

DEDICATED TO:



With great appreciation

FROM AVOIDANCE TO
ACTION: THE TEN BEST
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
TO MOVE FAMILIES OUT OF
THEIR ANXIOUS PATTERNS

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HOMEWORK SHOULD:

- Be experiential and active and novel
- Illustrate the larger process(es) that you're teaching... **(it's NOT about content!)**
- Change/create the emotional tone of therapy (and often the tone of the anxious/depressed family)
- Be the basis of your treatment, not an adjunct to it

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

1. What resources does this child/family have and how can we use them?
2. Where is the gap/missing piece that sustains the symptom pattern?
3. How can we create an experience that will offer a shift in the pattern?
4. **Am I (or is anyone else) doing the disorder?**

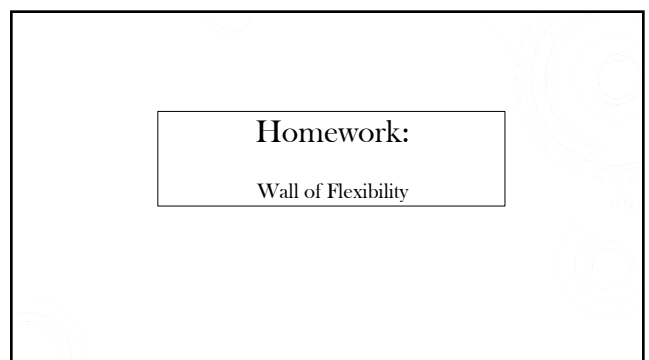
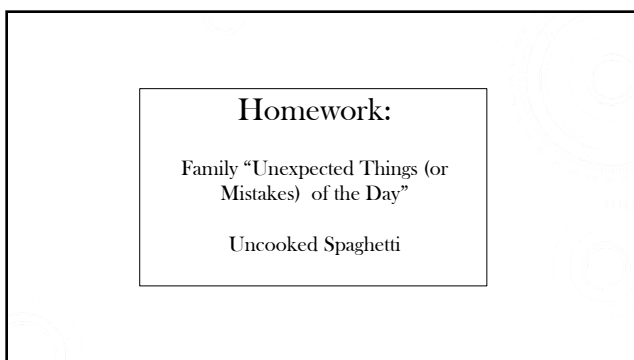
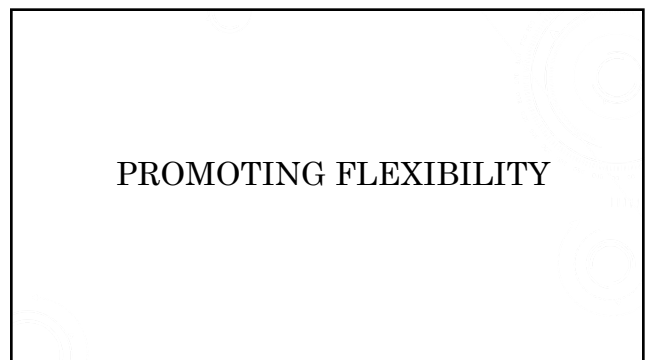
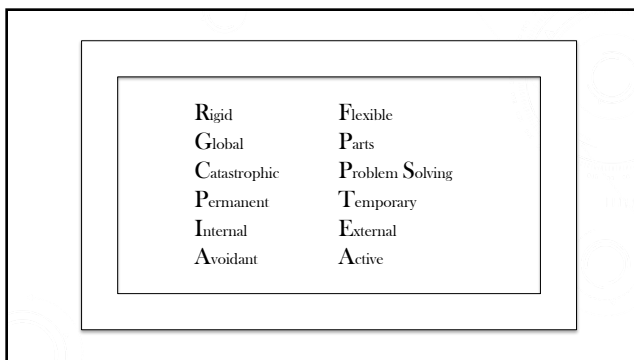
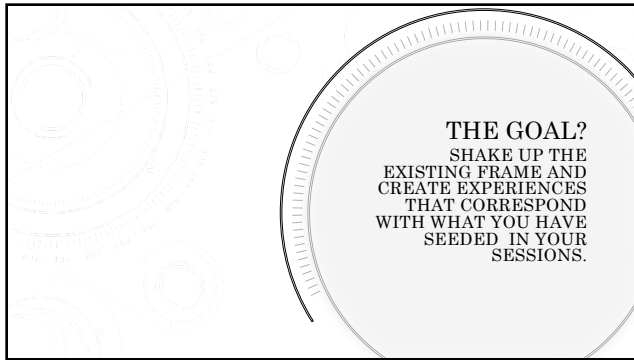
THINK PROCESS! ANXIETY DEMANDS TWO THINGS:

Certainty: "I have to know what's going to happen next...and I want to control it!"

Comfort: "I want to feel safe and comfortable...or else I want out!"

THE BIG PICTURE CRITICAL COGNITIVE SKILLS:

- ❖ *tolerate (and normalize) discomfort*
- ❖ *externalize/react differently to thoughts*
- ❖ *learn by doing, failing, & succeeding*
- ❖ *handle the uncertainty of life*
- ❖ *be more flexible (malleability!)*
- ❖ *problem solve (vs. ruminate)*



Homework:

Find or create a metaphor or story that illustrates the value of flexibility

GOING AFTER GLOBAL WITH PARTS

THE VALUE OF PARTS: EXTERNALIZATION

- Personify your anxiety and/or your depression...and start listening to what it says
- What are the parts of you that you value?
- What parts of you give you the most trouble?

Homework:

Global Language Alert

10 Good Things

Homework:

An experiential assignment that amplifies the concept/value of parts

EXAMPLE: TWO PART PERFECTIONISM AND THE COLLEGE ESSAY

CATASTROPHIC LANGUAGE

Parents: Interrupting Safety Chatter

TARGET PERMANENCE!

Assignments that amplify malleability,
changeability, temporary
flexibility

Homework:

A list of 5 things about YOU that have changed

A list of things that you or others believed, but
that you no longer accept as fact

A list of things that humans beings once
believed that we now think are nuts!

EXTERNAL CONNECTION VERSUS INTERNAL FOCUS

Homework:

Any assignment that amplifies social
connection and creates an external focus

As a family, I want you each to do
three small things that brighten
someone else's day.

ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE
OFFENSE VERSUS DEFENSE

EXPOSURE WITH THE BRAKES OFF
Getting unsure and uncomfortable
ON PURPOSE

Homework:

Success Journal
Keep track of when you stepped into worry

Homework:

ROLE PLAYING!

Homework:

Notice an active job out in the world and
imagine that job if the person became passive
(The funnier the better!)



Thank you!

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