

Worksheet

Professional Version | US English

Friendly Formulation



Description

A case formulation (case conceptualization) can be thought of as any way of helping a client to understand what their difficulties are, where they originated, and what keeps them going. CBT case formulations often have 5 ingredients:

1. Presenting problem(s).
2. Predisposing factors which made the individual vulnerable to the problem.
3. Precipitating factors which triggered the problem.
4. Perpetuating factors such as mechanisms which keep a problem going or unintended consequences of an attempt to cope with the problem.
5. Protective factors.

This friendly formulation diagram presents all of these 5 p's in an accessible way, framed by the question "How did the problem develop?"

Instructions

This is a Psychology Tools case formulation (case conceptualization) diagram. Put simply, case formulation is one method of a client and therapist coming to shared understanding of a difficulty. The formulation contextualizes the difficulty, making its origin and maintenance understandable. Case formulations are best completed collaboratively, with clients positioned as the 'experts in themselves'.

References

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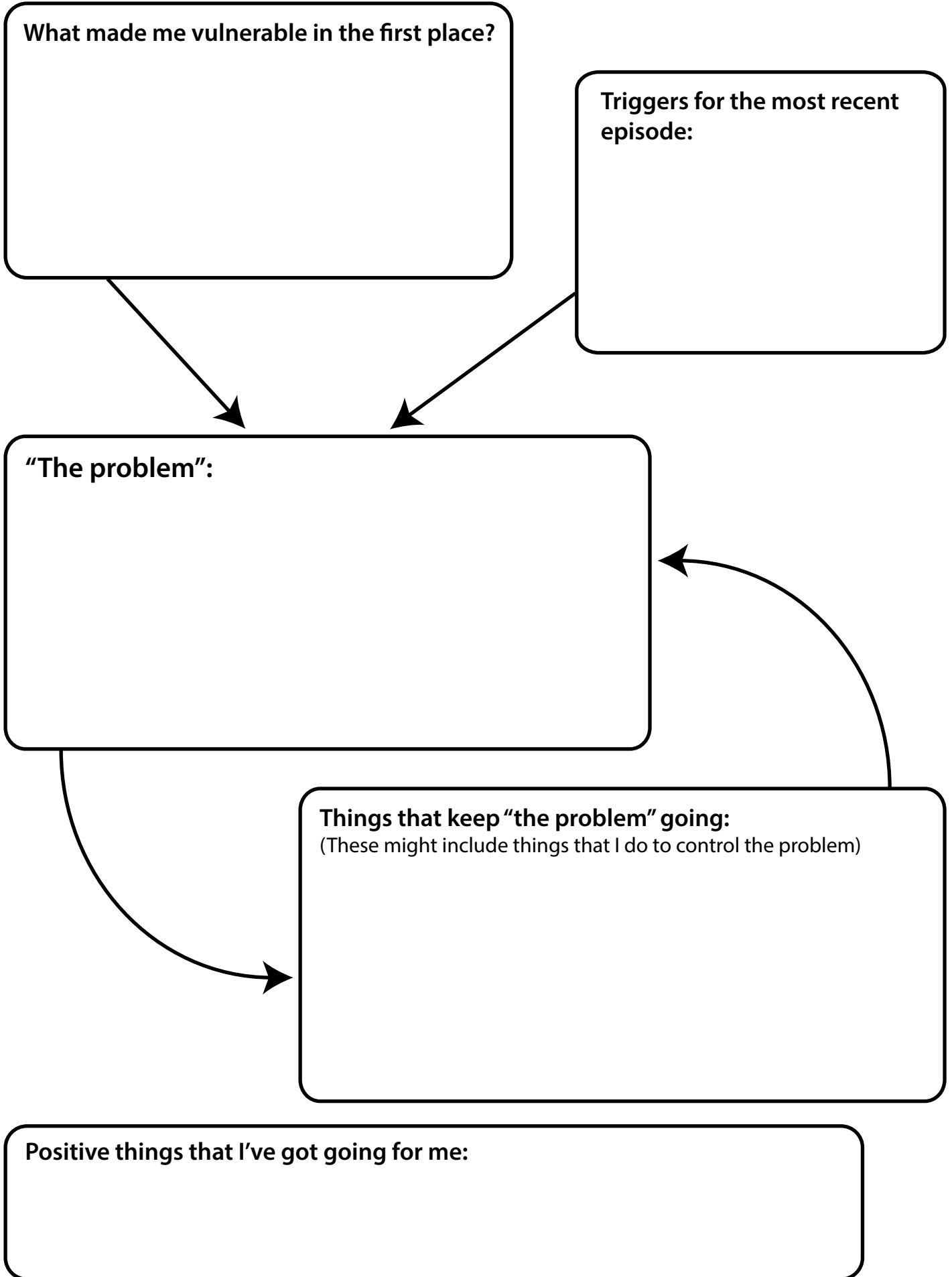
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How did 'the problem' develop?



How did 'the problem' develop?

What made me vulnerable in the first place?

Big trauma – years of being hurt by my dad.
Small trauma – the bullying and humiliation at school.

Triggers for the most recent episode:

When I saw my dad walking around town again – he must have been released from prison.

"The problem":

Feeling scared all the time – I'm so scared I don't want to leave the house.
memories of what he did to me and my sister that I can't get out of my mind. Waking up drenched in sweat.
Scratching myself on purpose when I feel s**t about myself.

Things that keep "the problem" going:

(These might include things that I do to control the problem)

I try to push all the memories out of my mind and to control what I'm thinking – but I feel like I'm going mad.
The way I talk to myself – I criticize and punish myself in ways that I wouldn't talk to anyone else.
Rely on anti-anxiety medication to make me feel ok, but it just numbs me out.

Positive things that I've got going for me:

Going to the trauma group really helped me to know that I wasn't alone.
my cat! She helps me when I'm feeling down.

How did 'the problem' develop?

What made me vulnerable in the first place?

I was 15 years younger than my brothers and sisters, and I think my parents were tired of being parents by then. In retrospect I had my physical needs taken care of but I felt neglected. I moved to a new city to be with my ex-partner and now I'm stuck here.

Triggers for the most recent episode:

I've think I've always felt like this, but the thing that brought me to therapy was when my relationship broke down.

"The problem":

I'm so depressed it's a struggle to get out of bed in the morning, and sometimes I don't bother. I feel like I'm just a waste of space and I look at other people and they look so happy and together. I'm never going to have what they have and there are times when I don't see the point in living.

Things that keep "the problem" going:

(These might include things that I do to control the problem)

I spend a lot of time thinking about why my life has turned out the way it has – people are always noticing that I'm staring off into space. It never makes me happy.

I'm quite hard on myself, which I always used to think was what made me motivated – but I'm learning about kindness/compassion and it's the opposite of that...

Positive things that I've got going for me:

When I've got my head together I'm analytical and can solve problems other people can't – it made me good at my job. I still have a good friend in my hometown even if she is busy with her young family.

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