

Self-Evaluation Paper
Darcee Christensen
Southern Adventist University

Self-Evaluation Paper

Me: Hi Anna It's good to see you again.

Client: Hi, it's good to see you too.

I. Mood Check

Me: So this week we're just going to start out, like we did last week with the mood check just to kind of see where you are at. So just to remind you on a scale of one to ten, if one was no depression at all and ten was the most depression you've ever experienced, where would you say you've been on average this last week?

Client: probably about a nine.

Comment: Overall, I believe that I adequately demonstrated the mood check by scaling one mood, which was depression since that is what we had hypothetically identified in a previous session. I also defined one and ten adequately. However, I could have improved this by wording it differently and prefacing it more.

Correction: In order to track your progress from week to week, we will start out again with the mood check. On a scale of one to ten, if one was no depression at all and ten was the most depression you've ever experienced, where you say you've been on average this last week?

II. Setting the Agenda

Me: Okay, that's pretty high. Wow. So I I definitely want to hear more about what was a nine this week, but first I just want to give you an overall idea of how our time together is going to go today. First we're going to review the homework assignment that I sent you home with and kind of just hear how that went and after that, we will sort of decide what we want to work on. Um and before we even do the homework I'm going to give you a chance to share a couple sentences with me, just about how you're week went. Kind of give me that little update. After that we'll work together on sort of the issue we choose to focus on today, hopefully learn some new skills, and then towards the end, we'll determine something new for you to take home and apply um as sort of your take home activity and we'll summarize, and then I'll give you a chance to give some feedback. Do you have any questions? Is there anything you want to add to that?

Client: um I can't think of anything

Comment: I successfully set the agenda and mentioned all the key parts of the session. However, I forgot to mention obtaining the update from the previous session in order, so I ended up mentioning it out of order. Because of this, the way I set the agenda sounds scattered, which is countering the purpose of providing the client with structure. Having forgotten, it may have been less confusing for the client if I had just clearly stated that I had forgotten to mention that first I would give her a chance to tell me about her week before any other part of the session. I believe that admitting when I have messed up also adds to my credibility. I think that it is good that I involved the client in the process by giving her a chance to ask questions or add to the agenda.

Correction: I definitely want to hear more about what was a nine this week, but first I just want to give you an overall idea of how our time together is going to go today. Then I will give you a chance to give me a little update since we last met, and next we will review the homework assignment. After that, we will decide what we want to focus on today and work together towards growth. Then towards the end, we'll determine something new for you to take home and apply as your homework. To finish, we will summarize what we did today, and then I'll give you a chance to give some feedback. Do you have any questions? Is there anything you want to add to that?

III. Update from Previous Session

Me: Okay, that's all right. So Anna, tell me a little bit about your week.

Comment: I could have improved this by being clearer with my instructions. Otherwise, my client may have thought I wanted her to share about what went on that week detail.

Correction: I want to hear about how your week went. Tell me about it in just a few sentences.

Client: um I mean like I said I was kind of depressed because of stuff going on with my friends and family and I didn't do very well on a test that I did. All of that happened all at once and made me really depressed.

Me: Sounds like you have a lot going on.

Comment: I was attempting to show empathy in response to the client sharing. However, I could not think of what to say quickly enough, and I can sense my discomfort in the response. Instead, I could have more effectively shown empathy and that I heard the client by paraphrasing.

Correction: I'm hearing that you were feeling really down this week because of situations with your friends, family, and schoolwork. I can imagine that it would very difficult to be dealing with issues in each of those areas all at once.

Client: Yeah

Me: Challenging to have issues with friends and family and school. Sounds like a tough week.

Comment: In saying this, I was seeking to show empathy, and I think I did this adequately, however, I could have done better had I said this in the way I corrected the last comment. I could have improved here by normalizing the experience for the client.

Correction: Most people facing several issues in significant areas of their life would be prone to feeling down.

Client: it was

IV. Reviewing the Homework

Me: Well I am really proud of you for being here. For finding it within yourself to come still. So um the homework I sent you with last week was to when something happened that you just felt especially depressed or maybe a different emotion too about that you would stop and think what's going through my mind right now and just you just jot down the thought that went through your mind and sort of rate how strongly you believe that thought and then the emotion that went with it and how much you believe that emotion, um like two or three times. Did you—it looks like you brought the paper—would you mind just reading it for me?

Comment: By describing the homework again, it is almost as if I am expecting that the client forgot what the homework was. Instead I could have kept this simpler and shown that I believe in the client's ability to remember and do the homework by simply asking about it.

Correction: Next I'd like to review your homework from last week. Do you have the notes from this last week with you?

Client: Sure

Me: Thank you

Comment: In order to improve this response, I could have highlighted the rationale for reviewing the homework.

Correction: Great, completing the homework for therapy and reviewing it together accelerates progress.

Client: Um so the first thing I wrote was that my friends didn't invite me to hang out this weekend, and that made me think that nobody wants me around, and I felt that was about a nine that I believed that, and it made me feel really rejected and sad and just like nobody wants me, and that was about an eight that I felt that. And another one was that I got a C on my biology test, and that made me feel like I was going to fail the class because I was already not doing so well

and then I got a C, and I believed that about an 8 and it made me feel really distressed and sad about it, which was probably about a 9 in sadness.

Me: Okay, you did like you showed a lot of self-awareness. You did just what I asked you. This was good work. Good job. I'm really really glad to see that you're taking the time to apply what we are learning together.

Comment: Affirming the client for completing the homework was good, but I should have taken the opportunity to differentiate between thoughts and feelings since the client used the word "felt" before describing thoughts.

Correction: Good job! You demonstrated self-awareness in competing this. I wanted to take a moment to clarify between thinking and feeling. On the first situation you shared, you described what you were thinking and feeling well. On the second one, you described your thoughts by saying getting a C on the test made you feel like you were going to fail the class. People often mistakenly describe their thoughts as feelings, but it is important to differentiate between the two in CBT. Does that make sense?

IV Prioritizing the agenda

Me: So of, all of these, what you've shared with me sort of the example with your friends that you just shared and with your test and also with the things with your family going on, we probably won't have enough time today to look at all of those, but which one is the most important for you right now? The most significant that you want to focus on for sure?

Client: Probably my friends.

Me: Okay, and what would you say is like the second?

Client: Um probably my parent's relationship right now.

Me: Okay, so

Client: like the fights and stuff and I just was arguing with them and stuff a lot this week.

Me: Oh, okay, so we'll start out with the situation with your friends, and then if we have time, we'll get to your parents. How does that sound?

Client: That sounds good.

Comment: Overall, I successfully determined what the client wanted to spend the session focusing on. However, I limited the client to the areas that she shared in the homework. Instead I should have started by making sure that the client had shared all of the significant areas. Also the way I phrased this part came out awkwardly.

Correction: Now I want to decide together where to focus our time today since we will not have time to cover more than one or two areas. I have heard you share about the situations with your friends, family, and taking the test. Are there any other significant areas that you might want to add to the list of topics we could potentially talk about today?

V. Working on One Problem and CBT education

Me: Okay, very good. So what I'm kind of hearing from the automatic thought that you just shared. It's kind of how we went over last week how we have these thoughts that lead to our emotions that lead to our behaviors. And the thought that I heard was that nobody wants me around and the situation being like. So what I'm kind of hearing is if my friends don't invite me to hangout, then nobody wants me around. Is that correct?

Client: Yeah

Comment: I chose to focus on the situation and automatic thought that the client had shared in her homework; however, there may have been a more significant event to focus on. Before focusing on one thought, I should have explored the issues more by asking an open-ended

question or inviting the client to share more. Then I could more effectively identify the most significant automatic thought to focus on.

Correction: Tell me more about how things went with your friends this week.

Me: Okay, so this week I just want take a minute to teach you about something we call distorted thinking, and we all have these patterns of thinking that aren't helpful to us, that can be um kind of um a little different than what is um beneficial. They can be they cannot necessarily be the correct way of looking at a situation. We all have them. Some people have different ones that are more they frequent in their ways of thinking than others and so most people have two or three that they engage in the most. And so what I'm kind of noticing in what you are sharing is maybe that dichotomous thinking is something that you engage in every now and then. Just this concept of all or nothing thinking. So you know if these friends don't invite me to hang out, then nobody wants me around. Or if I get a C, then I'm going to fail the class like sort of this all or nothing idea.

Comment: The way I explained cognitive distortions sounds confusing and random. I could have prefaced this better so that it made more sense in the flow of the session. Also, I think I pointed out the client's cognitive distortion too soon and that I would have worded that differently after giving the client a chance to respond to the concept first.

Correction: Now that we have identified an automatic thought that you had this week, we want to challenge it because often people have thoughts that are not helpful. In fact, there is a list of unhelpful ways of thinking, called distorted thinking patterns. Most people find that they use a few of the patterns identified on this list.

Client: Yeah

Me: Does that kind of resonate with you?

Client: I think that's true.

Comment: I know I was trying to clarify and give the client a chance to correct me, but I think that this is too much of a leading question under the circumstances. My client may be hesitant to tell me that I am wrong, especially on something relating to a new concept that was not well explained. Instead, I should have used a less direct question.

Correction: What are your thoughts on that?

Me: So maybe somewhat a part of your homework this week is you could take this home and sort of look over it, think about it and what you recognize for yourself. Um but as we continue, uh I kind of what to take a look at this thought. If if nobody—if my friends don't invite me to hangout, then nobody wants me around. Um and sort of just look at it and challenge it. Would that be okay?

Comment: I do not think it was the best to briefly introduce cognitive distortions and then hand the client a list of 16 of them to review for homework. If I were the client, I would have found this to be overwhelming and annoying. Instead, I could have explained more of why it is helpful to be familiar with the list and asked the clients thoughts on it before jumping to the homework.

Correction: I thought it might be helpful for you to look over the list of distorted thinking patterns so you can better recognize when the way you're thinking may be not be the most helpful for you.

Client: Yeah

Me: Okay, so on a scale of one to ten, Anna, how much would you say you believe this thought.

Client: probably and eight or nine. I think it's pretty true.

Comment: After identifying the automatic thought, it is helpful to scale how much clients believe the thought in order to see if the thought is significant enough to work on. However, I forgot to

define the scale. Also, I think it would have been more appropriate to ask this directly after identifying the automatic thought.

Correction: On a scale of one to ten, how much do you believe this thought? One being you don't believe it at all, and ten being you fully believe it.

Me: Okay and you were saying the that you feel rejected and sad. Um on a scale of one to ten, how strong would those would you say those emotions are?

Client: Probably about an eight.

Comment: Scaling the emotion that comes with the thought before challenging the thought enables me to be evaluate the effectiveness of therapy by scaling this again at the end. Once again, I forgot to define the scale. Also I should not have scaled more than one emotion at a time. By defining the scales and checking one emotion at a time, I am able to more accurately track the clients progress.

Correction: In the homework you described that you feel rejected and sad when you have this thought. On a scale of one two ten, how sad are you when you have that thought? One being you do not feel sad at all, and ten being you feel the most sad that you have ever felt.

Me: Okay, so pretty high for both of those. Um so are there other situations where you've noticed you have this thought that nobody wants you around?

Client: Yeah, I think other times that I've seen on social media or something friends hanging out together, and then I was like oh they didn't mention that to me or invite me or sometimes when I pass somebody that I know in a public place and they don't acknowledge me, then I think oh they must hate me or they don't want to be around me.

Comment: I attempted to respond empathetically, but I could have done this better and explained the purpose of scaling a little bit in order to increase rapport.

Correction: Seeing that you strongly believe this thought and feel these distressing emotions as a result tells me that this is significant for you. Have there been other situations when you have noticed this thought?

Me: Mmmhmm okay, yeah thank you for sharing that. Those are a couple of other good examples of where maybe we can even look at some of these dysfunctional thinkings like mind reading is something else that people sometimes engage in—just this idea of like assuming what people are thinking when we don't necessarily have enough evidence. Sort of like when you're passing, and like they don't acknowledge you like maybe that's the case, but maybe there's another explanation. So I I really appreciate you sharing those things um and it maybe like this is I hope this looking at this thought it helpful for you and those situations too um What do you notice happening in your body when you have this thought? Like do you get heavy in your chest, or like do you feel it in your shoulders?

Client: I definitely notice in my chest, like my heart feels like really heavy almost like tired, and my neck gets really tense too.

Comment: I do not think I should have referred back to the list of distorted thinking patterns at this time. For someone who has just learned about it, my response would be confusing. I even referred to the list with a different name. I sound unsure of myself too because I was debating in my mind whether to point out the distorted thinking, and I chose wrong. I think that this distracted more than it was helpful. I could have stayed on task better by moving to the next question. Usually, I avoid asking multiple questions at once. I could use the follow up question to help clarify if the client does not understand the question.

Correction: So you notice this thought in different situations. When you do, what do you notice happening in your body?

Me: Okay, and what do you next after you have this thought?

Client: Um when I feel like nobody wants me around or nobody likes me, I kind of just like hide in my room. And I'm like if nobody wants me, I'll just be by myself anyway. And I just tend to binge watch shows a lot, like this past weekend, I watched a whole season of a show.

Comment: I am satisfied with this response because it was an appropriate question in the appropriate place for CBT. It elicited the behavior that followed the emotion and automatic thought that the client shared.

Me: Oh okay, so—

Client: That's kind of my go to.

Comment: The client interrupted me, so I stopped to listen. I am satisfied with this because I think that it is important to be polite and listen as much as possible in order to build rapport. However, I noticed that I use the word "okay" too much. I think that it has become a filler word for me. Instead I could have gathered my thoughts and started with the actual paraphrase.

Correction: So you tend to--

Me: Oh okay, so you tend to kind of isolate yourself.

Client: Yeah.

Comment: The word isolate has a negative connotation, and perhaps the client does not perceive these behaviors as problematic. Maybe the client finds this to be a good way of coping. Instead I could ask the client an open-ended question about what she thinks about it. In this way, I avoid asking a leading question.

Correction: What do you think of your tendency to respond to this by staying in your room and watch shows?

Me: and watch a lot, a lot of shows. Got it. So what evidence supports this idea that if your friends don't invite you to hangout out, then nobody wants you around?

Client: Um I don't know. That's kind of just how I feel. I guess I haven't really seen evidence of it. It's just kind of a feeling that I think they don't want me around because they didn't invite me.

Comment: In order to start challenging the thought, this was an appropriate first question to ask, but it would have been better to explain that we were going to start challenging the thought together. In this way, the client could better understand the process and would be less likely to feel threatened by the questions.

Correction: Now that we have identified an automatic thought that results in distressing feelings and problematic behaviors (assuming that the client shared the behaviors are problematic), I would like to start challenging this thought by asking questions. Could we do that together?

Me: Okay, so you're sort of interpreting like. This uh that way, like if they're not inviting me, then they must not want me to around. Okay, so then um what evidence do you have against this idea? Is there anything that tells you that maybe they do want you around or maybe that other people want you around?

Client: Uh I mean I guess like my sister is always wishing that I lived closer and that she could hang out with me. I guess she wants me around, so that means that not nobody wants me around.

Comment: I was attempting to show active listening though paraphrasing at the beginning of this response, but this was not done well at all. Instead I should have moved on to the next question. I also should avoid asking two questions at one time. I could have followed up with the second question if my client did not understand what I was asking.

Correction: What is the evidence against this idea?

Me: Okay, that's a good example of maybe there is somebody else. Okay. So are there any other alternative explanations for maybe a reason why your friends didn't invite you to hang out this weekend? Other than them not wanting you to be there.

Client: umm Maybe they just didn't think about it or maybe they just wanted a really small group and they couldn't invite everybody they knew. Or maybe there was just a certain type of group that they wanted, and they knew that I wouldn't like vibe with them, so they're actually just being kind.

Comment: I did not word this question as clearly as I could have. Also I do not think it was necessary to add "Other than them not wanting you to be there" at the end. The question already implies this, and it might trigger negative feelings for the client just to hear that explanation spoken back to them in that way.

Correction: Good, that's great that your sister wants you around. Are there any alternative explanations for why your friends didn't invite you to hang out this weekend?

Me: Okay, so maybe there's—

Client: I hadn't really thought about it.

Comment: Perhaps I resort to saying okay because the silence makes me uncomfortable. I do not want to look like I do not know what to say next. However, I think that it would be more helpful in many cases to let the silence linger longer and gather my thoughts before speaking. This would also give the client more space to talk. If I had paused longer, she may have been more likely to naturally share more.

Correction: [Insert longer pause before speaking again]. You recognize that maybe the group had other reasons for not inviting you, maybe even with your best interest I mind.

Me: So it's something like, it's a possibility that maybe they had other reasons for not inviting you.

Client: Yeah

Comment: I was paraphrasing in order to show my client that I was listening. However, this paraphrase seems pretty shallow. I could have kept it simple but highlighted the positive.

Correction: You recognize that maybe the group had other reasons for not inviting you, maybe even with your best interest I mind.

Me: You came up with several. Okay, so what would you say is the worst thing that could happen if say that they really didn't invite you because they didn't want you around?

Client: I guess like they really wouldn't be true friends, or like I wouldn't want them to be my friends anymore, so I wouldn't have friends.

Comment: I think it would have been better to reframe this question to ask what would be the worst thing that could happen if the friends did not invite her. The answer may be that they did not want her around, but I think that this is still a more effective use of the question because it is allowing the client to make that connection instead of me doing it for her.

Correction: What is the worst thing that could happen if your friends don't invite you?

Me: Okay

Client: and then I wouldn't really want to trust other people in the future. I wouldn't want to make friends, and I would always isolate myself.

Comment: I gave said okay this time as a verbal affirmation. I do not think that this would be necessary though. I need to be careful because I do not want to make the client feel like I am gently trying to interrupt in this context.

Correction: [Replace with head nod and eye contact]

Me: So if that were the case that they weren't your true friends and that you, you didn't feel like you had anybody, how would you cope with that?

Client: I honestly don't think I would cope very well. I probably just wouldn't want to make any friends and always be a loner. I would probably just watch a lot of T.V. and be by myself a lot.

Comment: In looking at the worst-case scenario, it is important to invite the client to think about how they could cope in order to empower them. Instead the client seemed to base this question on how she has coped in the past. I could have worded the question differently in order to include ways that the client could try coping.

Correction: So if these were not your true friends, how could you cope with that in a healthy way?

Me: Okay, so you would continue to isolate, to do those things, so can you think of any other ways that you would be able to could cope with that?

Client: I could probably think of healthier ways like getting outside, yeah.

Comment: Instead of paraphrasing and asking the same question again, I could have improved this by clarifying that I was looking for healthy coping skills.

Correction: What other things could you do in order to respond to this in a way that is helpful for you?

Me: Okay, so maybe there's some, some other ways too. All right well, what do think is the best thing that could happen in this situation?

Client: You mean if they did actually want to be invite me?

Comment: I do not think that this was the best way of framing the question. I should not have made the connections for her. In asking the question more simply, I allow the client to better practice thinking the situation through.

Correction: What do you think is the best thing that could happen if your friends did not invite you to hang out?

Me: Mmmhmm

Client: Okay, then they would be my friends, and I'd be happy, and I would want to hang out more and be more social and not just like hide in my room and binge watch stuff.

Comment: I was too nervous to explain the question better, but I needed to. It would not make sense for the friends to want to invite her because they did not. I was not trying to ask "What do you think is the best thing that could happen if your friends actually wanted to invite you." In a way, allowing her to look at it in this way was encouraging her to use dichotomous thinking—either they were her friends or they were not.

Correction: That could be a possible answer. What would be the best thing that could happen if your friends did not invite you or the best explanation for why your friends did not invite you?

Me: Okay, that's great! And what do you think is the most realistic outcome?

Client: Probably the latter, like they probably are my friends, and they just didn't think about inviting me.

Comment: I am satisfied with the question that I asked here. It was the next question that logically should be asked when evaluating the best and worst-case scenario. It takes the client from looking at the hypothetical to reality.

Me: Okay, there's there is that possibility. All right, so what do you think is the effect of you believing this original thought that if my friends don't invite me, then nobody wants me around?

Client: I think it's a negative effective because I know it makes me feel really rejected and sad, and it just makes me feel awful.

Comment: I could have responded better to the answer that my client offered me. Instead of acknowledging that it was a possibility, I could have acknowledged how different that was from her automatic thought. The question I follow this with is appropriate and effective in continuing to work with the thought. It helps encourage the client to look at the impact of negative thinking.

Correction: That sounds much different than your automatic thought. What do you think is the affect of you believing your original automatic thought?

Me: Okay, so you don't you don't feel good, and you were sharing earlier how you isolate yourself from them.

Client: Yeah.

Comment: I could improve this paraphrase. The client emphasized the negative emotions but did not mention the behavior. In bringing up that the client "isolates" herself, I am assuming that this behavior is negative when the client might see it differently. Instead, I should have just reflected the emotional content back to her.

Correction: Believing this automatic thought comes with those difficult feelings of rejection and sadness.

Me: Okay and what do you think the effect would be of changing your way of thinking about this?

Client: I think I would be a lot happier, and I wouldn't isolate myself so much.

Comment: This is a good question in order to engage the client in challenging her thought.

However, it could sound vague. I could improve it by modifying it to be applied to the client's situation.

Correction: What do you think the effect would be of changing your automatic thought?

Me: Okay

Client: and that would be healthier for me.

Comment: Throughout the interview, I said "okay" many times. In a way, it became a filler word even though I used it to affirm that I was listening. In this case, I could have used a different word to celebrate my client's realization. I also could have highlighted the how the client recognized how thoughts impact feelings and then behaviors.

Correction: Good! I am glad you can see how your thoughts impact your feelings and behaviors.

Me: That would be great, yeah, I'm hearing you explain how it would effect your emotions—

you'd feel happier, which would effect your behaviors—you wouldn't isolate yourself as much.

Okay, so if you had a friend, Anna, in a very similar situation, um where she felt that if that since she wasn't invited nobody wants her around, what advice would you give your friend?

Client: I would probably tell her to try to put herself in their shoes and try to think positively about it and try not to think that everyone is against you and that nobody wants you just because that's negative thinking and even if that is true, if they don't like not to give up on people and distrust them.

Comment: Encouraging the client to look at her situation from another perspective can be helpful. Asking this question was effective, but I should have asked it in a different way. I think it could be improved by making the question even more personal than any friend. I should have encouraged her to think of someone specific. Asking her to think of a friend may be insensitive when she recently felt that she had no friends.

Correction: Anna, I want you think of someone you are especially close to like your sister.

Imagine that this person was in the same situation. What advice would you give that person?

Me: Okay, how do you think that might apply to your situation?

Client: I think that I should start thinking that way too.

Comment: I should have taken this opportunity to explain the usefulness of asking this question. Giving the rationale enables people to more easily apply concepts to other situations.

Correction: Anna, you give some really good advice. People are often more willing to be gracious to others than themselves. Sometime creating some separation from the issue by looking at it from another perspective allows us to see things more clearly.

Me: Okay

Client: not fall into my old thinking patterns.

Comment: I could have responded better by inviting my client to explain herself.

Correction: Tell me more about what that would look like for you.

Me: That sounds like growth. So kind of going back to that original thought, if nobody invites me to hangout this weekend, then nobody wants me around. Or if my friends don't invite me to hangout this weekend, nobody wants me around. On a scale of one to ten, that same scale of like one being not at all and ten being you fully believe this, how much would you say you believe that thought?

Client: I think now it's probably down to about a four.

Comment: Scaling the thought again allows me to evaluate how effective the work was with the client. The client is then able to track improvement as well. Scaling this again was good, however I changed the automatic thought here. Even though it is mostly the same, I should be careful to use consistent wording. In this way, I will be careful to evaluate the same thought. Thankfully I caught myself, but restating it in this way sounded jumbled and confusing.

Correction: So going back to that original thought, if my friends don't invite me to hangout this weekend, then nobody wants me around. On a scale of one to ten, one being you do not believe this at all and ten being you fully believe this, how much would you say you believe that thought?

Me: Okay, so that's a lot of improvement from where it started today. Okay and what emotion, that emotion of sadness and rejection that you were talking about earlier, where on that scale of one being not at all and ten being the strongest you've ever felt it, where would you say that's at now?

Client: Probably down to about a three.

Comment: Scaling the emotion again after is once again an effective method of evaluation. However, I could have improved this by speaking with clearer wording. Also, it is not ideal to scale two emotions at one time. Instead I should have scaled one emotion at a time.

Correction: When you think about that thought now how sad do you feel on a scale of one to ten, one being not sad at all and ten being the saddest you have ever felt?

Me: Okay, there's a lot of improvement there. You've done a lot of good work today, kind of processing this thought um and that's that's really great. So how would you say you can think about this now—you've kind of already shared a little bit in just kind of shifting your thinking to positive thinking but taking this specific thought if my friends don't invite me to hangout, then nobody wants me around. How could you sort of modify this thought to make it more helpful to you?

Client: Maybe even if my friends don't invite me, that doesn't mean nobody wants me or nobody wants me around ever.

Comment: Encouraging the client to take it a step further and modify the thought could be helpful. I think I had the right idea here, but it came out jumbled. I began to ask and then answered for her, and then asked again. Instead, I should have just left it open-ended in asking one time.

Correction: How can we practice shifting to positive thinking, as you described, in attempting to modify your automatic thought?

Me: So it almost sounds like you're answering your thought almost.

Client: Yeah.

Comment: Even though the client agreed, I do not think that my response was accurate. I do not think the client was answering her own thought. She simply changed it to be the opposite. It would have been better to recognize that and check how much the client believes the new thought.

Correction: Sounds like your modified thoughts says the opposite of the original thought. How much do believe this new thought?

Me: like even though like my friends aren't inviting me like that doesn't mean nobody wants me like maybe there's there are people who do want me around.

Client: Yeah.

Comment: I think rewording the thought to sound more positive and clear would be helpful. However, I should have explained this and worded the thought differently.

Correction: Maybe you could even say, Even if my friends don't invite me, I am still wanted.

VI. Collaboratively Setting Homework

Me: That's excellent. That really is excellent. So yes unfortunately I don't think we're going—our time is coming to a close, so we won't have time to go into your parents and your family, that situation today, but I do want to work on that in the future together. I want to talk together about what you can do this next week to sort of continue applying what we've learned today, to continue growing your ways of thinking in a way that's more helpful for you, so what I would like you to do is like we said earlier to go over these different distorted thinking, dysfunctional thinking, patterns, just to read over them to think about which ones seem to resonate with you the most and then you'll bring that back, and we can talk about it.

Client: Okay.

Comment: Although it may be helpful for the client to learn more about cognitive distortions, I do not like the way I approached setting homework. Telling the client that I would like for her to do something does not sound like a collaborative process. In the first few therapy sessions, it may be hard to ask a client about homework in an open-ended manor, but I could have at least asked her what she thought of the idea.

Correction: As our time is coming to a close, I want us to work together to choose homework that will help you practice what you have learned today. Do you think it would be helpful for you to become more familiar with the distorted thinking patterns by reading over them twice this week and reflecting on which ones you relate most to?

Me: But I also want you to take this automatic thought record again uh and if it doesn't sound like too much for you just two or three times go through it again to identify the things we did this week again but then also just start the process of challenging those thoughts like we did together this week, and maybe you can even just use those first two questions about the evidences: like what evidence supports this thought and what evidence might be against this idea. Does that sound like something that you would be able to do this week?

Client: Yeah, I could do that.

Comment: Again, I do not like how I approached this by telling the client that I wanted her to do something. I do not want clients to do things because I want them to—I want them to do them for their own personal growth. The way I explained this part of the homework sounds confusing and unclear. I needed to be more simple and intentional with my instructions.

Correction: You really made some progress today with challenging the thought that you identified. I'm wondering if it might be helpful for you to take this automatic thought record again and identify another automatic thought like you did last week. Then you could try to start challenging the thought with questions like we did today. A list of questions is included at the bottom of this automatic thought record. Does that sound like something you would like to try on your own once this week?

Me: Okay, it's a little bit more, so I don't want to make it too much, but as long as that sounds like something you can do.

Client: Mmhmm

Comment: I do not think I should have said this because it sounded like I doubted my client's ability to do the homework. If I did think it was too much, I should have worked collaboratively with the client to modify it. It would have been better to offer my client a no-lose proposition that way she would not believe she was a failure for taking on more than she could do.

Correction: If you do all of this, that's great. But if you struggle to get it done, that's okay too. In that case, pay attention to the thoughts that keep you from doing the homework, and we can talk about that next week.

Providing a Summary and Eliciting Feedback

Me: Okay, excellent! So just to summarize what we've talked about today, you came in, and you shared with me how were kind of around a nine this week with your depression because you have had a lot going on with school and your family and your friends and we specifically really after reviewing the homework, getting that update, we chose to really focus in on the situation with your friends not inviting you to hangout this weekend and how that really made you sad and rejected um and we looked at the thought that if my friends don't invite me to hangout this weekend then nobody wants me around, and we asked questions to kind of come to uh a new modified thought that even if my friends don't invite me, there is a possibility that people want me around. And then we talked about the homework and we reviewed what we learned about distorted thinking just a little bit um and went over what we wanted you to do for this next week to apply. Um You did a lot of great work to day Anna. Did I miss anything? Did that sound like an accurate summary?

Client: Yeah.

Me: Okay, so now with just the last little bit that we have I just want to hear from you. I just want to give you a change to give some feedback. What what went well for you today? What was helpful for you? Or anything that you really didn't like that wasn't helpful for you. I just want to make sure we are using this time in a way that is most beneficial to you.

Client: um I think just like really thinking about the different options of why my friends didn't invite me or even if they didn't want me that it's okay, and I can think differently about it. It really helped to change my thinking pattern. It really helped those negative feelings go away to a degree. I feel a lot better than when I came here.

Me: I'm so glad to hear that.

Client: Thank you

Me: That's awesome. And if there's ever anything that is uncomfortable for you or that you don't like, I want to hear that. I want this to be a very beneficial time for you. Wow, I am proud of the progress you made today, Anna. I'm I'm looking forward to hearing how this next week goes.

Client: Sounds good.

Me: Thanks you so much.

Client: Thank you.

Me: We'll see you.

Client: Okay, Bye.

Comment: I think that I adequately completed the session by summarizing and giving my client an opportunity to give feedback. However, I recognize that I could improve this. One area that could use improvement is in the summary. I sound scattered. Instead, I want to seek to be intentional in what I highlight from the session not only for my client to know I was listening, but also to remind her of what I want her to remember. In light of this, I would have said more about distorted thinking and challenging her thoughts since that may have been a new concept for her.

Correction: Okay, great! I just want to take a moment to summarize what we've talked about today. When we did the mood check, your depression had been about a nine this last week because of difficult situations with your friends, family, and school. You were able to identify your thoughts and emotions in the homework you did last week. In looking at the situation with your friends, you shared that you were having the thought that if your friends did not invite you to hangout this weekend then nobody wanted you around. We talked about distorted thinking, which are unhelpful thinking patterns that people commonly use. Then we used questions to challenge your thought until you chose a new, more healthy thought to replace the old one. In the homework this next week, you'll continue to look at distorted thinking and challenging your thoughts with questions. Did that sound like an accurate summary?

Reflections

From the beginning of the semester, I have grown towards being an advanced autonomous CBT therapist. Before taking this class, I did not know what CBT was except for that it stood for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Since then, I have learned about the principles and structure in which to facilitate CBT. Growth has come through a combination of knowledge, practice, and feedback. I now am able to work with clients' thoughts and facilitate a session of CBT with a client from beginning to end. Although I still have ample room for growth, I can do far more than when I started. I have even gotten to educate adolescents on CBT several times in therapy groups at my practicum.

Naturally, I faced challenges in beginning to develop these new skills. One challenge I faced is that I can get lost in seeking to work with the clients' thoughts. I found that utilizing the "If Then" technique helped me stay more on track. Another challenge for me is that I tend to overthink, which makes it difficult for me to actively listen and then quickly choose how I want to respond. This is an area that I am still growing in. On the other hand, I believe that I effectively build rapport through expressing warmth and empathy. I appreciate structure, and found that it was helpful to have a specific structure to follow. I demonstrated following CBT structure in my video.

I want continue intentionally growing my skills as a clinician. While I am balancing school, work, and practicum, I do not think it is feasible for me to practice CBT with pseudo clients. However, it would be feasible for me to practice with at least one person over the next month. I also plan to read back over chapters I skimmed or missed in *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: Basics and Beyond* by Judith Beck because I found the book to be particularly helpful. Lastly, I will continue to learn about CBT and watch examples by watching educational videos likely on YouTube.