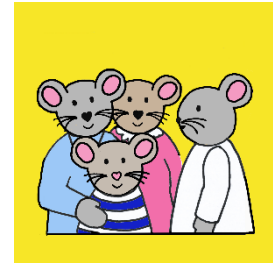


## Cognitive Coping - TLC

### Use This:

To learn how to get perspectives from friends, identify silver linings, and use distraction to improve mood.



### Goals

- The child will **think of friends** that he or she can talk problems over with
- The child will **look for the “silver lining”** in order to identify good things that are made possible because of bad situations
- The child will learn how to **change channels** to get his or her mind off bad things that have happened, by thinking of something else

### Materials

- ***Fear Thermometer*** and ***Fear Ladder*** (2 unrated copies for anxiety/trauma) (pp. 305, 307)
- ***Feelings Thermometer*** (p. 329)
- ***A small rock and treat***
- ***Coping Through TLC*** worksheet (p. 365)
- ***Using TLC When Bad Things Happen*** parent handout (p. 369)
- ***Weekly questionnaires*** and ***Monitoring sheet*** (see pages 268 – 285)
- ***Therapist Note Taking Sheet*** (p. 267)

*⚡ If time is tight: Illustrate that talking things over with friends, looking for silver linings, and distracting ourselves are ways we can make ourselves feel better even if we can't change what is making us feel bad directly.*

### Main steps

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set an Agenda</b>         | Remember to start by setting an agenda together and by reviewing any practice assignments.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Obtain Weekly Ratings</b> | If the main focus is traumatic stress or anxiety, use the 0 to 10 scale of the <b><i>Fear Thermometer</i></b> to obtain <b><i>Fear Ladder</i></b> ratings from both the child and his or her parent. If the main focus is depressed mood, use the <b><i>Feelings Thermometer</i></b> to take a rating. Review the <b><i>Weekly questionnaires</i></b> and <b><i>Monitoring sheet</i></b> in detail. |

□ <b>Introduce TLC</b>	<p>Explain that the focus of today’s session will be good things to do when bad things happen. Indicate to the child that you will discuss three good things to do to help him or her feel better:</p> <p><b>T      Talk to a friend:</b> Think things over with someone I trust.</p> <p><b>L      Look for the silver lining:</b> Figure out a good thing that comes out of my bad situation.</p> <p><b>C      Change channels:</b> Stop thinking about things that make me feel bad. Get my mind on something else.</p>
□ <b>ACTIVITY</b> <i>Tell a Story</i>	<p>Begin your discussion of these three strategies with a story of a child having a bad experience that leaves him or her feeling down. You should feel free to select any illustration that you think would fit the child well and capture his or her interest. The idea is to present the scenario (the protagonist has had a difficult or upsetting experience) and then note that we all have bad things happen to us, things that bring us down – and that there are at least three things that almost everyone can do to feel better, when such bad things happen. Tell the child that today we are going to talk about those three things.</p>
□ <b>Introduce “Think of a Friend”</b>	<p>Explain that the "T" in TLC stands for <b>Think of a Friend</b>. Discuss with the child that seeking support from a friend or family member can be helpful even when the situation cannot be changed, because simply having someone to listen, understand, and provide additional suggestions/perspectives can help you feel better.</p>
□ <b>Brainstorm a List of Friends</b>	<p>Identify a list of people the child can talk to when something bad happens and write this list down on page 1 of the <b>Coping Through TLC</b> worksheet. The list should include several people, and at least two adults.</p>
□ <b>Introduce “Look for the Silver Lining”</b>	<p>Discuss with the child what it means to look for a silver lining. Ask if the child has ever looked at a dark cloud and seen a bright light around the edges. Note that this is called the "silver lining," and that the saying is "Every dark cloud has a silver lining." Note that the same kind of thing is often true in everyday life.</p>
<b>Example script</b>	
<p><i>Sometimes we come across bad situations we can't change or control, like regular hospital appointments, seizures. What are some examples from your life? In these cases, we have a situation we don't like – a kind of "dark cloud" – but often the bad situation has a good side, too – something good that is made possible by the bad situation. And figuring out what that good thing is can make us feel better. Let's try some examples...</i></p>	
□ <b>Continue Worksheet</b>	<p>Work on completing page 2 of the <b>Coping Through TLC</b> worksheet with the child in session.</p>
□ <b>Introduce “Change Channels”</b>	<p>Introduce the third <b>TLC skill: Changing Channels</b>. Illustrate this skill by using the <b>Rock and Treat Activity</b>, below.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>ACTIVITY</b> <b>Rock and Treat</b>	<p>Illustrate the concept of <b>changing channels by</b> giving the child a small rock. Tell the child to put the rock in his or her shoe. Have the child stand up, then ask what the experience is like for him or her. Ask about both feelings and thoughts (e.g., irritation, thoughts about discomfort, thoughts about how mean the therapist is, etc.) and get a <b>Feelings Thermometer</b> rating from the child. Then give the child a treat and tell the child to put the treat in his or her mouth and describe that experience. Ask the child how he or she feels and what she or he thinks when focusing on the taste of the treat. Note that it's hard to just stop thinking about a bad experience – the rock; it's much easier to distract yourself by focusing on a good experience – in this case, the treat.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relate Distraction to Mood</b>	<p>Make explicit that it is very difficult to simply "stop thinking" about something that is bothering you – but thinking about bad things again and again can make us feel bad. Sometimes you need to do something completely different in order to get your mind off your bad mood for a little while. Elicit examples of times where the child "replayed" negative thoughts.</p>
<b>Example script</b>	
<p><i>When I asked you to suck a treat, you stopped thinking about the rock in your shoe! Can you think of a time when you could not get your mind off of something bad or upsetting? What do you think you could have done to distract yourself?</i></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue Worksheet</b>	<p>Work with the child to identify distracting activities the child can use to stop ruminative-depressive thoughts. The activities should be realistic and rewarding for the child, acceptable to parents, and likely to work well in disrupting the child's ruminative thoughts.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT</b> <b>TLC Worksheet</b>	<p>For the practice assignment, the child should use page 4 of the <b>Coping Through TLC</b> worksheet to write down something that happened that made him or her feel bad, and complete a <b>Feelings Thermometer</b> to show how he or she felt when the bad thing happened. Next, the child should write down one of the three <b>TLC</b> skills he or she can use to feel better, and try that skill out, then re-rate his or her mood.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Send the materials for the next session</b>	<p>Tell the parent/s you will send a written summary and the materials for the next session. Remind them that they <u>do not</u> need to be completed for next session as you will go through them together in the session. Tell the family you will also send the <b>Weekly questionnaires, Monitoring sheet</b> and <b>Feelings Thermometer</b> which need to be completed for the next session.</p>
<p>Confirm date and time of the next call.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Summarising</b>	<p>Ask if they would like you to summarise the session, if they want to summarise or if you should do it together.</p>

## Leave 'Em Laughing

End the session on a positive note with the family by perhaps talking about things that are unrelated to treatment or a game or activity that will leave them feeling good about the work you've done today. The end of each session should be used to praise the family's efforts and to convey support and encouragement.

## Helpful Tips

- The take-home message for the child in discussing the **TLC** skills is that he or she can cope with situations that can't be changed, not only by changing his or her thoughts but also by using the three skills taught in this session: seeking social support, identifying something good caused by a bad situation, and ending rumination by using distraction.
- When helping the child identify people on the first page of the worksheet, try to make sure that at least two of the people on the child's list are adults. A close relationship with a caring adult is a predictor of positive outcomes for youth facing a variety of risk conditions; thus, your effort to help the child identify such persons may be of lasting value.
- If the child enters the session in a bad mood, or seems tired, lethargic, or uninterested, this is an opportunity to introduce a **mood booster**: take a brief mood rating, spend a few minutes engaging in a pleasant activity, then re-rate the mood. If it is successful, be sure to highlight to the child that *what we do changes how we feel*.
- Check in on goals: Does the child feel that he or she is making progress? How does the material you covered today relate to the goals you set together?

## How's Your Style?

- Did you praise often?
- Did you review often, by asking questions?
- Did you simplify the steps as needed?
- Did your pace match that of the child or family?
- Did you stay on track?