
Positive Self-Talk

Anticipatory anxiety can cause individuals to miss out on many positive social-emotional activities. Using positive self-talk is a good coping strategy to enable children to access positive social events and to build confidence. One of the best methods to improve positive self-talk is to use memory. Providing examples of positive self-talk should be followed with “When was the last time you experienced a similar scenario and had a positive outcome?” Use the handout to reinforce the potential for positive outcomes when clients are facing challenging events that could lead to anticipatory anxiety.

On the following worksheet, help the client consider the scenarios listed in the boxes on the left. Invite the client to write a positive self-talk statement in the box to the right of each scenario. Encourage the client to consider personal memories and experiences when developing his/her positive statements.

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Scenario	Positive Self-Talk
<p>Nevaeh was typing a report for work and realized that 2 hours had passed and she was only on the first page. Nevaeh began to feel overwhelmed by the project.</p>	<p><i>Example: "In 2 hours, I have finished a page, and I will try to finish one more page before going home for the day."</i></p>
<p>Jeremy disliked going out with big groups of people. One of his friends invited him to an art show where there would be a crowd. He wanted to go, but he began feeling nervous about how other people would perceive him. Jeremy began having negative thoughts about the event.</p>	<p><i>Example: "I will go and greet my friend and try to talk to one other person while I am there."</i></p>
<p>Luis agreed to go on a blind date after a month of his cousin begging him to consider it. He was at the restaurant waiting for his date, and they were 20 minutes late. He was beginning to feel disappointed and rejected.</p>	<p><i>Example: "I can still treat myself to a nice dinner if my blind date doesn't show up."</i></p>
<p>Laura felt anxious any time she left the house. She needed to go to the store for groceries, and her sister couldn't go with her. Laura began having terrible thoughts about what may happen if she went to the store by herself.</p>	<p><i>Example: "When I have left the house before, nothing bad happened."</i></p>