

# FINDING STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY: CRAFTING A NEW NARRATIVE



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# FINDING STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY: CRAFTING A NEW NARRATIVE

## Learning Objectives

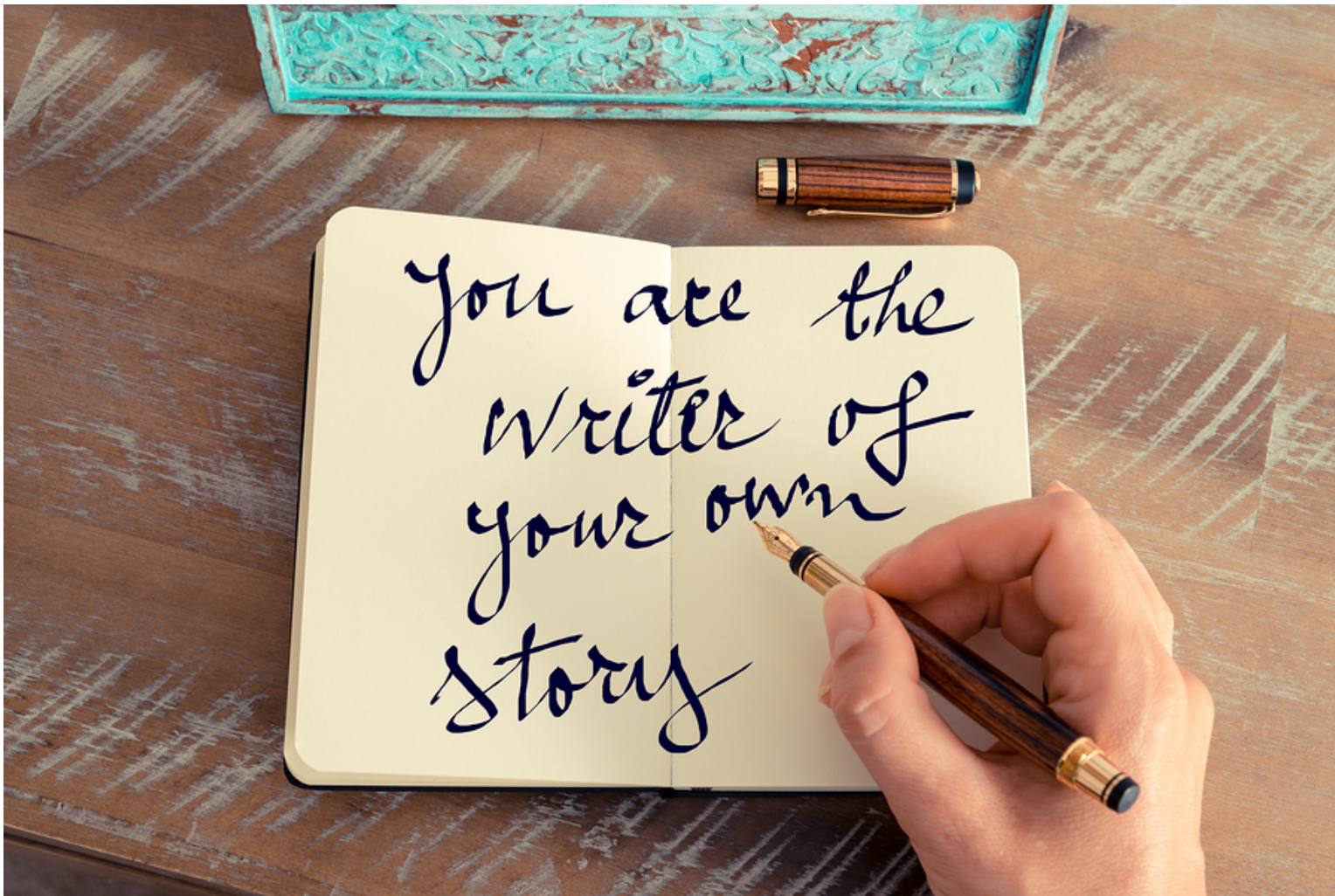
- Identify the three foundational ideas of Narrative Therapy
- Articulate and understand the four principles of Narrative Therapy
- Identify three commonly used Narrative Therapy techniques
- Demonstrate the ability to apply Narrative Therapy techniques to young adults with learning differences



# 3 FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS OF NARRATIVE THERAPY

1. Narrative therapy is respectful.
2. Narrative therapy is non-blaming.
3. Narrative therapy views the client as the expert.

WHETHER WE REALIZE IT OR NOT, WE ALL  
IMPOSE A NARRATIVE ON OUR LIVES



# 4 PRINCIPLES OF NARRATIVE THERAPY

1. **Reality is socially constructed**, which means that our interactions and dialogue with ourselves and others impacts the way we experience reality.
2. **Reality is influenced by and communicated through language.** The words/phrases we use to describe our reality matter.
3. **Having a narrative that can be understood helps us to organize and maintain our reality.** In other words, stories and narratives help us to make sense of our experiences.
4. **There is no “objective reality” or absolute truth,** meaning that what is true for us may not be the same for another person, or even for ourselves at another point in time.



# WHAT'S GOING ON IN OUR MIND?

## Question:

How many daily  
thoughts/stories do we  
have?



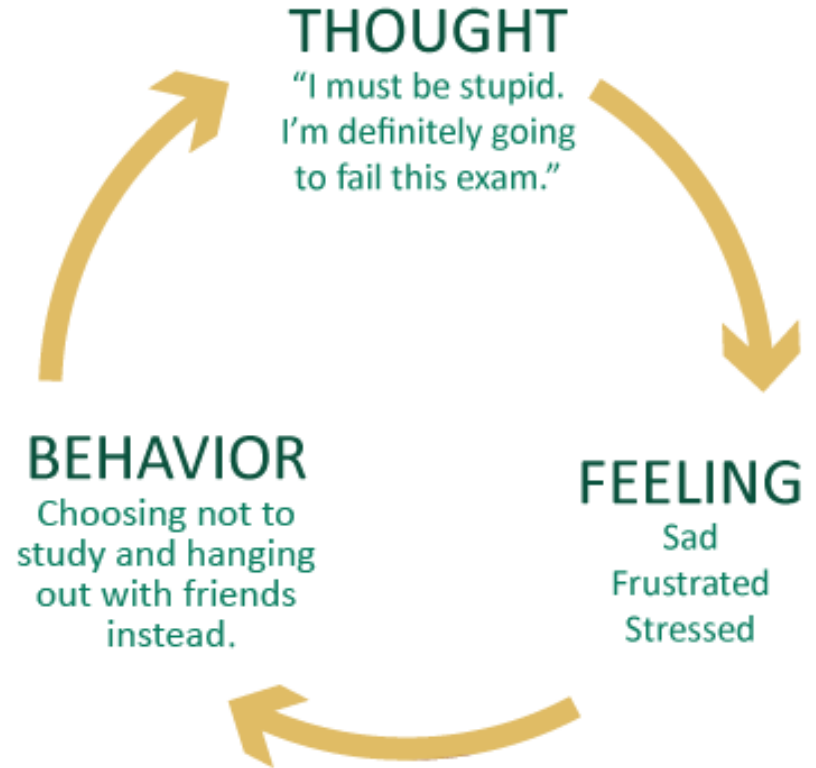
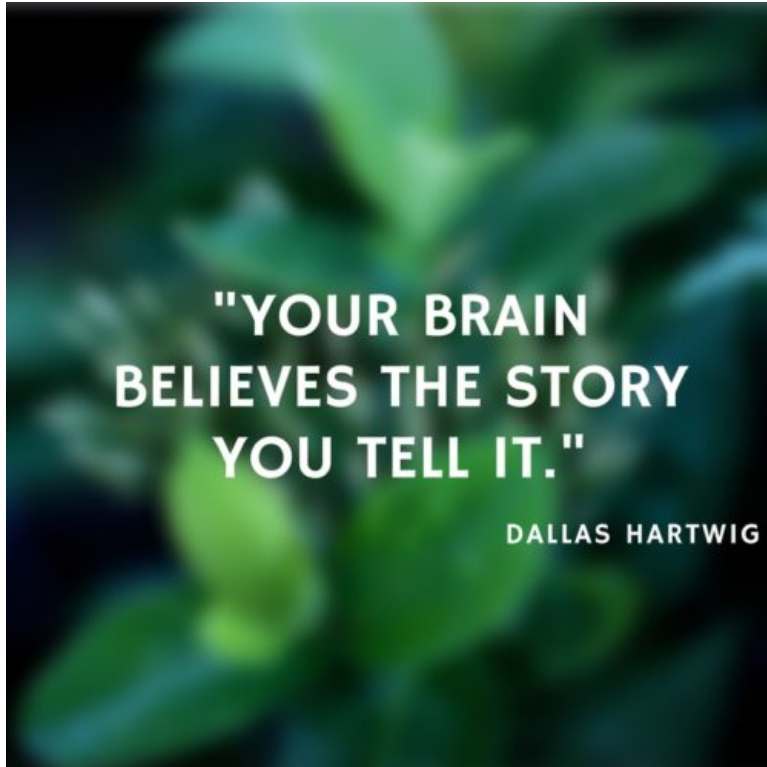
# Answer:

It has been estimated that an average brain has anywhere from 25,000 to 50,000 thoughts a day and 70% of them are believed to be negative.

People generate negative thoughts so automatically they are unaware that it is happening. What most people forget in the process is that this is actually a choice they are making.



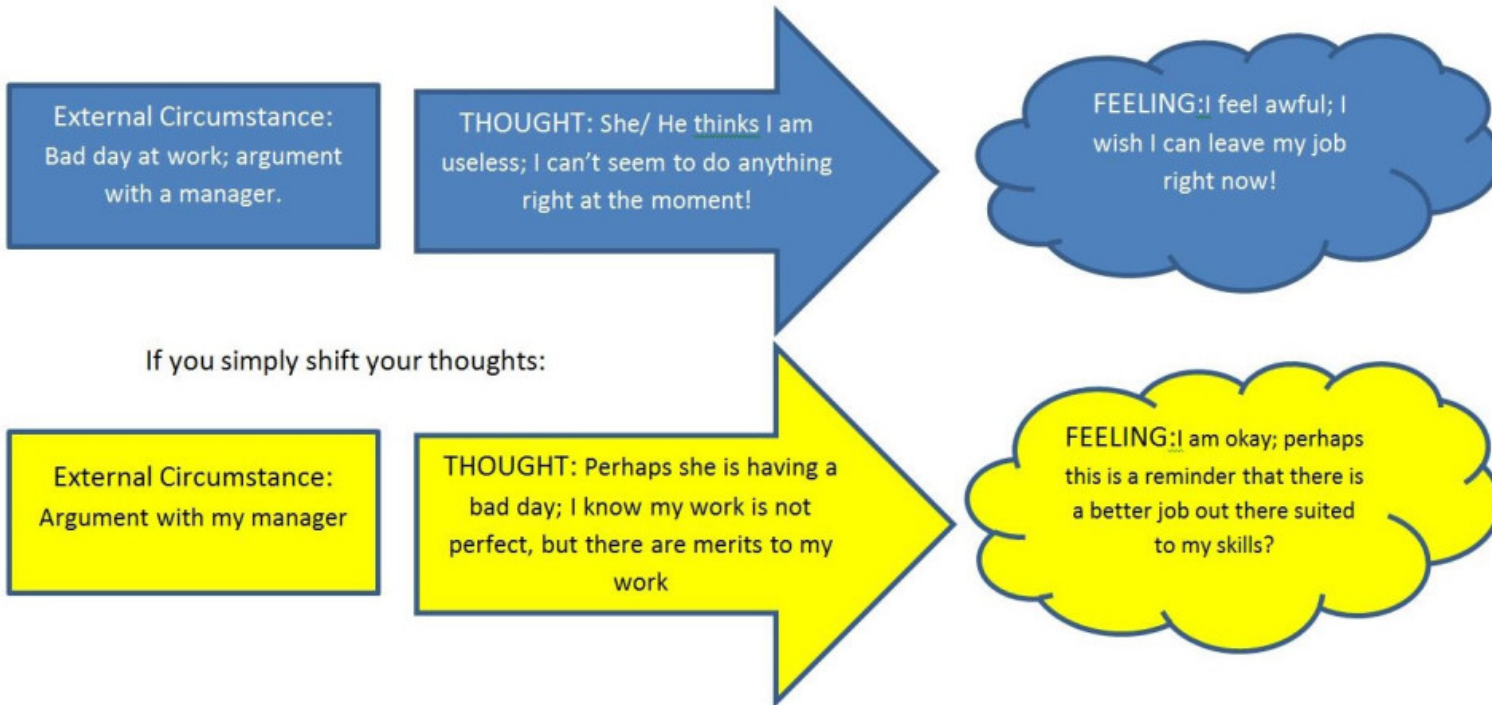
# WE BELIEVE WHAT WE TELL OURSELVES





# WHAT WE CHOOSE TO THINK MATTERS

Example: Bad day at work.]



# 3 NARRATIVE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

## Telling One's Story

**Externalization**

**Technique**

**Deconstruction**

**Technique**



# TELLING ONE'S STORY

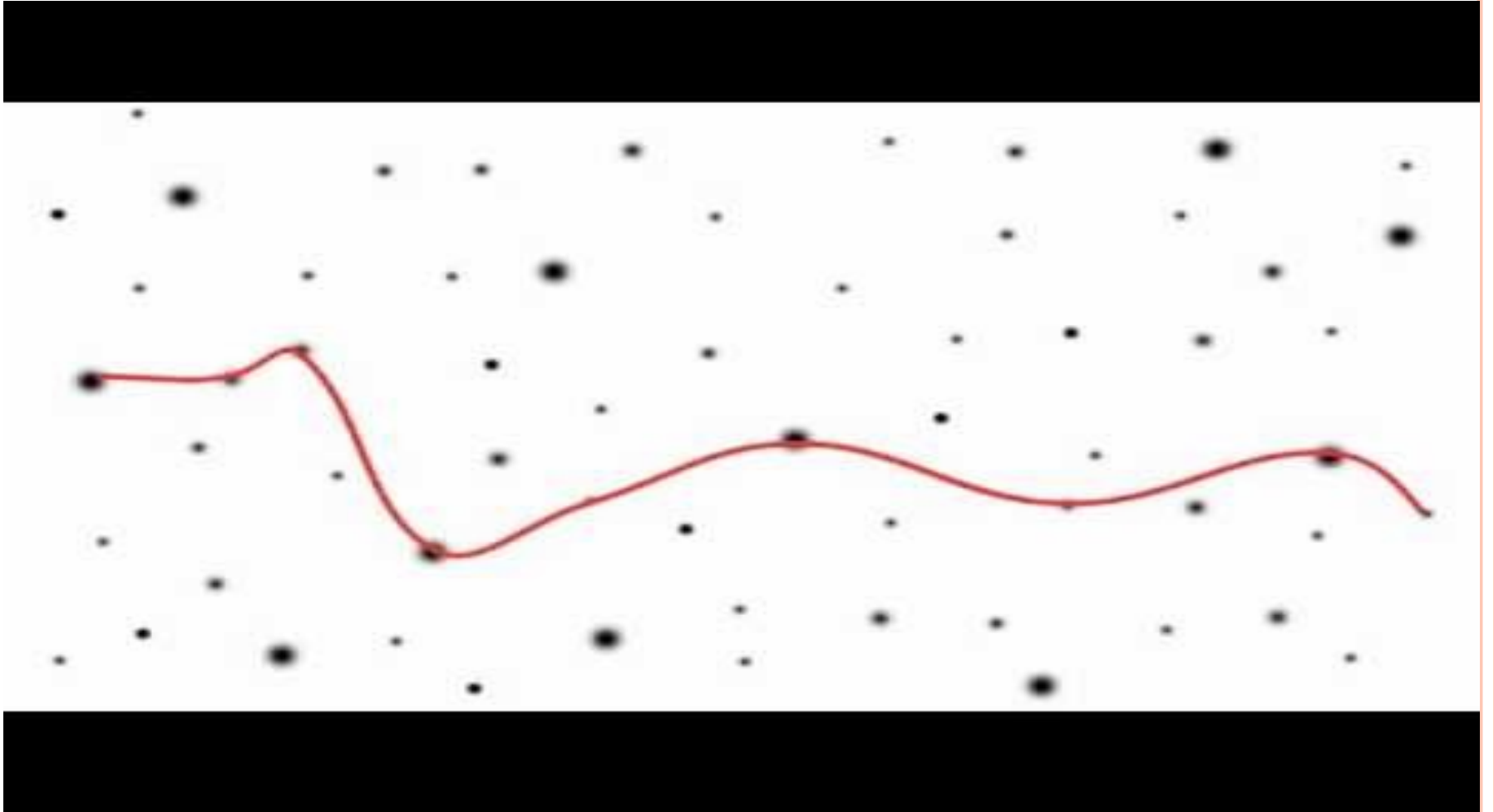


a new story

part one



# TELLING ONE'S STORY



# TELLING ONE'S STORY (CREATING A NARRATIVE)

As a supportive person to a young adult with learning differences, your job in narrative therapy is to help them develop their story, discover purpose/meaning, and establish or re-establish an identity.

Support them to explore their own experiences to find alterations to their problem story or make a whole new story.



# “PARTICULAR”



# ADHD AND CREATIVITY



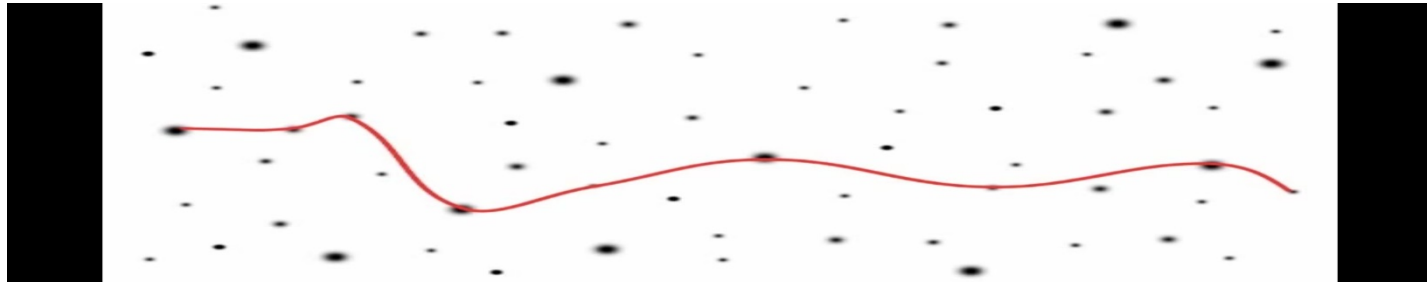
# TELLING ONE'S STORY (CREATING A NARRATIVE)

## Practice Exercise

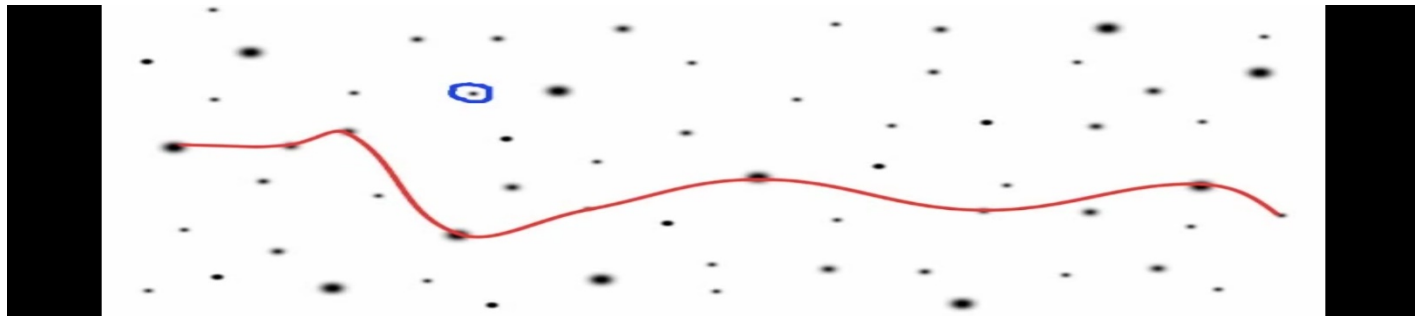




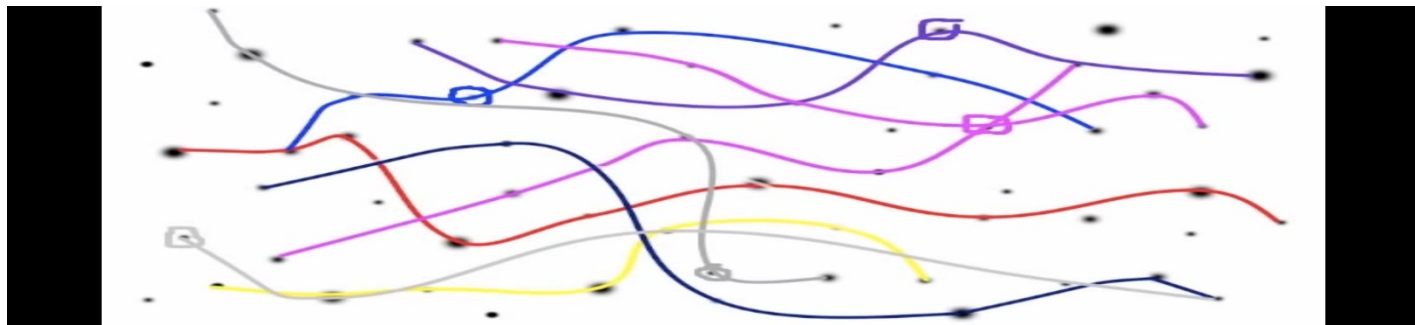
# 1. IDENTIFY A PROBLEM



# 2. IDENTIFY A TIME SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENED



# 3. ACKNOWLEDGE THE STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES



# EXTERNALIZATION TECHNIQUE

The externalization technique involves leading an individual toward viewing their problems or behaviors as external, instead of a part of him/her/them.

It is much easier to change a behavior that you engage in than it is to change a characteristic that is a part of you.



# EXTERNALIZING THE PROBLEM



# EXTERNALIZATION TECHNIQUE

## Practice Exercise



# EXTERNALIZATION TECHNIQUE

If your problem was an insect or animal what would it be and why?



# QUESTION THAT HELP EXTERNALIZE THE PROBLEM

- It sounds as though [problem] is part of your life now.
- How does the [problem] impact your energy for daily tasks?
- Does [problem] have an impact on your relationship with other family members?
- What do you think about the effects [problem] is having on your life?
- Are you accepting what [problem] is doing?
- How would you prefer things to be?
- If you were to stay connected to what you have just said about what you prefer, what next steps could you take?



# DECONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE

Deconstruction refers to breaking down the problem or problems the individual is having, making it more easy to understand and address.

Problems can feel overwhelming, confusing, and unsolvable. Breaking them down and addressing them one step at a time can provide tremendous support and a sense of relief.



# DECONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE

Behavior: Jumping Up  
and Down, Yelling, and  
Waving Arms





# DECONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE

**Behavior:** Jumping Up and Down,  
Yelling, and Waving Arms

**Context:**

1. Sporting Event
2. Library Study Group
3. At Home
4. At Work



# SOCIAL NARRATIVES

Social narratives are simple stories that visually represent social situations and appropriate social behaviors. The social narrative connects the important details of a setting or social situation to support the person with ASD [and other learning differences] in understanding the social context and in developing a new social skill. While most individuals generally understand social norms and conventions, individuals with ASD may need explicit instruction to understand these norms.

*Louise Southern, M.Ed., BCBA, ASNC*



# I'm Growing Up!

Asking For Help at School or Work

My Social Story: \_\_\_\_\_



**I'M GROWING UP!  
ASKING FOR HELP AT SCHOOL OR  
WORK**



**My Social Story:** \_\_\_\_\_

# ASKING FOR HELP.

- Sometimes, I don't understand what I'm supposed to do at school, or my job.



- That's okay! I just need to ask for help.



## HOW TO ASK FOR HELP APPROPRIATELY.

- People won't mind helping me if I ask appropriately.
- First, I wait until the person I want to ask to help me is not busy and I can make eye contact with them. **GOOD CHOICE!**



- Consequence: I have connected with the person I want to ask for help. It is likely that I will receive help soon.

**I'll wait...**

- I don't wait until the person I want to ask to help me is not busy and I don't make eye contact! **BAD CHOICE!**

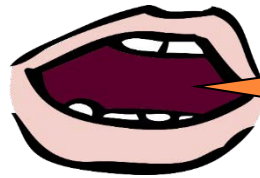


- Consequence: No one knows that I need help; or, they think I'm rude and are ignoring me. It's not likely that I will receive any help.



# HOW TO ASK FOR HELP APPROPRIATELY.

- Next: I use a pleasant voice tone. GOOD CHOICE!



Excuse me, I need some help understanding this work order.

- Consequence: Since my voice isn't hurting others' ears, they will more likely feel like helping me.

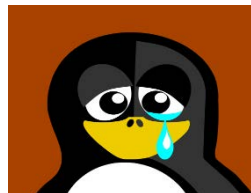


- I yell out for help! BAD CHOICE!



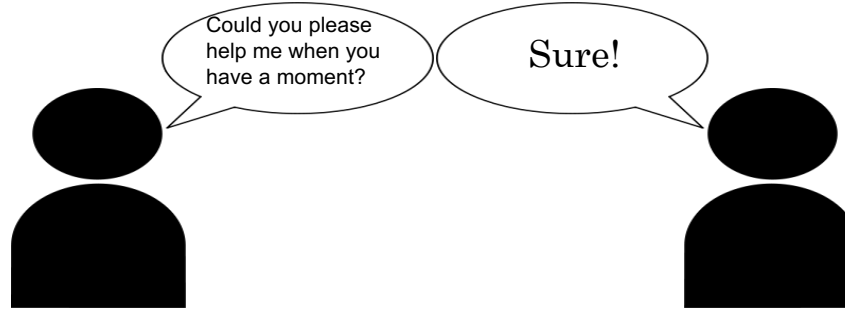
I need help NOW!

- Consequence: I may have hurt others' ears and they will try to get away from me.



# HOW TO ASK FOR HELP APPROPRIATELY

- Also, I use nice words such as “please” and “if you have the time.” GOOD CHOICE!



- Consequence: I have been polite and others will likely try to help me.



- I use profanity and curse at the person. BAD CHOICE!



- Consequence: I will likely just make the other person mad and still not get any help.





# HOW TO ASK FOR HELP APPROPRIATELY

- Then, I stay in my area and I wait patiently for the person to come and help me. GOOD CHOICE!



- Consequence: I will likely get the help I have asked for.



- I throw things around the room, then leave the area. BAD CHOICE!



- Consequence: I will not get help. I could get hurt! If I am at school, I may get in trouble. If I am at work, I may get fired.

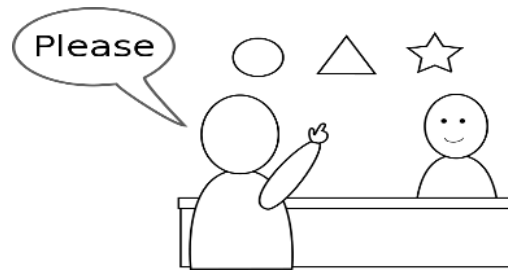


# I ASK FOR HELP APPROPRIATELY.

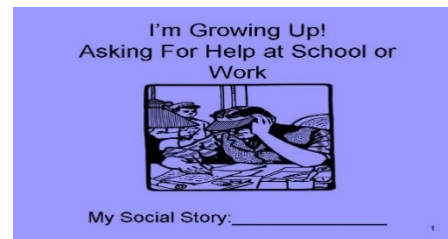
- Sometimes, I need to help at school or work.



- I know that it's more likely that I will get help if I act appropriately.



- I will use this social story to remind me of how I can ask for help appropriately and get it.



I know how to ask for help appropriately!



# SOCIAL NARRATIVES

**Are an evidence-based interventions**

**The research reports that Social Narratives can be used effectively with learners with ASD, autism, PDD-NOS, and Asperger's.**

**These interventions have also proven to be helpful for a diverse range of learners.**

Refer to the work of Carol Gray (1993; 1995)



# SOCIAL NARRATIVES

**Social narratives are designed to be used as a precursor to, or in anticipation of, upcoming events.**

**As such, they are portable and adaptable to nearly any setting. In the evidence base, the majority of the studies were conducted in school settings (including classrooms, therapy rooms, bathrooms, lunchrooms, and hallways).**

Refer to the work of Carol Gray (1993; 1995)



# SOCIAL NARRATIVES

A social narrative *might* include the following parts:

- A brief description of the situation
- What the individual with ASD thinks, feels, does, or says in this situation
- What others may think, feel, do, or say in this situation
- Description of appropriate response or behavior in that situation
- Explanation of why that response or behavior is appropriate
- How the better behavior/appropriate response will benefit the person with ASD

*Louise Southern, M.Ed., BCBA, ASNC*



CAROL GREY,  
SOCIAL NARRATIVES DEVELOPER



# SOCIAL NARRATIVES

Social narratives originated in the behavioral literature and have been used to (1) address behavioral difficulties, (2) teach social skills, and (3) promote effective and appropriate communication.

Refer to the work of Carol Gray (1993; 1995)



# SOCIAL STORIES

**Social Stories(TM)** are individualized stories that describe a social situation, often from the individual with ASD's perspective. **Social Articles(TM)** are similar to Social Stories(TM) except that they are written to include more age-appropriate material for adults. Both can be written in a variety of formats, including pictures with words, text alone, audiotapes, videotapes, PowerPoint, etc.





# SOCIAL STORIES



# SOCIAL NARRATIVE/STORIES FOR CLINICAL USE

Step 1. Identify the Social Situation for the Intervention

Step 2. Define the Target Behavior or Skill

Step 3. Collect Baseline Data

Step 4. Write the Social Narrative

Step 5. Choose the Appropriate Length of Story

Step 6. Include Photos, Picture Icons, or Hand-drawn Pictures

Step 7. Implement the Social Narrative

Step 8. Monitor Learner Progress

Step 9. Review Data and Modify the Narrative if Necessary

Step 10. Address Generalization and Maintenance of Learned Behavior or Skill



# YOU HAVE CHANGED YOUR BRAIN TODAY

## **#BrainFact:**

When you learn something new, the structure of your brain changes.



# PRACTICE THESE SKILLS TO STRENGTHEN WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

## NEUROPLASTICITY

The Ability of the Brain to Reorganize Itself,  
Both in Structure and How It Functions

### HOW THE BRAIN CHANGES



#### NEUROGENESIS

Continuous generation  
of new neurons in  
certain brain regions



#### NEW SYNAPSES

New skills and  
experiences  
create new neural  
connections



#### STRENGTHENED SYNAPSES

Repetition and  
practice strengthens  
neural connections




#### WEAKENED SYNAPSES

Connections in the  
brain that aren't used  
become weak



# SUMMARY

- Our lives are storied
  - We generate our identity through stories
  - People are not problems
  - Problems are to be externalized
  - Problems are to be deconstructed
  - Social Narrative and Social Stories are  
Awesome for Young Adults with Learning  
Differences
- 

FINDING STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY:  
CRAFTING A NEW NARRATIVE

THE END

Thank You



# SOCIAL NARRATIVE RESOURCES

Social Narratives: Overview National Professional Development Center on ASD 10/2010

Gray, C. (1995). Teaching children with autism to “read” social situations. In K. Quill (Ed.), *Teaching Children with Autism: Strategies to Enhance Communication and Socialization* (pp. 219-241). Albany, NY: Delmar.

Gray, C. A., & Garand, J.D. (1993). Social stories: Improving responses of students with autism with accurate social information. *Focus on Autistic Behavior*, 8, 1-10.

Kuoch, H., & Miranda, P. (2003). Social story interventions for young children with autism spectrum disorders. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 18(4), 219-227.

Reynhout, G., & Carter, M. (2007). Social Story efficacy with a child with autism spectrum disorder and moderate intellectual disability. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 22(3), 173-182.

Scattone, D., Tingstrom, D. H., & Wilczynski, S. M. (2006). Increasing appropriate social interactions of children with autism spectrum disorders using social stories. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 21(4), 211-222.

