

So you've been asked to
make a trauma narrative?

Common Reactions during the Trauma Narrative

- Afraid of remembering bad things that happened to me
- Afraid of bad feelings taking over
- Becoming upset

Good News!

- These fears are short term!
 - They won't last very long
 - You'll start to feel more confident
 - You'll start to feel better

What can I do so I feel better?

- Talk about bad things that happened!
 - It sounds weird, but...
 - By talking about the bad things from the past on purpose, you get to take control of the situation
 - That way thoughts about the bad things from the past don't sneak up on you.
 - You can be prepared, which always makes things easier

It gets easier!

- The more you talk about the bad things, the easier it gets!
 - At first it can be really scary or uncomfortable
 - But the more you talk, the less scary it is
- Think about what would happen if you watched a scary movie over and over and over again

Scary Movie

- The 1st time you watch a scary movie, it's really scary!
- The 2nd time you watch, it's still pretty scary, but a lot less scary than the 1st time
- If you watched the same scary movie 10 times, you'd get more and more comfortable seeing the scary parts
- And if you watched the movie 100 times, then the movie wouldn't be scary anymore
 - In fact, it would probably even be boring!

Trauma narrative = Scary movie

- Talking about the bad things that happened to you is like watching your own personal scary movie
- The 1st few times you talk about it, it's really scary
- But the more you do it, the easier it gets
- And eventually it's not scary anymore
 - Eventually you just get bored with it!

But it still sounds scary!

- Yes, it still seems scary
- But it's only going to be scary or upsetting for a short time
- AND, your therapist is going to be right there to help you out
 - Your therapist will make sure you're okay!

How will my therapist make sure I'm okay?

- 1) Your therapist will keep track of your stress level by asking you for your number
 - If your number is really high, the therapist will help you to calm down before moving on
 - Remember, you're not alone! Your therapist cares about you and wants to help!
- 2) Your therapist will ask you to tell your story little by little
 - So you don't have to tell all the scary stuff all at once

- Think about when you go swimming for the 1st time in the summer
 - Some people like to dive right into the deep end from the highest diving board
 - Others like to take it slow – just dip their toes in and get used to the water one step at a time

- Just like getting into a cold pool takes some people a long time, building the trauma narrative can take time, too
 - You can go at your own pace
- Just take one step at a time and get used to the water little by little
- Again, your therapist will be there to help you and encourage you.
 - You're not alone!

It still sounds hard!

- It is hard.. at first.
- But, the more you practice, the better you get at it.
 - Just like with learning to play a sport or a musical instrument
 - It takes practice to get good
 - At first it's hard, but it gets easier
 - And the more you do it, the more benefits you get

- Sometimes we have to do hard things at first so that we can get better and experience more rewards later
- Even with our health, when we're sick we do things that we don't like to do so that we can get healthy again
 - For example, we drink yucky tasting medicine, even though we don't like it, so that we get healthy

- Living through a trauma is kind of like being sick
- When you're sick you have symptoms like a stomach ache or a runny nose
- When we've had bad things happen to us, we have different kinds of symptoms like nightmares or feeling scared when we're reminded of the bad things

- When we're sick we drink yucky medicine to get better, even though we don't like it
- When we've had bad things happen to us, we get better by going to therapy and creating a trauma narrative, even though we don't like it

What do I get out of creating a trauma narrative?

- You get your life back!
- You get to go back to being YOU
 - Maybe even a new and improved you because you're not scared or stressed anymore, and you're not bothered by nightmares or other symptoms of PTSD
- You get to feel like you have control over your life again

- You get to have a clear mind because you're not going to be worried about the bad things that happened to you anymore
- You get to feel good about yourself
 - You get to feel positive emotions again
 - You feel proud of yourself for facing your fears and winning

Will this really work?

- ABSOLUTELY !!!
- It's hard and scary at times, but it works!
- When you complete your trauma narrative you will feel SO MUCH BETTER!
- Your therapist will ask you to put in a lot of effort in the beginning, but the benefits are far greater than the disadvantages

You can do it!

You'll do great!

I CAN DO IT !