

GUIDE TO THE BRIDGE UNIT A

SNAPSHOT – UNIT BRIDGE A

Emotional health - and veterans

The underlying agenda for this unit is awareness and self-management of symptoms and internal risk factors which contribute to problems. For veterans, some of the key insights may come from exploring what may have happened during the time of their service.

- One obvious area relates to specific incidents or episodes, specifically traumatic situations, or injuries, including TBI.
- It may be helpful to explore if there was a particular time during their service when their attitudes or behavior really seemed to change. These insights can help clarify areas for further treatment, either here or utilizing VA resources going forward.
- The nature of certain experiences can be too sensitive to be discussed in the correctional setting, but it may be helpful for staff to consider the possible impact of some of the following on certain program participants:

Sensitive issues

- Military training directly and repeatedly emphasized the killing of the enemy
- In certain branches and military specialties, this was glorified.
- Others (the enemy, local civilians) were dehumanized.
- The anticipation of exposure to combat - even prior to deployment - can be terrifying to some.
- Most people who are deployed become aware that they are at direct risk of losing their life (the fear of being maimed, crippled, or killed).
- Many high risk situations include elements of surprise (ambushes, IEDs, incoming rockets and mortars, or random sniper events for example). This can create an undercurrent of anxiety which can extend over months.
- In many deployments no area is totally safe.
- Terrorism has significant emotional consequences on those directly affected.
- Exposure to actual combat or danger.
- The use of patrols to draw fire.
- The wish to prove yourself.

- For some, being drawn to the highest risks. Some people volunteer for extended exposure to combat.
- Guilt feelings for what they had done.
- Guilt feelings for what they didn't do.
- Guilt feelings for not being brave enough (running away, hiding, or just seeking safer assignments).
- Survivor guilt. ● Firing weapons or other military activity with the direct intent to kill or otherwise destroy. Feelings then and later.
- Actually killing someone. Feelings then and later.
- While deployed, drugs or alcohol used as a coping mechanism.
- Dissociation (emotional numbing) continuing long after the deployment or combat experience.
- Lack of confidence in military leadership (small unit or overall). "This guy could get me killed!"
- Lack of clear guidelines or defined outcomes - a purpose for putting your life on the line.
- The wide range of emotions - in the high risk moments - both during and after traumatic events.
- The shutting down of emotions.
- The use of patrols to draw fire.
- The wish to prove yourself.
- For some, being drawn to the highest risks. Some people volunteer for extended exposure to combat.
- Guilt feelings for what they had done.
- Guilt feelings for what they didn't do.
- Guilt feelings for not being brave enough (running away, hiding, or just seeking safer assignments).
- Survivor guilt.

KEY FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources is awareness and self-management of symptoms and internal risk factors which contribute to problems. Key elements include a basic cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach, supplemented by DBT mindfulness activities, distress tolerance skills, and tools designed to assist awareness and motivation for successful symptoms self-management.

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

OUTCOMES

- "Build a life worth living." (Linehan)
- Participant functions successfully in daily living - and has the skills and motivation to maintain positive functioning.
- Envision and pursue positive life goals. Deal successfully with ordinary problems.

- increased awareness of internal - cognitive - risk factors and potential issues in their lives
- increased acceptance that these risk factors may have influenced some of their past issues and choices
- increased acceptance that these risk factors may be influences in some of their current issues and choices
- development of selected options for dealing more effectively with the above - specifically the selected/targeted coping skills
- In practice against internal and external high risk situations presented in scenarios provided, demonstrate repeated successful coping
- demonstrate competence at problem solving skills (versus specific risk factors).
- assessment of personal situational confidence in dealing with these specific areas.
- key outcome is that they have the motivation - and an actual action plan - to handle some of these issues more successfully going forward. "Taking charge of your mind."

ADDITIONAL GOALS

- documentation of increased importance, confidence, and readiness for key changes (as assessed by MI-instruments and behaviors).
- positive social integration and functioning in the facility
- note specific steps they will take, and areas for further development
- preparation for effective community and social reintegration upon release
- effective self-management continue to maintain positive and pro-active physical and mental health behaviors going forward
- Through completion of behaviorally-stated objectives, demonstrate effective implementation and action plans for successful integration of key strengths and protective factors targeted by program.

WORKBOOKS IN THIS UNIT (they appear in multiple parts)

CBT1	Introduction to Functional Thinking	This program element introduces basic CBT concepts. It also introduces feelings, scaling tools, and several MI tools.
Pre4	How important is it to you?	Identifies critical goals, high risk choices, and increases importance of making pro-social choices. Valuable MI resource for nearly all programs. <i>Substance abuse (AODA) option available - Pre4aoda.</i>
FD4	Coping with uncomfortable feelings	Addresses typical denial issues in the recovery process. Review of triggers and feelings. <i>Primarily for adult programs - substance abuse and basic mental health. Please also see resource CBT6 as an alternative to this workbook.</i>
CBT4	Symptoms and Early Warning Signs	This element helps participants identify the specific symptoms and early warning signs of selected feelings and problem areas in their own lives. Valuable in substance abuse, behavioral health, and most treatment and rehabilitation program settings.

SKILLS HOMEWORK

This unit teaches a number of distress tolerance skills, including self-soothing and distraction skills (DBT). As each skill is introduced, participants are then asked to practice the skill as homework for the

next class. A SKILLS HOMEWORK document is provided to hand out to participants.

In the next class, take a few minutes to review with the participants how they answered any questions on the SKILLS HOMEWORK document, how the practice of the skill went, and what they thought about the skill.

NOTE: Participants may have encountered some of these skills before in other units. This is deliberate— the key to skill mastery is constant practice.

DISCUSSION ELEMENTS

In this lesson there are also several targeted, short elements (FFT, Worksheets) meant to promote a robust discussion among the participants. It is recommended that you proceed as follows:

1. Review the goals and objectives for the Unit (see below). It is important to keep the discussion focused on these outcomes.
2. Review each element before starting the group and note the ones that best fit the participants in your particular group. Familiarity with the materials is essential to your task of guiding the discussion and keeping it focused.
3. Begin with the elements that best fit your group in case you don't have time to get to every element in the lesson.
4. It is critical that you ensure the discussion is on target for the goals and objectives for this Unit. If a discussion sparked by one of the elements is being particularly productive, you may wish to allow the discussion to proceed even if it means not getting to every single element in the lesson. However, it is critical that you keep the group on track and not allow the discussion to veer too far away from the targeted goals and objectives.
5. Be careful not to interject your own thoughts and experiences into the discussions. The idea is to get the participants talking. Your role is to guide the discussion, and keep it focused on the goals and objectives of the Unit.

A NOTE ON TIMING

- Total class time for each lesson is 60 minutes.
- Core Workbook elements should typically take 40-45 minutes.
- A Moment For Your Mind elements typically take 5-10 minutes.
- Some other elements in the TOC include a number indicating the length of time estimated to complete the task.
- Activities such as discussion elements (for example, Situations) should take approx. 10 minutes or so. However, if the discussion is proving fruitful and you have the time, please allow the discussion to continue.

KEY FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources is awareness and self-management of symptoms and internal risk factors which contribute to problems. Key elements include a basic cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach, supplemented by DBT mindfulness activities, coping and distress tolerance skills, and tools designed to assist awareness and motivation for successful symptoms self-management.

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

Lesson	intro element	core elements	
Bridge A1	moment/mind	CBT1.1 Functional Thinking, part 1	MI: expectations Worksheet - The last time
Bridge A2	moment/mind	CBT1.2 Functional Thinking, part 2	MI: Hypothetical Look Over The Fence Assessing your symptoms
Bridge A3	moment/mind	CBT1.3 Functional Thinking, part 3	MH FFT deep sadness Skill: selfsoothe #1 & homework
Bridge A4	moment/mind	CBT1.4 Functional Thinking, part 4 Homework review	Skill: selfsoothe #2 & homework Worksheet: what's really important
Bridge A5	moment/mind	Pre4s-SLMH, How important is it to you? Homework review	Skill: selfsoothe #3 & homework
Bridge A6	moment/mind	FD4 Coping with uncomfortable feelings 4.1 Homework review	Skill: distraction#1 & homework MH FFT everybody feels sad or down
Bridge A7	moment/mind	FD Coping with uncomfortable feelings 4.2 Homework review	Skill: distraction#2 & homework
Bridge A8	moment/mind	CBT4.1 Functional Thinking: Symptoms and Early Warning Signs part 1 Homework review	Skill: distraction#3 & homework MH FFT cutting
Bridge A9	moment/mind	CBT4.2 Functional Thinking: Symptoms and Early Warning Signs, part 2 Homework review	Skill: review selfsoothing and distraction Worksheet - Skills Confidence Self Efficacy Assessment
Bridge A10	moment/mind	CBT4.3 Functional Thinking: Symptoms and Early Warning Signs, part 3	Worksheet - Feelings and symptoms issues - and action plan 15

Checkpoint after Unit	Staff may assess participation, motivation, understanding, insight. Evaluate situational confidence and summary documentation noted above. Assess action plan for self-care and aftercare.
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GUIDE TO THE BRIDGE UNIT B

SNAPSHOT – BRIDGE UNIT B

The primary focus of these resources is awareness and self-management of triggers and external risk factors which contribute to problems. There is a specific emphasis on anxiety, depression, and anger/aggression, as well as a basic cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach, supplemented by DBT mindfulness activities, coping and distress tolerance self-management skills, and tools designed to assist awareness and motivation for successful symptoms self-management.

- After leaving the service, many veterans found dysfunctional ways of coping. Like many coping mechanisms, they addressed a short-term need (such as uncomfortable emotions), but created greater problems going forward.

Some of these behaviors include:

- use or abuse of alcohol or other drugs
 - isolation or social withdrawal
 - emotional numbing (dissociation)
 - minimization of emotional or behavioral issues
 - suppression of key feelings (anger, grief, guilt, anxiety, depression ,etc.)
 - aggressive behavior (including acting out on feelings of anger)
- Many vets have developed behavioral health issues, some of which rise to the level of “disorders.” It’s important to know that the more mental health diagnoses (co-occurring disorders) the greater the likelihood of violence.

FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources is awareness and self-management of triggers and external risk factors which contribute to problems. There is a specific emphasis on anxiety, depression, and anger/aggression, as well as a basic cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach, supplemented by DBT mindfulness activities, self-management skills, and tools designed to assist awareness and motivation for successful symptoms self-management.

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

OUTCOMES

- “Build a life worth living.” (Linehan)
- Participant functions successfully in daily living - and has the skills and motivation to maintain positive functioning.
- Envision and pursue positive life goals. Deal successfully with ordinary problems.

Improved general functioning through implementation of long term personal mental health and self-care plan.

- increased awareness of external risk factors and triggers - and potential issues in their lives
- increased acceptance that these risk factors may be influences in some of their past issues and choices
- increased acceptance that these risk factors may be influences in some of their current issues and choices
- development of selected options for dealing more effectively with the above - specifically the selected/targeted coping skills
- In practice against internal and external high risk situations presented in scenarios provided, demonstrate repeated successful coping.
- demonstrate competence at problem solving skills (versus specific risk factors).
- assessment of personal situational confidence in dealing with these specific areas.
- key outcome is that they have the motivation - and an actual action plan - to handle some of these issues more successfully going forward. “Taking charge of your mind.”

ADDITIONAL GOALS

- documentation of increased importance, confidence, and readiness for key changes (as assessed by MI-instruments and behaviors)
- positive social integration and functioning in the facility
- note specific health-related steps they will take, and areas for further development
- preparation for effective community and social reintegration upon release
- effective self-management continue to maintain positive and pro-active physical and mental health behaviors upon return to the community
- Through completion of behaviorally-stated objectives, demonstrate effective implementation and action plans for successful integration of key strengths and protective factors targeted by program.

WORKBOOKS IN THIS UNIT (they appear in multiple parts)

CBT5	Triggers	This critical CBT element helps participants identify the specific triggers of selected feelings and problem areas.
F13	What does anger do to you?	A comprehensive approach for individual participants to identify and begin to manage their symptoms and triggers for anger. It provides a range of tools and scales of self-assessment of symptoms (frequency, intensity, duration, current issues, consequences for poor self-management, and decisional balance tool for learning to manage this feeling better). Internal and external triggers for anger are identified and self-management is assessed through a range of rulers and scales. This resource may serve as a valuable building block for learning and mastering appropriate coping skills.
F14	What does anxiety do to you?	This resource provides a comprehensive approach for individual participants to identify and begin to manage their symptoms and triggers for anxiety. Similar in form and function to workbooks F13 and F15, it provides a range of tools and scales for self-assessment, and self-management of symptoms and triggers for anxiety.
F15	What does depression do to you?	This resource provides a comprehensive approach for individual participants to identify and begin to manage their symptoms and triggers for depression. Similar in form and function to workbooks F13 and F14, it provides a range of tools and scales for self-assessment, and self-management of symptoms and triggers for depression.

SKILLS HOMEWORK

This unit teaches a number of distress tolerance skills, including deep breathing, muscle relaxation, creative visualization, and an impulse control skill (thought stopping). As each skill is introduced, participants are then asked to practice the skill as homework for the next class. A SKILLS HOMEWORK document is provided to hand out to participants.

In the next class, take a few minutes to review with the participants how they answered any questions on the SKILLS HOMEWORK document, how the practice of the skill went, and what they thought about the skill.

NOTE: Participants may have encountered some of these skills before in other units. This is deliberate— the key to skill mastery is constant practice.

DISCUSSION ELEMENTS

In this lesson there are also number of targeted, short elements meant to promote a robust discussion among the participants. It is recommended that you proceed as follows:

1. Review the goals and objectives for the Unit (see below). It is important to keep the discussion focused on these outcomes.
2. Review each element before starting the group and note the ones that best fit the participants in your particular group. Familiarity with the materials is essential to your task of guiding the discussion and keeping it focused.

3. Begin with the elements that best fit your group in case you don't have time to get to every element in the lesson.

4. It is critical that you ensure the discussion is on target for the goals and objectives for this Unit. If a discussion sparked by one of the elements is being particularly productive, you may wish to allow the discussion to proceed even if it means not getting to every single element in the lesson. However, it is critical that you keep the group on track and not allow the discussion to veer too far away from the targeted goals and objectives.

5. Be careful not to interject your own thoughts and experiences into the discussions. The idea is to get the participants talking. Your role is to guide the discussion, and keep it focused on the goals and objectives of the Unit.

A NOTE ON TIMING

- Total class time for each lesson is 60 minutes.
- Core Workbook elements should typically take 40-45 minutes.
- A Moment For Your Mind elements typically take 5-10 minutes.
- Some other elements in the TOC include a number indicating the length of time estimated to complete the task.
- Activities such as discussion elements (for example, Situations) should take approx. 10 minutes or so. However, if the discussion is proving fruitful and you have the time, please allow the discussion to continue.

NOTE: Unit TOC follows on the next page

KEY FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources is awareness and self-management of triggers and external risk factors which contribute to problems. There is a specific emphasis on anxiety, depression, and anger/aggression, as well as a basic cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach, supplemented by DBT mindfulness activities, coping and distress tolerance self-management skills, and tools designed to assist awareness and motivation for successful symptoms self-management .

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

Lesson	intro element		
Bridge B1	moment/ mind	Functional Thinking CBT5.1	FFT-V- Intro to Bridge B.pdf Worksheet: - one thing
Bridge B2	moment/ mind	Functional Thinking CBT5.2, 5.3	Worksheet -Triggers importance/ confidence Worksheet - What happened
Bridge B3	moment/ mind 10	Becoming less sensitive to your triggers 15	Skill: intro thought stopping & homework 25-30 Worksheet- Assessing your symptoms (frequency, intensity and duration activity) 15
Bridge B4	moment/ mind	F13.1 What does anger do to you?, part 1 Homework review	Worksheet: MI importance/confidence assessment Deep breathing skill & homework
Bridge B5	moment/ mind	F13.2, What does anger do to you?, part 2 Homework review	Worksheet: Triggers Summary Activity Muscle relaxation skill & homework Worksheet: Using the anger scale
Bridge B6	moment/ mind	F14.1, What does anxiety do to you? , part 1 Homework review	Combination skill & homework
Bridge B7	moment/ mind	F14.2,What does anxiety do to you? , part 2 Homework review	Worksheet: External risk factors review Worksheet: Using the anxiety scale
Bridge B8	moment/ mind	F15.1, What does depression do to you? , part 1	Creative visualization skill & homework Worksheet: Assessing your symptoms (FID)
Bridge B9	moment/ mind	F15.2, What does depression do to you? , part 2 Homework review	Worksheet: 6-step triggers activity Worksheet: Using the depression scale Worksheet: Using skills to ameliorate symptoms
Bridge B10	moment/ mind	External risk factors - (SCQ)	Skills review Worksheet: acting out Worksheet: Risk Factors/Protective Factors Summary

Checkpoint after Unit	Assess participation, motivation, understanding, insight. Evaluate situational confidence and summary documentation noted above. Assess action plan for self-care and aftercare.
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GUIDE TO THE BRIDGE UNIT C

SNAPSHOT – BRIDGE UNIT C

The key elements of this unit focus on emotional balance, especially the effective management of stressors or triggers.

Anxiety disorders, PTS, and even PTSD are more likely among vets. The use or abuse of substances can be an independent issue - or linked to PTS/PTSD/Anxiety, or other mental issues, such as depression, grief/loss, guilt, shame, etc..

This unit then links these issues to a comprehensive self-improvement plan. See *Bridge lesson C9 and C10 worksheets*.

A final element links these areas to the impact - and strengths - of their military experience.

KEY FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources assessing and establishing balance - emotional stability and the capability to respond in appropriate ways to events. There is major emphasis on dealing with specific feelings and triggers. The final elements address protective factors, resilience and building personal confidence.

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

OUTCOMES

- “Build a life worth living.” (Linehan)
- Participant functions successfully in daily living - and has the skills and motivation to maintain positive functioning.
- Envision and pursue positive life goals. Deal successfully with ordinary problems.
- increased awareness of emotional balance and stress in their lives - and in this specific living situation
- increased acceptance that these issues may have been negative influences in some of their past issues and choices
- increased acceptance that these stress and difficult triggers and symptoms may influence some of their current choices
- development of selected options for dealing more effectively with the above - specifically the selected/targeted coping and stress management skills

- In practice against internal and external high risk situations presented in scenarios provided, demonstrate repeated successful coping
- demonstrate competence at problem solving skills (versus specific risk factors).
- assessment of personal situational confidence in dealing with these specific areas.
- key outcome is that they have the motivation - and an actual action plan - to handle some of these issues more successfully going forward. “Taking charge of your mind.”

ADDITIONAL GOALS

- documentation of increased importance, confidence, and readiness for key changes (as assessed by MI-instruments and behaviors).
- positive social integration and functioning in the facility
- preparation for effective community and social reintegration upon release
- effective self-management continue to maintain positive and pro-active physical and mental health behaviors upon return to the community.
- Through completion of behaviorally-stated objectives, demonstrate effective implementation and action plans for successful integration of key strengths and protective factors targeted by program.

WORKBOOKS IN THIS UNIT (they appear in multiple parts)

SP3	Learning how to keep life in balance	Valuable workbook for behavioral health and substance abuse programs. Guides clients to: (1) evaluate cues that they are out of balance; (2) develop a balance of activities and friendships; (3) identify specific ways to keep today in balance; (4) change the balance from dependence to independence.
CS9	Managing your stress	Basic stress management workbook, including self-examination, symptoms awareness, identification of triggers, underlying stressors and lifestyle issues, evaluation of past coping, and introduction to several key coping skills.

SKILLS HOMEWORK

This unit teaches a number of coping skills. As each skill is introduced, participants are then asked to practice the skill as homework for the next class. A SKILLS HOMEWORK document is provided to hand out to participants.

In the next class, take a few minutes to review with the participants how they answered any questions on the SKILLS HOMEWORK document, how the practice of the skill went, and what they thought about the skill.

NOTE: Participants may have encountered some of these skills before in other units. This is deliberate— the key to skill mastery is constant practice.

DISCUSSION ELEMENTS

In this lesson there are also number of targeted, short elements (Worksheets, Moment For Your Mind, Situations, etc.) meant to promote a robust discussion among the participants. It is recommended that you proceed as follows:

1. Review the goals and objectives for the Unit (see below). It is important to keep the discussion focused on these outcomes.
2. Review each element before starting the group and note the ones that best fit the participants in your particular group. Familiarity with the materials is essential to your task of guiding the discussion and keeping it focused.
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4. It is critical that you ensure the discussion is on target for the goals and objectives for this Unit. If a discussion sparked by one of the elements is being particularly productive, you may wish to allow the discussion to proceed even if it means not getting to every single element in the lesson. However, it is critical that you keep the group on track and not allow the discussion to veer too far away from the targeted goals and objectives.
5. Be careful not to interject your own thoughts and experiences into the discussions. The idea is to get the participants talking. Your role is to guide the discussion, and keep it focused on the goals and objectives of the Unit.

A NOTE ON TIMING

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- Core Workbook elements should typically take 40-45 minutes.
- A Moment For Your Mind elements typically take 5-10 minutes.
- Some other elements in the TOC include a number indicating the length of time estimated to complete the task.
- Activities such as discussion elements should take approx. 10 minutes or so. However, if the discussion is proving fruitful and you have the time, please allow the discussion to continue.

NOTE: Unit TOC follows on the next page

KEY FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

The primary focus of these resources assessing and establishing balance - emotional stability and the capability to respond in appropriate ways to events. There is major emphasis on dealing with specific feelings and triggers. Key lesson elements include mindfulness activities, and critical coping and distress tolerance skills. The final elements address protective factors, resilience and building personal confidence.

- This unit teaches specific self-management skills.
- This unit provides many opportunities for problem solving.
- This unit includes multiple Motivational Interviewing (MI) tools.

Lesson	intro element	core element	other elements
Bridge C1	moment/mind	SP3.1 Learning how to keep life in balance, part 1	FFT Out of balance TT10 How am I doing today
Bridge C2	moment/mind	SP3.2, Learning how to keep life in balance, part 2	MH FFT Less and less Worksheet - To review the situation that brought you here MI: Change talk tool
Bridge C3	moment/mind	SP3.3, Learning how to keep life in balance, part 3	MH FFT designated worrier Assessing your symptoms (FID)
Bridge C4	moment/mind	SP3.4, Learning how to keep life in balance, part 4	Worksheet - Turning points SL 20
Bridge C5	moment/mind 5	SP3.5, Learning how to keep life in balance, part 5 Homework review	FFT Where do you stand today? MH FFT new meds Anchoring skill
Bridge C6	moment/mind	CS9.1, Managing your stress, part 1 Homework review	4-7-8 skill Worksheet - What really matters to you
Bridge C7	moment/mind	CS9.2, Managing your stress, part 2 Homework review	Worksheet - Assessing your symptoms Worksheet - Stressors and triggers lead to discomfort
Bridge C8	moment/mind	CS9.3, Managing your stress, part 3 Homework review	Deep breathing skill
Bridge C9	moment/mind	CS9.4, Managing your stress, part 5 Homework review	Combined relaxation skills Worksheet - What are my options
Bridge C10	moment/mind	CS9.5 - incl problems Homework review	Confidence checklist (balance) - SCQ Worksheet - Key questions for vets
Checkpoint after Unit		Assess participation, motivation, understanding, insight. Evaluate situational confidence (SCQ) and summary documentation noted above. Assess action plan for self-care and aftercare.	