

Parent Training: Core Principles and Skills

- Apply “Tough love”
 - Balance demands/consequences with gentleness, love, encouragement, and validation.
 - Balance does not mean an average, which would result in “moderate” demands and love
 - Emphasize reinforcement over punishment: frame with positive wording and avoid punitive tone
 - Highlight positive consequences in advance
 - Describe the desired behaviors with specificity immediately after they occur and show your positive emotional reactions
 - Express that your attempts at control are pragmatic, since other strategies have failed.
 - Give a clear and thorough rationale, usually after compliance, as needed.
 - Have parent-child time for fun or affection to strengthen relationships, but do not force it.
 - Validate a lot in general, usually brief, but extremely elaborated every so often.
 - Give specific feedback about undesired behaviors soon after they occur.
 - Inhibit most of your anger (words and non-verbal behavior), instead “hurt” and “disappointed”
 - Trust that strong consequences applied consistently will eventually change the behaviors. Until then you must stay patient and loving, and remember that anger will only backfire.
- Refuse to argue or lecture when a behavior is needed
 - Far in advance, provide specific expectations for needed behaviors DEAR MAN
 - Soon before the behavior is needed, calmly provide brief and specific prompts for the behavior
 - Calmly briefly describe consequence then quickly apply the consequence
 - Give clear and specific prompts for positive behavior
 - Again, trust that strong consequences applied consistently will eventually change the behaviors. Until then you must stay patient and loving, and remember that arguing and anger will fail.
- Give effective immediate responses (reprimands) to negative behaviors
 - Calm, brief, and specific prompts for stopping negative behavior that is occurring (DEAR MAN)
 - Nonverbal look of disapproval, but calm voice
 - Provide clear and specific prompts for adding positive opposite behavior
 - Soon after undesired behaviors occur, give specific feedback
 - Calmly briefly describe consequences then quickly apply the consequences
 - Validate they are doing the best they can
 - Avoid negative assumptions about the intent or attitude and other adversarial fighting words like “you don’t want/care...”, “manipulate”, and “respect”
- Ignore many behaviors that bother you. Disengage from unproductive attempts to influence your child.
- Apply natural consequences frequently
 - Soon after desired behaviors, provide feedback and reinforcement
 - Describe with specificity the effective behaviors immediately after they occur and
 - Describe and show your positive emotional reactions: joy, love, gratitude, enthusiasm
 - Do extra favors and highlight the connection to their behaviors
 - Express appreciation for noticeable improvements in behavior, even if they are far from your final targets. Do not expect perfection.
 - Respect your feelings of hurt or burnout by withholding favors if there have been recent transgressions. Show your hurt or burnout by acting detached and aloof (“cold shoulder”).
 - Describe hurt or burnout as the reasons for you withholding favors (“favor lockdown”)
 - Describe the impact of their behaviors on your relationship.
 - Describe the behaviors that will help you recover from hurt/burnout and make you want to restore favors.
 - Make the withholding in proportion to the transgressions. Consider withholding nice behaviors of yours that are very basic and may have been taken for granted.
- Do not let coercive behaviors work. Do not give in simply to avoid aggression, confrontation, or self-harm.
- Much hard work is needed: Reading, practice (observed by therapists and in your home), and feedback (from therapists and your child), is needed. Therefore, bring your homework checklist (reverse side of this page) your diary card (of behaviors), and your behavior contract (even if just a draft), all of your handouts and worksheets, and your role-play scripts to every parent training session (group and one-on-one).

Parent Training Tasks

Educational materials: Right away watch the parent training orientation and skills overview videos, read the GIVE DEAR MAN and validation handouts in this packet, and get the book "Parenting a Teen Who Has Intense Emotions". By your third skills training group, read all the handouts in this packet. All videos, handouts, and resources are on our parent web page (below).

Parent Training Orientation Video



www.dbtsandiego.com/parents



Diary Cards: Starting the first week, we ask you to complete daily records of target behaviors, bring them to every individual parent training meeting, and send a copy to your teen's primary therapist each week. We also recommend you send audio recordings to the primary therapist to effectively show your teen's challenging behaviors. In addition, you can periodically email the primary therapist a concise summary of some of the details of your observations of your teen's triggers and behaviors. You can also occasionally ask your teen about you attending a part of one of their individual therapy sessions to check in about their progress and clarify ways you can help support their therapy work.

Written Reward Plan: When aggression or non-compliance are big problems, consider developing a written plan to reward effective compliance and non-aggressive behaviors. Start by completing Worksheet "Things Our Child Wants" and bring it to your one-on-one parent training session, and email the primary therapist asking them to talk to your child about things that would motivate them to comply with rules. After completing a draft of the written plan send the electronic document to both the parent training therapist and the primary therapist to get their input.

Role-Play Practices: To graduate from parent training, we ask that you show mastery of responding to your child's most challenging behaviors, and also show mastery of thoroughly articulating validation of the primary struggle with/of your child. We ask that you show us your child's two most challenging behaviors (and your skillful responses), either by playing an audio recording, bringing your child to a parent training meeting, or showing us in a role-play.

Brief GIVE DEAR MAN for Behavior Change Now

Balanced attempts to encourage more effective behaviors.

1. **Describe the behavior** that needs to change

G – Use a Gentle style and easy manner

D – “I noticed that you ... when I ...” [Describe facts of behavior and situation]

2. **C**onnect with your teen (Inquire and Validate)

I – “What happened?” (always ask at least one question)

“Oh, I see. You did that because...” (show that you heard your teen)

V – “That makes sense...that’s normal to want... in the short-term you...”

3. **S**low and smooth transition

[pause] ... and ... (speak slowly and softly and avoid the word “but”)

4. **G**ive feedback and redirect: Express, Ask, and Reward

“May I give you some feedback about this?” (optional)

E – “...it really stresses me out” “It makes me feel sad [hurt]”

“I worry about you...It increases your emotional suffering in the long-term”

A – Ask “May I make a suggestion? OK, can you please ... right now”

R – “It will really help you/me if you... [specific benefits] ...help our relationship”

5. **R**einforce - **B**e ready to deliver relevant consequences

For D, identify a PROBLEM behavior that you would like the person to change, and describe what you actually observed with your eyes and ears. Hold off on interpretations until MUCH later (after you complete the GIVE and begin Express). Telling your teen "you are upset" is an interpretation, and therefore NOT a part of Describe. Also "You are in a hard situation" references a situation, but does not describe an actual behavior. The whole point here is to request behavior change (changing ineffective behaviors into effective behaviors), so describe those BEHAVIORS very clearly.

For E, avoid expressing anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance

For A, ask for specific behaviors, and give advice only if they say they want advice

Reinforce Improved Behaviors

1. Stay alert to seeing improved behavior - Don't "hold the bar" too high. Appreciate noticeable improvements in behavior, even if they are far from your final targets.
2. When you see it, respond quickly with words (praise) and positive actions
 - a. DEaR Praise (#7 on the parent training diary card)
 - i. describe the specific behaviors that were effective
 - ii. describe your appreciation and/or emotions "I love how you..."
 - iii. nonverbals: eye contact, physical touch, soft voice, warm face
 - iv. your willingness to do nice things for them
 - v. avoid positive judgment words (e.g., "good")
 - b. Natural reinforcement: Do something that the person values or wants (#8)
 - i. "Wow! I'm in the giving mood; Anything I can do for you?"
 - ii. provide something recently requested or try to grant next request
 - iii. use words to convey that the favor is because of their behavior

Consequences for Dysfunctional Behaviors

1. Calm, brief, and specific prompts for stopping negative behavior soon after it starts (GIVE DEAR) before it gets big (if possible)
 - a. Nonverbal look of disapproval, but calm voice
 - b. Provide clear and specific prompts for positive opposite behavior NOW
2. Soon after a big negative behavior occurs calmly respond:
 - a. Calmly give brief feedback (no lecturing)
 - i. describe the specific behaviors that were dysfunctional
 - ii. describe that you feel demoralized and less willingness to do favors
 - iii. avoid judgments and words like "bad choices" or "rude"
 - b. Natural punishment: withhold warmth, attention, and favors
 - i. Look demoralized, but not angry, and switch to "cold shoulder"
 - ii. Ask that a thorough repair be done soon (after time out)
 1. If refuse: "That's your choice. Tell me if you change your mind"
 2. When they start repair, ask them to follow Repair Checklist
 3. Mark feedback on your copy of Repair Checklist
 - a. Ask "May I show you my feedback?"
 - b. "Would you like to try again?" to get full credit
 4. If repair was inadequate, and they don't try again: "That's your choice. Let me know when you want to finish the repair"
 - iii. Until repair is adequate, keep on favor lockdown
 1. immediately cancel planned favors or end a favor underway
 2. deny the next favor request ""not in a giving mood"
 - c. Briefly highlight other consequences (if any). Written reward plan?
3. If possible, make a brief supportive comment

Targeting Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidality

1. Target Avoidance, isolation, passivity/helplessness
 - a. Reduce “enabling” – Don’t make it easy for them to avoid or do too much for them (as if they are helpless or incapable). Review the handout “Try not to Accidentally Reinforce Dysfunctional Behaviors”
 - b. Do a GIVE DEAR MAN - Request that your child work to inhibit impulsive emotion-escape behaviors, and to instead engage in more opposite action (allow and/or approach the emotions and/or situations that they usually avoid)
 - c. Ask for opposite action when you see avoidance or isolation
 - d. When you see your child acting helpless or overwhelmed, ask your child to use problem solving skills (e.g., take one small step) or use DEAR MAN to ask for help. Reinforce the DEAR MAN skill by granting their request.

2. Prompt (and model) effective responses to dysfunctional thinking
 - a. Mindfulness of negative thoughts and Cognitive flexibility
 - i. “The thought ... popped into your mind ... and can you think of other possible interpretations”?
 - ii. “My brain sent me the thought ... and other possible interpretations are...”
 - iii. Model alternatives to judgments using the “Describe” skill (e.g., “effective” rather than “good/bad”)
 - b. Checking the facts (ask questions) about others, rather than negative assumptions. “Please find out if I am actually thinking that” Do not continue until they ask you a question.

That's a judgment, not a fact. That was not effective (It harmed...)

I had the thought...

You just had a hopeless thought. What are other possibilities?

A hopeless thought just went through my mind. I had the thought that...

You just had a thought about my [her] thoughts...that I am [she is] thinking...

What are other possible interpretations?

Can you please find out rather than assume? Go ahead and ask me.

I just had a thought about your thoughts...that you are thinking...What are you thinking?

My mind had the assumption that...

Try not to Accidentally Reinforce Dysfunctional Behaviors

Enabling (the Love Trap) – When efforts to help actually perpetuate the problem rather than truly solve it; when you help the person avoid adversity or distress.

Type 1: **Extreme Emotion Episodes** increase when they get attention, comfort, support, or encouragement. When one teen reported increases in PTSD, panic attacks, and self-injury feelings, to comfort him his father would come home early and his mother would sleep with him. Another teen got physical affection during from her mother immediately during emotional “meltdowns” (very loud crying, extreme hopeless statements, and suicidal escape comments). Physical restraints to stop self-injury increase frequency of self-injury (e.g., head banging) in autistic children.

Type 2: **Facilitating avoidance** of adversity or distress prevents the person from ever learning how to handle distressing situations, so instead encourage opposite action. Avoid taking them out of school or other stressful activities early. Avoid the hospital when it functions as an escape from stressful life situations.

Type 3: **Self-Hatred/Shame** gets stronger when you frequently correct their negative statements with reassurance, compliments, praise, expressions of love, etc.

Type 4: **Too much help**. Helplessness, overwhelm, and fear get worse when you solve their problems or do hard things for them, rather than helping them practice skills for managing challenges on their own. Acting as if they are incapable or fragile makes them stay that way (we feel like we have to save them from intolerable distress). This problem is the most likely if we provide help immediately after helplessness, avoidant, or **Suicidal** behavior (or self-injury), or if our help is excessive (when we do more than they do). Instead, offer to help them be assertive with others (rather than you influence others for them), help them get a job (rather than you pay for everything), teach them to drive (rather than be their chauffeur).

Type 5: **Rescuing removes lessons**. You protect the person from natural negative consequences that might otherwise deter future problematic behaviors. Allowing your child to stay home from school (an excused absence) because he hasn't studied for a test is enabling avoidance or irresponsibility. The spouse who makes excuses for his hung-over partner is enabling alcohol abuse. A friend who “lends” money to a drug addict “to pay for food” is enabling that addiction. Cancelling therapy because of homework procrastination allows procrastination to continue.

Coercion Trap – When your fear, guilt, or fatigue makes you give the person what they want even though they influenced you with intimidating or stressful behaviors.

Instead, you can withhold warmth and/or favors after aggression, and tell them they can only get what they want after GIVE DEAR MAN and/or repair.

Avoid arguing

1. See clearly that arguing is counterproductive and decide to never argue again with your child. If needed, write out pros/cons and keep it handy.
2. Maintain readiness and vigilance for potential arguments and readiness to engage in skillful behavior alternatives
3. When a conflict situation arises, label it (in your mind) as a potential argument and stay mindful and alert. Review written pros and cons.
4. GIVE DEAR MAN
 - a. Speak low and slow and relax your body posture
 - b. Understand and validate others' view
 - c. Request needed behavior (the main point of the discussion)
 - i. "You don't have to" (illusion of choice in the absences of alternatives)
 - d. Prompt effective specific conversational behaviors (non-arguing)
 - i. ask other to speak softly and slowly
5. Disengage promptly when the conversation starts to sound combative or angry, or otherwise proves to be unproductive. One gentle warning may help.
6. If needed, highlight consequence and then deliver it
 - a. If the conversation was prompted by their request, refuse to talk about what they want if their request was opposite to GIVE. Try again later but only if they request using the GIVE DEAR MAN.
 - b. Double chore consequence skill (if relevant)
 - c. If your teen's behavior was extreme aggression (e.g., yelling and insults)
 - i. "Favor lock down" - wait for them to ask for a favor and then deny favor request. Say that favor privileges will be reactivated after your emotions recover (a delay in proportion to the aggression severity) and after they complete a GIVE DEAR MAN and/or full repair.
 - ii. Consider "could shoulder" (in proportion to the aggression severity)
 - iii. Consequences in written behavior plan (if relevant)
7. Do a repair: acknowledge your mistake of slipping into arguing; describe the more effective way to respond to the behaviors that provoked you.

Effective Prompts / Directions

1. Ensure attention (optimal distance, stop distractions, firm voice)
2. Ask for behavior in the following way:
 - A. precise - specify desired behaviors and time frame
 - a) avoid vague commands: "be good", "do a good job", "act your age", "Let's.."
 - b) avoid questions: "Could you...?", "Shouldn't you be...?"
 - c) avoid specifying the behavior to eliminate: "Don't..."
 - B. concise - fewest possible words, on direction at a time
 - a) avoid chain commands
 - b) composite commands are OK, as long as all parts are written or well known
 - c) avoid explanations, except the first time: "I can explain it again after you do it"
 - C. immediate - ask for the behaviors "now"
 - a) grant time flexibility only if many previous instances of timely compliance
 - b) evaluate the pros and cons of parents taking charge of immediate prompting
 - D. Calm and Polite: "please"

Double-Chore Consequence Skill

1. Identify consequences in advance; additional 5-minute tasks or chores.
2. Direction: Clear, specific, concise request that a task be done right now.

"I see you still have not...What happened?... Please start ...[direction]... right now"
3. After 5 seconds without compliance: consequence warning

"If you don't start ...[direction]... now then you'll also have to (additional chore or task) ... and I'll hold your [desired item] until you complete [direction] and [additional chore or task]"
4. After 5 seconds without compliance: implement consequence
 - a) immediately remove/withhold/block the desired item/activity
 - b) consequence: "I will give you back your after you complete [direction] and [additional chore or task]"

Assertiveness: GIVE DEAR MAN

Getting help, Saying No, Gentle Confrontation.

Guidelines for Relationship Effectiveness:

(be) GENTLE

(act) INTERESTED

VALIDATE

(use an) EASY MANNER

- 1 (be) Gentle** Be COURTEOUS and temperate in your approach.
- No attacks** No verbal or physical attacks. No hostility, hitting, clenching fists. Express anger through DEAR MAN, after completing GIVE.
- No threats** No “manipulative” statements, no hidden threats. No “I’ll kill myself if you...” Tolerate a no to requests. Stay in the discussion even if it gets painful. Exit gracefully.
- No judging** No moralizing. No “If you were a good person, you would...” No “You should...” “You shouldn’t...”
- 3 (show) Interest** INQUIRE, LISTEN, and be interested in the other person.
- Ask many open-ended questions and listen carefully to the other person’s point of view, to fully understand their concerns and emotions. Don’t interrupt, talk over, etc. Summarize their concerns and emotions and ask if the person thinks you are fully understanding. Be sensitive to the person’s desire to have the discussion at a later time.
- 4 Validate** Validate or ACKNOWLEDGE the other person’s feelings, wants, difficulties, and opinions about the situation. Express compassion out loud: “It is very understandable that you feel ...” or “Many people would feel that way” or “Your reaction makes complete sense, AND...”
- (use an) **Easy manner** Use a little humor. SMILE. Ease the person along. Be light-hearted. Wheedle. Use a “soft sell” over a “hard sell.” Be diplomatic. Maintain a soft, gentle voice.

Other ideas: _____

Guidelines for Objectives Effectiveness: Getting What You Want

A way to remember these skills is to remember the term “**DEAR MAN.**”

DESCRIBE
EXPRESS
ASSERT
REINFORCE

(stay) **MINDFUL**
APPEAR CONFIDENT
NEGOTIATE

2 **Describe**

Describe the current SITUATION and BEHAVIORS you are reacting to.

Tell the person exactly what you observed (facts) that you are reacting to.

5 **Express**

Express your REACTIONS (FEELINGS and OPINIONS).

Assume that your feelings and opinions are not self-evident. Use phrases such as “I want,” “I don’t like it when you...,” or “I feel stressed by...” instead of “I need,” “You should,” or “I can’t.” Explain your position. Express soft emotions like sad, lonely, worried, stressed, guilty, hurt” Generally avoid anger words, including irritated, annoyed, frustrated Avoid expressing negative assumptions about the person’s thoughts and emotions (wants, love, appreciation, judgments, intentions). Instead, first find out during the GIVE phase.

“Those behaviors give me the impression that you...”

“It comes across to me as...”

6 **Assert**

ASK for what you want or SAYING NO clearly.

Assume that others will not figure it out or do what you want unless you ask. Assume that others cannot read your mind. Don’t expect others to know how hard it is for you to ask directly for what you want.

7 **Reinforce**

Reinforce or reward the person ahead of time by explaining CONSEQUENCES.

Tell the person the positive effects of getting what you want or need. Tell him or her (if necessary) the negative effects of your not getting it. Help the person feel good ahead of time for doing or accepting what you want. Express appreciation for after the person does (at least some of) what you ask. Reward improvement rather than perfection.

- (stay) Mindful** Keep your focus ON YOUR OBJECTIVES.
 Maintain your position. Don't be distracted.

- “Broken record”** Keep asking, saying no, or expressing your opinion over and over.

- Ignore** If another person attacks, threatens, or tries to change the subject, ignore the threats, comments, or attempts to divert you. Don't respond to attacks. Ignore distractions. Just keep making your point.

- Appear confident** Appear EFFECTIVE and competent.
 Use a confident voice tone and physical manner; make good eye contact. No stammering, whispering, staring at the floor, retreating, saying “I'm not sure,” etc.

- Negotiate** Be willing to GIVE TO GET. Offer and ask for alternative solutions to the problem. Reduce your request. Maintain no, but offer to do something else or to solve the problem another way. Focus on what will work.

- Turn the tables** Turn the problem over to the other person. Ask for alternative solutions: “What do you think we should do?” “I'm not able to say yes, and you seem to really want me to. What can we do here?” “How can we solve this problem?”

Other ideas: _____

GIVE DEAR MAN Checklist

Name:

Date:

G - (was) **Gentle** and used **Easy Manner**

- was calm and courteous (no attacks or hostility)
- consequences were not conveyed as threats
- did not judge: words such as "good" "should..." "irresponsible"
- used gentle voice and face showed smile or compassionate expression

D - **Described** - told the person exactly what you are reacting to

- stuck to observable behaviors and avoided assumptions about the other person
- used I statements to describe past events "What I remember is...Is that correct?"
- confirmed facts not directly observed "My understanding is that...Is that correct?"
- was specific and avoided vague words like "irresponsible", "respect", "annoying"
- avoided extreme words like "never" or "always"

I - (showed) **Interest**, listened, and tried to **Understand**

- inquired, asked open-ended questions about their concerns and primary emotions
- did not interrupt or talk over the other person
- eye contact, nodded, and made encouraging sounds like "mm hm"
- summarized their concerns and emotions
- asked the person if you are fully understanding, and if not, to say more

V - **Validated**

- acknowledged the other person's feelings, wants, difficulties, and opinions
- expressed compassion: "It makes sense that you feel/want ..." or "It is normal to..."

E - **Expressed** - stated your reactions (FEELINGS and OPINIONS).

- used I statements: phrases such as "I want," "I don't like it when you...", or "I feel"
- expressed soft emotions like sad, lonely, afraid, worried, stressed, guilty, hurt
- avoided mentioning anger, including irritated, annoyed, frustrated

A - **Asserted**

- you directly asked for a specific observable behavior or said "no" to their request
- asked for what you wanted instead of a request to reduce a behavior
- avoided vague and judgment phrases like "you should be more respectful"
- did not ask for person to change something internal, such as an attitude

R - **Reinforced**

- explained how giving you what you want will benefit them and you
- explained how your relationship will improve and your desire to do more for them
- asked about reciprocity options: "What can I do in return?"
- explained the negative effects of them not changing their behavior (if necessary)
- expressed appreciation, in advance
- only if needed: gently specify negative consequences for non-compliance

When GIVE DEAR is not enough:

M - used "Broken record"

M - ignored attacks, threats, or attempts to change the subject

A - used a confident voice, made good eye contact

N - offered alternative solutions (compromises or quid pro quo offsets) should

N - asked for alternative solutions (turned the tables)

"What do you think we can do to reach an agreement or compromise?"

Anger Management

1. GIVE – Gently seek to understand and validate the other person
 - A. Time out – Only speak when you are calm and gentle. If needed, leave and tell the other person when you are intending to return or when you will complete the conversation.
 - B. Delay saying you are angry, giving feedback, “speaking your mind”, confronting, or retaliating UNTIL you complete Steps C and D. At this point, only describe emotions of curiosity, confusion, “concern”, or worry.
 - C. Check the Facts – Ask questions about their behaviors and the situation, rather than make negative assumptions. “Did you...? Why?” “It is my understanding that you... Is that correct? Am I missing anything?”
 - D. Empathize – understand the core concerns, emotions, and intent of the other person. Ask the person questions about their experience and summarize: “It is my understanding that you... Is that correct? Am I missing anything?”
If the explanation does not make sense to you (or you suspect dishonesty), say “I’m still having trouble understanding... Can you say more about ...?”
Once you understand, end by saying “I understand that you...and that makes sense” (assume what they are saying is true).
If you still do not understand, end by saying “I understand that you...because you ... and I’m sure it make sense in having some understandable causes...
... even though I still don’t understand [and I think it was ineffective]”.
2. DEAR MAN – Ask directly and clearly for what you need (assert), rather than getting passive or angry. If you are denied (and at an impasse), flexibly collaborate to brainstorm possible solutions or compromises. If needed, ask the other person to repair their ineffective behaviors.
3. Opposite Action – Show gentleness, kindness, and empathy in anger situations
4. Repair – After an anger slip, complete the repair steps as soon possible:
Acknowledge, Apologize, Insight, Plan, Redo, Restitution.
Practice a lot, by repairing small anger slips, and even do mini-repairs with unimportant relationships or strangers.
5. Consequences – “Favor lock down” vs. favors, “could shoulder”, written behavior plan

Interpersonal Repair

Describe to the person you harmed your intention to repair by following the five steps below. Ask the other person to follow these steps when they hurt you.

1. Acknowledge your ineffective behavior, and its impact on the other person. Use the GIVE skill. Ask the other person how the behavior affected them rather than relying on your assumptions, and then summarize and apologize.
2. Show insight about why you did it, focusing more on current causes than historical causes, and don't blame the other person. For example:
 - "I over-reacted because I am very sensitive about that issue"
 - "I felt shame and I still don't know how to cope with that feeling"
 - "I made negative assumptions and didn't find out if they were true"
 - "I didn't express my needs soon enough"
 - "I don't know how else to get you to stop, or how to tolerate when you don't"
 - "I accidentally slipped into judgmental thinking again"
3. Validate the other person if your ineffective behavior was partly due to your negative assumptions or judgments about their behavior. Show that you believe the other person's understanding of the facts, and their non-negative emotions and intentions. If the other person verifies they had a negative reactions, express that they are normal reactions or make sense in some way.
4. Describe a compelling plan for effectively reducing the probability of repeating the ineffective behavior in the future. Ask for suggestions from the person who was harmed. In a convincing way, express commitment to the plan. The plan needs to be *better than the last plan that failed*. If the other person also had ineffective behaviors, you can do a GIVE DEAR MAN to ask for different behavior, but only AFTER completing all these repair steps.
4. Take one step NOW to implement the plan. REDO the problematic interaction, and thoroughly describe the improved skills that you show. Ask for feedback from the person who was harmed about the new response that you showed.
5. Do something nice to make up for the harm. Repair the damage. Fix items broken. Do something nice for the person to show that you care, if the damage is that the person felt that you did not care about them. Ask for input from the person who was harmed about how you can most effectively make amends.

Getting Your Teen to Do *Interpersonal Repair*

Learning Repair

- Make sure your teen reviews the Repair handout and checklist in an individual therapy session.
- Show the repair process by YOU repairing an unskillful parent behavior that made your teen upset. Use the Repair Checklist and let your teen see you checking off each item as you complete it.
- If needed, parents can have the teen observe a role-play of a repair that the teen could do for a recent problematic behavior of the teen. One parent pretends to be the teen doing the repair and the other parent shows how they would respond to each piece of the repair.

Starting the Repair

Ask, but do not demand, that a thorough repair be done soon after their aggression, stealing, lying, truancy, or being away from home without permission.

If they only apologize, ask: “Would you like to complete your repair now?”

If they refuse to do a full repair, say:

“That’s your choice. Let me know if you change your mind.”

Until the repair is completed, keep on favor lockdown and cold shoulder.

- immediately cancel planned favors or end a favor underway
- deny the next favor request “I’m not in a giving mood. I’m still hurt”

Doing the Repair

Checklist - Give them the Repair Checklist and ask that they use it when they deliver their repair. Have your copy of the Repair Checklist (feedback) and mark each item as it’s completed.

Gentle - Stop the repair if is not gentle: “I can only receive your repair if you do it in a kind and gentle way. Let me know when you are ready to do it that way. We can do it later if you need more time to prepare yourself.”

Feedback - After they complete their repair, ask “May I show you my feedback?” and “Would you like to try again?” Would you like me to show you an example of what you could say to get full credit?”

Try Again - If repair was inadequate, and they don’t try again: “That’s your choice. Let me know when you want to finish the repair.”

Interpersonal Repair Checklist – Teen gives repair

When you have harmed your parents:

Acknowledge, Understand, and Validate Your Parent

- N/A Described your behavior as ineffective
- N/A Asked parents how your behavior affected them (rather than assuming)
- N/A Accurately described the impact on your parents
- N/A Gave a sincere gentle apology
- N/A Showed insight about why you acted ineffectively (what you need to work on)
- N/A Did your parent trigger you? If so, you asked them to explain their behaviors, and then accurately summarized and validated their perspective (empathy).

Plan to Increase Skillful Behaviors

- N/A Described an effective plan to reduce your problem behavior
- N/A The plan included relevant DBT skills
- N/A The plan included doing GIVE DEAR MAN before expressing or acting on anger
- N/A Asked them for suggestions about how to reduce your ineffective behavior

Practice

- N/A Did a REDO of the problematic interaction to show the more skillful behaviors (e.g., how to more effectively influence them or react to them)
- N/A Asked them for feedback about the effectiveness and thoroughness of the skillful behaviors you showed

Make Amends

- N/A Did something nice to make up for the harm, and fixed/replaced items broken
- N/A Asked them for input about how you can effectively make up for it

Things to avoid

- Appeared to blame parent (e.g., stated they caused your ineffective behavior)
- The tone was not gentle enough or sounded judgmental of parent
- Asked parent to change before you completed all the repair steps

Interpersonal Repair Checklist – Parent receives repair

Parent completes this to give teen feedback on teen's repair.

Acknowledge, Understand, and Validate

- N/A Teen described their behavior as ineffective
- N/A Asked you how the behavior affected you rather than relying on assumptions
- N/A Teen accurately described the impact on you
- N/A Teen gave a sincere gentle apology
- N/A Showed insight about why they acted ineffectively (what they need to work on)
- N/A If your behavior provoked teen, teen asked you questions and then replaced their judgments and negative assumptions with accurate empathy.

Plan to Increase Skillful Behaviors

- N/A Teen described an effective plan to reduce the problem behavior
- N/A The plan included relevant DBT skills
- N/A The plan included doing GIVE DEAR MAN before expressing or acting on anger
- N/A Asked you for suggestions about how to reduce the ineffective behavior

Practice

- N/A Did a REDO of the problematic interaction to show the more skillful behaviors (e.g., how to more effectively influence you or react to you)
- N/A Asked you for feedback about the effectiveness and thoroughness of the skillful behaviors they showed

Make Amends

- N/A Did something nice to make up for the harm, and fixed/replaced items broken
- N/A Teen asked you for input about how to effectively make amends

Things to avoid

- Teen appeared to blame you (e.g., stated you caused their ineffective behavior)
- The tone was not gentle enough or sounded judgmental of you
- Teen asked you to change before completing all the repair steps

Interpersonal Repair Checklist – Parent gives repair

When you have harmed your teen:

Acknowledge, Understand, and Validate Your Teen

- N/A You described your behavior as ineffective
- N/A You asked how your behavior affected teen (rather than assuming)
- N/A You accurately described the impact on teen
- N/A You sincerely apologized to teen
- N/A Showed insight about why you acted ineffectively (what you need to work on)
- N/A Did your teen provoke you? If so, you asked teen to explain their behaviors, and then replaced your judgments and assumptions with accurate empathy.

Plan to Increase Skillful Behaviors

- N/A You described an effective plan to reduce your problem behavior
- N/A The plan included relevant DBT skills
- N/A The plan included doing GIVE DEAR MAN before expressing or acting on anger
- N/A Asked teen for suggestions about how to reduce your ineffective behavior

Practice

- N/A Did a REDO of the problematic interaction to show the more skillful behaviors (e.g., how to more effectively influence teen or react to them)
- N/A You asked teen for feedback about the effectiveness and thoroughness of the skillful behaviors you showed

Make Amends

- N/A You did something nice to make up for the harm.
- N/A You asked teen for input about how you can effectively make up for it

Things to avoid

- Appeared to blame teen (e.g., stated they caused your ineffective behavior)
- The tone was not gentle enough or sounded judgmental of them
- Asked them to change before you completed all the repair steps

Interpersonal Repair Checklist – Teen receives repair

Teen completes this to give parent feedback on parent's repair.

Acknowledge, Understand, and Validate

- N/A Parent described their behavior as ineffective
- N/A Asked you how the behavior affected you rather than relying on assumptions
- N/A Parent accurately described the impact on you
- N/A Parent gave a sincere gentle apology
- N/A Showed insight about why they acted ineffectively (what they need to work on)
- N/A Asked you questions to understand your behaviors that provoked them, and then accurately summarized and validated your perspective (empathy).

Plan to Increase Skillful Behaviors

- N/A Parent described an effective plan to reduce the parent's problem behavior
- N/A The plan included relevant DBT skills
- N/A The plan included doing GIVE DEAR MAN before expressing or acting on anger
- N/A Parent asked you for suggestions about how to reduce the ineffective behavior

Practice

- N/A Did a REDO of the problematic interaction to show the more skillful behaviors (e.g., how to more effectively influence you or react to you)
- N/A Parent asked you for feedback about the effectiveness and thoroughness of the skillful behaviors they showed

Make Amends

- N/A Parent did something nice to make up for the harm.
- N/A Parent asked you for input about how to effectively make amends

Things to avoid

- Appeared to blame you (e.g., stated you caused their ineffective behavior)
- The tone was not gentle enough or sounded judgmental of you
- Asked you to change before completing all the repair steps

Validation Examples

1			
2			
3	<u>Invalidation Option</u>		<u>Factual Description Alternative</u>
4	“You are ignoring me”		You never returned my call
5	“It’s not a big deal,		You sound so hopeless
6	all you have to do is...”		May I share some ideas about what I think may help?
7	“Don’t worry about it.		You’re having such a strong reaction, and I don’t understand why.
8	You’re too sensitive”		I’m can’t imagine having a reactions that strong. What’s going on?
9	“You made a bad choice”		That was a very harmful behavior.
10	“You are judging me”		Your voice is coming across as judgmental.
11	“You like to criticize me”		You often use judgmental language when you give me feedback
12	“You always...”		You very often... I can’t recall a time when you didn’t...
13	“You never...”		You rarely... I can’t recall a time you ever...
14	“You are selfish”		You do a lot for yourself, and I want you to do more for me...
15			
16	<u>Person A</u>	<u>Person B Invalidation</u>	<u>Factual Description Alternative</u>
17	“It’s cold	“No it’s not”	That’s so strange because I feel warm
18	“I told you”	“No you never told me”	I don’t recall you telling me that
19	“You said...”	“I never say that”	I don’t remember ever saying that
20	“Ouch!”	“That didn’t hurt.	Really? I’m so surprised
21		“I barely touched you.”	It felt like I barely touched you
22	“You never use skills”	“Yes I do!”	I do have to do more, but “never” is extreme
23		“That doesn’t make	I don’t yet see at all how this makes sense
24		any sense”	Please explain.
25			
26	<u>Person A</u>	<u>Person B Invalidation</u>	<u>Factual Alternative Description</u>
27	“I can’t”	“Yes you can”	It is really hard...and...
28	“It’s so hard”	“It’s actually easy”	It is really hard...and...
29			I have some ideas that may help?
30			May I share them with you?
31	“There is no hope”	“Yes there is”	You do face many challenges...and...
32			and I have different thoughts
33			about the possibilities”
34	“I have no friends”	“Yes you do”	I’m confused. What about the kids across
35			the street, and the kids on your team?
36	“I’m ugly/worthless”	“No, you’re not”	That doesn’t match my thoughts.
37			Why do you feel that way?
38			Please stay away from judgment. Instead try..
39			
40	“You are judgmental”	“No, I’m not”	I wasn’t aware of thinking or feeling
41	...condescending		judgmental. Sorry I came across that way
42	“You are mean”	“I’m sorry you <u>feel</u> I’m mean”	Did I come across that way? What did I do?
43			I’ll work on being more gentle...
44	“You are too strict”	“I’m sorry you <u>feel</u> I’m strict”	I’m sorry you can’t have more freedoms
45			It’s normal to want more.
46			I’ll create a way for you to earn more
47	“you got angry”	“No, I was not”	I felt frustrated with the situation, which
48			could certainly come across as anger at you

What to Ask For (A) and Reinforce

1. Compliance
2. Gentleness “softer voice please”

Skills

3. GIVE DEAR MAN instead of acting helpless, overwhelmed, or aggressive “please express what you need”

“Please take out the Checklist and follow along.”

4. Interpersonal Repair

“Please take out the Repair checklist and follow along.”

5. Check the Facts – Ask a question rather than assume

“Do you want to find out? Go ahead, ask me.”

6. Acknowledge thoughts out loud and stick to facts (mindful)

“Please say ‘I just had the thought...’ ”

“Instead of judging, please say...” [describe]

7. Approach rather than avoid – one small step

Stay rather than leave – even if only for a little more time

Get out of bed – even if for only 10 min. and you go back

Show up for just a few minutes (leave early) vs. not at all

Sit with family for dinner for a 5 minutes

8. Self-validation rather than self-judgment

Risk Management Recommendations

Short-Term Risk

The following are things parents need to do throughout treatment to reduce the risk of their child acting on suicidal or self-injurious thoughts. Complete the *Safety Checklist*, and give it to your child's primary therapist, if your child has ever had any suicide risk.

1. Secure all dangerous objects and substances in a safe.
2. Remove firearms from the home or store them securely.
3. Secure household cleaners and solvents that can be dangerous if ingested. Call the poison control hotline to find out the risks of different substances in your house.
4. If it is possible your child may ever run away from home to attempt suicide, we recommend you install a home security system (with an alarm triggered by motion sensors) and attach/activate GPS location devices (e.g., in their purse, shoe, or phone).
5. Be vigilant to efforts to "outsmart" your security methods, including searching your house for the key. For example, one teen set up his phone to secretly record his parent entering the code to their safe. Another teen dusted the keypad of a safe with baby powder to detect which numbers had oil residue on them indicating that those were the numbers used for the code. We recommend that you always keep the key on your person, if possible, since teens often find hidden keys.
6. Once per month, change the passcode on your safe and home security system, or move the storage location of the key (if not kept on your person).

These are additional things parents can do during periods of increased suicide risk:

1. Monitor your child throughout their period of crisis (keep eyes on them, remain in the same room, sleep in their room overnight).
2. Physically prevent your child from leaving your house.
3. Remove kitchen knives and other cutting tools and sharp objects.
4. Secure keys to vehicles and have license plate numbers readily accessible.
5. Remove belts, ropes, or other items that can be secured around the neck.
6. Talk to a DBT therapist before calling another mental health professional or the police, whenever possible. You should consider calling 911 if your child made a credible suicide threat and 1) no parent is available to intervene, 2) no parent is available to stay with your child during the crisis and your child does not speak to a therapist (refuses skills coaching or no therapist is available before your child would be unsupervised), 3) your child leaves the house, 4) or you cannot take away the suicide means.

Long-Term Risk:

These strategies minimize reinforcement of suicidality and non-suicidal self-injury:

1. Delay (e.g., by at least four days) engaging in long discussions or comforting them (e.g., "heart to hearts" talks) following suicide/NSSI threats or behaviors. Prior to suicidal/NSSI communication or behaviors show high levels of interest and initiate conversations with your child about how they are doing, validate their feelings, show warmth and concern. Communicate that you do not want them to have to be suicidal, or engage in NSSI to communicate emotional pain or distress. Make a request that if they feel distressed, that they tell you directly. Provide alternatives for how they can approach you in a more skillful way.

- a. "I'm angry that you said I can't go to my friends house; Is there anything that I can do to get you to reconsider?" instead of "If you don't let me go, I'll cut."
 - b. "I'm really worried about my grade in math and I'm scared I'm not going to pass" instead of "I just want to die" (in response to a poor grade or upcoming test).
 - c. "I'm feeling hopeless and noticing suicidal thoughts and I'm not sure how to manage them, can you help?" instead of "I want to kill myself"
2. As much as possible, try not to let NSSI or suicide comments/threats interfere with the normal responsibilities/activities of you or your child if the function of may be to influence you. For example, do not let your child stay home from school or come home early, or get out of doing chores or homework. Do not come home from work early, cancel date night, or cancel your out of town work trip. Instead try to handle the situation in other ways, e.g., with help from the other parent, a therapist, school counselor, etc.

When you deny a request:

- a. Give clear reasons (e.g., why you will not let them miss school, or why you will not be with them). Explain Escape Coping and Reinforcement problems (pages 3-4 of the "Parent Interventions" transcripts).
- b. Be prepared for "extinction burst" escalation by having a strong safety plan.
- c. In advance, explain the reasons to your teen in a therapy session, and complete the safety plan with your parent training therapist.

When you are compelled to give in, try to minimize reinforcement:

- a. Do not allow fun or distracting replacement activities. For example, make your home as boring as possible (no TV, phone, internet, and minimal conversation) during school hours.
 - b. Allow natural consequences of the child not completing their responsibilities (examples: avoid pleas from your child to email teachers to change assignment deadlines, and do not let them "off the hook" with chores).
3. During any necessary communication with your child during or following suicidal/NSSI behaviors or communication, talk as little as possible, maintain a neutral tone of voice, minimize eye contact, and avoid physical contact (hugs, rubbing their back, etc) except as needed for physical restraint.
4. If your child's NSSI or suicidal behavior requires medical attention, provide only what is needed for the specific severity of the injury (for example, give them bandages to apply on their own for superficial cuts) and maintain the verbal and nonverbal behaviors described above while tending to their wounds or waiting with them at a medical facility.
5. Avoid providing special activities to your child directly following NSSI or suicidal threats or behaviors, or because of those behaviors. For example, do not allow them to have a friend over on school night to "cheer them up" when normally that would not be allowed, no special outings, no giving favorite foods, no giving quality time. The most problematic reinforcement is when a child demands a privilege (e.g., go to an outing with friends), parents say no, then the child harms herself, and then the parents change their mind and allow her to go to the event.

Long-Term Risk: Use the "Master List of Triggers/Behaviors" worksheet to understand triggers for suicidality and non-suicidal self-injury, and to clarify opportunities to help them solve their problems, reduce distorted thinking, and reduce avoidant behaviors (increase opposite action). Review the worksheet with the primary therapist and your parent training therapist to clarify the specific ways you can help with these targets.

According to your child's psychiatrist, What is lowest possible lethal dose of these products for your child?

- ___ How many 325mg aspirin pills (including Anacin, Bayer, Bufferin)?
- ___ How many 325mg acetaminophen pills (including regular Tylenol)?
- ___ How many 500mg acetaminophen pills (including extra-strength Tylenol)?
- ___ How many 200mg ibuprofen pills (including Advil)?
- ___ How many Aleve pills (naproxen sodium)?
- ___ How many Benadryl pills?

Yes No Are there any guns in your home?
Yes No If yes, are they stored in a locked safe with the ammunition stored in a second locked/secured location?

Yes No Did you already provide to us your license plate and vehicle information?
If not, list here your license plate and make, model, year, and color of each of your vehicles.

Yes No Are you consistently keeping bleach and other household cleaners and solvents (that can be dangerous if ingested) locked up?
Yes No If not, do you agree to lock them up (or remove them from the home) immediately after suicidal threats or behavior, or as soon as suicide ideation increases?

Client's printed name(s): _____

Parent's printed name(s): _____

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Administrative Use Only

Effectiveness of security methods verified by _____ (therapist signature)

Yes No Reviewed the "Risk Management Recommendations" handout with parents

Yes No N/A Therapist verified the safe code and/or key storage method

Verified by clinic director _____ (initials)

Reduce Reliance on Emotion-Driven Behaviors

- 1) What is their dysfunctional emotion trying to make you do?
 - a. "Please help me avoid this. It's too uncomfortable!"
 - b. "Please do this for me! I am helpless/incapable"
 - c. "Listen to me! Take my concerns seriously"
 - d. "Reassure me that it's OK [I am OK]"
 - e. "Don't let me be alone"
 - f. "Leave me alone!!" (anger)
- 2) Don't do it...when their emotion is dysfunctional (extinction). Their emotion is trying to pull you into an enabling trap!
- 3) Describe their avoidance or emotion-driven behavior and how in the long-term it harms them (or the relationship).
- 4) Suggest how they can more skillfully respond to their distress or to the situation, or how to better influence you.
- 5) When they demand you enable them, give a gentle and compassionate explanation why you are withholding.
- 6) Consider a compromise if they meet you halfway.

Explain why you are not helping them escape this time (extinction):

Teen: Can you please come right now and bring me home?

Parent: Do you remember how I did a GIVE DEAR MAN telling you that I was no longer going to pick you up early from school [come home early to be with you] when you're upset? What were my reasons?

Teen: I don't understand why you can't be more supportive with my anxiety disorder.

Parent: I guess you're forgetting some of our previous conversation. I don't want to make you worse by contributing to escape and avoidance, which keeps you stuck in this pattern of feeling overwhelmed because you would never learn to deal with that situation or those emotions. Do you want me to review the coping skills plan with you or do you want to contact your therapist?

Teen: You're being really mean right now.

Parent: I'm truly sorry that the process of becoming stronger is so hard. I really wish there was an easier way. I have to follow my values of helping you in the long-term even if it means temporarily feeling worse as you learn how to face stressful challenges. With practice it will eventually become less overwhelming.

Address pattern of avoidance (global GIVE DEAR MAN):

"I have noticed that you often avoid going to school in the morning. Many days you are late or miss entirely. Tell me more about your thoughts and emotions when that happens. What is the worst part about being at school? [AFTER GETTING ANSWER] It makes sense that you would feel that way and try to not feel that distress and it's a short-term strategy for feeling better that does not help in the long-term. I'm worried about you staying stuck in this trap. Avoidance guarantees that school will stay overwhelming or feel even harder. Using skills to stay in the challenging situation and cope with it is the most effective way to build confidence and make you less overwhelmed by these situations. Do you remember what we learned in the DBT group about opposite action? Did your therapist already go over with you a plan for how you can manage it?"

Encouraging opposite-to-fear action in a specific situation:

Parent: Are you going to your friend's house to swim?

Teen: No, I don't want to go any more.

Parent: What?! You really like hanging out with her. What's going on?

Teen: She invited a few other people over so that would be too uncomfortable.

Parent: I know social anxiety is really difficult. It makes sense that you would not want to feel that distress and it's a short-term strategy for feeling better that does not help in the long-term. I'm worried about you staying stuck in this trap. Avoidance guarantees that this kind of situation will continue to make you anxious...forever. Using skills to stay in the challenging situation and cope with it is the most effective way to build confidence and make these situations less uncomfortable. Do you remember when we learned about opposite action in the DBT group?

Teen: Yeah

Parent: What did your therapist tell you to do in this kind of situation?

Teen: To do it.

Parent: Yes, but that is really hard. How about we break it into small pieces? It's much more effective to go for a little bit, rather than not at all. How about we set up a plan for you to leave early? You can send me a text if you want me to pick you up early. I will call you, you can answer it in front of them, and I will give a good excuse why I need you to come home early. Sound OK?

Encouraging opposite-to-depression action in a specific situation:

Parent: Please come to dinner now?

Teen: I'm not hungry?

Parent: Please come to the table even if you don't eat.

Teen: I don't really feel like it today.

Parent: Are you feeling down?

Teen: Kind of, I guess.

Parent: I thought I noticed that today. I know it's really hard to do stuff when you feel depressed. Depression makes us want to isolate and avoid things. That's true for everybody and letting depression control us makes depression worse. Acting depressed feeds depression. It's a really nasty trap. Can you please come join us for at least 10 minutes? Opposite action may not get rid of depression, but it makes it much less severe over time if you keep doing it.

Prompting your teens to practice mindfulness of their thoughts and cognitive flexibility

Here are some examples to guide these practices. These parent skills are called prompting and modeling effective responses to dysfunctional thinking. Keep in mind that these are ideals of how we want the conversations to go. I understand that for many of you the conversation will be much more difficult than what these examples may imply. If they reject conversations that sound like therapy, then you will have to water down and simplify these interventions. Do what you can. These examples leave out the most DBT skills labels, but I don't do much else to water them down.

MODELING MINDFULNESS OF JUDGMENTS

“You shouldn't do that. I'm sorry. That's a judgment. I shouldn't say that. Oops. That's another judgment thought. I'm certainly going to work on sticking to the facts. Let me try that again. It would be more useful if you didn't do it that way. Can you please consider doing it the way I suggested? I think it will be more likely to work. And it's certainly not effective for me to speak with judgments when I am trying to persuade you.”

“I just noticed the judgment thought 'That's a stupid idea' come into my mind. But I'm not going to say that. Instead, I'll just say 'I don't like that idea and I doubt it will work'.”

“I noticed the judgment thought 'That's a stupid question. Everybody knows that'. But I'm not going to say that. Instead, I'll just say 'I'm surprised he asked that question. The answer is obvious to me and I expect most people know it.' ”

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF JUDGMENTS

Teen: “I'm a loser”

Parent: “So a judgmental thought just popped into your mind. Can you please just stick with the facts when you think about yourself? I certainly don't have that thought about you. Judgments will increase your suffering to the max, and also get in the way of working on yourself. Judgments create their own reality and keep us stuck. A compassionate approach is much more effective. You could say something like 'I would like to have friends who are more compatible with me' or 'I wish I wasn't so socially anxious'. Social anxiety is very common and is nothing to be ashamed of. I also had a lot of social anxiety when I was your age. Say something like that right now, in your own words if you like. Go ahead, give it a try. Please. Learning this skill will help you not get pulled into depression as much.”

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF JUDGMENTS

Teen: “You're a jerk”

Parent: “So you just had a judgmental thought about me. Can you please just stick with the facts when you give me feedback, so we can more effectively work as a team here? Judgments only create battles and are not effective in getting others to change. They feed anger and anger always backfires. A gentle and direct approach is much more effective. You could say something like 'I hate it when you talk to me in a harsh voice and focus on making me do something and don't show any interest in understanding me'. Please give it a try. You'll see this way work out so much better.”

MODELING MINDFULNESS OF ASSUMPTIONS

“I'll make something very different for dinner tonight. You don't want Mexican food two nights in a row. Wait a minute, that's a mind-reading thought. I'll check the facts. What do you want for dinner tonight?”

“I'm not going to bother applying for that job because I won't get it. Wait a minute, that's a future thought, not a fact. I don't have a crystal ball. Let me try that again. My mind sent me the thought 'That's a long shot because most people who apply have more experience, and my co-worker agreed with me.' I can also check the facts by submitting my application and see what happens, even if my coworker and I think it's a long shot. What do I have to lose?”

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF ASSUMPTIONS

Teen: “I won't pass this class”

Parent: “Wait a minute, that's a hopeless thought, not a fact. I certainly don't share your pessimistic view, but neither of us has a crystal ball. Can you please just stick with the facts here? Instead, you can say something like 'my mind sent me the thought 'That's a long shot. I had a C average before the last test. I didn't feel good about the last test and I feel so unprepared for the final. I'm feeling really frantic about my grade.' You can also check the facts by asking your friends about their grades in the class, checking again to see if your last grade is now posted, and asking your instructor if he is considering grading on a curve. Instead of letting that hopeless thought control you, can you please say something like that? Right now please.”

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF ASSUMPTIONS

Teen: "I won't make any friends at this new school"

Parent: "So a hopeless thought just went through your mind. That's a thought, not a fact, and I certainly don't share your pessimistic view. But neither of us has a crystal ball. Didn't you and your therapist prepare some notes on alternative ways to think about this? I think she called it a cue card. Can you please take it out now and read those other ideas? I would love to help if you don't mind reading them in front of me."

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF ASSUMPTIONS WITH SOCRATIC QUESTIONS

Teen: "I won't make any friends at this new school"

Parent: "So a hopeless thought just went through your mind. That's a thought, not a fact, and I certainly don't share your pessimistic view. But neither of us has a crystal ball so there are other possibilities. Can you think of other possible ideas of how the year might unfold that could create opportunities for you to connect with other kids there?"

PROMPTING MINDFULNESS OF ASSUMPTIONS

Teen: "You're mad at me and judging me"

Parent: "So you just had a mind-reading thought. That's a thought, not a fact, since we don't have magical powers to read minds. That's your assumption or your interpretation of what I said. It would be really useful if you would acknowledge that and then find out the truth. You could say something like 'I just had a thought that you are angry and judging me' and then ask me to tell you what I am really thinking and feeling. Please try saying something like that. Right now please."

Teen: "I think you're angry and judgmental right now"

Parent: "Thanks. That's pretty close. Can you also say 'I know that's my assumption and there's a possibility it's not true'. You can even acknowledge that there is a slight chance your thought is not accurate. Can you try again please?"

Teen: "I know that's my assumption and there's a tiny chance it's not true"

Parent: "Thanks. And can you think of other possible ideas of what I might be thinking and feeling about you right now? If you practice flexible thinking your emotions won't control you as much and you will have smoother relationships. Nobody likes others making negative assumptions about them. I know you hate it when I do that to you. I'm also trying to do it less often."

Teen: "You might be softly judging me without any anger because maybe you calmed down already."

Parent: "Can you think of other possible ideas of what I might be thinking other than judging you?"

Teen: "No. I don't think so."

Parent: "OK. That's fine for now. Now go ahead and find out what I'm really thinking and feeling right now."

Teen: "Are you mad or judging me?"

Parent: "Thanks. That's pretty close. You asked a yes-or-no question. It's even more effective to ask an open-ended question like 'What are you thinking and feeling about me right now?' Go ahead and try asking that way."

Teen: "What are you thinking and feeling about me?"

Parent: "Thanks for checking the facts rather than making a negative assumption about me. I was only feeling sad, disappointed, and concerned for you that you did it again. I didn't notice any judgmental thoughts for feelings. I certainly was feeling stressed and so maybe I wasn't very warm and that could have come across as judgmental. I'm sorry if that happened."

Self-Hatred/Shame can get stronger when you correct their negative self-statements. Instead of enabling, get them to practice their skills.

Teen says "I'm ugly"

Parent: Your mind just created a judgment. Please try again but this time with mindful language.

Describe the thought instead of encouraging judgment

Teen: I really don't look good

Parent: That's still a judgment, and if you keep encouraging judgments, you will only stay stuck, suffering from this over and over again. Please try something like "I noticed thinking about how I look and feeling some shame, and I observed the judgment "ugly" came into my mind.

Teen: "I think I'm ugly"

Parent: That's a little closer. Can you please try saying something like what I just said to do even more to prevent that thought from controlling you

Teen: OK. I will

Parent: It would be most effective to do it now...please...it really will help

Teen: I can't

Parent: I know it's hard at first. Just repeat after me "I noticed thinking about how I look and feeling some shame"

Teen repeats the statement

Parent: "and I observed the judgment "ugly" came into my mind."

Teen repeats the statement

Parent: Fabulous. Thank you

Offensive Distortions: Reduce arguments and reduce the impact of extreme distorted thinking by getting them to practice their mindfulness and Check The Facts skills.

Teen says "Why do you always have to judge me?"

Parent: You think I'm judging you now?

Teen: Yes

Parent: So your mind just sent you the thought that I am judging you right now? Negative assumptions about you? What exactly are you thinking that I'm thinking?

Teen: That I'm just being irresponsible, because I am lazy, don't care about you or what you want, and want to make things difficult for you. I'm just really depressed, and you don't seem to care about me

Parent: OK. I see. Your mind sent you assumption thoughts about my thoughts about you. To reduce conflict, it's useful to use mindfulness to get some distance from those thoughts so we can see they are guesses that need to be checked out. Since we cannot directly observe others' thoughts we often make of errors. Please try again but this time with mindful language. Describe those thought about me.

Teen: I think you're judging me

Parent: That's a little closer. Can you please try saying something like this do even more to unglue from those thoughts about me? Something like "When you gave

me feedback about school, my mind sent me the thought that you are judging me, like I'm lazy, irresponsible, and just trying to be difficult.”

Teen: OK. I will

Parent: It would be most effective to do it now...please...it really will help

Teen: I can't

Parent: I know it's hard at first. Just repeat after me “When you gave me feedback about school”

Teen repeats the statement

Parent: My mind sent me the thought that you are judging me

Teen repeats the statement

Parent: Thank you for practicing that. Now please check the facts. Find out the truth about what I'm thinking

Teen: What were you thinking about me?

Parent: I wasn't aware of feeling judgmental about you or having thoughts that you were lazy or irresponsible, but I was probably feeling a little frustrated about you not doing the things we had talked about to improve your attendance and grades. I can see how that could have come across as judgmental, so I'll work on conveying more gentleness and compassion. I'm so worried about your struggle with school and I'll work on being more effective to help you.