

Addressing Crises of the Week (COWs) in TF-CBT Implementation

Alison Hendricks, LCSW

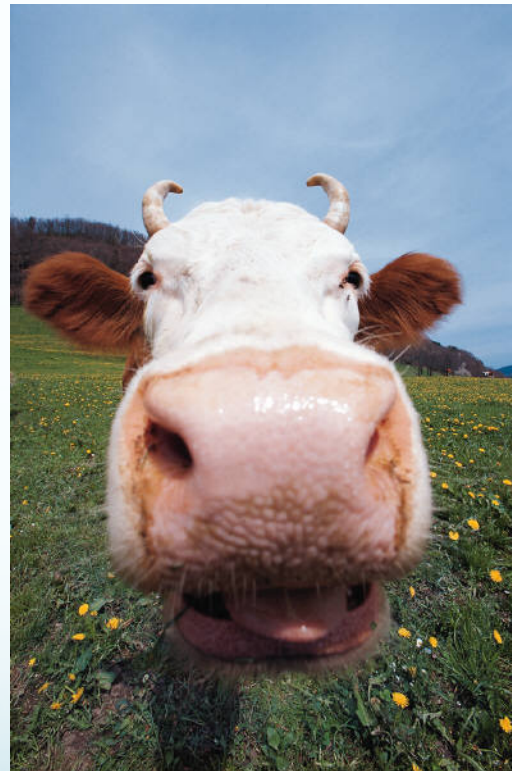
Hendricks Consulting

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Identify common crises that interfere with TF-CBT implementation
- Differentiate between true crises and client avoidance techniques
- Describe and apply strategies for addressing COWs in treatment

Name that COW



COW Classification

- Relationship issues
 - Peers
 - Family
 - Dating
- Transitions/Environmental
 - Housing/placement
 - School
 - Changes in family
 - Community violence
 - Discrimination/oppression
- Identity issues
- High-risk symptoms/behaviors
 - Suicidal/homicidal ideation
 - Self-harm
 - Substance abuse
 - Delinquency
 - Running away

Crises and Complex Trauma

- Complex trauma impacts trust, attachment, self-concept, emotional regulation, behavioral control
- Cognitive distortions related to trust, safety, intimacy, esteem, and control
- Survival coping skills
- Trauma re-enactment



NEVER GIVE UP

A Complex Trauma Video
by Youth for Youth



<https://youtu.be/y8XaYdQfV3A>

Crisis or COW?

Crisis

- High risk/threats to safety
- Needing immediate attention
- Client/family is overwhelmed
 - High distress level interferes with functioning

COW

- No immediate threats to safety
- Stressful but not overwhelming

Crisis or COW?

- Alex is a 16-year-old boy whose sister was kidnapped and forced into prostitution in Mexico. You are preparing for him to share an empathy letter with her and he focuses on problems with a teacher at school.
- Tonya is a 9-year-old girl who has complex trauma and has been very avoidant but has started working on trauma narrative. You just found out that she will be changing foster homes again due to her behavior problems.
- Mark is a 13-year-old boy who was referred due to medical trauma and a life-threatening illness. Every time you approach the topic of his medical issues he brings up family problems.
- Tia is a 5-year-old girl who was sexually abused by her brother. As she is in the middle of her trauma narrative, her parents start reporting defiant behavior and tantrums and want to spend the whole session on these issues.
- Lucy is a 15-year-old female who experienced severe physical and emotional abuse by her parents. She is in the relaxation component and comes in reporting that she has not slept in 2 days and feels like she can no longer cope with the flashbacks.

Addressing Crises

- Safety assessment
- Assessment of precipitating factors (including trauma reminders)
- Safety planning
- How much time is needed to achieve stability/crisis resolution?
- Options:
 - Plan on crisis intervention for a specific number of sessions and re-assess
 - Refer child/family to adjunct services to promote stability
 - Utilize PRAC skills to promote stability

Crisis Intervention

- Lucy is a 15-year-old female who experienced severe physical and emotional abuse by her parents. She is in the relaxation component and comes in reporting that she has not slept in 2 days and feels like she can no longer cope with the flashbacks.
- How would you assess and address safety issues for Lucy?
- What adjunct services might be needed?
- How can we engage Lucy and current caregivers in safety planning?

Getting Back on Track

- Assessing safety and stability
- Processing crisis, precipitating factors, and trauma reminders
- Reinforcing healthy coping skills and supports
- Review of previously covered treatment components
- Gradual exposure and attention to pacing
- Checking in on safety plan and feelings ratings every session

Addressing COWs

- Name the COW
- Normalize avoidance
- Explore what is driving the avoidance
- Session plans that address client concerns without derailing the trauma work
- Milk the COW – how can you apply PRACTICE skills to help client address the situation?
- Incorporate COW into narrative work



Addressing COWs

- Alex is a 16-year-old boy whose sister was kidnapped and forced into prostitution in Mexico. You are preparing for him to share an empathy letter with her and he focuses on problems with a teacher at school.
- Mark is a 13-year-old boy who was referred due to medical trauma and a life-threatening illness. Every time you approach the topic of his medical issues he brings up family problems.
- Tia is a 5-year-old girl who was sexually abused by her brother. As she is in the middle of her trauma narrative, her parents start reporting defiant behavior and tantrums and want to spend the whole session on these issues.

There's no cow on the ice

(ingen ko på isen)



What to Do if it is a Crisis and a COW

- Assess and address safety
- Explore trauma reminders and cognitive distortions
- Help client apply PRACTICE skills to deal with the crisis
- Utilize trauma narrative to help client process crisis
- Cognitive processing of traumas helps challenge distortions that contribute to crisis/instability

Addressing COWs in Crisis

- Tonya is a 9-year-old girl who has complex trauma and has been very avoidant but has started working on trauma narrative. You just found out that she will be changing foster homes again due to her behavior problems.
- How would you help Tonya cope with this crisis?
- What PRAC skills would be helpful?
- How long will you break from the narrative work?
- How will you get Tonya back into working on her trauma narration?

Questions



Contact Information

Alison Hendricks, LCSW

ahendricksconsulting@gmail.com

www.ahendricksconsulting.com

(619)549-7958