

**Religious Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
for Depression In Clients with Chronic Physical Illness**

Participant Workbook

(Hindu Version)

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This workbook is a variant of the treatment protocol
originally designed by A. T. Beck, M.D.

Session 1: Assessment and Introduction to RCBT

Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

"Those whose mind and intellect are wholly merged in Him, who remain constantly established in identity with Him, finally become one with Him. Their sins are wiped out by wisdom. They reach the supreme goal from where there is no return." Bhagavad Gita Ch 2, V 17

Write the verse down and post it somewhere you will see it often, perhaps on a sticky note placed on your mirror or fridge. You may want to make several copies and post them in places you will see it throughout the day.

2. Activity and Mood Monitor

The goal of the first session's homework assignment is begin developing skills in self-monitoring daily mood and daily activities. The goal at this stage is not to change any regular habits. The self-monitoring logs have a place for recording your activities and mood every two hours. Please complete this log daily. It may be easiest to fill out the activity log twice during the day. For example, you could record all of your morning activities when you eat lunch and all of your afternoon and evening activities just before you go to bed. This record will give us some information as to which activities may lead to better moods and which activities may lead to worsened moods.

Here are few guidelines about self-monitoring:

- a. Keep the self-monitoring log with you throughout the day and record your activities as close as possible to the end of the time periods.
 - b. Record the activity in a very few words. For example, you could record "went out to dinner" or "washed my clothes" or "read a book" or even "watched TV."
 - c. Immediately after recording your activities, record your mood.
 - d. Purchase a notebook to put the logs in, so that you will have a record of your activities. We will make use of them later.
 - e. Make sure you have your logs with you during each session. They are necessary for the rest of the program
 - f. Be sure and include even trivial events on your chart such as missed the bus or read the newspaper.
3. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Thinking and Depression

Signs of Depression

"I don't have a purpose in life anymore now that my chronic pain makes it too difficult to work."

"I am an unfaithful Hindu because I am depressed. A Hindu should not be depressed."

"I just can't motivate myself to do any of the things which I need to do. I'm a lazy person."

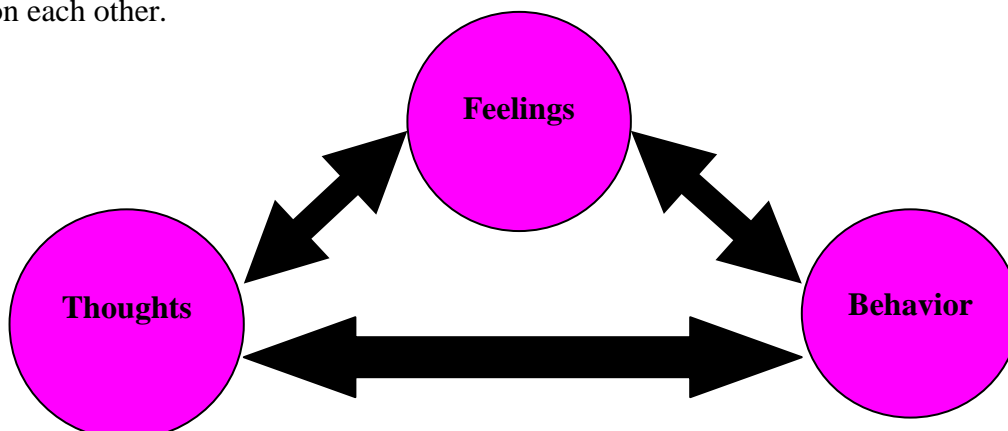
All of the above are statements that a depressed individual might make. While some of these statements and notions may seem to be correct on the surface they actually reflect a change in the way an individual thinks about him or herself. When people become depressed, they think about themselves and their environment in a different and more negative way.

Recent research has shown that depressed individuals are more likely to interpret an event more negatively than a non-depressed individual. Thus, depressive symptoms are related to the way in which individuals interpret and think about their situation in life. These thoughts and interpretations are also a reflection of one's past experiences. Not only are depressed individuals' interpretations more negative, but research also shows that their perceptions and interpretations are less accurate than those who are not depressed.

The interpretations that an individual makes of a situation influence his or her behavior, as illustrated in the following example. Imagine that you have a flat tire on a deserted highway and do not have anything to change the tire with, including a car jack. As you are standing there stranded, your next-door neighbor drives by and looks up briefly but keeps going. How would you feel about the fact that your neighbor kept driving? What would you most likely be telling yourself about the situation?

Now let's imagine, further, that you see your neighbor the next day and he comes over to you and apologizes for driving by you. "I'm so sorry I couldn't stop; my son fell and was bleeding from his head and I was rushing him to the emergency room." How might you be feeling now? What changed? What are you now telling yourself about the situation that is different from when you were standing on the road?

The following diagram represents the relative relationship that thoughts, feelings, and behavior have on each other.



The idea that our thoughts and assumptions play an important role in influencing not only our emotions but also our behaviors is actually a very common idea in Bhagvad Gita, a Hindu scripture commonly referred to by people in distress. The context of the Gita is a conversation between Lord Krishna and the Pandava prince Arjuna taking place in the middle of the battlefield before the start of the Kurukshetra War with armies on both sides ready to battle. On the battlefield Arjuna saw his evil cousins and those that supported him. He had to fight a righteous battle, which would lead to a lot of destruction. In great despair, Arjuna dropped his bow and arrow and got out of the chariot that Krishna was driving. Krishna, as Arjuna's spiritual guide, stated "Change how you think", which helped him see the positive aspects of a decision that would lead to victory of good over evil.

Activity and Mood Monitor

Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		

8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		

4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
Day:	Activity Engaged In	Mood
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		

Session 2: Behavioral Activation and Walking by Faith

Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

"When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow" (Gandhi, from Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, July 28, 1925, p 195)

As you did last week, write the verse down and put it in a place, or ideally more than one place, where you will see it many times a day. The more you meditate on these verses the more your mind is renewed and the greater improvement you will begin to see in your mood.

2. Plan and Complete Pleasant Events

Complete the two pleasant events you selected with your therapist between now and our next session. When you are finished the activity, complete the Planning Pleasant Activities Worksheet. Remember to complete the worksheets for both activities.

3. Identify and Contact Member of Faith Community

Identify several possible faith companions and make contact with at least one of them. This is important over the long-term and relates directly to depression. Both the receiving and especially *the giving of support to others* (as will be addressed in the session on altruism) is key in this regard. Identifying people worse off than you are helps to get your mind off your problems, helps you realize that things could be worse, helps you to feel grateful for what you do have, and gives a sense of purpose and meaning that will result in eternal rewards as a service to God by caring for another. In approaching another person, you might say something like:

"I'm having a pretty difficult time now and I'm wondering if you would agree to pray for and with me during this period, and perhaps we could talk on the phone or go out for coffee once a week or every other week."

4. Reading

Please read the pages in your workbook titled, "The Categories of Unhelpful Thinking" to prepare for next week's session. This is somewhat lengthy and to make the most of the limited time in session it very important that you have already reviewed this material

5. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says that: “*the dutiful live by deep faith and not by worldly attachments.*” This can also be read as ‘the righteous live by faith and not by feelings.’ In other words, many times we don’t feel like doing something, but we are asked to do it anyway. Notice that the joy in this verse is in the future. Arjuna was in distress over fighting a war in which his loved ones would be killed and he could never rest in peace with that victory. Krishna asked him to do things that he didn’t feel like doing but it was the right thing to do in the long run. God asks us to walk by faith and act in a certain way or engage in a certain behavior and trust that our feelings will follow the decision we make with our wills. We have to trust that our feelings and desire will follow our attention and our actions.

Pleasant Activities List

Put a plus sign (+) next to any activity likely to generate some positive reaction in you.
Put two (++) next to those that are positive and you are almost certain to do so.

1. Call a friend
2. Attend a movie
3. Clean the kitchen
4. Daydream
5. Rearrange furniture
6. Prepare a meal
7. Wash the car.
8. Outdoor yard work or gardening.
9. Buy a plant
10. Watch television
11. Take a mini-vacation
12. Go to an amusement park
13. Dinner with friends
14. Attend a play
15. Attend a concert
16. Visit a museum
17. Play a sport
18. Watch a sporting event in person
19. Watch sports with friends
20. Dance
21. Attend temple or another religious service
22. Speak to a friend(s) on the Internet
23. Play video games
24. Text messaging
25. Twitter
26. Visit family members
27. Provide childcare for family or friends
28. Exercise alone
29. Exercise with others
30. Get a massage
31. Read a book or magazine
32. Write in a journal
33. Write a poem or short story
34. Play a musical instrument
35. Listen to music
36. Engage in a hobby, such as photography, scrapbooking, stamp/coin collecting, genealogy, knitting, crocheting, etc.
37. Take a bath or shower
38. Take a nap
39. Go shopping
40. Sailing, boating, fishing, or other water-related activity
41. Attend an educational class

Planning Pleasant Activities Instructions

Implicit in the idea that mood is related to activity is the concept that mood can be improved by increasing specific activities. From the records you kept last week, you may be able to identify particular classes of activity that are associated with better mood. Even in Bhagavad Gita, Krishna addresses the value of quiet contemplation and meditation. The purpose of this exercise is to schedule more of these activities in order to improve your mood.

You can look at your Self-Monitoring Logs and the Pleasant Activity List for ideas. Choose activities that you have some control over, that bring a sense of mastery or accomplishment, and that you enjoy. Choose activities that take more than 10 or 15 minutes to perform, yet which can be accomplished in one day. Schedule activities that are additions to what you would ordinarily do. The following are some examples of pleasant activities:

- Have your hair done
- Browse in a bookstore
- Prepare a favorite dinner
- Play tennis
- Visit an art museum
- Buy a new plant

Next, using the following worksheet, schedule and complete at least two activities between now and the next session. Be sure to complete the worksheet once you have engaged in the activity.

Planning Pleasant Activity #1 Worksheet

1. Identify Activity #1 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.

Activity planned: _____

Who has to be contacted or notified? _____

2. When will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: _____

3. Prediction

On scale of 0 – 10 how positive will the event be to you? _____
(where 0 is not positive and 10 is very positive)

4. Reflect

Date activity was accomplished: _____

Outcome: On scale of 0 – 10 how positive was the event for you? _____

Conclusion: What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

Ideas for Future Activities:

Planning Pleasant Activity #2 Worksheet

1. Identify Activity #2 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.

Activity planned: _____

Who has to be contacted or notified? _____

2. When will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: _____

3. Prediction

On scale of 0 – 10 how positive will the event be to you? _____

4. Reflect

Date activity was accomplished: _____

Outcome: On scale of 0 – 10 how positive was the event for you? _____

Conclusion: What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

Ideas for Future Activities:

Unhelpful Thinking Styles and Theological Reflections

1. All-or-Nothing Thinking (AN):

You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.

Example: An example would be a straight-A student who received a B on an exam and concluded, "Now I'm a total failure."

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

This type of thinking causes one to fear any mistake or imperfection because that is taken as an indication of being worthless. This way of evaluating things is unrealistic because life is rarely completely either one way or the other. For example, no one is absolutely brilliant or totally stupid. Nothing on earth is totally one way or the other. Rarely, does everyone always like us, or rarely do we always find the perfect solution.

B. Theological reflection

The idea that nothing on earth will ever be perfect, including people and their activities is certainly a common theme in the Gita, which describes many levels of perfection. It could be primitive - from indulgence in dark ways, rising to indulgence in selfish ways, to goodness, and then to the highest possible level being the "Self perfection" of a "yogi" who reaches higher than the goodness of men and strives for perfection. The Gita teaches how to reach perfection and accepts everyone who chooses to be on this path with faith. Hinduism accepts everyone who is on this path to reach perfection.

2. Overgeneralization (OG):

You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

Example: An example of this type of thinking would occur when a shy young man, who is self-conscious of his artificial leg, mustered up his courage to ask a woman for a date. When she politely declined because of a previous engagement, he said to himself, "I'm never going to get a date. No one wants to date a guy with only one leg." He believed that all women will turn him down just because one declined his offer. And, he erroneously assumed it was because of his artificial leg. The pain of rejection is generated almost entirely from overgeneralization.

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

It is logically incorrect to conclude that one thing that happened to you once will occur over and over again. It is also incorrect to assume that all situations are similar; or that all individuals are similar.

B. Theological reflection

There are also several stories in the "Mahabharata" a Hindu epic in which the Gita is recited by Lord Krishna. The evil cousins of the Pandavas brothers had defeated them in a chess game by playing dirty tricks, and they had humiliated Draupadi, the wife of a Pandavas brother, in front of the entire courtroom. These experiences of the Pandavas brothers convinced them that they were set up to fail by their evil cousins, the Kauravas. Although the motives of the evil cousins were apparent, Arjuna, one of the five Pandavas brothers, was reluctant to fight the war. He eventually fought the war where the Lord Krishna guided disheartened Arjuna to fight his evil cousins' army and succeed in securing good over evil. Here Krishna guided Arjuna to look out for the larger good rather than the immediate destruction that was inevitable in the war.

3. Mental Filter (MF):

You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like a drop of ink that discolors an entire beaker of water.

Example: A woman with severe arthritis failed to complete one task that she had hoped to complete. She became more depressed and angry at herself for not completing that task. She overlooked the fact that there had been many tasks that she had, in fact, completed.

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

It is more sensible to clearly view one's environment and be aware of the positive things one has done in addition to negative occurrences. It is not adaptive to filter out anything positive. It is irrational to say, "I should preoccupy myself with dangerous or negative ideas." Nothing is gained by dwelling on them.

B. Theological reflections:

The Hindu Scriptures usually emphasize that one should reflect on the positive rather than the negative. One should certainly reflect on what is true, and that includes seeing the positive things you have accomplished. This theme is reflected in the Gita where emotional regulation is emphasized. Equanimity [mental calmness in difficult situations] is an essential virtue in life. Thoughtful people are characterized by a lack of extreme negative and extreme positive emotions. While the emphasis here might be on values and ideas, it could also refer to one's actions. The point here is that one should strive for balance and regulate emotions from reaching their extremes.

4. Disqualifying the Positive (DP):

You disqualify positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. In this way you can maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences. You don't just ignore positive experiences as in the Mental Filter, but you clearly and swiftly turn them into their very opposite.

Example: An example would occur when someone praises your appearance or your work and you automatically tell yourself, "They're just being nice."

A. *Why is this thinking incorrect?*

Again, it is maladaptive not to pay attention to feedback you get from your environment. We should take that feedback at face value and incorporate it into our understanding of ourselves. If we disbelieved everything everyone told us, we might still believe the world was flat. An adjusted person is one who pays attention to everything in their environment.

B. *Theological Reflections*

The Gita considers equanimity [mental calmness in difficult situations] an essential virtue, which is a lack of extreme negative or extreme positive emotions. Events of joy or sadness are treated similarly. Satisfaction with a job well done is when one does not succumb to having extremes of emotions but rather stays calm with equanimity of emotions.

5. Jumping to Conclusions (JC):

You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusions. There are two areas in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions.

Mind Reading (MR):

This is one area in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions. You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, and you do not bother to check this out.

Example: Suppose a friend says she does not have time to have a conversation with you on the telephone at a certain point. The depressed individual may conclude, "She is ignoring me and does not want to talk with me, because she does not like me anymore."

A. *Why is this thinking incorrect?*

One should never make an assumption about what someone is thinking without asking them because it is usually impossible to know what another person is thinking, no matter how sure we are we know. Jumping to conclusions about what the other is thinking is also maladaptive because our negative reactions to their imagined thoughts may set up a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, we may react negatively to them when we suspect they do not like us, when in fact they do. However, our negative reactions will soon turn them off.

B. Theological reflections

The Gita teaches that a person is wise who is self-assured and demonstrates non-dependence on others. Humility and a lack of narcissism (unhealthy focus on oneself) are elements of such wisdom.

The Fortune Telling Error (FT):

The second way in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions is they anticipate that things will turn out badly. They feel convinced that their predictions are an already established fact.

Example: Depressed individuals will tell themselves that they are never going to recover, "I will feel miserable forever."

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

No one has ever successfully predicted the future; there are so many factors that could have an impact upon the future. Furthermore, our predictions are likely to be even more off base if we predict only negative events because probability suggests that both positive and negative events will occur.

B. Theological Reflections

Often our jumping to conclusions regarding the future implies a fear about the future. The scriptures teach that the highest level of knowledge is the ability to differentiate the perishable (worldly and material things) from the imperishable (sublime things). Therefore, by worrying and imagining a negative future we do not improve the situation. Our thoughts should be on the present. Krishna counseled Arjuna that he should concentrate on removing the evil elements in his cousins in the present rather than worrying about the outcome of the war.

6. Magnification (Catastrophizing) or Minimization (MM):

You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or the other fellow's imperfections). This is also called the "binocular trick".

Example: A depressed individual accidentally misfiled some papers while working at his job. He concluded, "I made a mistake. How horrible! Everyone will think I am incompetent." An example of minimization would occur when the same employee was told by one of his or her colleagues that he had done a good job on a report. His reaction was to think, "Oh well, doing the report was very simple and anyone could do a good job on it."

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

It is important to have an accurate perception of ourselves and our performance. It is also important to realize that everyone makes mistakes and that they are to be expected. It is impossible for anyone to be perfect.

B. Theological reflections

We recall again the Gita, which describes “Karma” as one’s actions. A commitment to work and maintain discipline, to discharge dutiful responsibilities without any material rewards, is an appropriate Karma and the thinking that goes along with it. It is also believed that “as we sow, so shall we reap.” We have to take responsibility for our karma. We can neither blame our situation on past Karma when an undesirable outcome of our efforts occurs nor can we say "oh well it is all because of my good karma." Again these are extreme ways of thinking. This kind of thinking minimizes the good actions on the one hand and magnifies the negative actions on the other.

7. Emotional Reasoning (ER):

You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: “I feel it, therefore, it must be true.”

Example: A depressed individual may tell himself, “I feel overwhelmed and hopeless, therefore, my problems must be impossible to solve, or I’ll feel inadequate, therefore, I must be a worthless person.

A. Why is this thinking incorrect?

One cannot assume that one’s emotions are a reflection of the true state of things. Our emotions are a reflection of our thoughts and beliefs, which as we have seen are a product of our past and may be distorted. Emotions may also be a reflection of our physiology and how tired we are, but they are not necessarily a reflection of the true state of affairs.

B. Theological Reflections

On the battlefield as described in the Gita, Arjuna’s thinking was clouded, his vision blurred and his emotional state “helpless.” Krishna teaches that a wise man has steady thoughts and develops lack of ambivalence. Arjuna’s emotions about massive destruction that would follow the war were overwhelming for him. He became panicky and could not think clearly. Krishna helped him in many different ways, including encouraging him to meditate to calm his emotions, think positive, concentrate on the larger good that his actions would bring about and give up worries about the future. Krishna said that such efforts lead to decisiveness and self-conviction. Faith in God and concentrated meditation are tools to develop this wisdom.

8. Should Statements (SS):

You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn’ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could be expected to do anything. "Musts" and "oughts" are also offenders. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements towards others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.

Example: One example is the depressed housewife who says to herself, "I should keep my house cleaner, and I shouldn't complain," or, "I should be able to get my work done during the day."

A. *Why is this thinking incorrect?*

"Should" statements generate a lot of unnecessary emotional turmoil in your daily life, and, paradoxically, usually do not motivate you to change your behavior. Usually, you resent the source of the "shoulds." Saying, "I should do this", or "I must do this," usually causes one to feel pressured and resentful.

B. *Theological Reflection*

One of the central themes of the Gita is "Emotional Regulation." Anger and guilt are a wise man's eternal enemies. Events in life lead to emotions that can go to extremes if they are not treated with equanimity [mental calmness in difficult situations]. Arjuna refused to fight a righteous war because he felt he should not kill his relatives in the war. He also felt he must surrender. Such "should" and "must" thoughts led him to drop his bow and arrow and to refuse to fight. He lost his equanimity of emotions, and could not think about the larger good that was to be the ultimate outcome of the war.

9. Labeling and Mislabeled (L or ML):

This is an extreme form of overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself: "I'm a loser." When someone else's behavior rubs you the wrong way, you attach a negative label to him or her: "You are an idiot." Mislabeled involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

Example: An individual fails to get a job which they applied for and they call themselves a "failure."

A. *Why is this thinking incorrect?*

We are not our behavior. Labeling yourself is not only self-defeating, it is irrational. You cannot be equated with any one thing you do. Your life is made up of many events, thoughts, actions, and emotions. For example, you do not call yourself a "Breather" just because you breathe. Likewise, you do not call yourself a "failure" because you made a mistake.

B. *Theological Reflection*

To achieve spiritual growth, Gita dwells on a close relationship with wisdom and faith in God. God does not base our worth on our activities. Likewise, He does not label us based on our activities. God has a great love for us and rejoices in us even when our activities would not merit that. Our worth is not based on our activities but is a reflection of much more.

10. Personalization (P):

You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event for which you were not primarily responsible.

Example: One example is the child who misbehaves or is rude. The depressed mother says, "I am a failure or a bad mother," (as if she could control everything her child did).

A. *Why is this thinking incorrect?*

Essentially, the person with this problem has confused influence with control. While we obviously have some influence over people, especially our children, we cannot control everything they do. What another individual does is ultimately their responsibility and decision, not yours. We are not omnipotent.

B. *Theological Reflection*

God has control over the events that happen in the world. For the most part, we do not. We should not presume to be God or try to do so. This is especially important when negative events happen to us.

Session 3: Identifying Unhelpful Thoughts: The Battlefield of the Mind

Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

“Let him a (wise man) sit intent on Me (God)...” Bhagavad Gita Ch 2, V 61

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have. Turn to the next page in this workbook for instructions.

3. Thought Log

Please write down your thoughts once a day using the ABC method. Be sure to fill out all of the sections and categorize each thought into one of the unhelpful thought categories. If you have more than one stream of ideas in one time period, you can indicate several categories. There are seven thought logs included in the manual this week so that you can fill one out each day.

Remember that this is a learning experience; you should not worry about completing the logs perfectly.

4. Positive Activity

Add another positive activity to your week. Follow the same procedure for scheduling this activity as we used in Session 2.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Contemplative Prayer: Praying God's Word

Contemplative prayer is a way to meditate on God's word and leads to a more intimate relationship with Him. One of the most common metaphors for contemplative prayer is of the lover or friend. God desires our simple presence more than any action or service we might give. Indeed, prayer has been described as a gift to God. Prayer is also a discipline, undertaken as one would undertake to learn to play the piano. Practice is the key.

One way to engage in contemplative prayer is to take a verse from the Gita, one of God's thoughts, and meditate on it. In other words, you spend some quiet time thinking about the verse, repeating it to yourself, and saying it as a prayer to God. It's like letting yourself be saturated in God's words. Some forms of meditation have you focus your attention on your breath. When you notice yourself thinking about something else, you are to bring your attention back to your breath. Contemplative prayer is different in that instead of focusing on your breath you focus on God's words. This leads to a contemplative, prayerful state.

It's normal to find that your mind has wandered to thinking about something else. When you notice that this has happened, don't get upset with yourself. Simply bring your attention back to the verse. It might be helpful to have the verse written on a piece of paper or underlined in the Gita in front of you so that you can more easily keep your attention on the words. It is also normal to find yourself wanting to pray to God as you are in this state. If that happens just go with it and pray whatever comes up in your heart.

The Method

1. Choose a scripture. Begin with your memory verse for the week.
2. Sit comfortably, but not too comfortably, back straight, chest open so the breath is free and open.
3. Read the passage slowly. Savor each phrase. What word phrase or idea speaks to you?
4. Read the passage again. Where does this passage touch your life? What do you see, hear, touch, or remember?
5. Read the passage a third time. Listen quietly.
6. Note insights, reflections, and personal response to the reading in your journal.
7. Follow the steps in order or go back and forth between them as you feel moved.
8. Finish by waiting for a few moments in silence.

Instructions

Practice this for 20 minutes once or twice daily, and then discuss with your therapist any problems you encountered in doing this, or share how praying in this way made you feel.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 1

(*To be Completed During Session 3*)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 2

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 3

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 4

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 5

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 6

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

Session 3: Worksheet 7

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Unhelpful Thought Category: Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

Planning Pleasant Activity #3 Worksheet

1. Identify Activity #3 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.

Activity planned: _____

Who has to be contacted or notified? _____

2. When will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: _____

3. Prediction

On scale of 0 – 100 how positive will the event be to you? _____

4. Reflect

Date activity was accomplished: _____

Outcome: On scale of 0 – 100 how positive was the event for you? _____

Conclusion: What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

Ideas for Future Activities:

Session 4: Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts: Bringing All Thoughts Captive

Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

"Body is perishable and transient while the soul is eternal and immortal. Why do you grieve the loss of what is transient?" Bhagavad Gita Ch 2, V 27

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Thought Log Monitor

Complete the ABCDE thought monitor at least once a day.

Be on the outlook for automatic negative thoughts that trigger emotional upset and negative behaviors such as avoidance. The goal is to improve on the ability to spot these negative patterns at the time they occur, and to attempt to develop alternative ways of responding through the use of more effective beliefs and expectations.

Remember to use your religious beliefs and practices, as well as scriptures, to help challenge your unhelpful and negative beliefs.

4. Behavior Experiment

If behavioral experiments were covered in your session, set up and complete one behavioral experiment this week using the Behavioral Experiments Worksheet to plan and record the results.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Disputing Questions

Use these questions to challenge your automatic thoughts. Be sure to answer each question you pose to yourself. You will find each question helpful for many different thoughts. Several examples are also presented to help you get started.

1. Do I know for certain that _____?
Example: *Do I know for certain that I won't have anything to say?*
2. Am I 100% sure that _____?
Example: *Am I 100% sure that my anxiety will show?*
3. What evidence do I have that _____?
What evidence do I have that the opposite is true?
Example: *What evidence do I have that they did not understand my speech?*
What evidence do I have that they did understand my speech?
4. What is this worst that could happen? How bad is that? How can I cope with that?
5. Do I have a crystal ball?
6. Is there another explanation for _____?
Example: *Is there another explanation for his refusal to have coffee with me?*
7. Does _____ have to lead to or equal _____?
Example: *Does "being nervous" have to lead to or equal "looking stupid"?*
8. Is there another point of view?
9. What does _____ mean? Does _____ really mean that I am a(n) _____?
Example: *What does "looking like an idiot" mean? Does the fact that I stumbled over my words really mean that I look like an idiot?*

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 1)
(*To Complete During Session 4*)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 2)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 3)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 4)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 5)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 6)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 7)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Hindu and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

Session 5: Dealing with Loss Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

**"What have you lost that you came with?
You were born empty handed and you who will die empty handed?
What is yours today was someone else's yesterday and it will be someone
else's tomorrow. Change is the law of universe. It is this false sense of
happiness that is the cause of your sorrow."** (Gita Saar: The Essence of the
Bhagavad Gita)

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Thought Log or Behavioral Experiment

Use the ABCDE thought log and/or behavioral experiment to actively address one or two losses you have experienced as a result of your illness. You and your therapist should have come up with a concrete plan to do so in session. Two ABCDE thought logs and one behavioral experiment worksheet have been included in this section of the workbook for this exercise. Remember that integrating your religious beliefs and practices into the use of each of these tools makes them even more effective.

4. Active Surrender

Reflect on the things in your life that you want to surrender to God. Use the worksheet provided to make a list. Then, set aside a block of time to surrender these things to God in prayer. This is another effective tool to address the losses you have experienced as a result of your illness.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Words of Encouragement

*Several learned people from the east and the west of the world state that the Gita was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scripture and the encouragement provided we might have hope. The stories we read about in the Gita are there to encourage us, to provide a model for us to interpret the events in our own lives, and to create in us hope. It may be comforting to know that a number of individuals in the Gita suffered great losses. In fact, one could argue that there isn't a single individual in real life that didn't lose something important to them or who didn't suffer in some significant way. Thankfully, God offers us many, many words of comfort and encouragement in the Gita. The summary essence of the Gita is:
What have you lost that you came with?
You were born empty handed and you who will die empty handed?
What is yours today was someone else's yesterday and it will be someone else's tomorrow. Change is the law of universe. It is this false sense of happiness that is the cause of your sorrow.*

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 5, Worksheet 1)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 5, Worksheet 2)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

Session 6: Coping with Spiritual Struggles and Negative Emotions Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

"I forgive all living beings. May all souls forgive me. I have no animosity towards any one, I ask for forgiveness." (Aaveshyak Sutra, Pratikaman)

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer.

3. Spiritual Struggles and Spiritual Resources

It is important to remember the following points:

- It is normal to question God in the face of illness.
 - It is normal to feel negative emotions toward God.
 - God created us to experience a range of emotions and He can accept all of them.
 - God wants us to be honest with Him and to bring all of our concerns to Him.

If you and your therapist identified spiritual resources that would be helpful in addressing any spiritual struggles you have, make a plan to use these resources this week to address that issue. Spiritual resources include, but are not limited to, prayer, journaling, social support from friends, conversations/counseling with clergy, religious studies, repentance and forgiveness, attending religious or spiritual services, attending support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, attending activities sponsored by spiritual or religious groups like Swadheyaya, listening to religious sermons, and discussion groups. Several ABCDE thought logs have also been included in the workbook for this session; this may also be a helpful tool in addressing spiritual struggles this week.

4. Repentance and Forgiveness

Forgiveness can be a powerful antidote for some spiritual struggles (e.g., resentment, anger, bitterness) and an integral part of the process of healing. Indeed, research has shown strong relationships between emotions such as anger and resentment and physical health problems and compromised immune functioning.

In Ramayana, a Hindu scripture that dates back 5000 years, Lord Rama forgives the evil Ravana and asks him to surrender his evil spirit. Rama had the power to kill him but compassion was his strength. Although Ravana had kidnapped his wife Sita and terrorized his country, Rama chose to forgive him if he would join the path of righteousness.

There are verses in Bhagavad Gita that say "As a man shedding worn out garments takes other new ones, likewise the embodied soul, casting off worn out bodies , enters into others which are new." Bhagavad Gita Ch 2, V 22

The Jain scriptures, which date back to 5000 years, make it clear that God wants us to be well, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We also have a role to play. We have to be obedient and deal with the unforgiveness, which God calls sin, and the hurt in our lives so that God's power is able to flow freely in us and on our behalf. As Hindus, repentance and forgiveness are the main tools we have been given to deal with negative feelings toward others and ourselves that are due to being wronged.

Before we discuss what scriptures have to say about repentance and forgiveness, I'm interested in hearing how you define these two concepts.

What does forgiveness mean to you?

How would you define repentance?

God instructs us to forgive others. What forgiving someone does mean is that we give up the right to hold this action against the person. We give up our right to feel resentful, bitter, and angry. When we make a decision with our will to forgive someone, even when we don't feel like it, God can then begin to change our feelings. Usually our feelings are the last part to change.

The Hindu scriptures define forgiveness as canceling the debt; no longer holding someone accountable for their action and its consequences. It doesn't say forgiveness is seeing the action as okay now. Sin is never okay with God.

We know that the ability to offer us forgiveness was the ultimate reason Krishna came to earth; in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says, "whenever righteousness is on the decline and unrighteousness is in the ascendant, I will take birth and ascend on earth." Bhagavad Gita Ch 4, V 7. Although superficially it may seem that Krishna wanted to rectify unrighteousness, at a deeper level he wanted to offer wisdom to mankind by offering deeper insights to those who were willing to accept them. He made efforts to share these insights with the evil cousins of Arjuna and gave them an opportunity for forgiveness but the self-centered cousins wanted power at any cost.

Is there anyone you would like to forgive? That could include others, yourself, and even God Is there anything you would like to ask forgiveness for (i.e., repent of), either from God or from others? If yes, and if you did not address these in session, make a list of the people you want to forgive or the things for which you need forgiveness.

Take some time to pray about each item on your list. It is important that your prayers be specific and that you do not just offer one blanket prayer for all the items listed.

You can use a prayer such as the following:

“Dear God, I purpose and choose to forgive ____ (the person) for ____ (the action). I release him/her and cancel their debt to me completely. I will no longer hold any accusation against them. Even now I release them from this sin. I ask that you would forgive them for this sin and separate the sin from them forever. Please forgive me for the unforgiveness/bitterness (or other feelings against this person) that I have stored in my heart. I give you all my feelings of ____ and ask that You would cause my feelings to line up with my decision to forgive ____ (the person). I also purpose and choose to forgive myself. Thank you for forgiving me and making me righteous in your sight. Dear God, please heal my heart and tell me your truth about the situation.”

After you have finished praying, you might try closing your eyes and imagining yourself standing or kneeling before God. See yourself giving the list of wrongs that others have done to you, and that you have just forgiven, to God. Give the list of your own sins to God. Feel as God says, “You are forgiven. Go in peace.” Continue to feel relieved. When you are done thank God for what He has just done for you.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally some time this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Forgiveness Exercise

Is there anyone you would like to forgive? That could include others, yourself, and even God (although He never sinned against us, we can perceive a wrong against us in our minds). Is there anything you would like to ask forgiveness for (i.e., repent of), either from God or from others? If yes, make a list of the people you want to forgive or the things for which you need forgiveness.

Take some time to pray about each item on your list. It is important that your prayers be specific and that you do not just offer one blanket prayer for all the items listed. You can use a prayer such as the following:

“Dear God, I purpose and choose to forgive ____ (the person) for ____ (the action). I release him/her and cancel their debt to me completely. I will no longer hold any accusation against them. Even now I release them from this sin. I ask that you would forgive them for this sin and separate the sin from them forever. Please forgive me for the unforgiveness/bitterness (or other feelings) that I have stored in my heart. I give you all my feelings of ____ and ask that You would cause my feelings to line up with my decision to forgive ____ (the person). I also purpose and choose to forgive myself. Thank you for forgiving me and making me righteous in your sight. Dear God, please heal my heart and tell me your truth about the situation.”

I need forgiveness for.... _____

I need to forgive..... _____

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 1)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 2)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 3)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

Session 7: Gratitude Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

I offer gratitude to God for my overall existence. I pray with gratitude at least three times a day; when I wake up, before meals and prior to going to sleep.
(paraphrased) Bhagavad Gita, Ch 9, V 27

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Grateful Feelings Exercise: Counting our Blessings

Use your gratitude list, particularly your gratitude toward God for all that He is and all that He has done, as well as gratitude for those in your faith community, to help challenge negative thoughts and to replace negative emotions. Continue to add to your gratitude list this week as you think of more things for which you are grateful.

4. Gratitude Expression Exercise: Celebrating our Blessings

Express your feelings of gratitude toward the individual you identified in session. This ordinarily takes place in person, by phone, or letter. Complete at the specific time and place you chose in session. Remember to include the following:

- Precisely and specifically what it was that the other person did for you. Thus, "you were a nice person to me", is not as suitable as, "when I was in the hospital you came to visit me and you prayed for me every day."
- Include as many of these concrete activities for which you feel grateful as possible.
- Be sure to note what the meaning of the person's activities was for you. That is, how the activity or way of being made you feel, influenced your life, caused you to grow, taught you things you needed to know, etc.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

**Gratitude Exercise
Counting Our Blessings**

Rate your current mood on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means “very sad” and 10 means “very happy”: _____

List below the people, things, events, opportunities, and situations for which you are grateful. You can include God and any other things related to your faith beliefs and practices.

	Rating
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now go back over your list and rate each item from 1-10 (10 being most grateful).

Again rate your current mood on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means “very sad” and 10 means “very happy”: _____

If there was a change in mood, how do you make sense of that?

**Gratitude Exercise
Celebrating Our Blessings**

1. List three living persons whose lives have been especially important to you and toward whom you feel a deep sense of gratitude. The person's contribution may have been large or small; in any case it was meaningful and benefited you.

2. Select one person for a celebration visit or contact:

Name: _____

3. Make a list of this person's positive qualities that were truly helpful to you or others. As you list each trait or quality, describe the impact it had on your life and how it continues to influence you. Use as much space as you need.

4. Now, using this list, write a letter or a thank you card expressing your gratitude for these qualities.

5. Follow-through: 1) Plan a phone call or visit to the person; 2) Read the letter to him or her; 3) If possible, celebrate the event in a small way.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 7, Worksheet 1)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 7, Worksheet 2)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

Session 8: Altruism and Generosity Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

“Having created mankind along with the spirit of sacrifice at the beginning of creation, the creator Brahma said to them ‘you shall prosper by spirit of sacrifice and it will yield the enjoyment you seek’” Bhagavad Gita Ch 3, V 10

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Altruistic Acts

Carry out the specific altruistic acts to be done for the particular persons at a particular time you and your therapist chose in session. Be sure to have more than one option in case other people are unavailable.

4. Pray for Someone Daily

Pick one person for whom you will pray for daily this week. This might be the person you have made contact with from your faith community, another friend, or relative. Pray for this person each day. Praying for someone other than ourselves helps to get our minds off of our own problems and is a great way to be generous with our time and energy. It also helps to put our own problems in perspective.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Altruistic Acts

Make a list of the ways you have been helpful in the past and ways that you could be helpful now. Then rank each item on your list from easiest to most difficult (0-100 with 100 being the most difficult of all).

Helpful/Generous Act	Degree of Difficulty (0-100)	Activity Chosen

Next, select several of the easier acts you would like to initiate. Answer the following questions for each act you choose:

Helpful/Generous Act #1: _____

- 1. For Whom?**
- 2. When will you do it?**
- 3. Why will you do it?**
- 4. How will you do it?**
- 5. How frequently will you do it?**

Helpful/Generous Act #2: _____

- 1. For Whom?**
- 2. When will you do it?**
- 3. Why will you do it?**
- 4. How will you do it?**
- 5. How frequently will you do it?**

Helpful/Generous Act #3: _____

- 1. For Whom?**
- 2. When will you do it?**
- 3. Why will you do it?**
- 4. How will you do it?**
- 5. How frequently will you do it?**

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 8: Optional)

Activating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

Beliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

Consequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

Religious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Hindu worldview, the Gita and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

Session 9: Stress-Related and Spiritual Growth Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

"I rejoice with you again and again, by your grace my negative emotions are destroyed and I have gained wisdom. I am free of all doubt. I shall do your bidding." Bhagavad Gita Ch 18, V 73-74

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Complete the Spiritual Reflections Worksheet

4. Positive Changes

Add to your list of the changes in your life that you could view as positive or that have caused growth, including spiritual growth. It will be helpful to look to your faith and God's promises in the Gita to help you view some of the changes that have occurred as positive. Also think about the paradoxes in Hinduism and how these might help you reframe your situation.

Reflect on the meaning of these changes in terms of your character and the predictions you make regarding negative beliefs. In particular, what power do these changes give you to stop avoiding unpleasant experiences and to face them courageously?

5. Read Paradoxes in worksheet

If you can think of other paradoxes in Hinduism, add them to the worksheet.

6. Daily Prayer for Someone

Continue to pray daily for someone other than yourself this week. It could be the same person you prayed for last week or someone different.

7. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

Looking for the Positive

It may sound insensitive to suggest there is anything positive in pain and suffering, yet many people who cope admit they eventually make sense of the situation or find something that benefited them or others. This does not mean they like what happened or stop wishing it had never happened. They discovered that despite the pain they went through they could also describe positive changes in themselves and others or found parts of it that made sense. In the long run finding benefits seems to give people a measure of serenity.

1. In what ways, if any, can you make sense of what happened to you?

2. What positive changes have you noticed as a result of what happened?
 - a. In you?

 - b. In others and the people close to you?

 - c. In the way you look at the world?

 - d. In your religious views and belief?

3. How can these changes help you live your life more fully?

Spiritual Reflections

1. What does it say or what could it mean spiritually if you find some benefit from your tragedy or loss?

2. If there was any positive change in you, your perspective, or relationships, how do you make sense of that from a spiritual point of view? How does it make faith real for you?

3. What does having this faith or spiritual view mean in terms of coping with day-to-day struggles?

4. How can this view help you when you start to feel discouraged?

5. Any spiritual or faith perspective fades in and out. What concrete steps can you take on a regular basis to remind yourself of these helpful perspectives?

Paradoxes in Hinduism

There are many paradoxes in Hinduism. These paradoxes can help us see situations in our lives from another perspective. Some of these paradoxes include the following:

1. When you are weak, then you are strong. God's power is most evident when we are weak.

"I rejoice with you again and again, by your grace my negative emotions are destroyed and I have gained wisdom. I am free of all doubt. I shall do your bidding."

2. With faith in Krishna, you can do all things because you have positive emotions; without Faith you can do nothing because of the negative emotions and you feel weak. Faith makes you strong and destroys negative emotions.

3. We are called to be holy and perfect, but Hindu scriptures and the religious experts say that no one is perfect enough but with faith we can reach Nirvana.

"Your unfailing righteousness assures that there will always be goodness, victory, and glory" (Bhagavad Gita Ch 18, V 78). When your deeds are righteous, for the good of all, without any selfish interest, they will lead to victory and glory.

Session 10: Hope and Relapse Prevention Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

Ask the client to say the verse from memory, or read it from the Workbook:

“One should sit for meditation, and devote heart and soul to Me. For he whose senses are mastered through meditation has a stable mind.” Bhagavad Gita Ch 2, V 61

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have. This is an important practice that we encourage you to continue to do daily.

3. Continue to Use the Tools Daily

In order to maintain the gains you have achieved in treatment you need to keep using the tools you have learned. These tools include the following:

- Challenging and changing your negative interpretations (Additional ABCDE sheets are included at the end of this workbook. Feel free to make extra copies for yourself)
- Gratitude
- Altruism (choose a specific activity for a specific person)
- Finding the positives in your life
- Praying for someone else
- Maintaining communication with God
- Look for examples in the Gita for encouragement
- Spending time with others
- Connecting with your faith community, specifically the person(s) identified earlier in treatment
- Filling your mind and heart with the Word of God

One way to remind yourself to continue to put into practice the things you have learned is to incorporate them into a daily devotional period. Each day during this time you can review your thoughts and behavior with God to make sure they line up with the truth in His Word. You might find it helpful to use a journal during this time.

4. Make Use of Your Spiritual Resources

Spiritual resources include, but are not limited to, prayer, journaling, social support from friends, conversations/counseling with clergy, Gita studies, repentance and forgiveness, existential psychotherapy, attending religious or spiritual services, attending support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, attending activities

sponsored by spiritual or religious groups, such as pot-lucks, bingo, and discussion groups.

5. Anticipate Set Backs

Remember that there will be set backs and times that are more challenging and difficult than others. It is at these times that it is even more important to engage in the activities and resources you learned, especially if you don't feel like it.

6. Continue Contact Member of Faith Community

Continue to be in regular contact with the member of your faith community. Remember to pray for him or her daily, too.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Give client time to read and you do likewise, and then ask for any feedback from client

May the sacred stream of friendship flow through my heart

May the entire universe be blessed, May such be my thoughts

Let my heart dance with joy when I watch a virtuous wise man

I offer my life at such people's feet

May I have strength to show the path to the person who has lost one

Even if he does not care about me, may I have the strength to keep a balanced mind

May the teachings and thoughts given to us by God be in the heart of every human kind

May we all give up the hatred and in our heart and sing sacred songs

Poem by Chitra Bhanu

(translated by Nalini Juthani)

This poem is a translated version of what was written in Gujarati language. The English words used here are meant to express emotions through the English vocabulary used by contemporary Hindu people.

ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs

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Effective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.