

SUPPORTIVE PARENTING FOR ANXIOUS CHILDHOOD EMOTIONS (SPACE)

2024



Workbook

Parents of children ages 5-18

OVERVIEW

I. Introduction

- Introduction to the SPACE approach
- Key principles
- Benefits

II. Understanding Childhood Anxiety

- Defining childhood anxiety
- Recognizing symptoms and behaviors
- Understanding the impact of anxiety on children
- Understanding the brain

III. Managing Childhood Anxiety

- Techniques for managing childhood anxiety, including exposure, relaxation, and cognitive restructuring
- Creating an exposure hierarchy and facing fears gradually
- Understanding the role of self-care and coping skills in managing anxiety

IV. Implementing the SPACE Approach

- Practical tips for implementing the SPACE approach at home
- Steps 1-5 (see page 3 of workbook)

V. Key Take Aways

- See page 4

THE *PROCESS*

01

STEP ONE

IDENTIFY A SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATION TO TARGET. (SEE PAGE 5)

02

STEP TWO

COMMUNICATE AHEAD OF TIME TO YOUR CHILD BEFORE STOPPING THE ACCOMODATION

03

STEP THREE

DO NOT ENGAGE IN FIGHTING OR ARGUMENTS. FOCUS ON CHILD'S STRENGTH TO GET THROUGH THE OCD/ANXIETY

04

STEP FOUR

STAY CONSISTENT. IF YOU ARE NOT CONSISTENT YOUR CHILD WILL LIKELY CONTINUE TO PUSH YOU TO ACCOMMODATE. FOCUS ON WHAT IS IN YOUR CONTROL.

05

STEP FIVE

SLOWLY CONTINUE TO REDUCE OTHER ACCOMODATIONS OVERTIME.

KEY TAKE AWAYS

ACCOMODATIONS MAKE ANXIETY WORSE

Making accommodations for your child will make anxiety and OCD worse overtime because your child's brain does not learn they can handle the things they fear.



BE SPECIFIC

Start with 1 specific accomodation to target. Communicate clearly with your child before implementing.



FOCUS ON STRENGTHS

Focus on your child's strength when practicing, even when they experience distress. ("I know this is hard for you and I know you have the strength to get through it")



BE CONSISTENT & FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

Do what you can to be consistent. You cannot control your child's behavior, but you can control your response to their behavior and your own behavior.



CREATE YOUR GOAL

USE THIS FORM TO MAP OUT THE ACCOMMODATION YOU WILL REDUCE (2
EXAMPLES BELOW)

Target Accommodation: *Driving my daughter to school because she is afraid to take the bus*
Providing reassurance several times per day that my son is not a bad person (he has intrusive thoughts due to OCD)

WHAT?

I will no longer drive my daughter to school
I will no longer provide reassurance when my son's seeks it. I know this will help him.

WHEN?

In the mornings before school
I will no longer offer reassurance at any time.

WHO?

My husband and I agree we will not drive her
I will not be responding to my son's request for reassurance.

HOW AND HOW MUCH?

Every school day
Every day - I will tell him "I love you and know you can get through this without my reassurance"

WHAT WILL I DO INSTEAD

I will tell my daughter "I know it is hard and I know you are strong and can get through this."
I will tell him I am not able to provide reassurance and I know that is very hard for him, and I love him very much and believe he has the strength to handle it.

ADAPTED FROM "BREAKING FREE OF CHILD ANXIETY AND OCD" BY ELI R. LEBOWITZ

CREATE YOUR GOAL

USE THIS FORM TO MAP OUT THE ACCOMODATION YOU WILL REDUCE

Target Accommodation:

WHAT?



WHEN?



WHO?



HOW AND HOW MUCH?



WHAT WILL I DO INSTEAD

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IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. This training is informative only. Please seek out a licensed therapist if you would like to set a goal specific to your situation. This training provides general examples of accommodations and is not a substitute for therapy or counseling.

2. You Did Not Cause Your Child's Anxiety

- Anxiety is caused by a number of factors including genetics, experiences, and the general demeanor of your child. Parenting can influence anxiety but making accommodations generally does not cause it.

3. You do not have to feel guilty for providing accommodations for your child

- Accommodations are made from a place of love and desire to support.
- Once you know more after doing this training, you can take what you learn to make changes.

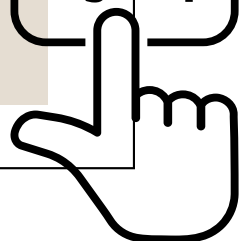
4. Accommodation changes should be child and age specific. Not all examples given are appropriate for every age. Please speak with a licensed therapist if you are unsure if the accommodations you would like to eliminate is appropriate for your child.



Need more support?
Reach out today!

www.BrainBodyWellnessAZ.com/Space

Sign Up



OTHER RESOURCES

1. Book: "Breaking Free of Child Anxiety and OCD" by Eli Lebowitz

2. Kennedy, R. (2013). The SPACE program: a unique approach to treating childhood anxiety disorders. The National Psychologist, 22(4), 9.

3. Cheron, D. M., Ehrenreich-May, J., & Lyon, A. R. (2018). The SPACE program: a clinical case example of a stepped-care intervention for childhood anxiety disorders. Evidence-Based Practice in Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 3(2), 71-85.