**COPING WITH LOSS COURSE – WEEK FIVE**

**Exercise 1 List examples of thoughts you have had in relation to Grief in the last week. Then try to label them as Type 1 or Type 2 worries.**

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**Exercise 2 Go back to your answers for Exercise 1 – Can you identify any unhelpful thinking styles?**

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**Perception**

* It is not usually the situation itself that makes us feel upset/distressed it is our perception of that situation…
* Our perception can be based upon past experiences
* Changing the way we think about situations and seeing different perspectives can help us to feel less upset/distressed and more in control

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**7 Column Thought Diary - Example**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date/Time/Situation** | **Emotions (rate 0-10**  | **Thoughts** | **Evidence Supporting Thought** | **Evidence Disputing Thought** | **Balanced Thought**  | **Emotions** |
| Monday morning, 10am,Having breakfast at home on my own, sent a text to Carol to cancel meeting up today  | Sad 9/10Guilty 10/10  | I can’t cope with company just nowIf I start crying I won’t stopI shouldn’t have cancelled with Carol***I am a bad friend*** | I have cancelled with Carol three times now | I am grievingI have cancelled with other people tooI don’t usually cancel with CarolCarol has had to cancel with me in the past | I am not a bad friendI am a friend who is struggling right nowCarol understands and will still be my friend | Sad 7/10Guilty 4/10Relieved 5/10 |

**Exercise 3 Use this 7 Column Thought Diary to challenge one of your Type 2 worries from Exercise 1**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date/Time/Situation** | **Emotions (rate 0-10**  | **Thoughts** | **Evidence Supporting Thought** | **Evidence Disputing Thought** | **Balanced Thought**  | **Emotions** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Other Impacts of Grief on Thoughts**

* Disbelief (I only spoke with him/her an hour ago)
* Guilt (I should have, I could have, If only...)
* Anger/Blame (It’s ..... fault, s/he made a mistake) **(Type 2)**
* Confusion (struggle to order thoughts, difficulty concentrating, forgetful)
* Preoccupation (intrusive thoughts/images of the individual dying)

**How to Manage These Thoughts**

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If you answer “yes” to “Can I do something about this?” then follow Problem Solving Technique.

* Exercise
* Relaxation
* Mindfulness
* Listen to music
* Talking to family/friends
* Writing to do lists for the day/week
* Write a list of people you can contact
* Write a list of favourite restaurants/places

**POSTPONING WORRY**

**STEP 1 SET A WORRY TEIM**

* Choose a **specific time**, **length of time** and a **place** to do all your thinking about worrisome things e.g. *6pm for 20 minutes in the spare room*.
* The time should be **convenient** so you can keep your worry time the same everyday  - *try not to set your worry time close to bedtime as this can impact on your ability to sleep*.
* If it does need to be changed on a certain day, just make sure you have a clear idea of the time you have rescheduled it to.
* Make the place **unique**, **comfortable** and **free from distractions**.

**STEP 2 POSTPONE YOUR WORRY**

* Whenever you notice yourself worrying during the day, **postpone it to the worry period**.
* **Note your worry** briefly on paper or ‘phone.
* Remind yourself that you will have time to think about it later, no need to worry about it now. You will be in a better position to deal with the worry in the worry period.
* **Turn your focus to the present moment** and the activities of the day to help let go of the worry until the worry period has arrived.
* **If the thought pops back again** (which it likely will), this is not a sign that postponement hasn’t worked. After all we can’t control what pops into our head!

***The aim is to stop the engagement with the thought that results in spiralling or snowballing of those thoughts.***

**STEP 3 COME BACK TO YOUR WORRY**

* When your worry period comes around, settle in your chosen place and **take some time to reflect** on the worries you had written down from the day.
* Only worry about the things you have noted if you feel you must. **Don’t think about them if they no longer bother you**, or no longer seem relevant. You could just cross them off your list.
* If you do need to worry about some of them, **spend no longer than the set amount of time** you specified for your worry period.

**Exercise 4 Controlling Worry**

On a scale of 0-10, with 0 meaning ‘I have no control’ and 10 meaning ‘I have complete control’, how much do you believe that you can control the time you spend worrying?

0…………………………………………………………………………10

**ATTENTION TRAINING**

* Worry is generally future focused
* We miss out on the present
* Pay less attention to the task in hand
* Attention training can help improve our focus on the here and now
* It can reduce preoccupation with worries

**Exercise 5 Practice of Attention Training in Session**

That issue that I asked you to think about, how much attention were you giving it during that exercise (0-100%)?

How worried do you feel at this moment (0- 10) scale?

Did anything change?

**Exercise 6 List the key points you have learned today.**

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| **HOMEWORK*** Try to identify the Unhelpful Thinking Styles in your unhelpful thoughts and see if there is a pattern.
* Use the 7 Column Thought Record to challenge any Type 2 thoughts you identified today and any you have over the next week.
* Use the Worry Tree to help you manage your worries. Record your outcomes on the sheet provided.
* Use the Postpone Your Worry Technique and record your results on the sheet provided.
* Practice the Attention Training Technique and record the outcome on the sheet provided.
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