



Oxfordshire Adult Autism Diagnostic and Support Service



Emotional Resilience

ASPiration Workshop



What we will cover



- What is emotional resilience?
- How resilience affects daily life
- How to develop emotional resilience



What is resilience

- Resilience means 'TO SPRING BACK or REBOUND'
- According to the Oxford Dictionary, it is THE ABILITY TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY, ACHIEVING GOOD OUTCOMES REGARDLESS OF LIFE EVENTS OR CIRCUMSTANCES



What is resilience



- Emotional resilience is a person's ability to adapt to stressful situations or crises
- People who can deal with minor stresses can more easily manage major stresses or crises with greater ease
- So resilience has its benefits for daily life as well as major occurrences



RESILIENCE



- The ability to adapt to a variety of situations and increase competency in the face of adversity (Bobek, 2002)
- Adversity may be a 'catalyst' for enhancing resilience
- Resilience can be learnt and developed with personal skills (like problem-solving and feelings of competence or efficacy – Howard and Johnson, 2004)



Characteristics of Resilience



Resilience is not a quality that you do or do not possess, people have different degrees of stress that they can handle. Some of the main characteristics that resilient people share are:

- Emotional awareness
- Perseverance
- Internal locus control
- Optimism
- Perspective



Why is resilience important?



- Lack of emotional resilience can instil the feelings of 'not coping'
- Lack of emotional resilience can increase the impact of anxiety
- It can impact on mental health and wellbeing, as well as physical health
- Low emotional resilience increases illness and absence levels from work



Resilience Program



- Aims to teach techniques and strategies to build emotional resilience and to manage in stressful times
- Ideas for developing working coping strategies
- Solution-focused approach (builds on existing skills and shares what works)
- Interactive and informal approach



Overview



- There are 5 major evidence-based techniques for building resilience that we will look at. These are:
 - Mindfulness and attention training
 - Challenging unhelpful thoughts
 - Identifying role models and support networks
 - Problem solving strategy
 - Conflict resolution and assertiveness training



What is coping?



Coping is:

What we do to make a BAD SITUATION better or to make us FEEL better about the situation



Coping



- What are your coping strategies?
 - Listening to music
 - Shouting
 - Playing computer games
 - Alcohol and drugs
 - Exercise
 - Eating
 - Ignoring the problem
 - Causing destruction
 - Cry

See handout



Mindfulness



- We experience sensory input constantly
 - Sights, sounds, smells, sensations, thoughts, feelings

Most goes unnoticed by us. Mindfulness is about becoming **AWARE** of **ALL** of these **SENSORY INPUTS**



Mindfulness



We can start to learn mindfulness by focusing our attention on our breath, bodies, the environment.



Being mindful of our emotions helps us to be able to stand back from the emotion, so we can understand it, not fear it and learn not to struggle against it.

Being mindful of your emotions can have the benefit of reducing distress but the overall goal is to learn to accept the experience, rather reduce the distress.



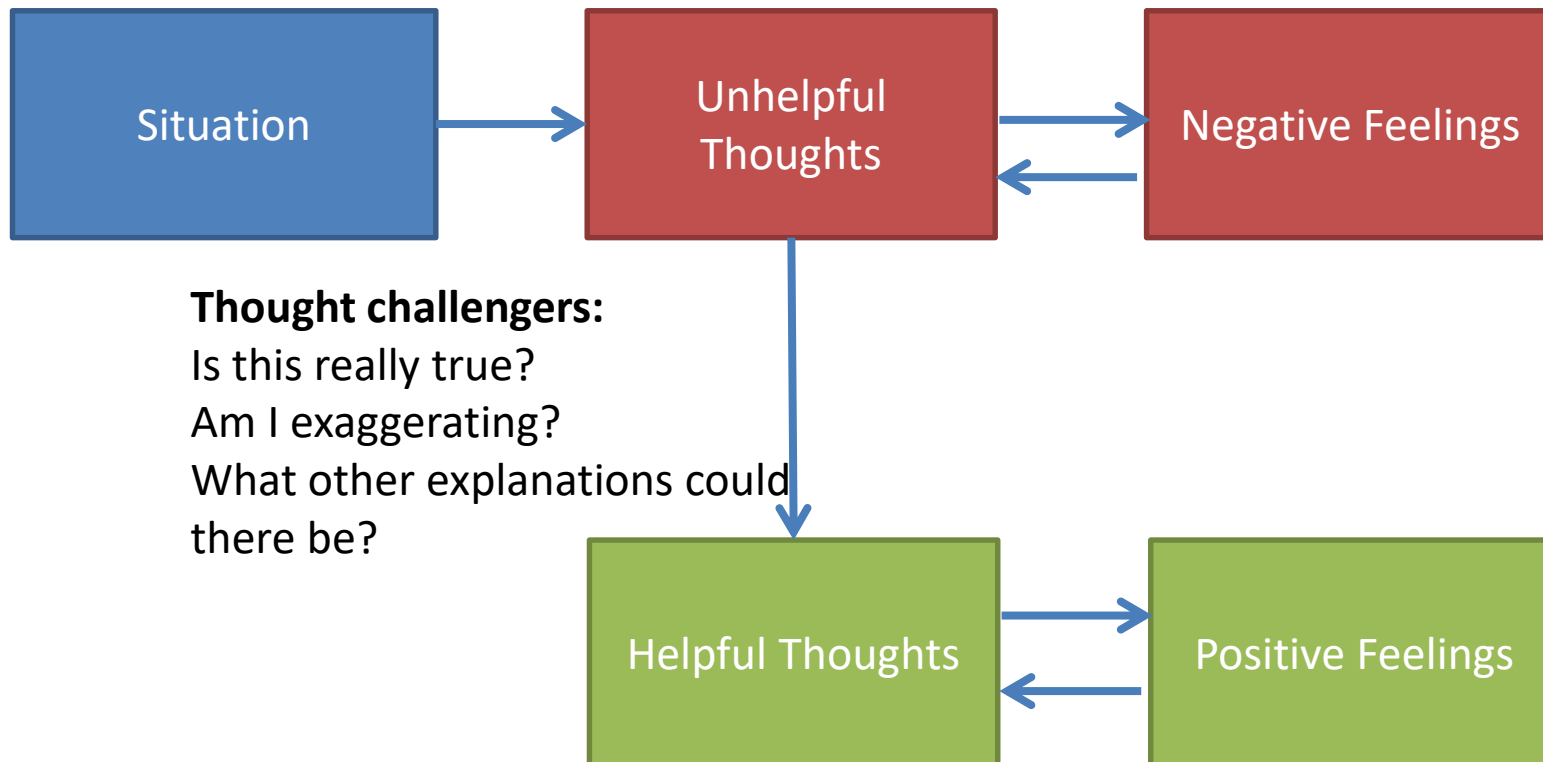
Mindfulness

- We are now going to practice a short 2 minute mindfulness session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eqyj6Rp2Q1w>



Thoughts to change feelings



Thought-Feeling-Behaviour



- **Situation:**

You have been trying to save money. You thought you were making progress, but today received some big bills that will use the majority of your savings up.

What are some unhelpful thoughts you may be feeling?

What unhelpful feelings might you experience?

What behaviours might this lead to?



UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

This is hopeless

What is the point

I'm never going to be able to save

I'm going to struggle so much

UNHELPFUL Feelings

Sad

Depressed

Useless

UNHELPFUL Behaviours

Give up trying to save



Thought-Feeling-Behaviour



- **Situation:**

You have been trying to save money. You thought you were making progress, but today received some big bills that will use the majority of your savings up.

What are some helpful thoughts you may be feeling?

What helpful feelings might you experience?

What behaviours might this lead to?



HELPFUL THOUGHTS

This is a setback but it's not a big issue

I'll have to plan for those types of bills in the future

I'm still doing all right – I'm not in debt

HELPFUL Feelings

Hopeful about the future

OK

HELPFUL Behaviours

Work out how I forgot about those bills and plan for them in the future



Thought-Feeling-Behaviour



- **Situation:**

You are tired after a busy day. Once you get home, your housemate seems angry and start telling you a list of things you should have done

Write down your unhelpful thoughts/feelings/behaviours and helpful thoughts/feelings/behaviours on the next pages



UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS



UNHELPFUL Feelings

UNHELPFUL Behaviours





HELPFUL THOUGHTS

HELPFUL Feelings

HELPFUL Behaviours

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Problem solving

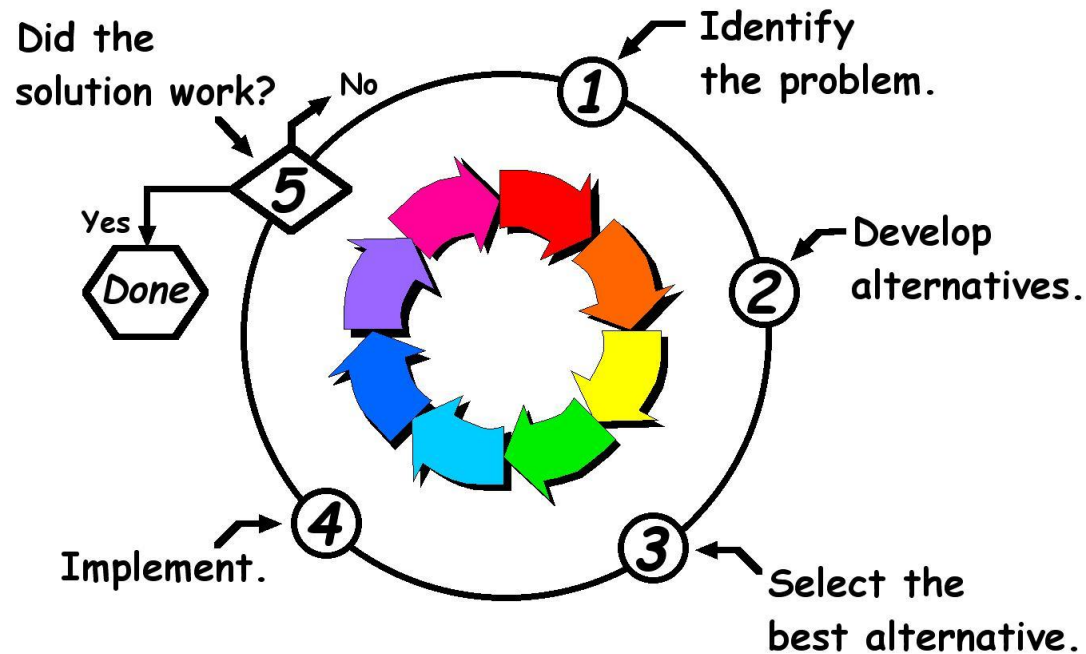


- Problem solving is a coping strategy that can be used when the situation CAN change
- There are many different problem solving models that can be used:
 - 5 stage problem solving plan
 - Coping step plan



Example of a plan

Steps to solve a problem...



Other resources



- Mindfulness information can be found at www.bemindful.co.uk
- CBT and mindfulness resources and ideas at www.getselfhelp.co.uk
- Problem-solving frameworks can be found at the 'FRIENDS for life' program

