

## Chapter 8

### PSYCHOEDUCATION

#### PART 4: FEAR AND AVOIDANCE HIERARCHY AND SELF-MONITORING

*Timeline:* Typically one session

*Reading:* Chapter 4 in Client Workbook

*Photocopies needed from Client Workbook:*

Figure 4.2, Brainstorming for Your Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy

pp. 50-53 SUDS anchor points

Figure 4.4 Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy (2 photocopies needed in session, make 2 additional copies after situations are filled in but before anxiety and avoidance ratings are completed)

Figure 4.6 Self-Monitoring Form

Figure 4.8 Weekly Summary of Self-Monitoring of Average Daily Anxiety and Depression

Figure 4.9 Weekly Summary of Self-Monitoring of Average Peak Anxiety for Two Situations

*Session Outline for Chapter 4 in Client Workbook*

- I. Review Worksheet for Reactions to Starting this Treatment Program (Figure 3.2 in Client Workbook)
  - A. A few doubts are normal
  - B. Address more significant doubts by reviewing relevant material in the first three chapters of the Client Workbook
- II. Develop individualized Fear and Avoidance Hierarchy

A. Describe and explain rationale

1. Rank ordered list of situations that evoke social anxiety
2. Rationale
  - a) Used to understand what makes a situation more or less anxiety-provoking
  - b) Helps guide selection of therapeutic exposures
  - c) Used to assess progress in treatment

B. Step 1: Brainstorming

1. Use Figure 4.2 in Client Workbook to record list of 8-10 situations that might appear on the hierarchy
  - a) Integrate client's experience completing this form for homework into this discussion
2. Situations can describe a specific event ("attending high school reunion") or a more general category of social event (e.g., "conversations with strangers")
3. Include situations that evoke mild, moderate, and severe anxiety
4. Emphasize situations that the client would like to address in treatment

C. Step 2: Rank Ordering the Situations

1. Rank order brainstorming list with 1= most difficult
2. "Difficult" is subjectively defined by client and may reflect fear and/or avoidance

3. Rank ordering may reveal the need to subdivide some situations as certain aspects or circumstances may be more or less difficult

#### D. Step 3: Discovering the Dimensions that Make a Situation Easier or Harder for You

1. Examine the rank-ordered list to identify situational dimensions that increase or decrease the difficulty
2. This process may yield additional situations or other refinements to the list

#### E. Step 4: Rate Each Situation For Fear It Evokes And The Likelihood You Will Avoid It

1. Explain fear (SUDS) ratings
  - a) Wolpe and Lazarus' Subjective Units of Discomfort Scale (SUDS)
  - b) 0-100 scale, higher numbers indicate more discomfort or anxiety – scale appears on p. 50 of Client Workbook
  - c) Subjectively define ratings of 0, 25, 50, 75, and 100 by identifying a situation that matches each description and recording it in Client Workbook on pages 51-52
    - (1) 0 = no anxiety. Not necessarily happy but calm and relaxed
    - (2) 25 = alert but able to cope. A little "hyped up"
    - (3) 50 = anxiety definitely bothersome, some difficulty concentrating

(4) 75 = extreme discomfort and thoughts of avoiding or escaping

(5) 100 = worst anxiety has experienced or can imagine experiencing

2. Explain avoidance ratings on 0 – 100 scale with higher numbers indicating greater avoidance – scale appears on p. 53 of Client Workbook

a) Rating behavior – whether or not avoids the situation

b) Virtually all situations can be avoided, although sometimes cost is high (e.g., loss of job)

c) Avoidance can be subtle, i.e., entering a situation then avoiding its anxiety-provoking aspects (e.g., attending a party but only talking with familiar people)

3. Transfer hierarchy situations to Figure 4.4 in Client Workbook using rank order. If possible, make a photocopy before filling in the ratings.

4. Complete SUDS and avoidance ratings for each situation and record on one copy of Figure 4.4

### III. Self-Monitoring

#### A. Share rationale for self-monitoring

1. First step in gaining control of social anxiety is to understand precisely when and where it occurs
2. Research shows that current mood colors memory for events

3. May also be difficult to remember details of experiences between sessions
4. Self-monitoring ensures more accurate information
5. Self-monitoring will be used to:
  - a) Monitor progress in treatment
    - (1) Know if treatment is working
    - (2) Help overcome discouragement if progress feels slow or there is a setback
  - b) Help determine what situations should be the focus of exposures and cognitive restructuring

B. Review instructions for self-monitoring (See Self-Monitoring Form, Figure 4.6 in Client Workbook)

1. Three types of ratings
  - a) Average anxiety during the day
    - (1) Overall sense of tension level during the day
    - (2) Not just social anxiety
    - (3) Use 0 – 100 scale like SUDS
  - b) Average depression during the day
    - (1) Sad, blue, down feelings
    - (2) Rate depression because socially anxious people are often depressed as well
    - (3) If depression is severe or gets worse, may need separate treatment for depression

(4) Use 0 – 100 scale, higher numbers indicate greater depression

c) Peak anxiety in two situations

(1) Pick two situations that do (or could) occur frequently

(2) Monitor same two situations throughout treatment

(3) Use 0 – 100 SUDS

2. Complete ratings towards the end of each day, about the same time

3. Helpful to put the sheets in a visible place

4. Bring completed sheets to session each week

5. Ratings will be summarized on graphs in Figure 4.8 and 4.9 in Client Workbook

C. Describe expected pattern with self monitoring

1. Initially client may see an increase in anxiety as avoidance decreases

2. Anxiety will decrease later

IV. Assign Homework:

A. Make sure that client leaves with copies of completed hierarchy and

1. Self-Monitoring Form (Figure 4.6 in Client Workbook)

2. Weekly Summary of Self-Monitoring of Average Daily Anxiety and Depression (Figure 4.8 in Client Workbook)

3. Weekly Summary of Self-Monitoring of Average Peak Anxiety  
for Two Situations (Figure 4.9 in Client Workbook)

B. Client should initiate self-monitoring during the next week

C. Client should read Chapter 5 in the Client Workbook