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### **CBT IDEAL DIALOGUE**

Ten examples of dialogue that you may hear from a therapist during a CBT therapy session are presented below. These examples demonstrate poor or ineffective skills by the therapist. For each example, construct a corrected dialogue that demonstrates a therapist's effective use of the skills. See rubric for points distribution.

#### **1. Greeting the client/Introductions:**

*Therapist: Hey, I'm Sally, I'll be your therapist, are you ready to get started?*

**Corrected Dialogue: Hi! I'm Sally Jones, what is your name? Is there another name you would like to go by? Let's get started!**

#### **2. Mood Check:**

*Therapist: Tell me how you've felt this past week.*

**Corrected Dialogue: On a scale of 1 to 10, how have you felt sad this past week, where 1 is not sad at all, and 10 is extremely sad? On a scale of 1 to 10, how sad do you feel right now, sitting with me today.**

#### **3. Setting the agenda:**

*Therapist: Today I thought we'd talk about some of the situations that are causing you anxiety. I'll probably assign you some homework to do before the next session. Does that sound alright?*

**Corrected Dialogue: So today we are going to talk about why you came in, and we will focus on a specific issue. We're going to what is called a mood check to see how you are feeling, and we will set some goals. I will also talk to you about the type of therapy we practice, called CBT. We will work together on a problem, come up with some homework, and at the end we'll have a summary and you can give me some feedback. How does that sound?**

#### **4. Confidentiality:**

*Therapist: Everything we talk about will be kept confidential. Do you have any questions?*

**Corrected Dialogue: Everything that you say to me in here will be confidential, with a few exceptions which I need to go over. If I feel that you would be a threat or harm to yourself or other people, this would be an exception. Also, if anything in our discussions is brought up about harm or danger towards a child, elderly person, or disabled person, this would also be an exception to that confidentiality.**

#### **5. Identify Automatic Thoughts:**

*Therapist: What's happening in your mind right now?*

**Corrected Dialogue: So as you are talking about this event, what thoughts are going through your mind as you explain this?**

**6. Working with Automatic Thoughts:**

Therapist: *The way you are thinking is called fortune telling and you need to just stop thinking that you can predict the future, nobody can do that.*

Corrected Dialogue: This thought pattern which you are describing is called fortune telling, and it happens when individuals predict that there are dangers ahead. Many people experience this, but it is helpful to know that this is a thought distortion and is unlikely to happen and does not reflect the situation.

**7. Working with Automatic Thoughts:**

Therapist: *This thought is bad, you should try to think positive thoughts instead.*

Corrected Dialogue: Automatic thoughts can sometimes be unhelpful, and everyone experiences these. Unhelpful automatic thoughts lead to distressful or unwanted feelings, which is why it can be helpful to evaluate and challenge these automatic thoughts.

**8. Elicit Summary:**

Therapist: *Today we mostly focused on your anxiety and we talked about some ways you can cope with it this week.*

Corrected Dialogue: Today we focused on one of the feelings you've been experiencing— anxiety—and we discussed ways that would be helpful for you to cope with those feelings this week.

**9. Homework:**

Therapist: *For this next week I'd like you to track how many times you felt anxious.*

Corrected Dialogue: For this week, do you think you could write down—in a journal maybe or on your phone—two to three times when you feel anxious? Would that be a reasonable amount for homework this week?

**10. Elicit Feedback:**

Therapist: *Do you have any complaints about the session today?*

Corrected Dialogue: Now that our session is almost over, do you have any feedback for me—maybe something you would like me to do differently?

**CBT Ideal Dialogue Rubric**

Skill Demonstrated	Possible Points	Score
Greeting Client	3	

Mood Check	3	
Setting the Agenda	3	
Confidentiality	3	
Identify Automatic Thoughts	3	
Working with Automatic Thoughts	3	
Working with Automatic Thoughts	3	
Elicit Summary	3	
Homework	3	
Elicit Feedback	3	