Recovery Oriented Cognitive Therapy for Families

Elisa Nelson, Ph.D. and Ariana Rivens, M.A.
October 9th 2023

The following content is a collaboration of materials from PERC and Beck Institute Center for Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy 2021
Essential Role of Families

- Family interventions have been linked to:
  - Increased engagement in care
  - Increased retention in services
  - Decreased relapse
  - Reduction in symptoms
  - Improved family interactions


Family Members Experience with Coordinated Specialty Care Setting

Overview
- Conducted a semi-structured interview of 18 families in a CSC clinic to learn about their experiences

Results
- Expressed distress regarding family member’s mental health condition and hesitation about engaging with staff and in services
- Expressed confusion about strategies to support loved one enrolled in CSC services
- Confusion about how to foster natural growth and autonomy while also looking out for their family member

Power of Family Connection

Overview
- Surveys 155 students
- Increases in daily stress $\rightarrow$ increases in loneliness and depression $\rightarrow$ decreased in mood

Results
- Open and assuring contact with family member moderated impact of stress and loneliness
- Daily positive, open and assuring contact with family also positively correlated with happiness

Power of Family Engagement: Strategies

Do you have ideas or experiences that have helped you support your loved in their mental health care?

- Strategies
  - Involvement early
  - Identify the right level of involvement
  - Identify best method for involvement
  - Identifying a common goal between client and family
  - Understanding the benefits of family involvement
Childhood and Young-Adulthood

- Self-expectations and timing of transitions
- Identity -- find self, contribute
- Can get lost in the challenges
- Broaden context
- Success
When we see youth in treatment

- Told by others they have to go: parents, teachers, counselors, coaches
- After a significant incident: truancy courts, criminal justice involvement, hospitalization
Disagreement with Diagnosis

- What might be the reasons why individuals wouldn’t want to:
  - Discuss a diagnosis?
  - Discuss treatment?
  - Take medication?

- What might they think about themselves (and how others see them)?

- What would it mean to have that diagnosis/need treatment?
So what do we need?

- Coordinated Specialty Care - the gold standard
- Outcomes show greater improvement than standard treatment (outpatient therapy and medication management)
- All Pennsylvania Heads Up First Episode Psychosis (FEP) programs are using Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy
Dr. Beck’s revolutionary 1963 paper: introduced the cognitive model and cognitive therapy

**A 60-Year Evolution of Cognitive Theory and Therapy**

Aaron T. Beck
Department of Psychiatry, Pennsylvania State University, University of Pennsylvania

As I look back over the past 65 years, my professional life has been filled with what I can best describe as a continual series of adventures. For the most part, the challenges that I’ve confronted were of my own making. Like Thoreau in the wilderness, whatever I seemed to find a solution to a problem, I was confronted with another problem. My initial difficult confounders occurred when I was a fellow at the Institute of Psychiatry in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. I was assigned to work with a young man with a pervasive delusion of being followed by government agents. To my surprise, even though the therapy was for the most part supportive, the delusion disappeared. In 1952, I subsequently published this case history as the first reported successful psychotherapy of an individual with schizophrenia (Beck, 1953). This case report is of particular interest since 90 years elapsed before I returned to the psychotherapy of schizophrenia: a form of mental illness that is considered, then and now, to be relatively impervious to psychotherapy.

In 1960, fresh from having ceased my battles in

who were not depressed. To our surprise, the patients with depression showed less hostility in their dreams than did the nondepressed individuals. This negative finding posed a dilemma for me: I would soon that the absence of manifest hostility in dreams, which had been characterized by Freud as the "royal road to the uncon- scious," invalidated the theory of stressed hostility. However, after examining the content of dreams for a second time, we found that the dreams of the patients with depression consistently portrayed the dreamer or the action in the dream in a negative way. Conversely, this consistent finding was not evident in the dreams of the nondepressed patients. We then reasoned that the hostility was unable to penetrate through the dreams but it still existed at an unconscious level and assumed the form of a need to suffer. Because of this

2019 update: CBT is transdiagnostic.
Dr. Beck’s Guiding Idea 2

Cognitive Model -- Challenges

**Self**
- I am weak
- I am vulnerable
- I am worthless

**Others**
- Others control me
- Others are dangerous
- Others reject me

**Future**
- My future is uncertain
- My future is forbidding

Cognitive Model -- Empowerment

**Self**
- I am a good person
- I have purpose
- I am successful

**Others**
- People appreciate me
- I belong
- Things go better with others

**Future**
- I can contribute
- I can make a difference
Randomized Control Trial & Follow Up

Compared to the Standard Treatment (ST) individuals, CT+ST individuals had:

- Better functioning ($d = 0.56$)
- Reduced avolition-apathy ($d = -0.66$)
- Reduced positive symptoms ($d = -0.46$)

Gains maintained over the course of a 6-month follow-up in which no therapy was delivered:

- Better Functioning ($d = 0.53$)
- Reduced Negative Symptoms ($d = -0.60$)
- Reduced Positive Symptoms ($d = -1.36$)


6-Month Follow-up


beckinstitute.org ©2023
Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy
Modes

Disconnected Mode
- Deactivation of Positive Beliefs
- Activation of Negative Beliefs

Deactivation of Negative Beliefs

Adaptive Mode
- Deactivation of Negative Beliefs
- Activation of Positive Beliefs

Positive Expectations
- Success
- Connection
- Pleasure

Negative Expectations
- Failure
- Rejection
- Lack of Pleasure

Avoidance/Withdrawal
- Reactivity

Engagement/Participation
Modes

Access → Energize → Develop → Actualize → Strengthen

Hope

Connection

Resilience

Purpose
Adaptive Mode

Understanding the adaptive mode

Definition:

- A person at their best
- Positive beliefs are activated about themselves, others and their future
- Increased access to motivation, energy

Family unit’s can also experience an adaptive mode - when they all are connected, contributing and feeling appreciated in the family unit
Finding the Adaptive Mode: Application for Families

- **Eliciting:**
  - When is your family member at their best? What do they look like?
  - When do you feel most connected to your loved one? When are you most bonded as a family unit? What does this look like?

- **Identifying interests to increase bonding:**
  - Dig deeper into loved one’s interests by asking more detailed questions

- **Identifying activities to engage in together:**
  - Collaborate on activity schedule with shared activities
  - Discuss engaging in previous routines or finding something new together
Energizing the Adaptive Mode: Application for Families

- Engage in shared activities and interests consistently
  - Helpful to develop routines or traditions (e.g. Thursday is coffee date day, movie night, morning walks)
Developing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- **Aspirations:**

- A significant and meaningful vision about a way that an individual wants to live his/her/their life
Developing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- Important to understand or get a sense of their loved one’s dreams for the future.

- Questions you can guide family member’s to use:
  - If things were going your way, what would it look like? With school? In your relationships?
  - How would you be spending your time if X were not bothering you?
  - What is a vision you have for yourself?
Developing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- Benefits of asking these types of questions
  - Greater knowledge of person
  - Increases bonding in relationships
  - Greater access to them and more likely to be able to ask when person is in the adaptive mode
Developing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

Enriching Aspirations

- Types of questions include:
  - Help me imagine it?
  - Paint me a picture!
Developing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

Getting to the underlying meaning of aspirations

Get a sense of why a specific aspiration is important to their family member:

Sample questions:

- What about that type of job or role is important to you?
- What’s the best part of school?
- What about driving is important to you?

Underlying meaning can provide:

- Information about their values
- More flexibility
- Increased motivation
Contribution as a Basic Need of Adolescence

The Need to Contribute During Adolescence

Andrew J. Fuligni
Jane and Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA, University of California, Los Angeles

Abstract
As an intensely social species, humans demonstrate the propensity to contribute to other individuals and groups by providing support, resources, or helping to achieve a shared goal. Accumulating evidence suggests that contribution benefits the givers as well as the receivers. The need to contribute during adolescence, however, has been underappreciated compared with more individually focused psychological or social developmental needs. The need is particularly significant during the teenage years, when children’s social world expands and they become increasingly capable of making contributions of consequence. Moreover, contribution can both promote and be a key element of traditionally conceived fundamental needs of the adolescent period such as autonomy, identity, and intimacy. The neural and biological foundations of the adolescent need to contribute, as well as the ways in which social environments meet that need, are discussed. A scientific and practical investment in contribution would synergize with other recent efforts to reframe thinking about the adolescent period, providing potential returns to the field as well as to youths and their communities.

Keywords
development, adolescence, interpersonal relations, others, positive psychology, contribution, prosociality

➔ Autonomy
➔ Identity Development
➔ Part of expanded social world
➔ Related to wellness factors
Benefits to Contributing

• Creates positive changes in immune system functioning

• Reduces stress hormones

• Link between stress and mortality becomes insignificant

• Activates pleasure system in brain

Actualizing the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- Use meaning from aspiration or break down aspiration into steps and translate this into everyday activity

- Collaborate on some possible steps together and have them bring back those ideas to loved one
Strengthening the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- Noticing positive experiences:
  - Aim: Increase families member’s opportunities to notice positive experiences
    - Most of the time people focus more on the challenging experiences
    - Important to notice the good stuff!

- Help family members notice:
  - Capability, Connection, Contribution
  - Future, Hope, Possibilities
  - Strengths, capability, value
  - Ability to connect with family, friends, others. Sense of belonging.
  - Energy and good times with others
  - Independence/autonomy
Strengthening the Adaptive mode: Application for Families

- **Ways to notice capability**
  - Guide parents to provide feedback about how family members advice was helpful or impactful:
    - “I really enjoyed the dish you picked out. What did you think?”

- **Ways to notice connection**
  - Guide parents to say the good feelings and experiences out loud! If they are having fun together it is important to share
    - “Your brother was so happy to hear from you, did you notice?”
    - “I had fun at the museum with you, how about you?”

- **Ways to notice energy**
  - Guide parents to voice when they are feeling more energized doing an activity with their loved one and see whether they are having the same experience
    - “Walking outside feels great, what do you think?”
    - “This helps me feel so energized! What about you?”

- **Ways to notice enjoyment**
  - Guide parents to point out when you are having fun doing something together and see whether their loved one is having the same experience
    - “Forgot how fun it was to go to the park, how about you?”