

## Chapter 17

### TERMINATION

*Timeline:* 1 session; may be extended to 2 sessions if discussion of progress reveals need for further intervention

*Reading:* Chapter 13 in the Client Workbook

*Photocopies needed from Client Workbook:*

Figure 6.1 List of Thinking Errors

Figure 6.2 Disputing Questions

Figure 7.1 BYOCC Worksheet

*Session Outline for Chapter 13 in Client Workbook*

- I. Review progress thus far
  - A. Checklist of Progress
  - B. Re-rate Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy without looking at original ratings
    1. Compare to original ratings
    2. Usually Avoidance ratings change first
    3. As stop avoiding, SUDS ratings decrease as well
  - C. Identify progress and what still needs work
    1. Help client congratulate self for progress
    2. Watch out for Disqualifying the Positive
      - a) Sample AT: "I've done all of those things but social anxiety is still a big problem."
      - b) Challenge using cognitive restructuring skills

- D. Normal to still have some social anxiety after several weeks of treatment
- II. How to continue to progress
  - A. Avoid avoidance
    - 1. Avoidance rewards the anxiety and makes it worse
    - 2. Some avoidance is like taking two steps forward and one step back
    - 3. Avoidance should be near zero
  - B. Keep using the cognitive skills
    - 1. Don't take short cuts by skipping steps in cognitive restructuring
    - 2. Continue to use BYOCC Worksheets
  - C. View an increase in anxiety as an opportunity to work on overcoming fears
    - 1. Change mindset from trying to protect self from anxiety
    - 2. Anxiety should be a signal to charge ahead, not stop, escape, or avoid
  - D. Reward yourself for your success
    - 1. Facing fears takes courage and motivation
    - 2. Give self credit for success
    - 3. Tell therapist about accomplishments
    - 4. Celebrate successes with friends or family who know client is working on social anxiety
    - 5. Celebrate ways life is improving as making progress on anxiety

- E. Use additional strategies to control anxiety.
  - 1. If progress insufficient, consider adding strategies
  - 2. Medication (see Chapter 14 of Client Workbook)
  - 3. Relaxation and breathing retraining that therapist can teach
- III. Reactions of Family, Friends, and Other People
  - A. Explain notion of family system
    - 1. Family in family therapy because teenager is getting into trouble
    - 2. Everyone knows their role in the family, even if they are unhappy
    - 3. Family has achieved a certain balance
    - 4. As daughter improves, parents may fight more because she was distracting them from marital problems
    - 5. Her improvement upset the balance
    - 6. There is a tendency for daughter to act out again to put everything back in a balance that feels familiar, if not comfortable
  - B. Clients live in social system
    - 1. Family, friends, co-workers expect client to maintain a certain role that includes being socially anxious
    - 2. As client improves, others may be unsure how to respond
    - 3. Their reactions initially make it easier to start acting anxious again
      - a) Not expect client to attend a social event

b) Not expect client to go for a promotion that involves increased contact with people

4. Once they adjust to the new non-anxious person, then they help maintain that role as well.

#### IV. When to Stop Seeing Your Therapist Regularly

##### A. Treatment usually 15-20 sessions

1. May be longer if spend time on other topics during sessions
2. May then shift to other issues with therapist, but stop emphasizing social anxiety in sessions
3. If anxiety is more severe, it may take longer

##### B. Signs that client may be ready to stop seeing therapist regularly

1. Completed in-session exposures for the most difficult situations on your Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy and completed homework exposures for nearly all of the situations on hierarchy
2. Met most important treatment goal such as going back to school, getting/changing a job, going on a few dates, facing a specific difficult situation such as an important speech or social occasion
3. Social anxiety does not interfere in day-to-day functioning in any important way. May still get some anxiety but you feel able to handle it and, rarely, if ever, avoid anything due to anxiety.

V. Identify any needed in session or *in vivo* exposures to be completed before finishing treatment

- VI. Celebrate client's accomplishments and set goal for continued progress
  - A. Complete My Accomplishments During Treatment for Social Anxiety form
  - B. Set a goal for one month after treatment ends
    - 1. Immediately after treatment, it is easy to stop working so hard to face fears
    - 2. Setting a goal for one month after active phase of treatment will help get back on track after taking this expected rest
    - 3. Tapering sessions will help provide support
- VII. Describe common experience with long term treatment outcome
  - A. Most people still have some anxiety at end of treatment
  - B. Social anxiety is normal; it will always show up in some situations
  - C. Most people who have made good progress, continue to improve over the 6-12 months after stopping treatment as they continue to apply what they learned
- VIII. New Situations Mean New Challenges
  - A. After treatment, the client may be in situations never before entered
    - 1. Relationship breakup for someone who had never dated
    - 2. Getting a new job
  - B. Anxiety may occur because these are new challenges
    - 1. Does not mean client is losing treatment gains
    - 2. It is a sign of treatment success
  - C. Handling anxiety in these new situations

1. Use cognitive restructuring and exposure skills learned in treatment as outlined on BYOCC Worksheet
2. Call therapist for a “booster session” if needed

IX. Terminating treatment

A. Some sadness over not seeing therapist regularly any more is normal

B. Ending treatment is a positive event

1. Signals client has improved
2. Ends commitment of time, money, and emotional energy
3. Call therapist if
  - a) Facing new situation and have not been able to handle anxiety using the skills learned in treatment
  - b) Anxiety appears to be returning
    - (1) Most likely to occur if have some very stressful life event
    - (2) Don't wait too long or it will be more difficult to get back on track