

# Helping Caregivers Manage Challenging Teen Behaviors in TF-CBT

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# Goals

- Normalize difficulty
- Better understand why teens are so difficult
- What do we tell caregivers to do?
- Problem solve some cases

# Tell me about it...

- What are the biggest issues caregivers share with you?

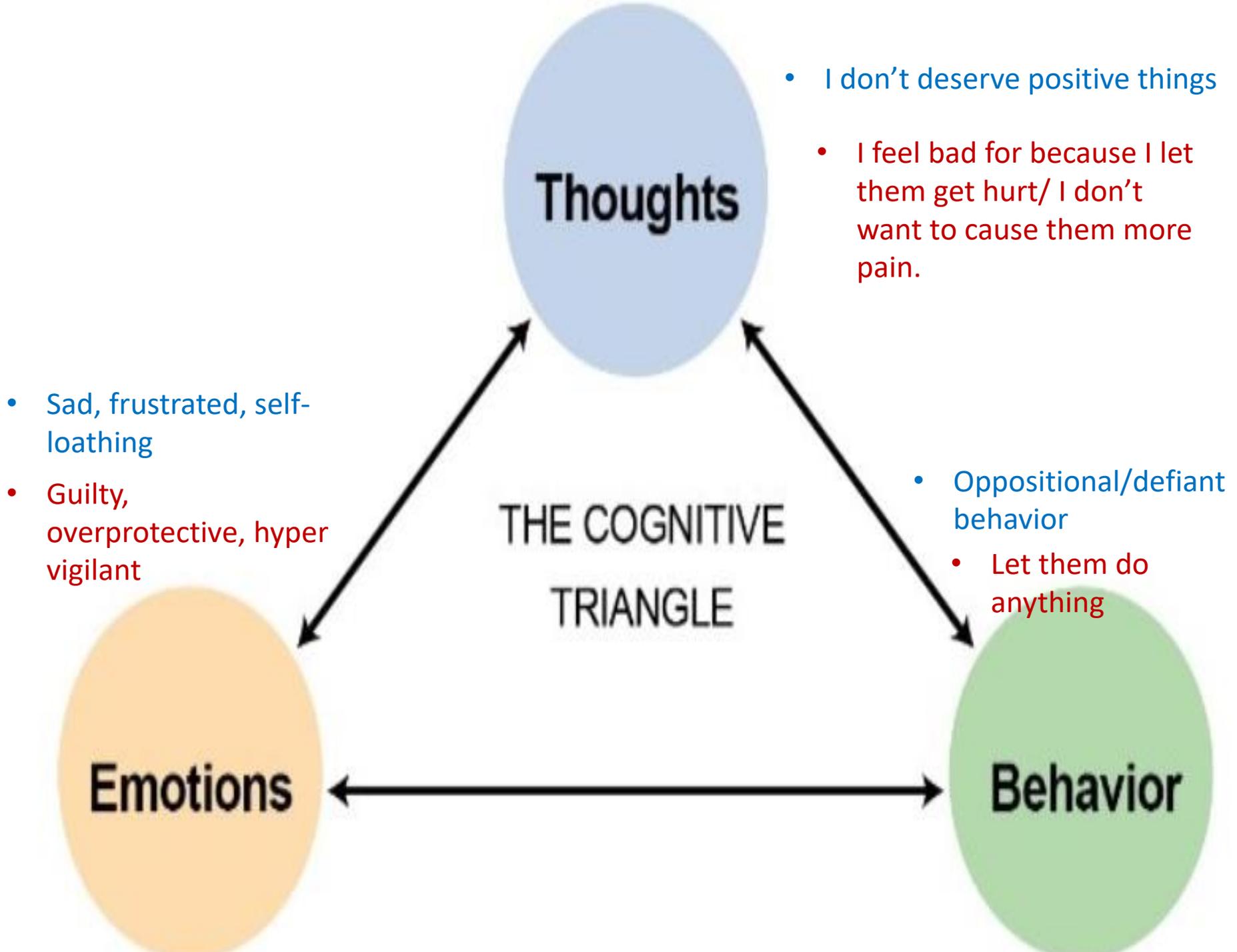
# Adolescent Development

- Puberty
- Abstract Cognitive Abilities
- Egocentric Ideas
- Reasoning Abilities
- Social Focus
- Risky Behavior
- Identity Formation
- Autonomy

# Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

# How does trauma effect...

- ...typical development?
  - Problem solving
  - Coping
  - Social skills
  - Reasoning
  - Emotional regulation
- ...moral development?
  - empathy and perspective taking
  - self-preservation/survival
  - avoidance of conflict vs. preference towards conflict



# Messy combination

- High limits-----goes against developmental desire for autonomy
- Low nurturing-----might reinforce teen's unbalanced thinking
  
- What happens with low limits and high nurturing?
  
- How does this look in real-life?

# **THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT IN MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**

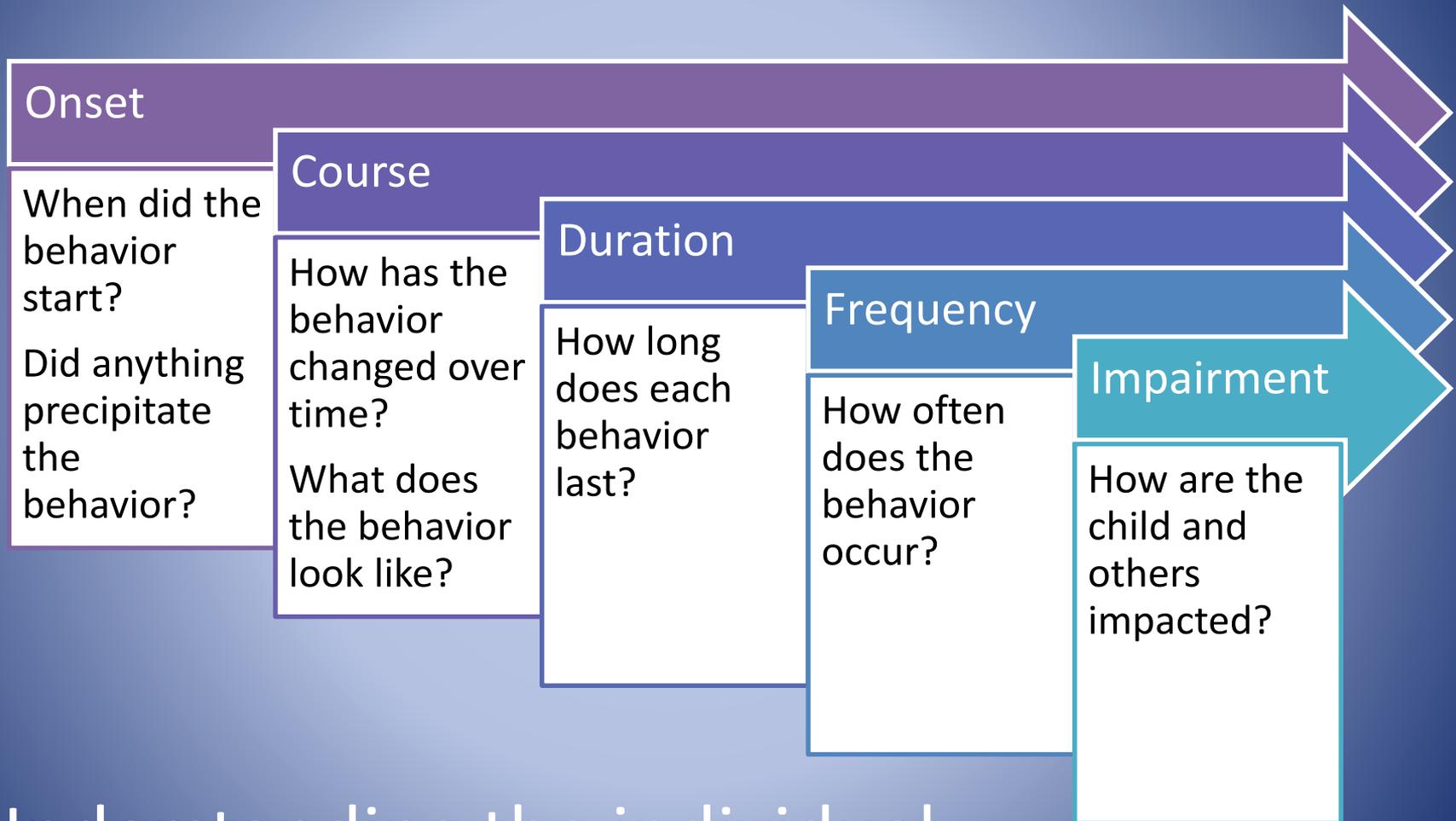
# First stop—caregiver buy-in

- How has parenting been affected by traumatic events
- Engagement of caregivers to commit to reducing trauma symptoms by providing safety, structure, and consistency to increase positive behavior while reducing negative behavior.

# Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

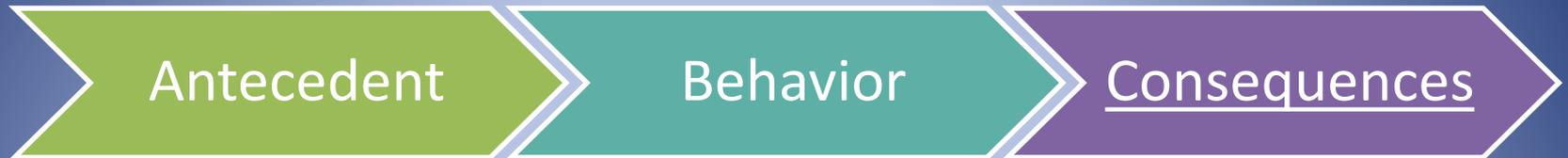
- Allows behavior to be defined, understood, and put in context
- Sets the stage for building a plan to change behavior on all fronts, not just on the response after a behavior occurs
- Helps caregivers understand their role in changing behavior

# Key Questions to Ask in an FBA



Understanding the individual

# Why may the behavior keep occurring?



- Attention (Positive or Negative)
  - I made someone laugh; it's the only time my caregiver focuses on me
- Escape / Avoidance
  - When I escalate, people leave me alone. I don't have to do my chores or go to school
  - Is it a skills deficit or a performance deficit?
- Gain Access to Items
  - When I act out, sometimes they give in and I get what I want
- Self-Reinforcing
  - This feels good; I had fun doing it

# Why does this matter?

## How to select a method?

Behavior	Function of Behavior	Method for Behavior Management Plan
Stealing treats/food	Teen wants treats/food	Create system for earning treats
Acting Out/Misbehaving	Seeking caregiver attention	Support parent initiating positive one-on-one time
Aggression towards caregiver	Fear related to caregiver raising voice	Caregiver reducing yelling; implement "time out" during disagreements
Lying	Avoidance of punishment/conflict	Provide incentive for truth telling, house rules for responses to lying
Defiance/Refusal	Doesn't want to complete chore/task; caregiver typically gives in eventually	Caregiver remove self from coercive cycle, implement consequence/reward for chore/behavior

# ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOR

# Parenting 101

- Core features of behavior management:
  - Consistency, predictability, clear rules
  - Positive reinforcement
  - Negative consequences
  
- Adaptations for teenagers:
  - Involve teens in decision making
  - Grant increasing independence
  - **Importance of maintaining positive relationships/communication**

# The Importance of Relationships

Effective Boys 

Ineffective Boys 

Effective Parent

Ineffective Parent

# Caregiver-Child Communication

- Circumstances that foster improved, more effective communication
- Characteristics of healthy communication
- Skills for increasing capacity for expressing one's self and hearing another's perspective

# Caregiver-Child Communication

- Provides teens and caregivers the opportunity to practice skills discussed in session.
- Allows the opportunity for teens to express a concern to their caregiver and caregivers the opportunity to hear and respond appropriately.

# Quality Time

- Anyone know PCIT?
- Same principles can be applied

Special time:

3-4 days a week for 15 minutes

Activity that is enjoyable that the teen chooses or join them in an already engaged activity.

# SETTING RULES

Simple  
Phrased Positively  
Measurable

# Guidelines for House Rules

- Clear and Specific
- Measurable
- Phrased positively
  - “Respectful language and tone” vs. “No back talking”
- Agreed upon by both child and caregiver
- Don't always have to be fair- caregiver is still in charge
- Is it enforceable consistently?
- Is it necessary? Can we pick our battles?

PROBLEM NEEDING A	POSSIBLE RULE	EVALUATE THE RULE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear and specific?</li><li>• Addresses a serious problem?</li><li>• Enforceable?</li><li>• Feasible for teen to really do it?</li><li>• Adults in charge agree?</li><li>• You can enforce it consistently and unemotionally?</li><li>• Did you get teen's input?</li></ul>

# **STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOR**

# Strategies for Managing Behavior

- Removal of privileges/consequences
- Reward system to earn privileges
- Grounding
- Use of natural consequences

# Appropriate Rewards/Consequences

- **Basic Rights-** NOT to be taken away as consequence
  - Regular family food (not including soft drinks/treats)
  - Clothing
  - Shelter
  - Love
- **Growth Privileges-** avoid taking away as consequences:
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Community activities
- **Optional Privileges-** can/should be rewarded and removed in response to behavior
  - Electronics
  - Snacks/Treats
  - Allowance
  - Social time with friends
  - Later curfew

# Consequences/Removing Privileges

- Breaking a House Rule
  - Removing a privilege
  - Adding a negative consequence
    - Grounding
    - Extra chore
    - Others?

# Rewarding Positive Behavior

- Earning “Optional” Privileges **AND** labeled praises for measurable smaller behaviors
  - Agreed upon by teen and caregiver
  - Daily, weekly, etc., depending on teen level of functioning
- For teens/caregivers who need structure and visual support
  - “Behavior Charts”/ Point systems
  - If using a point/reward system, minor misbehavior simply does not earn teen that privilege
  - Caregiver does not add additional consequence for not completing behavior

# How have you heard caregivers use grounding?

- Quick, angered response with no attention to schedule
- No follow through
- Piling on the grounding
- No monitoring system in place

# What should grounding really mean?

- Think time-out, but aged up
- Removal from all privileges and positive reinforcement
- Short-term
  - If always grounded, what does teen have to fight for?
- Predictable
- Consistent

# Natural Consequences

- Capitalizing on peer dynamics/social pressure
  - Hygiene
  - Room clean
  - Eating habits
  - Poor communication
  - Poor school work- impact on extracurriculars
  - Others?

# Case Examples

- 13 year old male – low self-worth, high anxiety
  - Will not do any of identified chores
  - Mother largely against positive reinforcement system
- What would you do?
  - Interventions for behavior?
  - Interventions with mother?

# Case Examples

- 16 year old female – emotionally withdrawn, anger outbursts
  - Argumentative with caregiver
  - Has zero privileges because of “poor attitude”
- What would you do?
  - Interventions for behavior?
  - Interventions with caregiver?

# Case Examples

- 15 year old female – history of substance use, highly avoidant, defiant
  - Caregiver reports her to be unmotivated by caregiver praise
  - Very few expectations in the home
- What would you do?
  - Interventions for behavior?
  - Interventions with caregiver?

# Reading Recommendations

- Your Defiant Teen (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed):10 Steps to Resolve Conflict and Rebuild Your Relationship
  - By Barkley and Robin
- How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk
  - By Faber & Mazlish

# Thank You!

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