

“Will Manage Emotions” Is NOT Enough

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Iowa’s Technical Assistance and Behavior Supports



Please consider completing this pre-test while we wait.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/pre-test-willmanagemotions>

Objectives

Attendees will be able to:

- Describe an activity to teach others how about “Getting Unstuck.”
- Explain why it is valuable for people to have the skill of “Getting Unstuck.”
- Describe one advantage of providing the individual a tangible/visual listing of ideas they can use.

Common Goals

“John will manage his emotions.”

Or something like:

“John will not engage in (John the behavior).”

Oversimplification

- Telling someone to “control their emotions” rather than being taught exactly how to do it makes it sound easy, yet to the person, it is not at all easy.
- It may contribute to feelings of shame.
- Per Marsha Linehan: “It is about like telling a child with no legs to walk without providing artificial legs for her to walk on.”

Linehan, 1993

Oversimplification

- Oversimplification is just **ONE** example of a characteristic of an “Invalidating environment.”
- Invalidating environments are believed to contribute to the development of a variety of struggles.

Oversimplification

- Early childhood is not the only time during one's life in which they may experience oversimplification.
- Documentation sometimes suggests that it also occurs immediately prior to an outburst.
 - “Calm down”
 - “Use your coping skills” (as if it were easy to do so)
- While we cannot change early childhood experiences, we can avoid oversimplification from occurring in present day interactions.

Alternative: More Specific Skill Acquisition Goals

- Not a “one-size-fits-all”
- New skills should be individualized and preferably reflect results of functional assessment.
 - Teach the person an alternative way to get the same ‘payoff’ the challenging behavior acquires.
 - Reduce the person’s motivation to engage in the challenging behavior, as it is no longer needed.

Sample Specific Skills

- Getting Unstuck
- “Things To Do When....”
- Reminder: Always use language that is matched to the person’s skill set and preferences.

Getting Unstuck – Explaining It

“Sometimes we get “stuck” thinking about the same things over and over, like a movie that plays, rewinds, plays again, rewinds..... Getting stuck can result in doing and saying things we later regret and take us away from what is really important to us in the long run. Below is a way to get “unstuck.””

Getting Unstuck – Explaining It

“First, let’s:

Learn the difference between “Here and Now” and “There and Then” thoughts.“

Getting Unstuck – Explaining It

“There and Then (these are the ones that get you stuck):

- **(There)** Thinking about things that take place in another location than where you are at the moment.”
 - Example: Something other people are doing or things going on somewhere else.

Getting Unstuck – Explaining It

“There and Then” (these are the ones that get you stuck):

- **(Then)** Using *memory* to think about things that have already happened or using *imagination* to think about things that “might” happen in the future.
 - Example: Something that happened when you were little, or last week, last night, earlier today. Or, something that might happen tomorrow or next week.

Getting Unstuck – Explaining It

Here and Now (these are the ones that get you unstuck):

- Focusing on the information your 5 senses provide, e.g. what you can SEE, HEAR, SMELL, TOUCH/FEEL, TASTE right “**here**” in your present location and right “**now**”, in this present moment. These are called “Present Moment” activities.”
 - Examples of “Present Moment” activities: Counting how many red items you can see, listening for sounds, touching on surfaces/items; smelling things, noticing urges, internal sensations, etc.

Encourage/Coach the Learner:

Share this new skill with teachers, staff, and/or parents:

- Tell them about it.
- Show them examples of each “There and Then” and “Here and Now” thoughts.
- Ask them to help notice when you may be “stuck” and when you are, to invite you to do a Present Moment activity with them.”

Encourage/Coach the Learner:

“When you find yourself thinking about the same “there and then” thoughts over-and-over again, just like a movie that plays, rewinds, plays, rewinds, etc. do this:

- Tell yourself “good job” for recognizing what is happening.
 - Initially, staff may need to recognize the situation and draw the person’s attention to it. E.g. “Sounds like your mind is stuck thinking about ____.”
- Take a deep breath.
- Engage in Present Moment activities to get back into the Here and Now.
- Once you’re back on track, return to behaviors/actions that will be effective in moving you toward your long-term goals.”

Potential Goal and Objectives

Goal: Will utilize Here and Now activities

Potential Hierarchy of Objectives:

- When asked, Mary will distinguish Here and Now from There and Then thoughts.
- When stuck in There/Then thinking, provided a vocal and visual prompt, Mary will engage in a Here/Now activity.
- When stuck in There/Then thinking, provided a visual prompt, Mary will engage in a Here/Now activity.
- When stuck in There/Then thinking, Mary will independently engage in Here/Now activity.

Some Things to Think About

- Linehan - Invalidating Environment
- Bowlby & Ainsworth- Attachment Theory
- Trauma Informed Care
- Gabor Mate: The Origins of ADHD
- Behavioral Analysis – Setting Events; States of Deprivation

Not Limited to “Oversimplification”

- Absent physically
- Absent emotionally
- Parenting styles
 - Inconsistent or delayed responses to needs
- “Legacy Burdens” – Schwartz, 2021
- Etc. (Beyond the scope of this presentation)

These concepts are not limited to the people we support.

They apply to ALL of us.

Know Your Triggers.

- Possible examples
 - Exaggerated fear response
 - Need for control
 - Need for acceptance Etc.

- Your responses to situations will influence the behavior of others.
 - Non vocal messages
 - Body stance
 - Facial expressions
 - Voice tone

- Ask your supervisor for feedback.

“Things To Do When _____”

- Dependent on staff to
 - recognize the need (a situation in which the use of a support/skill would be beneficial)
 - and to then assist the person to use supports
- Transfer those skills, starting with the use of the support/skill

“Things To Do When _____”

- Tangible, visual listing
 - One sheet of paper – perhaps special stationary
 - Sheet Protector
 - Travel Size: Shrunk down to card size so it fits in wallet or pocket
- Words or icons
 - e.g. clip art, pictures, etc.
- Brief
 - Number of bulleted items
 - Description of each item

“Things To Do When _____”

- Supports listed
 - Invite the person to contribute ideas
 - Match to resources available
 - Perhaps different sheets for different environments
- What to call this
 - Things to do when _____
 - Safety Plan
 - Action Plan
 - Etc




Things to do when it is too noisy for me:

- Wear my headphones
- Go to a quieter area
- Cover my ears
- Ask staff for help

Things to do when Mom doesn't answer my calls:

- Let staff know I'm disappointed
- Leave a message for her
- Find something else to focus on, e.g. take a shower
- Remember all the reasons that may prevent her from answering

Things to do when I see triggers

My Safety Plan			
Triggers	Results in:	What I can do:	Who I can call for help:
		<p>My House:</p> 	
<p>Feeling rejected</p> 		<p>At Work:</p> 	

Potential Goal and Objectives

Goal: Will utilize a “Things To Do When ____” listing

Potential Hierarchy of Objectives:

- When no triggers are threatening and following a review of the listing, John was able to **show you** [or describe] one idea from the listing.
- When in a vulnerable situation and provided vocal and visual prompts, John was able to engage in an idea from the list.
- When in a vulnerable situation and provided a visual prompt, John was able to engage in an idea from the list.
- When in a vulnerable situation, John independently engaged in an idea from the list.

Questions or Comments

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References

- Hayes, S. & Smith, S. 2005. *Get Out of Your Head and Into Your Life*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc.: Oakland, CA.
- Linehan, M. (1993). *Cognitive Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder* (pp. 50). New York: Guilford Press.
- Schwartz, R. (2021). *No Bad Parts*. Boulder: Sounds True.

Competency Quiz

To receive your certificate of completion, use the following QR code or link to complete the competency quiz. A certificate of completion will be sent to you by email after completing the competency quiz.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/competency-willmanageemotions>



Email HCBSTTA@dhs.state.ia.us with any questions or technical issues

Thank you for attending.

Post-attendee Survey

Please complete this survey to let us know your feedback.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/survey-willmanageemotions>



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