



*Promoting behavioral health
equity for North Carolina's
children, youth and families.*

Common Brief Behavioral Interventions and Goal Setting Support

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J. Nathan Copeland, M.D., M.P.H.,
DFAPA, DFAACAP has no relevant
financial relationships to disclose

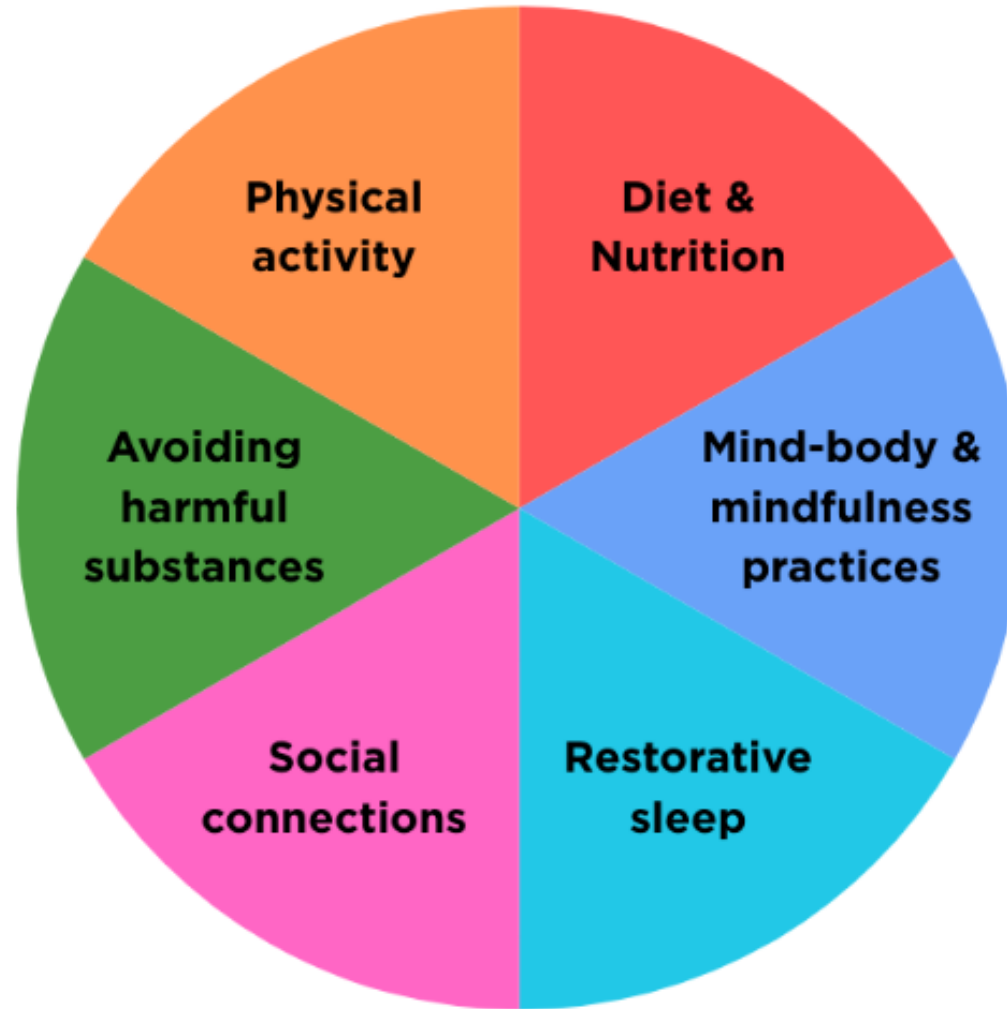


CoCM Brief Behavioral Interventions

(a short list)

- Lifestyle Psychiatry
- Motivational Interviewing
- Behavioral Activation
- Exposure Therapy
- Problem Solving Therapy

Lifestyle Areas Supporting Mental Health

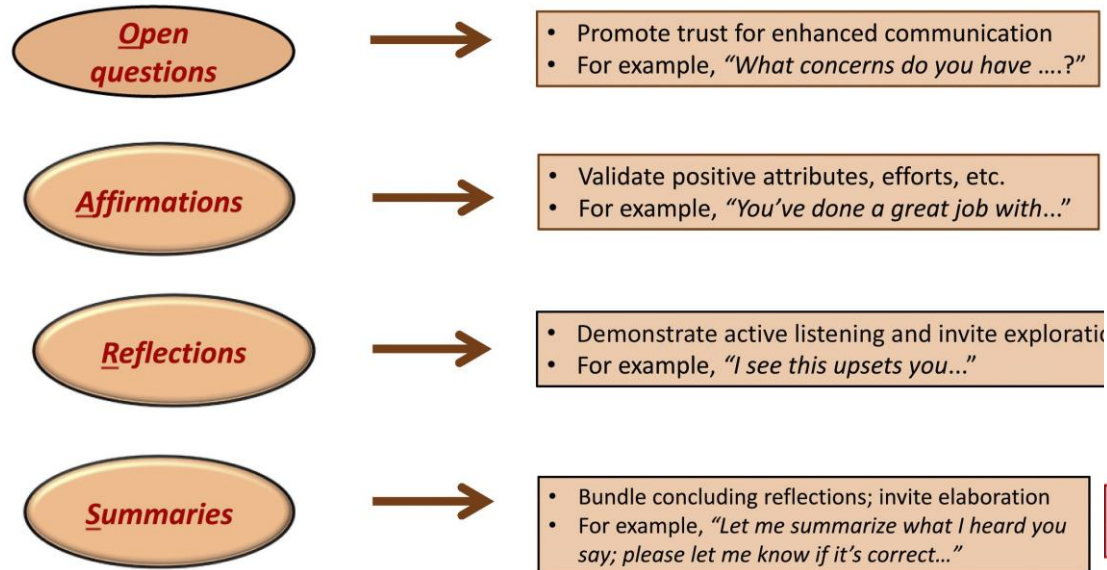




Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound

Motivational Interviewing

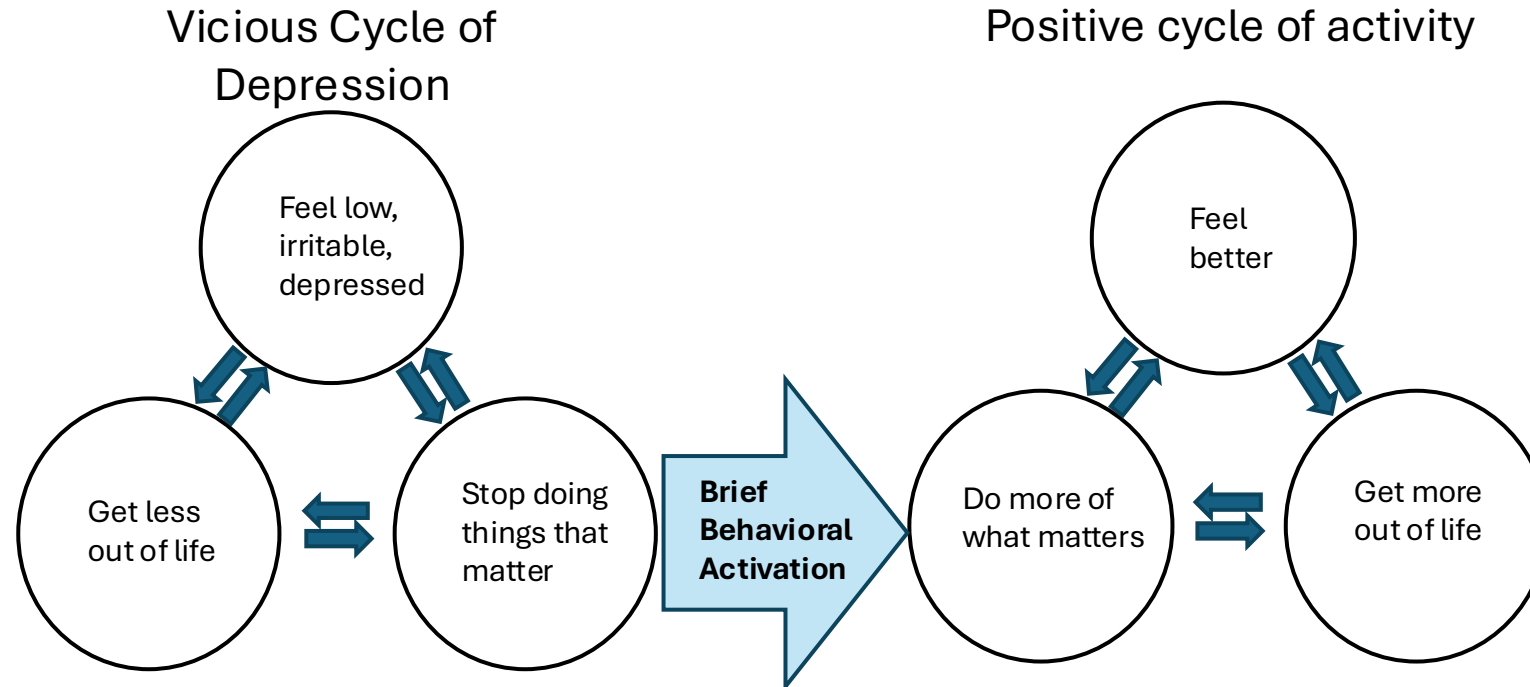
OARS: Four Core Skills of Motivational Interviewing



Four Processes of Motivational Interviewing



Basic model for BA





Common components of CBT for depression

- Psychoeducation
- **Behavioral activation**
- Problem-solving
- Cognitive restructuring
- Social skills training
- Parent management training
- Relapse prevention
- Components vary in emphasis, specific protocols, frequency of sessions, and intensity across studies



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A Life Worth Living: Values, Pleasure, Mastery, and Goals

The next step in Behavioral Activation is determining the behaviors on which to focus to improve our mood. While some behaviors, like exercise and meditation, can be used right away to improve mood directly, many of the behaviors that are likely to help us are those that align with the things that we enjoy or are important to us.

An exploration of “values,” “pleasure,” and “mastery” describe much of the “stuff” that makes life worth living. This process can help us come up with tangible goals to move us toward the things that are most important to us.

DeSena D, Miner K, Tischler S, Rimer J. *Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) group program for depression adult patient manual: behavioral activation*. Michigan Medicine, University of Michigan Department of Psychiatry. Accessed August 23, 2026. <https://prismbh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/RUB-CBT-Manual-Behavioral-Activation-for-Depression.pdf>

Jungbluth N. *First Approach Skills Training for Depression (FAST-D) Workbook for Teens*. Seattle Children's Hospital Research Foundation; 2023. Accessed August 23, 2026.

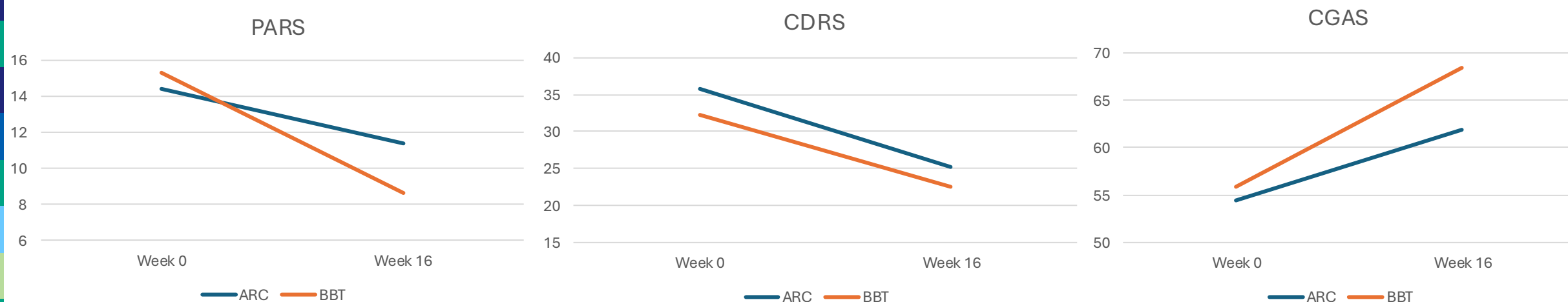
Brief Behavioral Therapy for Pediatric Anxiety and Depression in Primary Care: A Randomized Clinical Trial

OBJECTIVE To examine whether a pediatrics-based behavioral intervention targeting anxiety and depression improves clinical outcome compared with referral to outpatient community mental health care.

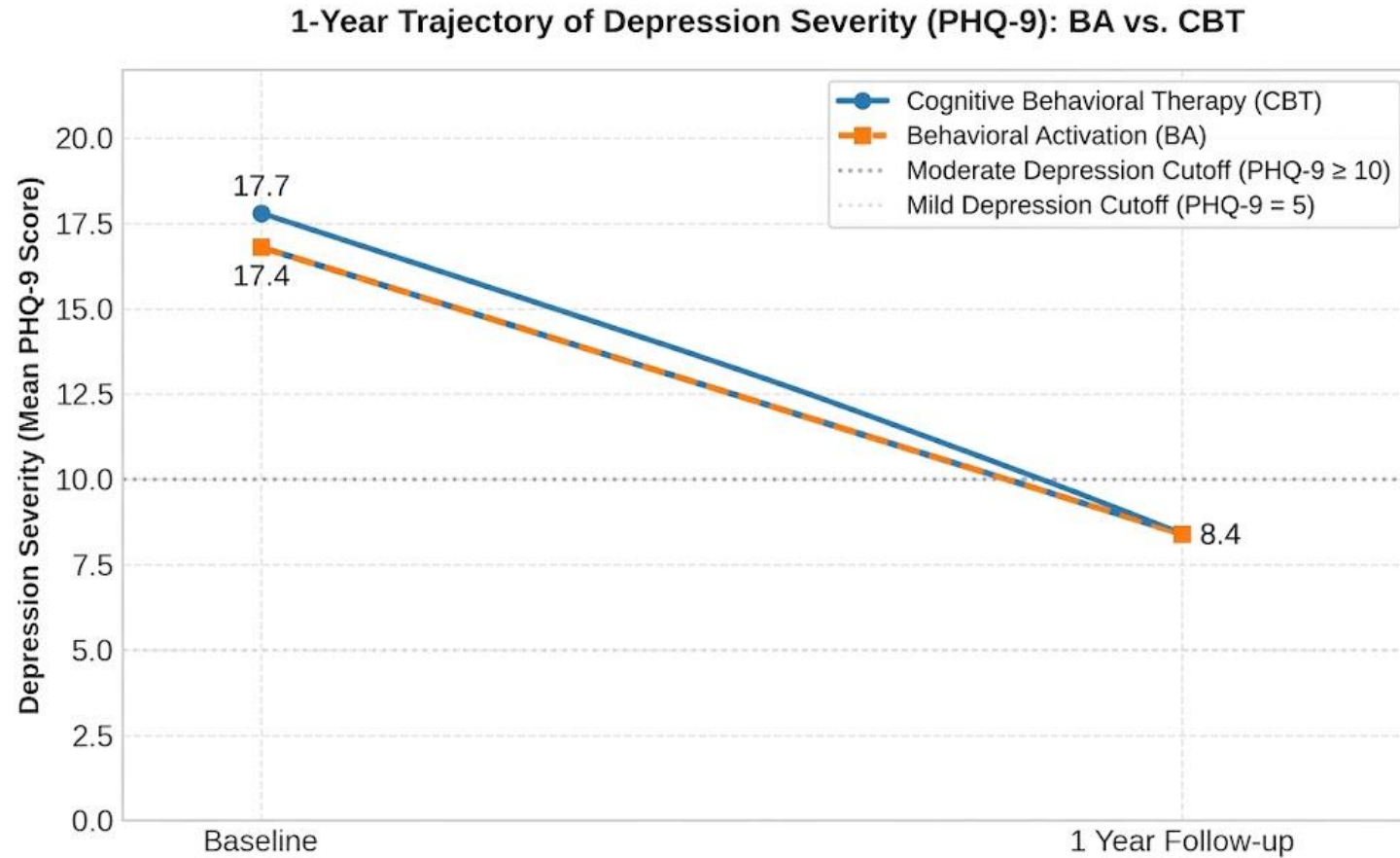
INTERVENTIONS The BBT consisted of 8 to 12 weekly 45-minute sessions of behavioral therapy delivered in pediatric clinics by master's-level clinicians. The ARC families received personalized referrals to mental health care and check-in calls to support accessing care from master's-level coordinators.

“In brief, exposure and behavioral activation were combined in the current protocol as graded engagement in avoided activities, supplemented by relaxation to manage somatic symptoms common among internalizing youth in primary care and by problem-solving skills to aid in stress management.”

Brief Behavioral Therapy for Pediatric Anxiety and Depression in Primary Care: A Randomized Clinical Trial



The COBRA Study

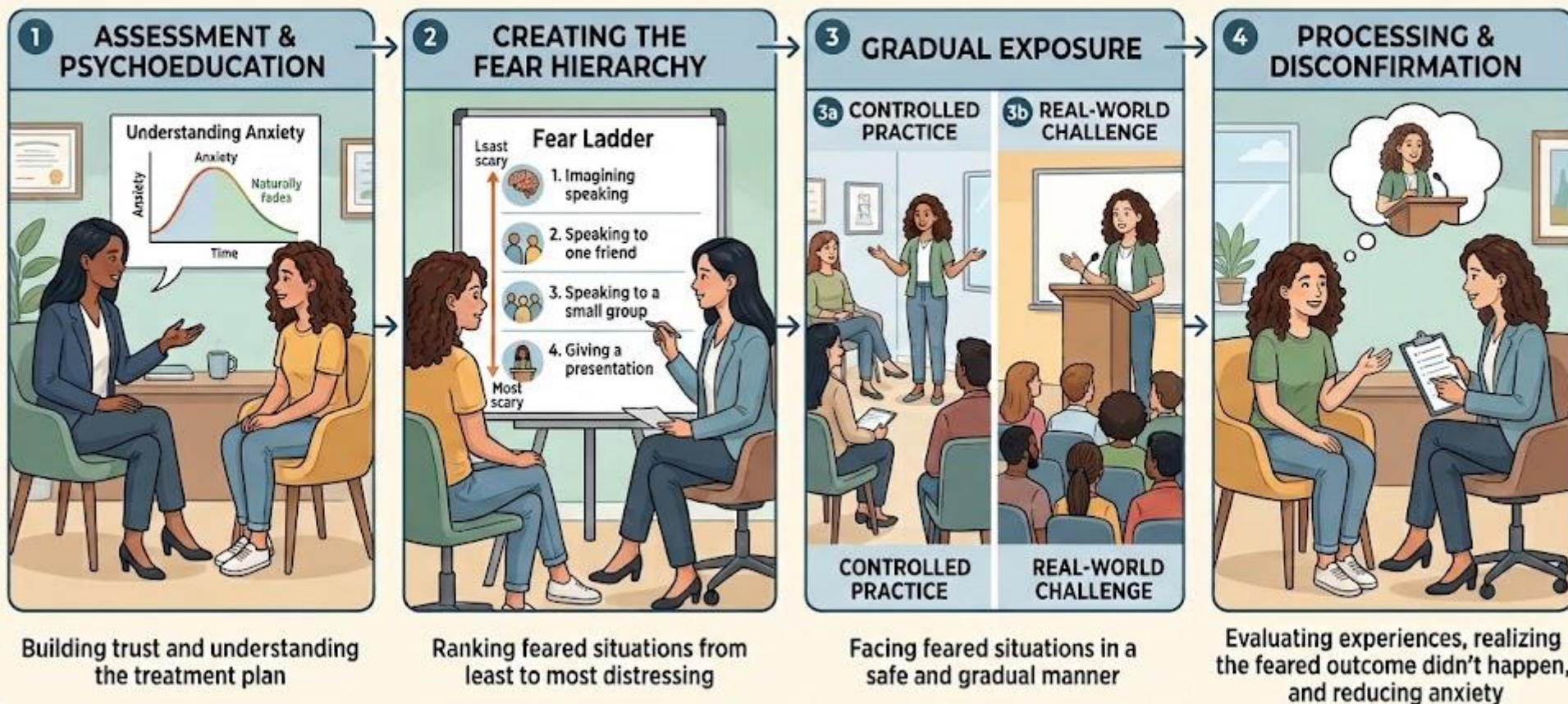


Richards, D.A., Ekers, D., Mcmillan, D., Taylor, R.S., Byford, S., Warren, F.C., Barrett, B., Farrand, P.A., Gilbody, S., Kuyken, W., O'Mahen, H., Watkins, E.R., Wright, K.A., Hollon, S.D., Reed, N., Rhodes, S., Fletcher, E., Finning, K., 2016. Cost and Outcome of Behavioural Activation versus Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Depression (COBRA): a randomised, controlled, non-inferiority trial. *The Lancet* 388, 871–880.. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(16\)31140-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(16)31140-0)

Mayor, S., 2016. Simpler psychological treatment is as effective as CBT for depression and is cheaper, study shows. *BMJ* i4114.. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.i4114>

Exposure Therapy

THE PROCESS OF EXPOSURE THERAPY: FACING FEARS GRADUALLY



Exposure Therapy

Exposure therapy is thought to help in several ways, including:

Habituation: Over time, people find that their reactions to feared objects or situations decrease.

Extinction: Exposure can help weaken previously learned associations between feared objects, activities or situations and bad outcomes.

Self-efficacy: Exposure can help show the client that he/she is capable of confronting his/her fears and can manage the feelings of anxiety.

Emotional processing: During exposure, the client can learn to attach new, more realistic beliefs about feared objects, activities or situations, and can become more comfortable with the experience of fear.

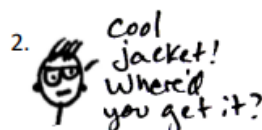
Exposure Therapy

1. Start easy.

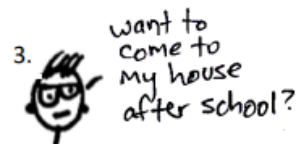
You don't have to face the really scary stuff right away. You can start with easier steps and move on to harder stuff.



Say "hi"



Give a compliment



Invite someone over

2. Choose the right practice.

Pick challenges that will help you with your goals and test out your specific fears. This sometimes means doing unusual things, like making mistakes on purpose, to see if what you fear really happens.

Aliyah worries people will tease her, so she spends way too much time fixing her hair and picking out clothes. She also avoids crowded places where people might notice her. Check out some of her brave practices:



Messed up hair at a public library



Strange clothes at coffee shop



Water spill on her shirt at school

Problem Solving Therapy

Seven Steps to Problem Resolution

There are seven steps to solve a problem:

Step 1: Identifying the Problem

Step 2: Setting the Goal

Step 3: Brainstorming Options

Step 4: Weighing the Pros and Cons

Step 5: Selecting the Best Option(s)

Step 6: Creating an Action Plan

Step 7: Evaluating the Outcome

Problem Solving Therapy

Figure 2. Mean SCL-20 Depression Score

