

Case Conceptualization

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Identified Client and Reason for Referral

The identified client is Chris. Chris is a 16 years old Biracial male who is seeking counseling for managing stress, anxiety, and struggling internally with self. Chris describes himself as the popular guy in school and a golden boy at home. He notices peers and his family look up to him and describe him as “God-like”, perfect, and flawless. Currently, Chris’s stressors are about maintaining a 4.0 gpa in order to get accepted into University of Southern California, he feels his parents do not give him room to make mistakes nor do they provide space for him to vent. Also, he is struggling internally since his best friend came out as bisexual and he broke up with his girlfriend.

Education

Chris comes from a family that values education. Both his parents are medical doctors. Furthermore, Chris wants to follow in their footsteps and become a doctor too. His goal is to maintain a 4.0 to get accepted at USC.

Family background

Chris lives with both parents and is the oldest of four siblings. Chris identifies as biracial. He practices Catholicism and goes to church every Sunday. Since, being the oldest he feels the pressure of setting a good example for his siblings.

Multicultural Considerations

1. Religion- Chris has identified as a Catholic and goes to church every Sunday. Clients can be affected and influenced by their religion.
2. Sexual identity: When Chris' friend confided in him about his sexuality Chris was not really supportive and was more concerned about whether other people will continue to be friends with Josh. He can recall a classmate that came and the whole school turned on that individual. It was a very negative experience and Chris's is worried that would happen to his friend. However, Josh is confident and wants to come out whether it is a good or bad experience he does not care. Also, Chris shares that he recently broke up with his girlfriend because she wanted to get physical with

him and he was very uncomfortable. Recently, he finds himself looking a men but then says he can never be gay.

3. Ethnic- Chris identifies as biracial. I wonder how his experience has been? Has he experienced oppression? Or has he made himself to be a type of person everyone can like in an effort to hide his true identity?
4. Family- Chris is the oldest child in his family. His parents pressure him to have good grades to set a good example for his siblings. However, Chris feels he has no room to vent and feels he must maintain this perfect image.

Extra- Curricular Activities

Chris is a star athlete, an amazing student that has maintained a 4.0 gpa thus far, he practices and participates in the Catholic Church.

Identified Strengths

Chris is a star athlete and popular guy at school. He is an excellent student that has maintained a 4.0 gpa. He understands his role as the older brother of pathing the way of success for his siblings.

Identified Challenges

Chris is having a challenging experience with balancing school, sports, and personal life. He shares he feels overwhelmed by the feeling of not having room to fail and this persona of confidence, success, and popularity are starting to take a toll on him. He shares that he does not feel he has space to vent nor be open. Chris's friend Josh recently disclosed he is gay and Chris is preoccupied with what people will think of his friend. Also, Chris broke up with his girlfriend because she wanted to do more physically. He notices that he is looking at other guy's muscles, he has been having thoughts about other boys but he "will never be gay." He is struggling internally and feels like he needs to let everything out.

Treatment Plan

Goals: Developing a sense of self as an empowered and autonomous human being. Along with learning coping techniques.

Interventions:

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a therapeutic approach that addresses the impact of thoughts and behaviors on a person's feelings in a situation (Lonczak, 2021). CBT enables nonadaptive learning processes to be replaced by those that are positive and in line with the client's objectives (Hofmann & Smits, 2008).

Mindfulness-Based counseling is to increase relaxation while eliminating negative judgments (Lonczak, 2021). It is a technique found in Buddhist philosophy and a mental process "characterized by nonjudgmental awareness of the present moment" (Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt, & Oh, 2010, p. 169).

Strategies: Are from Lonczak, H. (2021, February 27). Self-Esteem therapy: 24 activities and techniques for your practice. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from <https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-therapy/>

1. Befriending Your Inner Critic

This will help clients to identify and work with, rather than fight against, their internal judge. Individuals are first instructed to reflect on times when their judging mindset negatively affected their lives, such as by influencing self-blame. They then respond to a series of questions pertaining to their inner voice, such as:

- What was your inner voice telling you about yourself, others, and the situation? What was the risk to yourself if the worst thing happened? What were the risks to other people? What were the risks to the situation if the worst thing happened?

Individuals are then asked to reflect on their responses, noting how their judging mindset was actually trying to keep them safe. The next step is to write a letter of gratitude to their inner judge, which is followed by a mental hug. By making friends with their inner critic in this way, individuals are better able to appreciate the valuable information it offers.

2. Savor the Moment

In this lesson, individuals will learn to be present and ultimately build micro-moments of positivity. The exercise involves setting aside two to three minutes each day to get into the habit of reflecting on the moment. Individuals are recommended to set up a daily reminder to engage in their habit, as well as to consider giving themselves a small reward each time they do so.

The next steps are as follows:

Trigger the savoring moment

This involves noticing the moment when one's attention is triggered by a cue. At this time, individuals are instructed to take a deep breath and savor the present moment while considering the sights, sounds, and smells around them. This is followed by a sense of gratitude and pride in accomplishments.

After savoring reflections

After engaging in moment-savoring activities for one week, individuals then reflect upon various aspects of the experience, considering questions such as:

- What positive emotions did you experience during the intervention?
- How did the intervention affect one's mood, attention, and behavior afterward?
- Did this week feel different compared to a normal week?

By getting into the habit of savoring moments, individuals will benefit from a greater sense of gratitude, serenity, and overall well being.

References

- Lonczak, H. (2021, February 27). Self-Esteem therapy: 24 activities and techniques for your practice. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from <https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-therapy/>
- Hofmann, S., & Smits, J. (2008). Cognitive-behavioral therapy for adult anxiety disorders: A meta-analysis of randomized placebo-controlled trials. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 69, 621–632.
- Hofmann, S., Sawyer, A., Witt, A., & Oh, D. (2010). The effect of mindfulness-based therapy on anxiety and depression: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 78, 169–183.