

Cognitive Processing with Caregivers:

Exploring and guiding caregivers towards more balanced thoughts can and should occur throughout treatment. Below are versions of common unhelpful beliefs. Select 2-3 to work on in small groups. Identify how you might validate the emotion related to the belief. Generate a potential more balanced belief. Brainstorm questions you could ask (or activities to do) to support a more balanced belief. Below is an example.

What if talking about it just makes things worse?	
Validate:	<i>I imagine it feels pretty scary to think about what if her tantrums got worse.</i>
Balanced Thought	<i>Doing counseling now saves her from carrying these problems into adulthood. We will work together to manage any problems that come up.</i>

Exploring Questions:

- *What do you worry would happen if we don't do this now?*
- *When you've gone through a really stressful time in life, what did you need?*
- *What do you think leads to these tantrums?*
- *How do you hope talking about the trauma she's been through might help?*
- *Could I share what this has been like for other families I've worked with? –give brief psychoed on process—*
- *If you did see her more distressed, how might you support her?*

If my daughter hadn't gone with those kids like I told her not to do, she wouldn't have gotten hurt.

Validate:

Balanced Thought

Exploring Questions:

He may not be prosecuted. How can we ever heal if there is no justice?

Validate:

Balanced Thought

Exploring Questions:

My child is going to grow up to do the same thing that happened to him.	
Validate:	
Balanced Thought	
Exploring Questions:	

She's going to have to be in counseling for the rest of her life.	
Validate:	
Balanced Thought	
Exploring Questions:	

He hurts people and he lies. My own kids weren't like that. I don't think you can teach people to have a conscience.

Validate:	
Balanced Thought	
Exploring Questions:	

I failed as a mother for not leaving the abusive relationship sooner.

Validate	
Balanced Thought	
Exploring Questions:	

It's my fault. I should have known.

Validate:

Balanced Thought

Exploring Questions:

I went through worse when I was a kid and am just fine. My kid just needs to stop thinking about what happened and get over it.

Validate

Balanced Thought

Exploring Questions: