

[Covid-19 resources - click here](#)

Activities that work over the phone

[Games that require no supplies - works over the phone](#)

[Great books to read during therapy for kids](#)

Anxiety assessment

<https://ce21.blob.core.windows.net/global/517d4ultkiwnkcxgaeila.pdf>

List of triggers to review

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1p_LHz0leYhBe4Uh2fxqc-liNgtcK1XwcQFsP1GHmSMU/edit?usp=sharing

Blanket fort

For a video chat, cover your head and laptop with a blanket to simulate the feeling of a blanket fort

Left-brain right brain connection/EMDR

Clients draw an infinity symbol to the rhythm of the music. The clients then do “butterfly tapping” (slow, rhythmically, right knee, left knee) Clinician monitors for ability to stay grounded during the activity.

“Cheat Codes”:

This reading and discussion activity presents metaphors connected to video games with coping skills, resources, and more.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zhbfMBqaTfSditXVz4GulspnwyvW4ESvr_FhgPMu-qY/edit?usp=sharing

The Emperor’s New clothes

Read online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmEOwjVksU>

This story can be used to discuss the concept of enabling. Many clients feel that being re-directed is “mean”. Enabling often has positive intentions, but can be harmful.

Clinician then provides scenarios and asks if the clients feel the adult in the scenario is enabling or not

“Dear teacher”

This fictional letter signed by “That kid” expresses the hope that the teacher will not give up on her/him, because underneath her/his problematic behaviors s/he is struggling.

<https://www.weareteachers.com/a-letter-to-teachers-from-that-kid/>
<https://lemonlimeadventures.com/letter-teacher-kid-difficult-behavior>

What would you do questions

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dM-JZUJsyQgWprPtB0mZh0EEMt1Ykf7JBuotGeqSFZY/edit?usp=sharing>

Serious versus silly:

Clients play the “serious vs. silly game” which gauges when it is or isn’t appropriate to behave silly.

<http://autismteachingstrategies.com/autism-strategies/silly-to-serious-cards-and-panels-downloads-page/>

Self esteem check in

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GbeEd_qwyMmNBvLLtUNrdW-jJnhdL6nbewdp9LOP9Cw/edit?usp=sharing

Fill in the blanks questions

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W_avpXJsZygca-Sv8l18VmVLpGSi_jUrszkBxxXzCuk/edit?usp=sharing

Conversation starters

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eE1kwKuQdlstTSUxEXyHDPnqDlaOB_F-OLogdAn-clk/edit?usp=sharing

Coping skills discussion

Have the client rate the list of coping skills on different scales--how much I like this skill, how likely I am to use this skill, etc.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CbsSOIJ4g-HldK98ZlIWBuWN2OhoEYS3ionjDw9umx0/edit?usp=sharing>

Would you rather questions

Ask the client to pick a number, then read the corresponding question.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18nQ_-Z7EM124UmR_xb1YieNH1g86x9wqqidMcZxLTX/XY/edit?usp=sharing

Guided meditations

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uKIFQmGNTn0XV9qtTiN2wqH2bDZAsZUnXbdyqYjU64/edit?usp=sharing>

Telephone scavenger hunt

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1toMFFfEfsK8hhcYkBSA-WZt6Y0M-mEpwsdf7p3TAJm4/edit?usp=sharing>

Grounding exercises

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bdPX_tw6r-0bK9-7jDFW8GreAOe89V8LLY_4-pb81yA/e/dit?usp=sharing

Deep breathing prompts

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mBhgUcBcjPmZ2zoI5ZzggmdY5bFaMuQwd4DthWcmnlM/edit?usp=sharing>

Spell Your Name Workout

Using this [Spell Your Name Workout Sheet](#) (password is “kids”) engage clients in spelling out their name or other chosen word. It can be used as a mindfulness activity, a brain break, or a wellness activity.

Planting seeds / moderation

Present the metaphor of how a flower grows, compared to how a human changes over time, is a product of their environment and what they consume, etc. Too much water or too much sun can be bad, yet a flower needs these resources in moderation.

Spoon theory

Clients explore the “spoon theory” proposed by Miseradino (2003) and discuss the metaphor. Clients color in how many spoons they feel like they have left today, and identify what efforts/activities made them “lose” spoons. Clinician validates client’s experiences that different people will need more or less willpower for certain tasks, and that this is normal.

My songs

Clinician asks each client to choose 5 songs that make them feel a strong emotion. Clinician screens songs for explicit content and then creates a playlist. The clinician can also share their own favorite songs. Then clients listen to the songs and jot down a few emotion words or

thoughts that they associate with each song in the playlist. Discuss how emotions are expressed through rhythm, lyrics, etc. Analyze song lyrics for their underlying meanings, or even change the lyrics together to better suit a topic, or to apply to the client better.

Sleep Hygiene:

Clients learn about how the blue light from digital devices can alter the circadian rhythm and result in trouble falling asleep. Clinician suggests clients write down the apps Twilight and Flux to use on their devices to help filter blue light. Discuss the importance of sleeping at a regular time, and not too late. Clients look at a checklist of new ideas to improve their sleep hygiene, and choose some options to try tonight.

Read my fortune

Read an online fortune or horoscope. Ask the client what they think about their fortune. Clients read their birthday zodiac description from “astrology.com” and decide if they feel like this description is accurate and/or inaccurate, and if so, how. Clinician observes how clients respond to an outsider’s [largely uninformed] perception of themselves—if they are likely to readily adopt an outsider’s view, resist (“Nobody knows who the real me is”), have a strong sense of self, not really affected, temporary Rosenthal effect, etc.

Rules game

Have the children make up their own rules. If you do something or say something, you have to do the silly consequence. (If you say the word “friend” quack like a duck)

Frys Profile

Interpretations

Show your teen client pictures of people interacting or on their own. Make sure these images are expressive of many different emotions. Ask your client to describe what’s happening in the picture, or if the person in the photo is alone, what he or she may be thinking or feeling. How the teen interprets the photos may give you insight into their way of thinking.

Top 10 photos

For kids that are allowed a cellphone, ask them to share the 10 favorite photos on their phone and ask them to explain why they chose these photos

“Enneagram”

https://www.https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-iRfTWtYIca0/WCtUICATcyI/AAAAAAAAA9s/d8fKiGeCS_AqoVakSLOb6rGpqLrTns8-ACEw/s1600/Anger-Iceberg-1.png.enneagraminstitute.com/typ e-descriptions/

(self-discovery) Clinician shares the enneagram and its significance. The clients decide where they fall on the gram and which strengths, weaknesses, fears and qualities they have.

Animal adaptations

Maladaptive + adaptive coping skills.

Clients discuss how animals adapt to different situations and how humans do too, such as camouflage. We discuss ways that adaptation can have good intentions, but be unhealthy too.

Setting goals

Clients set goals for today, next week, next year, and 5 years ahead. They look at what can get in the way of these goals, what they need to achieve them, and how they can start--today!

Clinician assesses Ct.'s current stage of change and if they create goals that are related to their presenting problems.

Anger iceberg

Discussing the "anger iceberg". What emotions, thoughts, and feelings might underlie anger; also discuss how anger is often a more acceptable or comfortable emotional expression .

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oThHjtDbvFb64hQq1XQNhyPebDyUXI8A62VWIRws_zM/edit?usp=sharing

Non-verbal communication:

Signs, symbols, other forms of speech. (Braille, body language, facial expressions) How would you get your way around Tokyo if you don't speak Japanese? Clients brainstorm an imaginary day where they do whatever they want in Japan, but have to figure out how to communicate/navigate a foreign place.

One bad apple

Clinician uses the proverb "Don't let one bad apple ruin the barrel." to help discuss the concept of negative peer influence with clients. Clients then create paper bag puppets of themselves.

The clinician has a "bully" puppet and the clients must act out a scene with their own puppets of how they would/could respond pro-actively to negative peer influence.

Integrity

Focus Area: Integrity, applications to safety Clients discuss famous figures in history who had or did not have integrity. We discuss what integrity means, and how it keeps us safe.

Drawing prompts

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wxTNF2d52H9sJZhWC9HFjJDXfCq0pUIZgODCj7qFdQI/edit?usp=sharing>

52 cards discussion prompts

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1L2kKQRMnGtPhEEgiX9HfYUyljIER1EuuPZx92EsXG1w/edit?usp=sharing>

Emoji bingo (identifying emotions)

Clients play emoji bingo. If they win they have to read off each face and share a time that they felt the same way. Sometimes we interpret the faces differently; we also discuss multiple ways that the same emotion can be expressed.

Screen-share activities

Books on Kindle Unlimited on Amazon

These books can be opened during a “screen share” and read together.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xhyNiGbkosE0H4qLksLhpNC5ljK8NB4WzNcXKK6dPBE/edit?usp=sharing>

Screen share activities

Here are tours of museums, art galleries, and more! Use the “Share screen” function in a video chat to view them together

Drawing challenge

Have your client draw a picture and describe what they are drawing. Then try to copy that drawing without looking. Show them your creation when you are done! They are sure to laugh.

Coping Skills ASMR psycho education

We watch “satisfying video compilation” on youtube and discuss ASMR. Is ASMR calming to you? Can it be used as a coping skill? Clinician observes how clients handle excitement during the videos.

Growing Rice with Love and Hate

[Rice](#) experiment explanation video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31shlv5Z71A>

Useful videos

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YsLd49uUwbVEc_Y_oMCOMcNVePTxpxLsGoF4rfbGwY/edit?usp=sharing

Animated videos about various psychology topics:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UckJEpR7JmS36tajD34Gp4VA>

Music based

Shake It Off

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfWlot6h_JM

You can make your own shaker with a toilet paper tube, tape, and some dried rice or beans.

“Our big idea this month is forgiveness, which means that we will not stay angry when someone does something wrong. We can shake off the anger. Shake your whole body to show how you would shake it off. Now, let’s play some music and use our new shakers to the beat. Let’s practice shaking it off!”

“It feels good and puts a smile on my face to move and have fun. Whenever you are angry, focus on doing something fun for a while. When you move and shake, it’s hard to stay angry. Let’s say our bottom line and do our hand motions together: I will not stay angry.”

Art based

Photography prompts

According to the PewResearchCenter, 73% of teens have access to a [smartphone](#). Take advantage of that by asking them to photograph their environment. What’s important to them? What images make them feel safe, anxious, happy, or alone? Talk about the pictures and why they evoke the feelings they do. If your client enjoys photography, consider giving them a few words,—such as “home,” “mentor,” or “calm”—each week at the end of the session, so they can come prepared with pictures that represent those words for the following week.

“Take one”

Focus Area: Positivity

Clients make their own “take one” fliers that have little tabs on the bottom. EX: “Take some hope”. Clients write a different affirmation on each tear-off tab. Clients then hang up their

posters somewhere in the treatment building to feel empowered by making a positive impact in their community. Print out, or copy onto your own piece of paper:

<https://www.weareteachers.com/take-one-posters/>

Magic geodes.

Create a glitter clay geode and process symbolic meaning throughout. Clients discuss a geode and how it looks different inside from outside. Try to draw connections between self identity inner feelings how we look, if we like ourselves, first impressions, etc.

“Deface the face”

Teens are known for their artistic doodling on places they shouldn't be defacing, such as their desks in school or the faces of the figures in their history books. Embrace their interest in altering art during counseling. Provide your teen attendees with a full-page sheet of a person's face and give them pens, markers, crayons to create an updated look. Take the “artwork” a step further by asking your client to describe why they made the choices they did. Did they make a happy-looking person look angry? Why?

Clay Beads

Clients work on with clay to create a bead that they will later put onto a necklace and put essential oil on. Smelling the necklace is a coping skill to help keep them grounded. While sculpting the clinician discusses how mindfulness relates to our favorite smells. Clients are asked to name their favorite smell and what memories go along with it, to be able to recall this happy place.

Clients complete their sensory necklace now that it is dry and add bells and different texture string/beads for auditory/touch stimulation as they prefer. Continue to discuss basic sensory grounding principles while completing craft.

My guardian angel/bodyguard/watch-dog/ knight in shining armor

Clinician shares famous art images of guardians, and discusses the feeling of being protected/safe. Clients paint an artistic rendering of what gives them hope. They are encouraged to visualize it into a human, animal, or anthropomorphized being. They work with clinician through group discussion to each create this sort of character that helps them stay strong when they are upset and express it through a visual rendering.

Family crest:

Clients decorate a crest to pictorially represent the defining aspects of their family---values, culture, how they get along, favorite pastimes together, etc.

Graffiti walls (personal expression)

Clinician tapes up large amount of poster paper and allows the clients to draw “on” the wall. Clinician observes what clients write. Clinician discusses social reasons why people are motivated to write graffiti. Discussed positive messages that we can share without property destruction. Clients create a flag together with a positive statement for display.

Paper bag puppets

Clients create their own puppet that represents themselves, and then act out a scene at the lunch table, pretending to be themselves at lunch. Clinician encourages authenticity of performance, and gauges to see how clients perceive themselves as behaving, versus how they behave in reality.

Color scales: visual representation of emotions

Clients use different color paint chips from a hardware store (with varying shades of darkness/lightness) to symbolize intensity of emotions. Clients describe a life experience for each level of intensity. Ex: Light red is an incident that made them slightly mad, medium red is something that made them quite mad, and dark red is something that made them furious.

Power Bracelets (sense of self, identifying goals)

Clients discuss different character traits they identify their strengths and then identify a trait they would like to gain. They make a bracelet that reminds them of their strength or goal, using their beads or colors to represent this.

My room, my dream house: (Art therapy)

Clients are prompted to draw themselves in their rooms at home. Clinician processes with them why they included certain elements (or didn't), discuss how they drew themselves, etc. Then the clients are prompted to draw themselves sitting in their dream house. The clinician also asks the clients to add in depictions of their family in this drawing.

Slime

Following directions/sensory skills for mindfulness clients make slime and discuss how engaging the 5 senses calms the nervous system. Clinician observes to see clients ability to follow linear directions and how they respond to any needed redirection.

Fears (clay sculpture “squish the monster”)

Clients played with clay to make shapes of different topics and then made a monster. We talked about each others monsters and what frightens us. Then we squished the monster.

Heartfelt feelings:

Clients fill in a drawing of a heart to visually express what emotions they are currently experiencing, and to what extent. [Example](#)

“The animal in you”

Clients identify an animal that they relate to and create a mask to represent it. The clients act out different emotions while participating in guided imagery. How does your animal respond to stimuli?

Make your own Pokemon

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qBhS-N8EAVXYVYhEhVeqHlEnNP_IGHHPG_SU5yIpzUA/edit?usp=sharing

Cootie Catcher

Make a cootie catcher that has coping skills under each tab

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CG1j9P8WmRbV3fU4Tk00yv0mjFI_2J-QVKiowOhI8ps/edit?usp=sharing

You’re a star

Focus on identifying strengths. clients write a positive character trait for each letter of their name. They cut it out, decorate, and hang up for visual affirmation.

99 coping skills poster

Clients create a banner of as many coping skills as they can. We continue to discuss whether the coping skills are actually avoidance (sleeping, watching TV). Clients that were actively participating are rewarded by getting to glue decorations onto the flag.

My classroom: (Art therapy/guided imagery)

Clinician asks Ct.s to each draw their classrooms at their schools. Clinician processes the drawings with clients. Clinician then leads clients in guided imagery. The clients must imagine they are back at their schools, and they are in math class, then english class, etc. They are guided to interact with their best friend, their least favorite teacher, etc. Clinician asks each client what stood out to them in each mental scene.

Weighted stuffed animals

You will need a stuffed animal, a funnel, rice, and a needle and thread.

Clients create their own weighted stuffed animals with the assistance of clinician. Discussed how the weight of these toys can be comforting and mimic the comforting touch of a safe person/friend.

Affirmation Eggs

Clients fill up easter eggs with positive statements and affirmations, and hide them around the building for others to find. Discussed in random acts of kindness, kindness without expecting something in return, etc..

Erase the Mad Face

(Art/Creativity) What you need: clear gallon zipper bags, washable paint in various colors, clear packing tape Before the activity: Pour about a ½ cup of paint into the gallon zipper bags. Make sure all the air is out of the bag before sealing it closed. Then, use clear packing tape to tape over the zipper closure as added security.

What you do: Give each child a bag with paint in it. Have them lay the bag flat on the table and smooth out all the paint. This will be like finger painting, but without the mess. They should be able to draw designs in the paint and see what they draw through the bag. Let them explore by drawing things of their choice for a few minutes.

Then, instruct them to draw a mad frowny face. You may need to assist younger children and draw the face for them. Then, tell them that they can ‘erase’ it and make it go away and draw a smiley face instead. This symbolizes that they can choose to forgive and love instead of staying mad and angry. Let them continue making faces as long as they are interested. What you say: “Who is in charge of your attitude and your feelings? You are! When someone does something that makes you mad, it doesn’t feel good, does it? Let’s draw what our face would look like if we were mad or angry. Now, when we choose to forgive and love that person anyway, what can that make us feel like? It can make us a little more joyful or a little happier. Let’s erase the mad face and draw a happy face now.”

Physical activities

Beach ball

Write emotions, questions, or other prompts on each section of the beach ball. Toss the beach ball back and forth. Whatever the section the client is touching with their hands they will respond to.

Feelings Yoga

Make up a different yoga pose for different emotions. What is a pose that looks angry? What is a pose that looks sad? Hold the pose for at least 10 seconds. How did it feel to hold this pose?

Red light, green light / simon says

These games can be played to practice what it means to control ourselves and follow rules

Writing activities

Writing an apology

Clients write an apology letter to a family member or a peer for something that they did in the past

Turning over a new leaf: (Goal identification)

Clinician checks in with clients to see what they identify as their primary presenting problem, or at least, what adults in their lives tell them to change. Clients can color in the leaf coloring page, if they wish, to create a visual representation.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_dEhwDmVoH2LylwvTQ5koKd4mQNGWe7R3Sbd51w8moQ/edit?usp=sharing

Letter to my future self

Clients write a letter to their future self, giving them advice, and writing about what is currently on their minds this week.

Open-ended writing prompts

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HrFj8BnrleLjqemlBdR4RVtrr_DfnEjdJromdv7VRO0/edit?usp=sharing

My autobiography

Focus area: creating a personal narrative

Clients complete a paper activity-- the "back cover" of their autobiography. Clients draw a self portrait, write a summary about themselves, and title and price their book. Clinician uses art therapy principles to observe how clients identify, perceive themselves/present themselves to others, and how they value themselves/their story. Clinician verbally processes activity with each client.

Group activities

Anonymous jar

Focus area: Relating to others/empathy. Clients write things that happened to them on slips of paper and put them into the anonymous sharing jar. Clinician reads the submissions and then

we discuss them as a group--how we relate or don't relate, or any advice that they may have for the person.

Privilege walk

Clients completed the "privilege walk" where they step back and forth for privileges and disadvantages in their lives. Discuss where we ended up standing, how it felt to be there and why, and how we can be thankful for what we have.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ICTEfzsjP0lI0mr-9hWPxOBRIYmNYscMowQEgTD95tc/e/dit?usp=sharing>

Spectogram

Focus Area: clients move around the room as a visual representation of how much they agree or disagree with a statement. Example statement: "I have somebody that I can trust"

Friendship Scavenger hunt

Target content: Identity formation, emotion identification, relating to others.

In this group clients completed an activity titled "In the same boat?" where they complete the following questions:

My parents make me feel ___ ; My siblings make me feel ___ ; This is how I feel about how I look ___ ; When I don't get enough sleep I feel ___ ;

Clients then look for other peers who wrote similar answers to each of the questions.

Best resources for sale

Boomwhackers

Clients use Plastic "boomwhacker" instruments to keep the beat to songs. Children are observed if they can be safe/ acknowledge boundaries, contain their excitement, get along with peers etc. Self control, team building, left brain - right brain connection.

<https://boomwhackers.com/>

Kid's Chat Pack

<https://www.amazon.com/Chat-Pack-Kids-Bret-Nicholaus/dp/0975580159>

Cranium: Whoonu

Focus area: Team building, identity formation

Clients play the "Whoonu" game, which centers around identifying others and self's interests. Children draw a hand of 5 cards and take turns being "it". All children put in 1 card from their

hand. The client that is "it" chooses from the pile what their favorite is. A point is awarded. Client that Clinician observes how clients interact/relate with others, and how they resolve conflict (such as feeling misunderstood, frustration with not "winning")

Flags

Raise a red or yellow flag if a client speaks using a thinking error.

Free apps

Habitica

If your client has computer access or a smart phone they can signed up for free to Habitica, which is an RPG style game that rewards you for completing tasks. Prompt your clients to create goals and work towards them each day with measurable progress! [Habitica website](#)

Build Legos on your computer

<https://www.bricklink.com/v2/build/studio.page>

Free mood tracking application:

<https://www.closegap.org/>

Resource Websites

<https://www.weareteachers.com/>

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com>

<https://www.pbisworld.com/>

<https://www.therapistaid.com/>

<http://autismteachingstrategies.com/>

<http://www.emotionalcompetency.com/>

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types>

VIDEOS: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF4rN9sFr6hjHaNKrbMuBLg>

Free Dungeons and Dragons activity book/campaign for kids

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/294712/Adventure-with-Muk-5e>