Stepping over the Line: Root Function of Behavior & Strategies for Working with Difficult Behaviors
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Presentation Outline

- First Things First: Maslow’s Hierarchy
- Common Diagnoses & Interventions
- Relationship Building
- Self-Care
Maslow and Bloom

MASLOW'S Hierarchy of needs

- Physiological: Food, water, shelter, sleep
- Safety: Emotional & intellectual safety
- Love/Belonging: Friendship, belonging to group/classroom
- Esteem: Self-esteem, achievement, status
- Self-Actualization: Achieving one's full potential

Bloom's Taxonomy:

- Remember: Recognizing and recalling facts
- Understand: Understanding what the facts mean
- Apply: Applying the facts, rules, concepts, and ideas
- Analyze: Breaking down information into component parts
- Evaluate: Judging the value of information or ideas
- Create: Combining parts to make a new whole

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The Amygdala Hijack

Figure 1
Step-by-step process of an amygdala hijack

1. Sensory data fed to Thalamus
2. Data sent to Amygdala
3. Data also sent to Cortex
4. Amygdala does quick threat assessment
5. Amygdala blocks ‘slow’ thinking
6. ‘Unthinking’ response
Common Diagnoses

• Depression
• Anxiety
• ADHD
• Oppositional defiant disorder
• Autism spectrum disorder
• Disruptive mood dysregulation
• PTSD
Depression

- Irritability
- Low-motivation
- Weight gain or loss
- Poor focus/concentration
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Diminished interest in activities
Anxiety

• Excessive fear and worry
• Restlessness
• Irritability
• Muscle tension
• Sleep disturbance
• Difficulty concentrating
• Easily fatigued

• Progressive Muscle Relaxation
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- Inattentive type
  - Difficulty sustaining attention
  - Does not seem to be listening
  - Difficulty organizing
  - Often loses things
  - Easily distracted
- Hyperactive type
  - Often fidgets
  - Often “on the go”
  - Unable to participate in leisure activities quietly
  - Often blurts or talks excessively

ADHD
Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

- Touchy or easily annoyed
- Angry and resentful
- Argues with authority
- Actively defies rules
- Deliberately annoys others
- Often blames others
THE KIDS WHO NEED THE MOST LOVE WILL ASK FOR IT IN THE MOST UNLOVING OF WAYS.
Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity
- Deficits in relationships (developing, maintaining, and understanding)
- Lack of eye contact
- Rigidity
- Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation (DMDD)

• Severe recurrent temper outbursts
  • Inconsistent with developmental level
• Mood between temper outbursts is persistently irritable or angry most of the day
PTSD

- Exposure to threat of death, injury (neglect), or violence
- Nightmares, flashbacks, memories, hypervigilance, avoidance, negative beliefs, distortions, negative emotions,
- Physical abuse versus domestic violence (attachment)
“I’d like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony…”
Self-injurious behaviors

- Self-injurious behavior / Maladaptive Coping (e.g., cutting, burning, branding) has many possible functions
  - Emotional regulation
  - Self-punishment
  - Social identification
  - Thrill-seek
  - Re-associate
  - Cry for help
- People often have a history of physical/sexual/emotional abuse as a child
- Often used when affective state is too intense for the person
- Unfortunately, it is effective in getting immediate needs met
"He's just doing that to get attention."
Depression and SIB

- Gratitude
- Actively listening
- Self-harm to calm and soothe
  - Take a bath or hot shower
  - Pet or cuddle with a dog or cat
  - Wrap yourself in a warm blanket
  - Massage your neck, hands, and feet
  - Listen to calming music
Depression and SIB cont.

- Self-harm because you feel disconnected or numb
  - **Call** a friend (you don’t have to talk about self-harm)
  - **Take** a cold shower
  - **Hold** an ice cube in the crook of your arm or leg
  - **Chew** something with a very strong taste, like peppermint gum
- Self-harm to release tension or vent anger
  - **Exercise** vigorously—run, dance, jump rope, or hit a punching bag
  - **Punch** a cushion or mattress or scream into your pillow
  - **Squeeze** a stress ball or squish Play-Doh or clay
  - **Rip** something up (sheets of paper, a magazine)
• Substitutes for the cutting sensation
  • Use a red felt tip pen to mark where you might usually cut
  • Rub ice across your skin where you might usually cut
  • Put rubber bands on wrists, arms, or legs, and snap them instead of cutting or hitting
Executive Functioning Skills

- Working Memory
- Flexible Thinking
- Organization
- Task Initiation
- Impulse Control
- Emotional Control
- Self-Monitoring
- Planning and Prioritization
## 10 Games to Improve Executive Functioning Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BLURT</td>
<td>(self-control, metacognition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SCRABBLE</td>
<td>(planning, organization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PICTONARY</td>
<td>(flexibility, time management)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DISTRACTION</td>
<td>(working memory, attention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 SECOND RULE</td>
<td>(time management, task initiation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FREEZE</td>
<td>(self-control, attention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>JENGA</td>
<td>(self-control, flexibility, planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>BRAINTEASERS</td>
<td>(perseverance, flexibility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>CHESS</td>
<td>(planning, flexibility, working memory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SUDOKU</td>
<td>(perseverance, working memory)</td>
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Calm down kits
**Emotion Regulation**

- Grounding exercises
- Breathing techniques
50 Coping Skills for Kids

- Ask for help
- Blowing bubbles
- Create art!
- Ride a bike or skateboard
- Play a board game
- Paint or draw
- Color
- Use kind and compassionate self-talk
- Make a scrapbook or collage
- Practice gratitude
- Take slow, mindful breaths
- Make a smoothie
- Cook or bake
- Stretch
- Take a shower or bath
- Go on a hike, walk, or run
- Try something new
- Garden or do yardwork
- Use aromatherapy (add essential oils)
- Take a bath
- Sing or dance
- Explore nature’s treasures
- Visualize a peaceful place
- Listen to music
- Cuddle or play with your pet
- Drink water
- Forgive and let go
- Move on
- Drink a warm cup of tea
- Use stress ball (or other fidget tool)
- Do a puzzle
- Cry
- Take a break or nap
- Build something
- Play outside
- Talk to someone you trust
- Jump on a trampoline
- Do a kind deed
- Make origami
- Clean, declutter, or organize
- Look at or take photographs
- Write a letter
- Read a book or magazine
- Say positive affirmations
- Explore the outdoors
Mindfulness

- Guided Meditation
- Yoga
Rapport

- Interests
- Active listening
- Getting to know the person
- Setting aside pre-judgements
- Being understanding
- Open-positive communication
Self-Care

• Physiological needs
  • Food, water, rest

• Safety needs
  • Security, safety

• Belongingness
  • Friends, family

• Esteem
  • Accomplishment
  • Mastery
  • Recognition
Thank you for your time!