recent situation where you experienced voices or worries.

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



### Check it

Evidence **For** the Thought

Evidence **Against** the Thought

Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No



## Take-Home Points

---

- ✓ In the 2nd step of the 3 Cs, **CHECK IT**, we check our thoughts to make sure they are both accurate and helpful.
- ✓ You can check a thought by asking yourself 3 questions: 1) What is the evidence for and against the thought? 2) Am I making any mistakes in thinking? 3) Is the thought helpful?
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques, and refocusing techniques.
- Practice **CATCHING** and **CHECKING** thoughts with the forms on the following pages.
- Other:

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

Evidence **Against** the Thought

Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No

---

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?*  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?*  Yes  No

---

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?*  Yes  No

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?*  Yes  No

---



## Session 12 – Changing Thoughts and Avoiding Jumping to Conclusions

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Ways to avoid jumping to conclusions
4. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- 3Cs is a method for managing thinking, to make sure it is accurate and helpful.
- We can **Check** thoughts by looking at evidence for/against, mistakes in thinking, and seeing if they're helpful or not

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Practicing **Catch it** and **Check it**.

### 3. What is jumping to conclusions?

- **Example:** “He did not say hello to me in the cafeteria today. He thinks I am stupid and that is why he does not want to talk to me.”
  - How is this an example of jumping to conclusions?
- Think of your own example of a time when you jumped to conclusions (e.g., you lost something or couldn't find your car).
- Everybody jumps to conclusions; it's human nature.
- But too much jumping to conclusions can lead to negative feelings, including worries and more stress from voices. People who struggle with suspiciousness tend to jump to conclusions more often than those without.
- So it's important to **Check** for jumping to conclusions when doing the 2<sup>nd</sup> C—**Check it**.

### 4. How to avoid jumping to conclusions

- One of the best ways to avoid jumping to conclusions is to **look for alternative explanations**.



## Avoid Jumping to Conclusions by Looking for Alternative Explanations

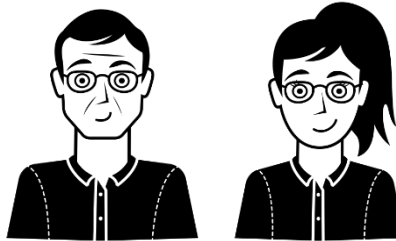
3 key questions to ask yourself

1. What are **other possible explanations** for what happened?
2. What is the **MOST LIKELY** explanation?
3. What is the **BEST** explanation—the one that would help my feelings and goals the most?



### Exercise: What Could Have Happened?

Read each of the following situations about Joe and Mary and try to come up with as many explanations as possible.



A. Joe came home and his window was broken. What could have happened?

---

---

---

B. Mary went to a store and saw 2 women laughing very loudly. What could be happening?

---

---

---

C. Joe returned home from work and noticed that his wallet was not in his pocket. What could have happened?

---

---

---

D. As Joe approached his house after returning from the VA, he saw a man standing nearby. The man asked Joe if he lives in the neighborhood. What could be happening?

---

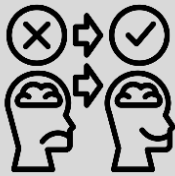
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---

- What have we learned about jumping to conclusions?
  - We have to look for *alternative explanations*. Another way to look at it is that we are *getting more information*.

### 5. CHANGE IT: Changing inaccurate/unhelpful thoughts

- The final step in the 3 Cs is **Change it**, which means change the inaccurate/unhelpful thought so that it's more accurate and helpful.



### CHANGE IT Questions to Ask Yourself to Change Inaccurate/Unhelpful Thoughts

1. Are there any **alternative explanations** for what happened?
2. If **someone else** had this thought, how would I tell him or her to change it?
3. How can I think about this situation differently so that I **feel better**?
4. How can I think about this situation differently so that I keep working toward my **goals** and have the **life that I want**?



### Exercise: Practice the 3 Cs!

Choose a recent situation where you experienced voices or worries.

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



### Check it

Evidence **For** the Thought

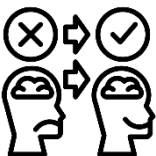
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*



## Take-Home Points

---

- ✓ Jumping to conclusions is coming to a conclusion without enough evidence.
- ✓ We all do this but more jumping to conclusions = more worries and stress from voices.
- ✓ The best way to avoid jumping to conclusions is by looking for alternative explanations and picking the one that's the most likely and best one for you (most helpful for your feelings and goals).
- ✓ **Change It:** You can change inaccurate/unhelpful thoughts by considering alternative explanations and asking yourself questions like "How can I think about this differently so that I feel better and can keep working on my goals?"
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep practicing stress reduction/relaxation techniques, and distraction techniques.
- Practice the full 3 Cs for situations in which you feel upset, suspicious, or hear voices, with the forms on the following pages.
- Other:

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

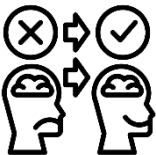
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

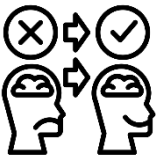
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

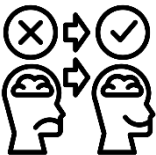
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*



## Session 13 – Being Your Own Detective

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Avoiding jumping to conclusions by being your own detective
4. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- Jumping to conclusions (JTC) is coming to a conclusion without enough evidence.
- More JTC = more worries and stress from voices.
- We can avoid JTC by looking for alternative explanations and picking the most likely and helpful one.
- We can also change inaccurate/unhelpful thoughts by asking ourselves questions like "How can I think about this differently so that I feel better and keep working on my goals?"

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Practicing Catch it, Check it, and Change it

### 3. Avoiding jumping to conclusions by gaining more information

- Last session, we looked at how to avoid jumping to conclusions by coming up with alternative explanations.
- Today, we will look at deciding which explanation is the most likely. The process of doing this is like *being your own detective*.



## Being Your Own Detective: Choosing the Most Likely Explanation

One way to reduce suspicion and other worries is to avoid jumping to conclusions. This is done by coming up with alternative explanations about situations in which we feel suspicious. To pick the most likely explanation, follow these 3 steps:

**Rule-out**

**Possible**

**Most likely**

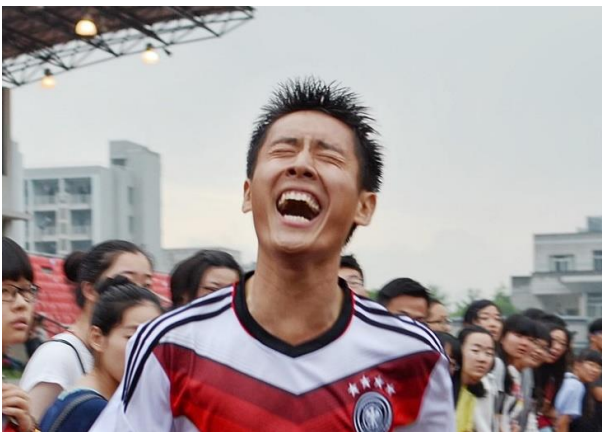
1. **Rule-out:** Toss out explanations that you're very sure are not true.
2. **Possible:** These are possible explanations you're not really sure about—they could be true or could be untrue, so keep them.
3. **Most Likely:** Narrow down the explanations to the one you think is most likely to be true.



### Exercise: Practice Choosing the Most Likely Explanation

Look at each of the pictures below and try to choose the explanations you might rule out, the ones that are possible, and the most likely one.

What is happening here?



- The man is shouting for help.
- The man is passing the finish line in a marathon.
- The man is laughing.
- The man is being attacked.
- Other explanations?

---

**What is happening here?**



- The women are having a conversation and the man is on a phone call.
- The man is talking about the women.
- All 3 of the people are friends.
- The women are talking about the man.
- Other explanations?

---

*Notice how many different explanations there can be for the same picture. We can't know for sure which one is correct because we need more information, but we can take some educated guesses.*

## Summary of How to Avoid Jumping to Conclusions

1. Do a **stress reduction/relaxation technique** (like soothing rhythm breathing) to calm your emotions so you can think more clearly.
2. Avoid making fast decisions. **Slow down** and think things through.
3. Look for **alternative explanations**.
4. Gain as much **information** as you can before making a conclusion.
5. Look at the **evidence for and against** each explanation.
6. Use the **Rule-out → Possible → Most Likely** process to pick one explanation.
7. Pick the **BEST explanation**—the one that would help your feelings and goals the most.
8. Get **feedback** from other people.
9. Other ideas:



### Take-Home Points

- ✓ Jumping to conclusions can lead to suspicion and other worries and make voices more upsetting.
- ✓ One way to avoid jumping to conclusions is to find all the alternative explanations for a situation that is upsetting you.
- ✓ We can use the Rule-out → Possible → Most Likely method to pick the *most likely* explanation. This is like being your own detective.
- ✓ Other ways to avoid jumping to conclusions include thinking slowly and getting feedback from other people.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep socializing and practicing stress reduction/relaxation and refocusing techniques.
- Keep practicing the 3Cs. Try being your own detective and using the Rule-Out → Possible → Most Likely method when CHECKING your thoughts.
- Anything else?

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

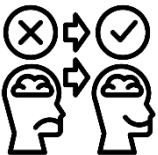
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentionalizing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Reasoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Externalizing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

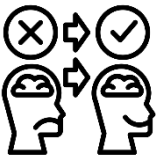
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping to Conclusions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Reading        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortunetelling |
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*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*

---

**Situation:** *What happened? Where? When?*

---

**Feelings:** *How were you feeling?*

**Actions:** *What did you do?*



**Catch it:** *What went through your mind? What was your thought/belief? What story did you tell yourself?*



**Check it**

Evidence **For** the Thought

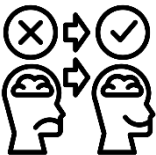
Evidence **Against** the Thought

*Is the thought **totally accurate**?  Yes  No*

**Thinking habits?**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Abstraction  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Positives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalizing  |

*Is the thought **helpful** for your feelings & goals?  Yes  No*



**Change it** *Make the thought more accurate and helpful.*



## Session 14 – Being Your Own Scientist

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Reviewing what we have learned
4. Being your own scientist
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

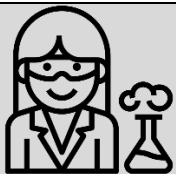
- Jumping to conclusions can lead to worries and make voices more upsetting.
- One way to avoid jumping to conclusions is to find all the alternative explanations for a situation that is upsetting you.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- Practicing Catch it, Check it, and Change it and being your own detective

### 3. Testing your beliefs with experiments: Being your own scientist

- We've talked about checking beliefs by being your own *detective*—looking at all the different explanations for a situation and choosing the best one.
- Another way to check beliefs is by being your own *scientist*—doing experiments to test your beliefs.



### Being Your Own Scientist: 5 Steps to Testing Beliefs with Experiments

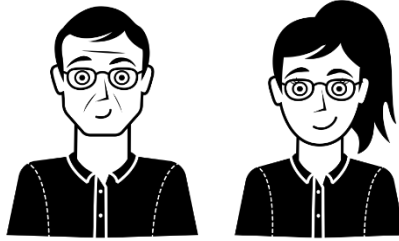
1. State the belief that you're going to test.
2. Design your experiment to test your belief.
3. Agree on what the conclusion of the experiment will mean.
4. Conduct the experiment and record what happens.
5. Decide what the results mean for your original belief.

- Example of experiment about suspicion:
  1. **State the belief that you're going to test.**  
*That man is following me.*
  2. **Design your experiment to test your belief.**  
*I'll sit down for a bit and see if he sits down too.*
  3. **Agree on what the conclusion of the experiment will mean.**  
*If he doesn't sit down, it means he's not following me.*
  4. **Conduct the experiment and record what happens.**  
*I sat down but he kept walking.*
  5. **Decide what the results mean for your original belief.**  
*It means he wasn't really following me!*
  
- Example of experiment about voices:
  1. **State the belief that you're going to test.**  
*The voices are uncontrollable.*
  2. **Design your experiment to test your belief.**  
*I'll do the Look, Point, Name game for a while and see if they decrease.*
  3. **Agree on what the conclusion of the experiment will mean.**  
*If they decrease, that means I have some control over them.*
  4. **Conduct the experiment and record what happens.**  
*Did Look, Point, Name for 5 mins. They got much quieter.*
  5. **Decide what the results mean for your original belief.**  
*It means I do have some control over the voices!*



### **Exercise: Design Experiments**

See if you can design experiments to test the following beliefs from Joe and Mary, and then one of your own.



- **Joe thinks someone is stealing his mail. He is very anxious and can't stop worrying about it. What experiment can he design to test his belief?**
  
- **Mary believes that if she goes outside, the voices will get really bad and prevent her from doing anything. She really has to get groceries but she is scared and staying home. What experiment can she design to test her belief?**
  
- **Think about a belief you have about voices or worries. Can you design an experiment to test it?**
  1. State the belief that you're going to test.
  
  2. Design your experiment to test your belief.
  
  3. Agree on what the conclusion of the experiment will mean.



## Take-Home Points

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- ✓ Another way to check a belief is by designing and running experiments that test the belief, which is like being your own scientist.
- ✓ There are 5 steps to being your own scientist: 1) Select the belief; 2) Design the experiment; 3) Agree on what the conclusion will mean; 4) Conduct the experiment and see what happens; and 5) Decide what the results mean for your original belief.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Take at least 1 step toward your goals.
- Keep socializing and practicing stress reduction/relaxation and refocusing techniques.
- Keep practicing the 3Cs.
- Try being your own scientist by running the experiment we designed today and recording the results below.
- Anything else?

4. Conduct the experiment and record what happens.

5. What do the results mean for your original belief?

## Session 15 – Putting it All Together and Planning for the Future

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Reviewing what we have learned
4. Being your own therapist: designing a Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 4. Review



- Another way to check a belief is by designing and running experiments that test the belief, which is like being your own scientist. This is a 5-step process.

### 5. Review of Action Plan

- What were the results of your experiment? What do the results mean for your original belief?

### 6. Reviewing what we have learned

- We have covered 5 different types of coping strategies for voices and worries:

5 Ways to Manage Voices and Worries	
	<p><b>Working on recovery goals</b></p> <p>It can be tough to keep working toward life goals when voices or worries come up. But with the right tools and support, working toward goals can be a powerful way to reduce these problems because you shift your attention and energy to something more positive and productive and become more empowered.</p>
	<p><b>Relaxation and stress reduction</b></p> <p>Voices and worries can be stressful, and stress can make them worse. So, learning stress reduction/relaxation strategies can not only reduce the <i>stress</i> that voices and worries cause but can even reduce the voices and worries.</p>



### **Social activities and support**

Voices and worries can make it hard to want to be around people but socializing and having people to talk to can be a big help in making life with voices and worries happier and more meaningful.



### **Refocusing**

When voices and worries come up, it can be hard to stop thinking about them, which in turn can make them worse. Learning simple techniques to refocus and distract your mind can therefore take power away from the voices and worries, causing them to reduce so you feel better.



### **Changing thinking**

How we think about voices or worries has a lot to do with how much they bother us. We will spend a lot of time in this class learning how to adjust our thinking so that it is more balanced, accurate, and helpful. This is a very powerful way to not only cope better with voices and worries, but to reduce them too.

## **7. Being your own therapist: Designing a Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan**

- We have 1 more session together, which will be after a break.
- As the therapy draws to a close, it's important to think about how you can be your own therapist.
- This is just the beginning. You have learned many great skills that you can use forever!
- It will be up to you to keep practicing the skills in your daily life to keep them fresh and for you to keep growing.
- The skills are like a foreign language—you have to “use them or lose them.”
- The break will be an opportunity to practice being your own therapist.
- 2 important tools that can help you manage voices and worries are:
  - 1) A **Wellness Plan** for things you will do on a regular basis to stay well, and
  - 2) A **Coping Ahead Plan** for dealing with problems that might come up.



### **Exercise: Complete a Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan**

Please complete the 2 plans below.

## Wellness Plan

A plan of the things you will do on a regular basis to stay well. Pick your favorite techniques and activities.



1. **Recovery Goals** – *Life goals that are important and meaningful to me and that I will make my #1 priority and continuously work toward, despite voices/worries*
  
2. **Relaxation and Stress Reduction** – *Techniques or activities to reduce my stress and to relax*
  
3. **Social Activities and Support** – *People I will do things with or go to for support*
  
4. **Refocusing** – *Techniques or activities to focus my attention away from the voices/worries*
  
5. **Managing Thinking** – *Techniques like the 3 Cs to make sure my thinking is accurate and helpful*

## Coping Ahead Plan

The journey to recovery is rarely straight. Problems might come up that cause you stress or block you from working toward your goals.

You've learned so much in CBT! Select the strategies you learned that you can use to tackle the top 3 problems that life might throw your way.



### Problem/Obstacle #1:

### Ways to Manage it:

Work on my recovery goals:

Do a relaxation/stress reduction technique:

Connect with people:

Do a refocusing activity:

Manage my thinking/3Cs:



**Problem/Obstacle #2:**

**Ways to Manage it:**

Work on my recovery goals:

Do a relaxation/stress reduction technique:

Connect with people:

Do a refocusing activity:

Manage my thinking/3Cs:

**Problem/Obstacle #3:**

**Ways to Manage it:**

Work on my recovery goals:

Do a relaxation/stress reduction technique:

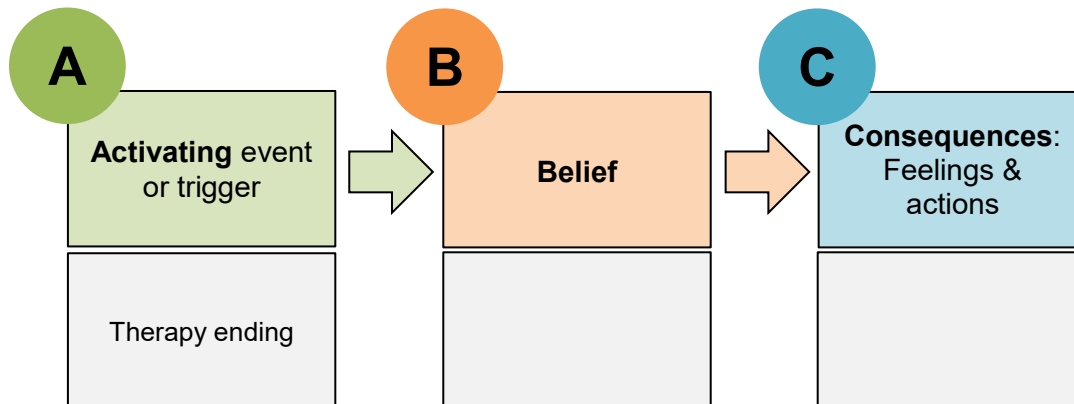
Connect with people:

Do a refocusing activity:

Manage my thinking/3Cs:

## 8. Feelings about Ending Therapy

- a. Like ending any relationship, ending therapy can bring up difficult feelings. It is normal to feel sad, anxious, or even angry.
- b. Common thoughts that people have at the end of therapy include:
  - i. "I can't do this on my own."
  - ii. "Things are going to get very bad again if I'm not in therapy."
  - iii. "I need to be in therapy forever."
  - iv. "My therapist is ending therapy because they don't like me."
  - v. "I've learned a lot of things that will help me."
  - vi. "It's good to see I'm not alone."
  - vii. "My therapist really cares about me."
- c. How do you feel about therapy coming to a close?
- d. If you're having difficult feelings about it, can you apply anything you learned in CBT to take care of yourself?



## Tips for Being Your Own Therapist

How to keep applying the skills you learned in CBT and keep growing.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Follow the Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plans you designed.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep this manual and re-read it.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to pay attention to the way you THINK about the voices and situations in which you feel worried/suspicious.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Do activities that shift your attention away from voices and suspicious thoughts.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> When bothered by voices or worries, ask yourself questions like, “What are some other explanations?” “What is the most likely explanation?” “What is the best explanation?” etc.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Do experiments to test any beliefs that are making you feel/act negatively or are interfering with your goals.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep a daily structure.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Manage your stress and have fun.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Talk to people you trust about what is upsetting you; don’t isolate.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Stick to your recovery goals—make them more important than the voices or worries.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Remind yourself that you are not alone and that many people experience voices and worries.</li></ul> |
|---|---|



### Take-Home Points

- ✓ We have learned 5 different categories of strategies for managing voices and worries.
- ✓ In order to help you practice these skills into the future and be your own therapist, it is very helpful to have a written **Wellness Plan** and **Coping Ahead Plan** that you will refer to.
- ✓ You now have what you need to be your own therapist!
- ✓ We will meet 1 more time after a break. This will be an opportunity to practice being your own therapist.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Keep practicing all of the techniques covered in therapy, and working toward your recovery goals.
- Complete your Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan and follow them.
- Refer back to this manual whenever you need to refresh your memory.
- Anything else?

## Session 16 – Celebrating Your Achievements and Saying Goodbye

### Agenda

1. Review of last session
2. Review of Action Plan
3. Thoughts and feelings about ending therapy
4. Reflecting on our time together
5. Take-Home Points and Action Plan

### 1. Review

- You have learned 5 different types of coping strategies for voices and worries and are ready to be your own therapist.
- Following a Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan can help you to stay well and deal with problems as they come up.
- Ending therapy can bring up difficult feelings, but it can also be a time to celebrate your achievements.

### 2. Review of Action Plan

- How did it go following your Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan?
- What has gone well since we last met?
- What problems came up and how did you deal with them?

### 3. Thoughts and feelings about ending therapy

- Like ending any relationship, ending therapy can bring up difficult feelings. It is normal to feel sad, anxious, or even angry.
- How do you feel about therapy ending?
- If you're having difficult feelings about it, can you apply anything you learned in CBT to take care of yourself?

#### 4. Reflecting on our time together

- What are the 2 most important things you learned in CBT?

1)

2)

- What are the 2 biggest accomplishments you've made since starting therapy?

1)

2)

- What are 2 strengths that your therapist sees in you?

1)

2)

- What are 2 hopes or wishes that your therapist has for you?

1)

2)



## Take-Home Points

---

- ✓ You now have what you need to be your own therapist!
- ✓ Following your **Wellness Plan** and **Coping Ahead Plan** can help you stay well and deal with problems as they come up.
- ✓ It is normal to have difficult feelings at the end of therapy but this is also a time to celebrate your achievements.
- ✓ Other:



## Action Plan

---

- Keep practicing all of the techniques covered in therapy, and working toward your recovery goals.
- Keep following your Wellness Plan and Coping Ahead Plan.
- Follow the tips for bring your own therapist that we covered last session, including referring back to this manual whenever you need to refresh your memory.
- Anything else?



***Congratulations on completing CBT, and best of luck!***



# References

## Session 1

1. Take-Home Points icon: “reminder” by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
2. Action Plan icon: “to do” by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com

## Session 2

1. Exercise icon: “Pencil” by Hoeda from thenounproject.com
2. Working on recovery goals icon: “success” by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com
3. Relaxation and stress reduction icon: “peaceful” by Kamin Ginkaew from thenounproject.com
4. Social activities and support icon: “friends” by Random Panda from thenounproject.com
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## Session 3

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#### Session 4

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#### Session 5

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#### Session 6

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#### Session 7

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2. Look Point Name Game icons: "Thermometer" by Muhammad Ridho; "Look" by Alice Design; "Point" by Till Teenck; "Talk" by Adrien Coquet, all from thenounproject.com
3. Take-Home Points icon: "reminder" by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
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#### Session 8

1. Icon on opening page: "Changing thinking" icon: Thinking by Ashley Fiveash from thenounproject.com
2. Feelings wheel from <https://defendinnocence.org/wheel-of-emotions/>
3. Feeling icon: "emotions" by Magicon from thenounproject.com
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#### Session 9

3. Take-Home Points icon: "reminder" by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com

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### Session 10

1. 3 Cs adapted with permission from: Granholm, E. L., McQuaid, J. R., & Holden, J. L. (2016). *Cognitive-behavioral social skills training for schizophrenia: A practical treatment guide*. Guilford Publications.
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### Session 11

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### Session 12

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5. Change it table icon: “Change” by Phonlaphat Thongsriphong from thenounproject.com
6. Catch it icon: “Idea” by Toli from thenounproject.com
7. Check it icon: “Magnifying Glass” by Davo Sime from thenounproject.com
8. Change it icon: “Change” by Phonlaphat Thongsriphong from thenounproject.com
9. Take-Home Points icon: “reminder” by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
10. Action Plan icon: “to do” by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com

### Session 13

1. 3 Cs adapted with permission from: Granholm, E. L., McQuaid, J. R., & Holden, J. L. (2016). *Cognitive-behavioral social skills training for schizophrenia: A practical treatment guide*. Guilford Publications.
2. Being Your Own Detective icon: “Detective” by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com
3. Exercise icon: “Pencil” by Hoeda from thenounproject.com
4. 1<sup>st</sup> photo in exercise: “[A man yell](#)” photo by Tia Zhang, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons (cropped from original). To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>.
5. 2<sup>nd</sup> photo from exercise: “[Reflections](#)” by [21limited](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#). To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>.
6. 3<sup>rd</sup> photo in exercise from <http://thelistlove.com/10-unbelievable-acts-you-need-to-read/> (#9).
7. Take-Home Points icon: “reminder” by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
8. Action Plan icon: “to do” by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com

9. Catch it icon: "Idea" by Toli from thenounproject.com
10. Check it icon: "Magnifying Glass" by Davo Sime from thenounproject.com
11. Change it icon: "Change" by Phonlaphat Thongsriphong from thenounproject.com

#### **Session 14**

1. Being Your Own Scientist table icon: "Female Scientist" by Template from thenounproject.com
2. Exercise icon: "Pencil" by Hoeda from thenounproject.com
3. Joe and Mary icons: "happy man" and "happy woman" by RROOK from thenounproject.com
4. Take-Home Points icon: "reminder" by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
5. Action Plan icon: "to do" by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com

#### **Session 15**

1. Working on recovery goals icon: "success" by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com
2. Relaxation and stress reduction icon: "peaceful" by Kamin Ginkaew from thenounproject.com
3. Social activities and support icon: "friends" by Random Panda from thenounproject.com
4. Refocusing icon: "behavioral change" by dDara from thenounproject.com
5. Changing thinking icon: "Thinking" by Ashley Fiveash from thenounproject.com
6. Exercise icon: "Pencil" by Hoeda from thenounproject.com
7. Wellness Plan icon: "healthy" by Mask Icon from thenounproject.com
8. Coping Ahead Plan icon: "healthy" by SELicon from thenounproject.com
9. Take-Home Points icon: "reminder" by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
10. Action Plan icon: "to do" by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com

#### **Session 16**

1. Take-Home Points icon: "reminder" by Sergey Demushkin from thenounproject.com
2. Action Plan icon: "to do" by Adrien Coquet from thenounproject.com
3. Last icon: "winner" by Template from thenounproject.com