**Guide to Using IRT Handouts in COVID 19 Telephone and Video Sessions**

This document provides a guide to using specific IRT handouts as tools to help you address the uncertainty, stress, symptoms, or boredom in IRT sessions with individuals during the COVID 19 outbreak. The descriptions below include recommendations on how the IRT handout could help address a current need and suggested strategies included in the handout.

Guide to Relaxed Breathing-A one-page handout with simple steps to teach a strategy to reduce distress and cope with stress. Remember that IRT clinicians can demonstrate and practice this strategy on the phone or on video with the individual.

Brief Strengths Test-Completing this assessment together is a helpful way to focus on or revisit character strengths with an individual. It can be helpful to review a person’s top 5 strengths and make a plan to use one or more strengths to cope during this time.

IRT Goal Planning Sheet-Even though normal routines may have changed, it can be comforting for individuals to work towards a meaningful goal. Use the IRT goal planning sheet as needed to update a person’s goal and develop a short-term goal that an individual could be working on at home during this time.

Coping with Stress-This handout includes information about the common sources of stress such as daily life hassles and life events that can lead to increases in stress. It also includes strategies to recognize signs of stress and learn and practice coping strategies for stress. There are 3 relaxation scripts in the handouts: Relaxed Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, and Imagining a Peaceful Scene. At the end of the handout, the Coping with Stress Plan can be helpful to put all of the information together in a plan for the person to use if they are struggling with stress.

Relapse Prevention Plan-IRT clinicians can complete a Relapse Prevention Plan with an individual at any time there could be a risk for a relapse or symptoms returning. Some helpful updates to the plan include changing the name of the plan to a Just in Case Plan, A What If Plan, or a Wellness Plan and adding in a plan to address the common causes of relapse (stopping medication, using substances, and stress).

Module 6 & 14 Developing Resiliency-A common situation that may come up for many individuals is boredom or having nothing to do. The Developing Resiliency Modules include activities that are designed to help a person experience an upward spiral of positive emotions. These activities are short, fun, and easy to do. Reviewing and practicing an activity with a person in session and making a plan to practice the activity over a week can be helpful tool to combat boredom or mild feelings of depression.

5 Steps of Cognitive Restructuring-This tool can be very helpful to individuals who are distressed by feelings of anxiety, worrisome thoughts, depression, or other negative feelings. If the individual has already learned the skill then be sure to review it with them using a current situation. If the person is new to the skill, take some time to teach the cognitive triangle and common styles of thinking before completing the worksheet together.

Action Plan-This handout is a general guide to use for problem solving. This handout can be helpful to review with an individual after completing the 5 steps of cognitive restructuring or any time that the individual is trying to make a decision about something. Going through the steps of problem solving allows a person to tackle one problem at a time in a structured way.

Module 10-Coping with Symptoms-This module includes handouts with suggestions for coping strategies associated with the following symptoms: depression, anxiety, hallucinations, low energy, sleep problems, and worrisome thoughts. If someone is feeling distressed, it can be helpful to teach and practice a coping strategy to help. There are also assessments included to identify the distressing symptom if the person is having difficulty doing that.

Substance Use-Dealing with Boredom-This handout includes some helpful suggestions for how an individual can cope with boredom if they want to cut down or stop using substances. The suggestions for coping with boredom may also be helpful for individuals experiencing boredom or nothing to do.