

WEEK 2

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY FOR ANXIETY –

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD)

## Cognitive Conceptualization Diagram

**RELEVANT HISTORY**  
Parents focused attention on developmentally delayed brother.  
Parents criticized her for seeking attention and told her she should be grateful.  
Parents invalidated emotions and said she should feel happy.  
Parents worried about money and safety.  
Parents compared her to high achieving others.  
She moved to a new city for a new job without local social support.

**CORE BELIEF(S)**  
I'm not good enough/incompetent.  
I'm needy.  
I'm selfish.  
I'm vulnerable.

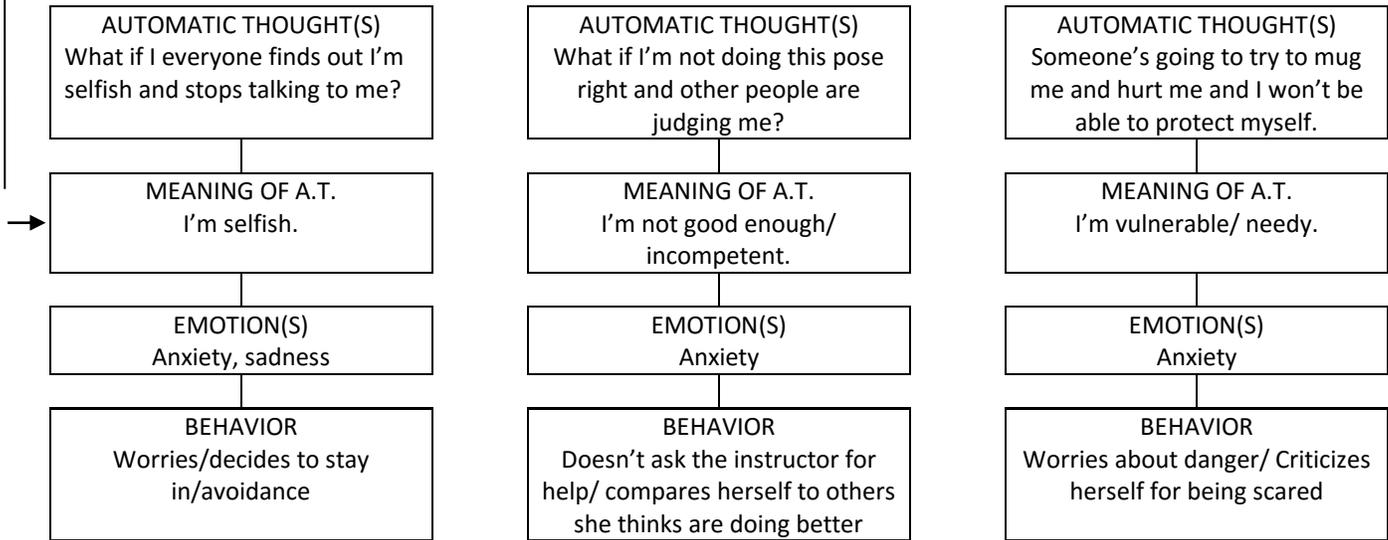
**CONDITIONAL ASSUMPTIONS/ATTITUDES/RULES**  
If I try to be perfect, I'll be ok; if I don't, I'll fail and show that I'm not good enough/ incompetent.  
If I do everything on my own without help, I'll be ok; if I don't, it will show I'm needy.  
If I worry, I'll be ok; if I don't, I won't be prepared for danger [I'll be vulnerable].  
If I put other peoples' needs before my own, I'll be ok; if I don't, it will show I'm selfish.  
Negative emotions are bad.  
Anxiety protects me.  
Anxiety is always present and will never go away.  
Anxiety will cause me to have a heart attack.  
Anxiety won't let me function.  
Worry is uncontrollable and all-consuming.  
I should only experience and express positive emotions.  
The world's a dangerous place.  
People are judgmental.

**COPING STRATEGIES**  
Perfectionism/developing unrealistically high standards  
Repeatedly checking  
Relies on advice from her family  
Avoids asking others for help  
Seeks reassurance from others  
Compares self unfavorably to high achieving others  
Over-prepares/rehearses  
Self-criticism  
Worry  
Rumination  
Humming as a distraction from anxiety  
Thought suppression/tries not to think about certain subjects/images  
People pleasing/puts others' needs ahead of her own  
Isolates from others  
Avoids feared events

**SITUATION #1**  
Thinking about going to a social outing with her coworkers

**SITUATION #2**  
Attending a yoga for beginner's class

**SITUATION #3**  
Walking home from work at night



# General Anxiety Disorder Assessment (GAD-7)

Name	Date
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Over the last <u>two weeks</u> , how often have you experienced these symptoms?	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Not being able to stop or control worrying?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Worrying too much about different things?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Trouble relaxing?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Being so restless that it is hard to sit still?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Becoming easily annoyed or irritable?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

<b>Score</b>	<b>Risk level</b>	
0-4	Minimal anxiety	Add the score for each column:      +                      +
5-9	Mild anxiety	
10-14	Moderate anxiety	<b>Total score:</b> _____
15-21	Severe anxiety	_____

If you checked any problems, how difficult have they made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all   
  Somewhat difficult   
  Very difficult   
  Extremely difficult

Notes

## Worry Awareness Log

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

*Instructions:* Please use this form to record daily occurrences of worry episodes that you experienced during the next week. Try to complete the form as close to the worry episodes as possible in order to increase the accuracy of your remarks.

<b>Date and Estimated Time of Day</b>	<b>Anxious Intrusive Thoughts and/or Initial Worry</b> (Briefly indicate your thoughts when you began to worry)	<b>Worry Content</b> (Briefly describe the focus of your worries; what you were worried about?)	<b>Duration of Worry</b> (minutes or hours)	<b>Average Distress</b> (0-100)	<b>Outcome</b> (What did you do to control the worry, turn it off? How effective was this?)

## Calming Your Worries

Situation I'm worried about:

How Anxious or Worried are you (1-100):

What's going through my mind? What am I thinking?

What am I feeling (emotions and physical sensations):

Questions to ask yourself (they may not all apply; ask yourself the ones that make sense):

- What am I worrying will happen?
- What am I predicting will happen?
- What's the worst-case scenario?
- How likely is it the worst-case scenario will happen?
- What evidence do I have that the worst-case scenario will come true?
- What evidence do I have that the worst-case scenario may not come true?
- If the worst-case scenario did happen, what could I do to help me cope with it?

## Calming Your Worries

- What are some other possible scenarios? Other outcomes? Other ways things might turn out?
- What is the most likely thing to happen?
- If that were to happen, how could I cope?
- Have I ever been in a similar situation? How did that turn out? How was I able to cope?
- What have I learned from past situations that can help me deal with what I'm going through now?
- What advice would I give to a friend or loved one who was in a similar situation? What advice might a friend or loved one give to me?

How Anxious or Worried are you after completing the questions (1-100)?

## Questions to Help Reduce Worry

Situation I'm worried about:

A presentation I have to give at work.

How Anxious or  
Worried are you  
(1-100): 90%

What's going through my mind? What am I thinking?

I hate speaking in front of people. What if I stumble over my words or forget things. Everyone will see how uncomfortable I am. What if I leave out something important? What if there are questions I can't answer?

What am I feeling (emotions and physical sensations):

Anxious, worried, sad.

What am I worrying will happen?

I'm going to embarrass myself and let people down.

What am I predicting will happen?

I'll forget what I was going to say. I'll talk way too fast. Everyone will see how nervous I am.

What's the worst case scenario?

I'll completely freeze and make a fool of myself and people will think I'm stupid. My boss will get mad and I won't be able to advance in my career.

What evidence do I have that the worst-case scenario will come true?

I'm always uncomfortable when I speak in public. I never do as well as I should.

What evidence do I have that the worst-case scenario may not come true?

Even if it hasn't been perfect, it's always been okay and nobody's ever complained it. I always managed to get through it.

How likely is it the worst case scenario will happen? Not very likely.

If the worst case scenario did happen, what could I do to help me cope with it?

If I start to freeze, I can drink some water to calm down. I can read from my notes if I start forgetting things.

What are some other possible scenarios? Other outcomes? Other ways things might turn out?

It could go fine and nobody will notice. I might stumble a bit but I'll get through it.

What is the most likely thing to happen?

I'll be nervous before/when I first start speaking, but then I'll settle down & do OK even if it's not perfect.

If that were to happen, how could I cope?

That's not so bad. I'll just try to relax before and then once I get started I'll be fine.

Have I ever been in a similar situation? How did that turn out? How was I able to cope then?

I always feel really nervous when I know I'll have to make a presentation. I usually make a few mistakes or forget something, but nothing bad has ever really happened and I've always gotten through it.

What have I learned from past situations that can help me deal with what I'm going through now?

I'll be uncomfortable when I first start talking but then I'll calm down and it will go okay. I always prepare really well and if I get lost, I can always refer to my notes and get back on track. As long as I prepare well, I'll be fine.

What advice would I give to a friend or loved one who was in a similar situation? What advice might a friend or loved one give to me?

Just prepare as well as you can. Know you'll be nervous at first but most people get nervous speaking in public. If I stumble over some words or speak too fast or forget something, people will understand. Once I start talking, it usually goes better than I feared, and I've never completely screwed it up so there's no reason to think I will now.

How Anxious or Worried are you after completing the questions (1-100)? 50%

# Predictions Worksheet

<b>What negative things will happen and when?</b>	<b>Strength of Your Belief (0–100%)</b>	<b>What really happened?</b>	<b>Check False Predictions (v)</b>

## Constructive Worry Instructions

When we have problems, we tend to use our problem solving skills to make our lives better and relieve ourselves of anxiety. It is not surprising that some of us may use our problem solving skills at the wrong times and places, namely bedtime. We may think about a problem, trying to solve it, but unfortunately, the anxiety caused by the problem will keep us awake. Constructive worry is a method for managing the tendency to worry during that quiet time when sleep is supposed to be taking over. During the early evening (at least 2 hours before bed) take about fifteen minutes to do this exercise. Here's how it is done:

1. Write down a problem facing you that has the greatest chance of keeping you awake at bedtime, and list them in the "Concerns" column.
2. Then, think of the next step you might help fix it. Write it down in the "Solutions" column. This need not be the final solution to the problem, since most problems have to be solved by taking steps anyhow, and you will be doing this again tomorrow night and the night after until you finally get to the best solution.
  - If you know how to fix the problem completely, then write that down.
  - If you decide that this is not really a big problem, and you will just deal with it when the time comes, then write that down.
  - If you decide that you simply do not know what to do about it, and need to ask someone to help you, write that down.
  - If you decide that it is a problem, but there seems to be no good solution at all, and that you will just have to live with it, write that down, with a note to yourself that maybe sometime soon you or someone you speak with will give you a clue that will lead you to a solution.
3. Repeat this for any other concerns you may have
4. Fold the Constructive Worry sheet in half and place it on the nightstand next to your bed and forget about it until bedtime.
5. At bedtime, if you begin to worry actually tell yourself that you have dealt with your problems already in the best way you know how, and when you were at your problem solving best. Remind yourself that you will be working on them again tomorrow evening and that nothing you can do while you are so tired can help you any more than you have already done; more effort will only make matters worse.
6. An additional benefit of Constructive Worry may be less anxiety during the daytime.

Constructive Worry Worksheet

CONCERNS	SOLUTIONS
1.	1.  2.  3.
2.	1.  2.  3.
3.	1.  2.  3.

## Script Exposure

**Anxiety/Fear Topic:**

**Worst Possible Scenario:**

**Script:**

Write in first person as if it is REALLY happening. Add as many details as you'd like. Record the above script in your phone, then listen to it over and over again. While listening to the looped audio, try to hold on to the mental image that matches the script. Mindfully experience your feelings. Answer any threats that come to your mind with, "maybe, maybe not." "sure that may happen." - Relax your body as if you don't care. Try to focus on the core fear.

Throughout the exposure, mindfully check in with yourself every few minutes and observe how much distress you are experiencing. Rate your distress here, using the 0-10 scale.

Notice what your distress was at the beginning of the exposure.

First rating = \_\_\_\_\_

Notice how high your distress got.

Peak rating = \_\_\_\_\_

Notice your distress rating at the end of this exposure.

Final rating = \_\_\_\_\_