

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Anxiety



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Disclosures

No financial disclosures

Basic CBT Model: Treatment Rationale

Situ



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CBT Philosophical Tenets

Stoic Philosophy: Perception as basis of true knowledge

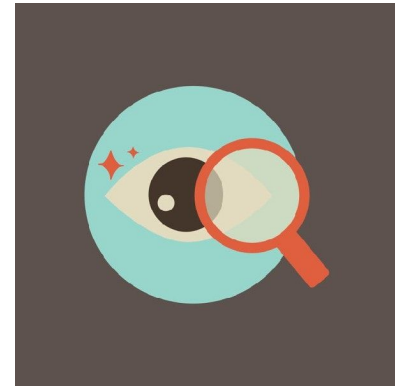
- Logic and reasoning to overcome emotional difficulties
- Uncover automatic thoughts, underlying beliefs, and behaviors

Inductive Method:

- Observe experiences to create general conclusions
- Socratic method

Collaborative Empiricism:

- Together constructing ways of understand experiences
- Creation of common treatment goals
- Hypothesis testing with trial and error



CBT Case Review: Present-Focused

Situation

Child with DMI
Caring for parents
Anti-Asian harassment
Works in grocery store
Financial strain



Thoughts

Worries about Safety/Health:
?Preoccupied with safety
?Only way to protect family
?*Prior childhood medical issues*
?*Responsible for parent/child health*

**CBT
Cognitive
Triangle**

Behaviors



Feelings



Cleaning & Avoidance:

- Washing all food
- Avoid mail three days
- Avoiding playdates
- Arguing with spouse

Emotional Distress:

- Anxiety
- Hypervigilance
- Irritability
- Panic attacks

CBT Strengths

- Honors patient experience (inductive)
- Present-focused, scientific perspective - Hypothesis testing & Objective (non-judgemental)
- Collaborative & Flexible (intervene at multiple levels)
- Time-efficient - Directive and educational
- Natural “piece” of work



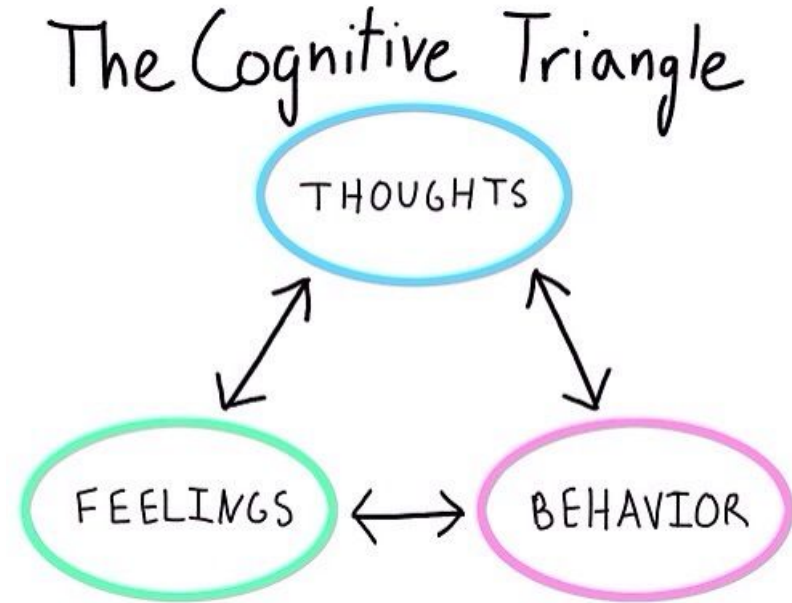
CBT Interventions for Anxiety

Behaviors:

- Relaxation & Stress Mgmt Training
- Exposure & Reality Testing
- Sleep hygiene
- Assertiveness
- Exercise
- Limit caffeine and alcohol
- Medication

Thoughts:

- Psychoeducation
- Cognitive restructuring



Steps in CBT Treatment

1. Collaboratively identifying target goal
2. Psychoeducation based on CBT Triangle
3. Build cognitive and/or behavioral skills
4. Target maladaptive core beliefs
 - a. Introduce cognitive distortions (absolute, black and white thinking)
 - b. Evidence for and against
 - c. Restructure new, more balanced and accurate thoughts



Worries about Safety/Health:

?Preoccupied with safety

?Only way to protect family

?Prior childhood medical issues

?Responsible for parent/child health

Cognitive Restructuring 101

Situation: Food & mail into house	Action: Wash food, mail 3 days	Feelings: Hypervigilant, Anxious, Overwhelm, Panic	Automatic Thought: “It is unsafe. If I don’t my family will die.”
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Evidence for:

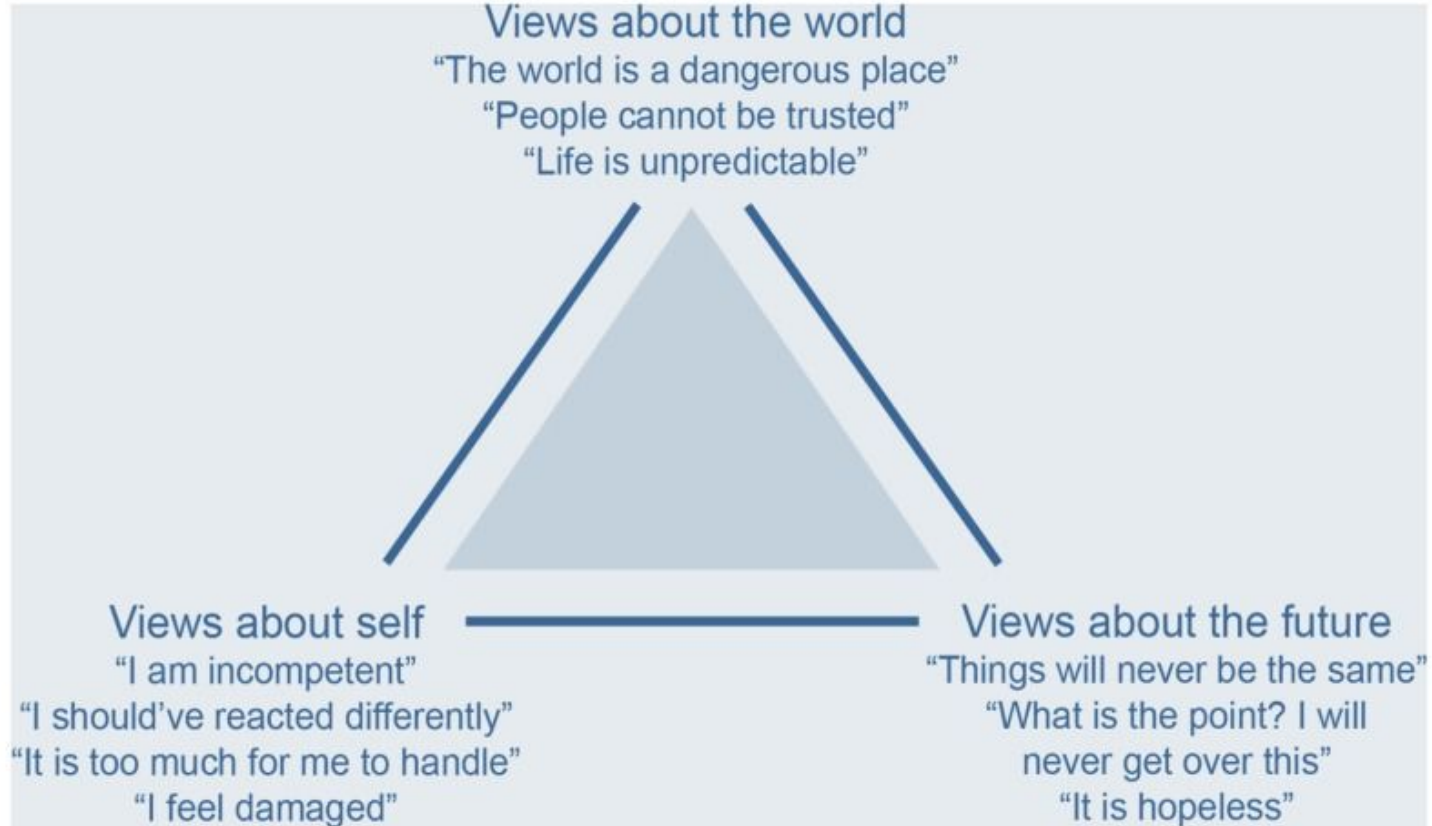
- Infection is a real threat
- COVID *can* cause death

Evidence against:

- Vaccines protect against severe illness
- Low chance spreading by surfaces (mostly droplets)
- Possible, not probable

Restructured Thought: “Even though COVID infection is a serious threat, vaccines protect against severe illness. There is a very very low chance of spreading through surface contact. Just because COVID death is possible, it doesn’t mean that it will happen to my family.”

Advanced CBT Model: A Practitioner's Eye



Primary CBT Target: Restructuring Underlying Core Beliefs

Worries about Safety/Health:

?Prior childhood medical issues

?Responsible for parent/child health

Life Experiences as Data Points:

- *Identified patient* - Spouse and prior childhood medical issues
- *Caregiver responsibility* - Child with DMI and caring for parents
- *Disempowered minority* - Racial discrimination, financial hardship, no remote work

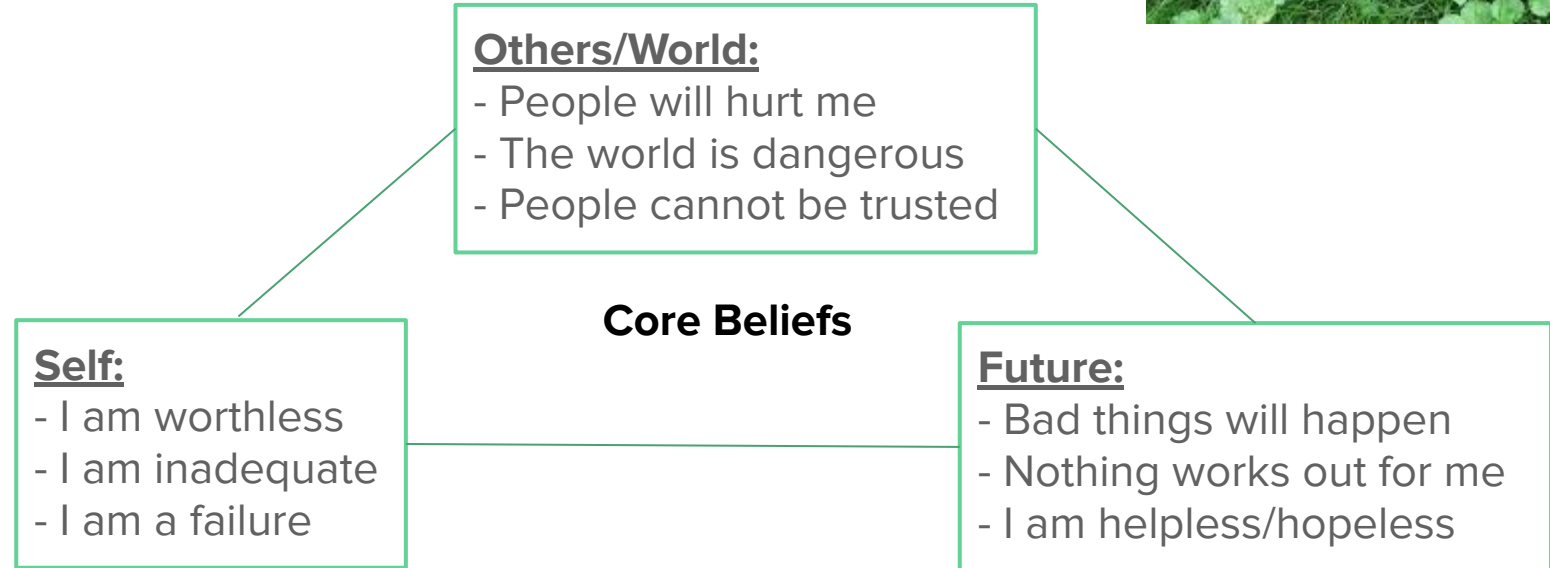
Inductive Conclusions (Core Beliefs):

- *Self*: I am the problem, I am responsible for everything, I have no control
- *Others/world*: The world is dangerous, hostile, and overwhelming
- *Future*: ???

Underlying Core Beliefs are like weeds...

*Look for *recurrent thoughts or themes of interpretation*

*Look for *all-or-none/polarized/splitting beliefs*



Cognitive Restructuring of Underlying Core Beliefs

Situation: Varies	Feelings: Hypervigilant, Anxious, Overwhelm, Panic	Thought (Core Belief): “The world is dangerous”
	Evidence for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal and family medical issues• Discrimination• COVID threat	Evidence against: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family is alive and safe even when I’m not there• I have gotten to work unharmed for the past year• Known COVID cases have recovered at work
Restructured Thoughts: <p>“The world <i>can</i> be dangerous. If I only focus on the dangers all I will see are the dangers, but if I can keep my eyes open to where it is not dangerous, I can have a more realistic and balanced view that not everything is dangerous”</p> <p>“There are threats, but it is up to me how I deal with them.”</p> <p>“COVID is a threat, but I do know people that have recovered and are back at work.”</p>		

Summary: CBT for Anxiety

Cognitive model:

- Individual perception + Reaction ➤ Situation

Etiology of Distress:

- Automatic maladaptive thoughts
- Core beliefs

Goal of CBT:

- Change automatic maladaptive thoughts, core beliefs, & behavior to improve mood and functioning



Thank you!



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