



TF-CBT Booster Training Westside Regional Center

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Training Overview

- Engagement strategies
- Integrating COWs
- Application of components in a structured, gradual exposure manner
- Focus on Trauma Narrative, small groups
- Cognitive Restructuring Practice
- Complex Trauma applications
- Competency requirements & fidelity
- Questions



Engaging Families

- Good Assessment, Measures
- What has worked? What hasn't worked?
- Feedback about diagnosis & symptoms, overview of TF-CBT, why you think this is a good fit
- Emphasis on structured, time limited approach
- Address barriers, cultural issues



Cultural considerations for Engagement

- Listen to their stories, mutual communication
- Some self-disclosure (“es muy frio”)
- Provide assistance with basic resources
- Assist w/ discipline & show it works
- Be flexible with visiting hours, in-home services
- Be informed of issues of concern to different populations

Evelin Gomez, Chadwick 2011




Why is Structure Important?

- Adds structure and concrete activities to help with the “chaos” of a trauma
- Helps minimize avoidance
- Helps maintain fidelity to the model
- Keeps with timeframe parameters (12-18 sessions)

How to Maintain Structure

- Pyramid of TF-CBT steps
- Agenda-setting along w/ client input
- Homework assignments
- PRACTICE Checklist
- Manage COWs
- Involving caregiver or other supports





Gradual Exposure and the Early Skills Components

- Common mistake is not to include GE in the early skills components
- GE can be incorporated into psychoeducation; parenting; relaxation; affective modulation; and parental cognitive coping

Murray and Mannarino, 2009



PRACTICE

- **P**sychoeducation and parenting skills
- Relaxation
- Affective expression and regulation
- Cognitive coping
- Trauma Narrative & processing
- In Vivo desensitization
- Conjoint parent-child sessions
- Enhancing safety and future development



Psychoeducation: Gradual Exposure

- Start with initial contact, assessment, goes throughout
- Use the specific names of trauma (e.g., “when he raped you” not “when the bad thing happened”)
- Educate parents and children about trauma triggers and their connection to child’s trauma symptoms/behaviors



Specific Resources for Psychoed

- Please Tell, Jessie’s Story; Sara’s Waterfall (Ellery Akers) – SA
- I miss you (Pat Thomas); When Families Grieve (Sesame Street) – CTG
- Rosie Remembers Mommy: Forever in her Heart, Samantha Jane’s Missing Smile – Loss of Parent
- Maybe Days; Murphy’s Three Homes – Foster placement
- No More Bullies (game); stopbullying.gov
- [Harborview Questions for Psychoed](#)



Parenting Skills

- Empower parents with **positive** strategies to manage child's behavior problems, fears, sleep difficulties
- Increase parental support of child
- Establish reasonable developmental expectations
- GE: Offer a trauma lens for understanding behaviors



Parenting Skills

- Working with "resistant" parents
 - Or is this a "failure of engagement"?
- Behavioral interventions are essential:
 - Take specific behavioral problem that is of concern for the family – and address it immediately!
 - Role play practical behavioral management strategies
- How do you handle lack of follow-through by parents?



Parenting Quotes

- "There is no such thing as a perfect parent, so just be a real one." – Sue Atkins
- Children need love, especially when they do not deserve it." – Harold Hulbert
- "Children learn more from what you ARE than what you TEACH" – W.E.B. DuBois
- "Yelling silences your message. Speak quietly so children can hear your words instead of just your voice." L.R. Knost



Parenting Books

- The Whole-Brain Child by Dan Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson
- Quirky, Yes- Hopeless, No: Practical Tips to Help Your Child with Asperger's Syndrome Be More Socially Accepted by Cynthia Norall & Beth Brust
- The Misunderstood Child, Fourth Edition: Understanding and Coping with Your Child's Learning Disabilities by Larry B. Silver
- The Out-of-Sync Child (SPD) by Carol Kranowitz



Parenting Tips

- Recognize parenting strengths
- Give yourself a break when you make a mistake
- “Rupture & Repair”
- 3 C’s: Calm, Compassion & Consistent
- Self-care



PRACTICE

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Relaxation- Gradual Exposure

Goal: Reduce physiological arousal associated with trauma reminders/triggers

- Reference child's assessment & symptoms
- Review strategies, but ask "what will work best when you are reminded of (SA, DV)?"
- Use for in vivo work
- Homework, caregiver involvement
- Use before, during and after work on the trauma narrative



Relaxation Techniques

- Deep Breathing
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Guided imagery
- Grounding, mindfulness activities
- Yoga, Meditation, Prayer
- Books, Music
- Make sure you're considering cross-cultural practices & needs across the developmental span



Creative Relaxation & Apps

- Getrelaxed.com; kidsrelaxation.com
- Insighttimer.com, also app
- Take a chill app – teens
- Headspace app - mindfulness
- www.crownhouse.co.uk: Relaxation Techniques- CD by Lillian Nejad & Katrina Volny
- [PMR exercises for kids](#)



Integrating COWs into Relaxation

- When that stressor/crisis occurred, how did your body respond?
- What did you do to manage the crisis?
- How could you have employed one of the relaxation skills you have learned?
- Can you apply the same skill to trauma triggers?



PRACTICE

- Psychoeducation and parenting skills
- Relaxation
- **A**ffective expression and regulation
- Cognitive coping
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Affective Component GE

Goal: Teach skills to identify and cope with feelings associated with the trauma

- How do you feel when you remember what happened?
- What can you do to feel better when that happens? (coping skills)
- How might a child feel when they experience (child's trauma)?
- Select activities that fit with client presentation and treatment goal



Creative Affect Interventions

- Music
- Mixed up feelings, paint or food coloring
- Garbage dumping, bean bags
- Photo feelings cards of client
- Other ideas?



Integrating COWs w/ Affect Component

- Talk about the situation highlighting the feelings- naming them, asking how others in the situation might have felt
- Are there other times when you've had these same feelings?
- How can you cope with these feelings?



PRACTICE

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- Relaxation
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- **Cognitive coping**
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Cognitive Coping Goals

- Help children **distinguish** between thoughts, feelings & behaviors
- Help children and parents **understand connections** between thoughts, feelings & behaviors
- Help child/parent cope and improve functioning when overwhelmed w/ trauma reminders.



Common Distortions & Themes

- Self-blame/responsibility
- Overestimating danger
- Changed world view
- Shame/regret
- Interpersonal concerns (trust)
- Loss/abandonment
- Justice



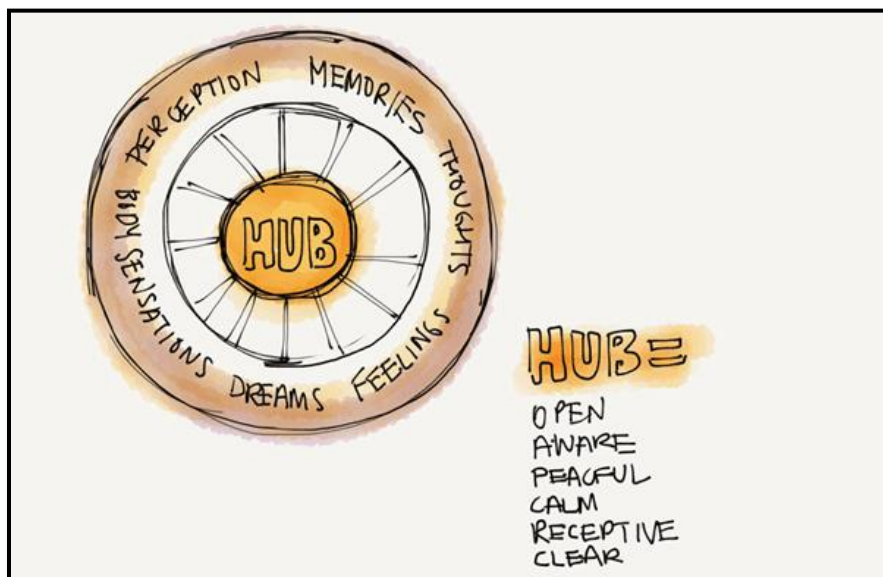
Creative Cognitive Coping

- Positively painted desert: fill up container w/ large rocks that represent negative thoughts, sand represents positive thoughts
- Right Address/Wrong Address: send extreme messages (i.e., I never make good choices) to the North Pole
- 3-headed dragon puppet
- Wheel of Awareness

Wheel of Awareness

- Kids can get “stuck” on one rim point, might be a negative thought or situation
- Bring them back to the hub and focus on bigger picture, all child’s strengths, thoughts, and supports
- “State” instead of “trait”, feel instead of “am”
- Example

Dan Siegel




Dan Siegel



Additional Cognitive Component Interventions

- Musical Triangle
- Picture/situation cards
- Magazine Pictures & phrases
- Positive Penguin, Thought box, Mind Jar Apps
- Triangle of Life App
- Songs – change the tune
- Other ideas?



Never Shout Never – “On the Bright Side” chorus lyrics

You're only as tall as your heart will
let you be
And you're only as small as the world
will make you seem
When the going gets rough and you
feel like you may fall
Just look on the bright side - you're
roughly six feet tall"



Christina Aguilera Fighter lyrics

'Cause if it wasn't for all that you tried to do,
I wouldn't know just how capable I am to
pull through.

So I wanna say thank you

'Cause it makes me that much stronger,
makes me work a little bit harder, makes
me that much wiser, so thanks for making
me a fighter. Made me learn a little bit
faster, made my skin a little bit thicker,
makes me that much smarter, so thanks
for making me a fighter



Thought Processing Books for kids

- Meet Thotso by Rachel Robb Avery
- When My Worries Get Too Big by Kari Dunn Buron
- Wilma Jean the Worry Machine by Julia Cook
- Pete the Cat and his Magic Sunglasses by Kimberly & James Dean



Integrating COWs into Cognitive Component

- Use crisis situation to work the cognitive triangle
- Case examples?



Cognitive Coping- GE

- This is one exception- children are not asked about their trauma-related cognitions until after their TN
- Don't restructure too quickly, they might start censoring information
- Can alter trauma narrative, parent won't have chance to respond
- If it comes up, REFLECT, VALIDATE & REDIRECT



PRACTICE

- Psychoeducation and parenting skills
- Relaxation
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- Cognitive coping & processing
- **T**rauma Narrative
- In Vivo desensitization
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Why is it important to talk about it?

- Resolve avoidance symptoms
- Prevent it from coming up in unwanted ways (Bear & Thorn)
- Correction of distorted thoughts re: self, others, the world
- Contextualize traumatic experiences into life
- Promote integration in the brain



How do you know client is ready?

- Child has general understanding of his/her trauma & typical responses
- Client has developed basic feelings identification skills
- Child has learned coping skills for lowering anxious or uncomfortable feelings
- * *Mastery is not essential.* Concept of “stably unstable” for complex trauma



COWs and Avoidance

- Remind client of rationale for TN process; current reactivity to COW may be linked to unprocessed trauma
- Promise time at end of session to attend to COW
- Assess if COW is diversion/avoidance or true crisis that needs immediate attention
- If deemed real crisis, can hold off on TN for a week



Gradual Exposure - TN

- Structure session: offer limited choices
- Do relaxation exercise at the beginning of session; calming, fun activity at end
- Use open ended questions & reflections
- Minimize interruptions (can break for coping skills)
- Assess stress rating through periodic check-ins with thermometer
- Next session always begin with rereading



Getting more details

- What happened next? And then?
- What were you feeling when...?
- I wasn't there, so tell me all about...
- Repeat the part about...
- What were you saying to yourself when...?
- Re-building Mr. Potato Head: allows for dialogue about what child sensed during the trauma



Creative Trauma Narratives

- Legos
- Storyboardthat.com
- Use of Emojis
- Harry Potter Analogy
- Use of Incredible Hulk character
- Denim Day: wrote TN on jeans



Making Meaning of Trauma

- What have you learned?
- How have you changed?
- What would you tell other kids who have gone through this but think they can't talk about it?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years from now?
- Social justice, cause



Examples from life & media about overcoming odds

- Amy Purdy - Dancing with the Stars
- Age 19 contracted bacterial meningitis, lost both legs & kidney function
- Song came on radio, motivated her to dance w/ dad
- Said to self: "If I can dance, I can walk again; if I can walk, I can snowboard; If I can snowboard, then I can live a great life."
- Power of positive thinking; "survivor"



Real Stories in social media

- [Boston Marathon Survivor](#) - Letter to perpetrator read in court
- [Tia complex trauma survivor](#)
- Other creative meaning making examples?



TN for Ongoing Traumas

- Can or should you desensitize children to trauma experiences since they will be re-sensitized by ongoing trauma (i.e., DV in home)?
- What if the child tells the perpetrator about the therapy?
- What if doing the TN decreases the child's fear & hypervigilance, thus putting child at increased danger?

Judy Cohen, 2013



TN for Ongoing Traumas

- The child is already thinking about what happened internally, that is why they have symptoms
- You can try to obtain consent from perpetrator parent for treatment
- Rarely does child go home and talk to parent about detailed therapy experience; usually they will say we played a game or talked about feelings

Judy Cohen, 2013



Benefits of doing TF-CBT with ongoing trauma

- Help the child differentiate between real danger & overgeneralized fears
- Too much fear/hypervigilance is counterproductive to helping the child act effectively when real danger occurs because it interferes with the child's ability to cognitively process and make minute-to-minute decisions

Judy Cohen, 2013



Managing Avoidance & Anxiety

- Check-in with Thermometer ratings
- Know that tolerating some distress is an important part of GE
- Pull through the "hot spot" and come back to it later if needed
- Engage in relaxation/coping for a few minutes and then return to TN
- Can slow down pace
- Don't over attend to COWs
- "prove it" technique



Break out Groups - TN

1. Choose 1 TN from the group
2. Review for completeness
3. Are there more details you would like to have heard?
4. Identify strategies for eliciting more details or addressing resistance



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Cognitive Processing Goals

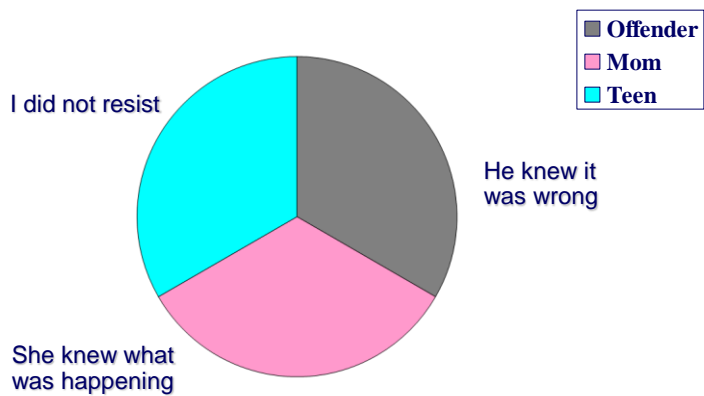
- Develop optimal understanding of the trauma within the context of the child's life
- Identify maladaptive thoughts and beliefs about why the traumatic event occurred, why it happened to me, etc.
- Promote the notion that thoughts can be changed & with young kids, just because you think it doesn't make it true



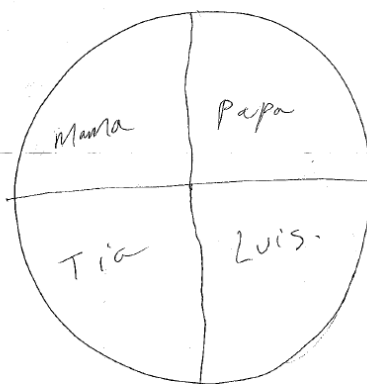
Ways to Identify Distortions

- Trauma Narrative
- Role Plays, fill-in the blank sentences
- Worry Brain
- Responsibility Pie
- "What is something that you were too ashamed of to share with *anyone* prior to coming to therapy?"

Responsibility Pie Allocating Blame/Fault for CSA



Responsibility Pie examples





Techniques for Challenging Cognitive Distortions

- Cognitive Triangle
- Checking thoughts for accuracy/helpfulness
- Best Friend Role Play
- Progressive logical or Socratic questioning
- Differentiate responsibility vs. regret
- Puppet on a string – for sexual abuse victims
- Image of monster: feeding the monster





Cognitive Restructuring Practice

- Slides from Matt Kliethermes
- Break out into 5 groups



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In Vivo Mastery of Trauma Reminders

- Mastery of trauma reminders is essential for resuming normal developmental trajectory
- To be used only if the feared reminder is innocuous/harmless (not if it's still dangerous)
- **Goal** is to resolve generalized avoidant behaviors



In Vivo Steps

- Identify the feared situation
- Get “buy in” and involvement from key participants
- Develop a plan that eases the child into facing feared situation or cues
- Make it specific and include rewards
- Plan should progressively increase exposure.
- Case examples?



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- **Conjoint** parent-child sessions
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Conjoint Session Goals

- Facilitate supportive response to TN
- Clarify any questions, misperceptions, or unpleasant feelings the child may have related to the trauma such as parent's role or family disruption
- Correction of cognitive distortions (power of parent vs. therapist)
- Prepare for future traumatic reminders
- Video



Preparing for Joint Sessions

- Share TN with caregiver first
- Can parent emotionally tolerate material and respond supportively? (role play & coach responses)
- Client has practiced reading TN with therapist
- For complex trauma cases, can client identify trustworthy candidate for hearing TN?



PRACTICE

- Psychoeducation and parenting skills
- Relaxation
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- Conjoint parent-child sessions
- **E**nhancing safety and future development



Enhancing Safety & COWS

- If client presents with COW in this stage of treatment, it may be a sign they are anxious about termination
- Can always transition into another treatment modality if deemed appropriate
- Importance of reinforcing skills (PRAC & safety) acquired; *empowerment
- Virtual hope box app
- Circle of hands



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

Based on Cohen et al., 2012 and Kiethermes & Wamsler, 2013

- Violence, abuse or self-injury may be a present threat
- **Enhancing Safety** may come first
 - Identify trusted supports
 - Safety planning
- **Psychoeducation**
 - emphasize identification of triggers
 - healthy boundaries
 - healthy sexuality
- **Parenting** = “Systems” approach, because parents may not be available/able to support child



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

○ **Relaxation**

- Identify previous coping strategies and discern between helpful and unhelpful
- Validate that unhelpful strategies were adaptive attempts to feel better
- Add mindfulness practice for dissociation symptoms

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

○ **Affective Identification**

- Identify that emotions are useful and provide information about the environment
- Identify disadvantages of numbing
- Negative affect states are temporary and can be tolerated until they pass
- Multiple feelings can be experienced
- Communicating emotions can alleviate intensity and secure support

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **Cognitive coping**
 - Deeply ingrained cognitive errors may have helped survival “I can’t trust anyone”
 - Validate then challenge
 - Recognition that thoughts during stressful situations “The staff are out to get me” can be inaccurate/unhelpful, intensify arousal and lead to problematic behaviors

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **Trauma Narrative**
 - May have less detail esp. for early (non-verbal) memories
 - May not be chronological
 - May be organized by theme
 - Meaning making may be more important than desensitization
 - “How do the themes affect me now and in the future?”

David Hong, 2014



Organizing the TN for Complex Trauma Cases

- Can do a “life narrative”
- Select “anchors” (e.g., foster homes, schools, significant life events)
- Can organize according to trauma types
- Identify the unifying theme (loss, abandonment, betrayal, hurt by those who should love & protect)
- May help to limit TN sessions

Cohen et al., 2012



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **In Vivo Mastery**
 - Desensitization to associations may be more important than desensitization to situation itself
 - e.g. Client who is triggered by pregnant adoptive mother, thinks she will reject him once baby is born so he acts out & uses drugs.

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **Conjoint sessions**
 - Clinician should assess caregiver's ability to respond in supportive manner
 - May be done with other significant individuals
 - Client should lead in choosing alternative supports
 - Possible that there will be no caregiver participation

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **Enhancing Safety part II**
 - Prevent re-victimization
 - Identify specific schemes (trafficking, lure of material gifts/shelter/drugs)
 - Goal setting – When you grow up what kind of parent do you want to be? e.g. child in placement may set goal of being a successful parent who retains custody of children

David Hong, 2014



TF-CBT and Complex Trauma

- **Ending Treatment**
 - May be first healthy goodbye
 - May trigger feelings of loss or abandonment
 - Therapist should address differences
 - Child has some control, e.g. choosing last activity
 - Termination = achievement
 - Transitional object, photo together, journal

David Hong, 2014



Requirements for TF-CBT

- Web-based training
- 2 Day basic + 1-day booster training
- Track fidelity to the model with PRACTICE checklist
- Track symptoms w/ outcome measures
- 12/14 consultation calls
- Audio/video tape review
- Weekly supervision with a TF-CBT trained agency-supervisor
- Everything done within 1 year of training



National Certification Process

- Web-based training
- 2-Day TF-CBT initial training
- 12 consultation calls w/ trainer (9)
- 3 cases, 2 w/ caregiver participation
- At least 1 standardized outcome measure
- 40 question multiple choice test
- Licensed in state of practice