

UTALK: Overview of Intervention

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Focus of UTalk

- UTalk is based on the concept that feeling socially anxious or depressed occurs in an interpersonal context, often with peers
- Focus of the intervention is on:
 - Improving current relationships
 - Learning communication skills that can be applied to current and future relationships

Key Components of UTalk

- Psychoeducation
 - Education about social anxiety and depression
 - Education about friendships and peer victimization
 - Linking feelings and interactions
- Interpersonal skill-building
 - Teaching communication skills
 - Practice skills via games, role-plays, and discussion
- Maintaining a positive, supportive, respectful environment

Format and Structure

(could be adapted for individual needs)

- Length of Sessions
 - 45 minutes for individual; 90 minute for group
- Timing of sessions
 - During school or after school
- Group leaders
 - Typically, 2 per group
 - Training in mental health
- Size of groups
 - 5 to 8 is ideal
- Other
 - Food/snacks and positive atmosphere

Sample Group Rules

- Attend all sessions
- Let leaders know if you must miss a group or have a schedule change. This is important because
 - We don't want you to be behind and miss information
 - We all worry or wonder how you are
- Keep confidential what goes on in the group
 - Do not using others' names when describing those outside the group
- No bullying or harassing others
- Listen with respect (no "eye rolling," when others speak)

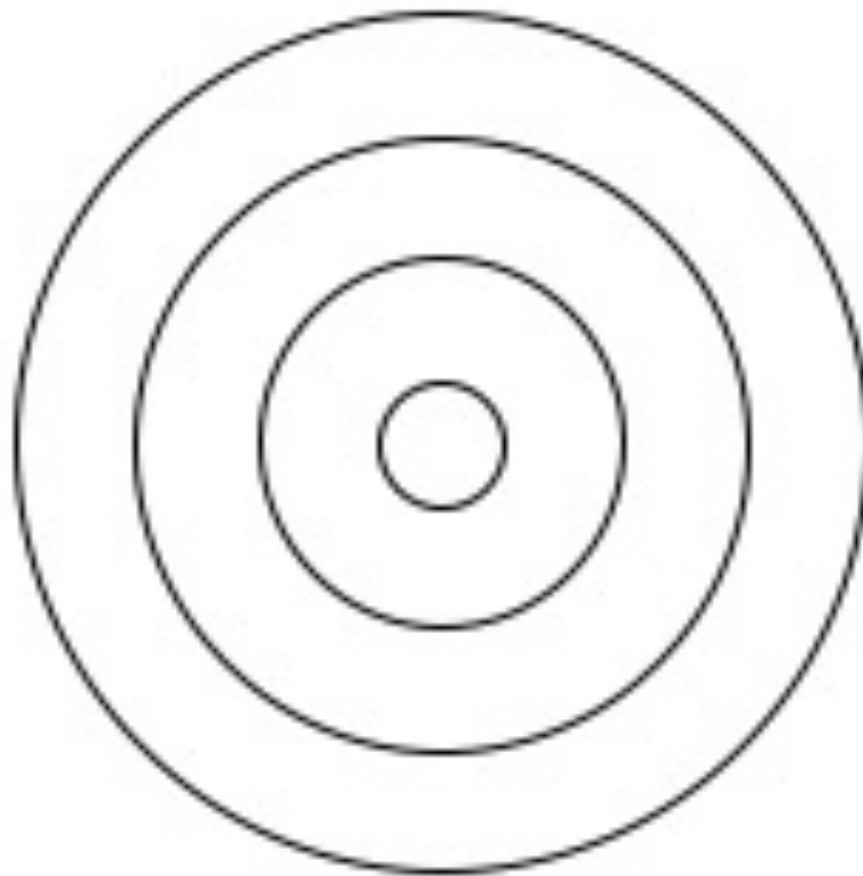
UTalk: Session by Session

Individual: 1 – 2	<i>Getting to Know You!</i> Concept of prevention; learn about interpersonal relationships
Group: 1	<i>Getting to Know Each Other!</i> Rapport building; psychoeducation on anxiety, depression, friendships; review group rules
2	<i>How You Say It Matters</i> How tone and behavior influences what you communicate
3	<i>Ways to Communicate!</i> Introduce Communication Skills and how to use them
4 - 6	<i>Practice Makes Perfect</i> Using the communication skills in typical scenarios and real life!
7	<i>I Get By With a Little Help From My Friends</i> Psychoeducation on friendships; discussion
8	<i>Tweet This! No Bullying Allowed!!</i> Psychoeducation on peer and cyber-victimization
9 - 10	<i>Keep Calm and Carry On!</i> Review and skill maintenance; graduation
Individual: 3	"Touch base" session mid-group to see how teen is doing

Individual Sessions

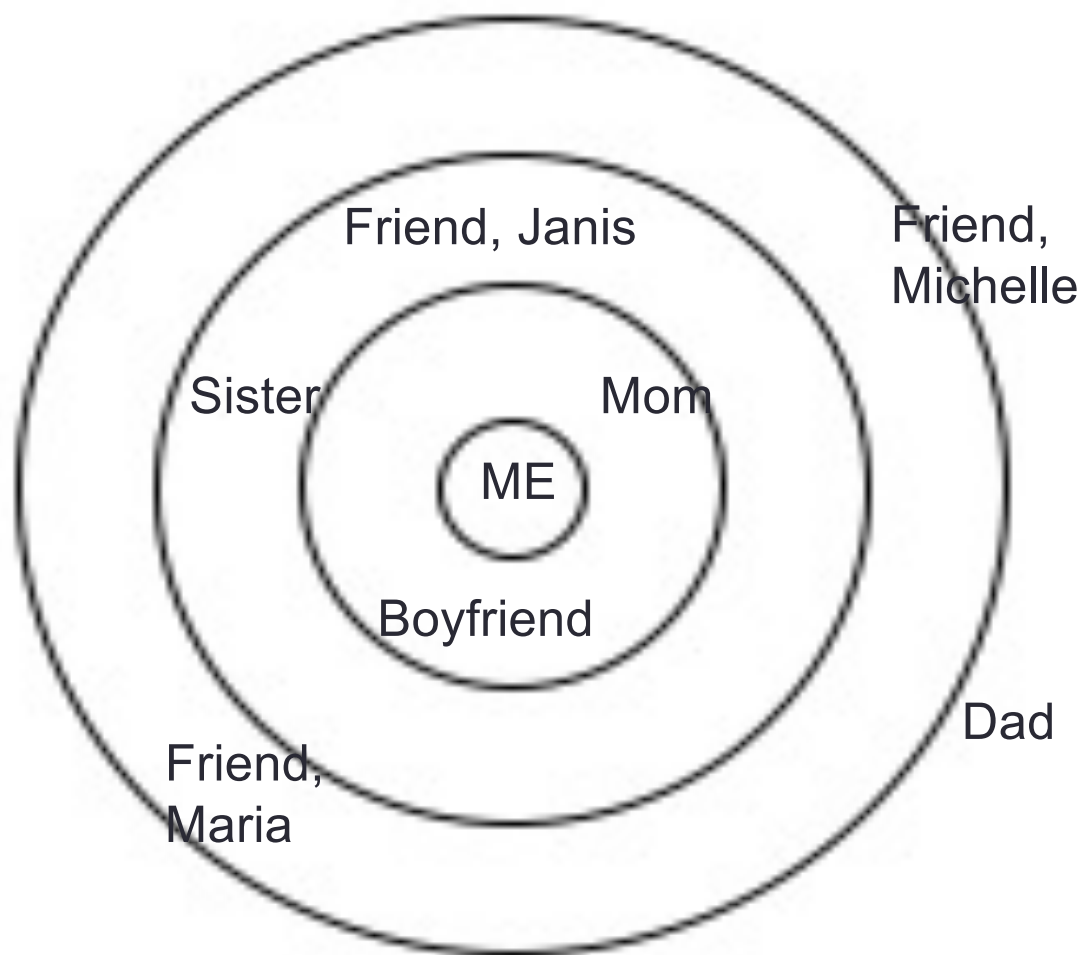
- Sessions 1 - 2: ***Getting to Know You!***
 - Establish rapport
 - Review concept of “prevention”
 - **Complete Closeness Circle**
 - **Identify individual goals**
 - Emphasize fun and positive aspects of group
 - Review
 - School policies on bullying and available resources
 - Group rules and importance of regular attendance

Closeness Circle



Closeness Circle

See Handout for Questions



Questions for the Closeness Circle

- What do you do together?
- How do you get along with _____?
- How do you feel when you are with that person?
- What do you like about _____?
- What don't you like about _____?
- Have you ever told _____ how you feel?
- If no, what stops you?
- Are there things that you don't agree on? What are they?
- When you have an argument with _____ how does it get resolved?
- Have you ever felt picked on by _____?
- Do you ever feel left out or excluded by _____? How so?
- Have you ever been embarrassed by _____? If so, how?
- Do you communicate with ____ via texting, Facebook, or some other source? If so, how?
- Do you share photos on Instagram or by texting?
- What does _____ do to support you?

Case Vignette 1 – Maria (15 yrs)

Maria is a 15-year-old sophomore in HS. She has several friends but is very upset that her best friend shared her “secrets” with others and posted unflattering photos of her online (which she finds embarrassing). She also reports arguing with her best friend. Maria frequently feels depressed about this situation and has trouble sleeping and concentrating. She feels self-conscious about her appearance, and dislikes speaking or eating in front of others.

- **Assessment**
 - Peer Relations (High on Reputational PV)
 - Depressive Symptoms (High on CES-D; score = 20)
 - Social Anxiety (Moderately high on SAS-A; score = 48)
- **UTalk Goal:**
 - Enhance conflict resolution skills (resolve conflict with best friend)

SAS-A = Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents;
CES-D = Center for Epidemiological Studies - Depression

Case Vignette 2 – Brian (14 yrs)

Brian is 14 years old and in the 9th grade. He feels left out by his friends (confirmed on Facebook) since making the transition to high school. He is also unsure about how to connect with others and make new friends. As a result, he occasionally “feels down” and has some trouble sleeping and concentrating in school. He worries a lot whether peers will like him and avoids social situations as a result. He reports difficulties working in groups, starting conversations, and meeting new people.

- Assessment
 - Peer Relations (High on Relational PV)
 - Social Fears and Anxiety: High score (> 50) on SAS-A (all subscales)
 - Mild Depressive Symptoms (CES-D > 11)
- UTalk Goals:
 - Increase social contacts and “fitting in”
 - Improve communication skills

SAS-A = Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents;

CES-D = Center for Epidemiological Studies - Depression

Group Sessions:

Initial Phase (Sessions 1 - 3)

- Session 1 – Getting to Know Each Other

- ***Complete weekly ratings of feelings of social anxiety/depression***

- Introductions and ice breakers
- Establish group rules
- Establish importance of confidentiality
- Discuss friendships
- Review concept of “peer challenges”
- Open-ended discussion of adolescent issues

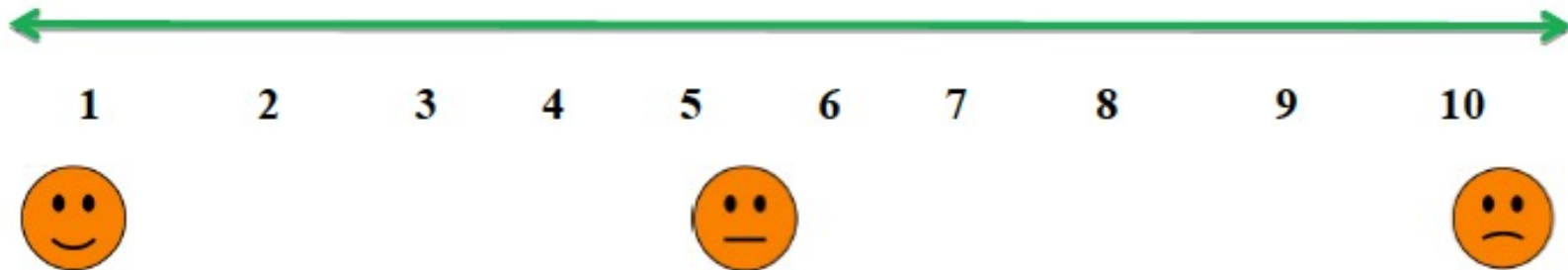
Sample Rating Scales: Depression (see handouts)

During the past week...

1. Have you felt sad a lot?	Yes	No	Sometimes
2. Have you felt hopeless that things will never get better?	Yes	No	Sometimes
3. Have you gotten mad easily, sometimes over little things?	Yes	No	Sometimes
4. Has it been difficult to have fun doing things you used to enjoy?	Yes	No	Sometimes
5. Have you felt guilty about little things that may not be your fault?	Yes	No	Sometimes
6. Have you felt more or less hungry than you used to?	Yes	No	Sometimes
7. Have you had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep?	Yes	No	Sometimes
8. Have you taken lots of naps or felt like sleeping all the time?	Yes	No	Sometimes
9. Have you had less energy than you used to?	Yes	No	Sometimes
10. Have you felt bad about yourself?	Yes	No	Sometimes
11. Has it been difficult to pay attention in school?	Yes	No	Sometimes
12. Has it been hard to make decisions?	Yes	No	Sometimes
13. Have you had headaches or stomachaches a lot?	Yes	No	Sometimes
14. Have you wished you weren't born or you could just disappear?	Yes	No	Sometimes
15. Have you thought about hurting yourself?	Yes	No	Sometimes

Sample Rating Scales: Depression

USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE OF 1-10 TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW.
1 IS THE BEST YOU'VE EVER FELT AND 10 IS THE MOST DEPRESSED YOU'VE EVER FELT.



RATE YOUR CURRENT MOOD: _____

RATE YOUR BEST (across the past week): _____ WHY WAS IT YOUR BEST MOOD? _____

WHAT INTERPERSONAL EVENT WAS RELATED TO YOUR BEST MOOD: _____

RATE YOUR WORST (across the past week): _____ WHY WAS IT YOUR WORST MOOD? _____

WHAT INTERPERSONAL EVENT WAS RELATED TO YOUR WORST MOOD: _____

Group Sessions:

Initial Phase (Sessions 1 - 3)

- Session 2 – How You Say It Matters
 - *Repeat weekly ratings; linking interactions with feelings*
 - Show how behavior and voice communicate feelings
 - Roleplays
 - Practice ways of saying things
 - Use scenarios to demonstrate importance of communication

“How you say it matters” - Examples

Say the following looking down, in a quiet voice.

“I’m fine. Nothing’s wrong. Really, I’m fine.”

Say the following in a regular, calm voice.

“I’m fine. Nothing’s wrong. Really, I’m fine.”

Say in a loud voice.

“What do you want from me? No matter what I do, nothing is okay with you!!!
I’m sick of this.”

Say in a calm voice.

“Maria, I feel sad when you talk about me behind my back. It hurts my feelings.”

Say softly, looking down at the ground.

“You always do that. You say we’ll play basketball and then you don’t show.”

Say in a loud, angry voice.

“Susan I don’t want to sit at that table for lunch – those kids make me uncomfortable. If you are going to eat with them I will just eat by myself.”

Say in a quiet voice, looking down at the ground.

“Susan I don’t want to sit at that table for lunch – those kids make me uncomfortable. If you are going to eat with them I will just eat by myself.”

Role Play of How You Say It Matters

#1



#2



Group Sessions:

Initial Phase (Sessions 1 - 3)

- Session 3: Ways to Communicate!
 - Communication analysis activity (repeat from Session 2)
 - **Discuss communication skills 1 – 7 and guidelines**
 - Role-play scenarios

Communication Skills in UTalk

See Handout

Strike while the iron is cold.

Have a few solutions in mind and be willing to compromise.

Use "I feel" statements.

Put yourself in their shoes.

Be specific when talking about a problem.

Know when to hold'em, know when to fold'em.

Remember...don't give up.

Communication Analysis

- Adolescents role-play scenarios from the manual (and then use “real life” scenarios)
- Leaders ask the following questions:
 - What did you say?
 - What did he/she say?
 - How did you feel?
 - How do you think it made him/her feel?
 - Was that the message you wanted to convey?
 - How could you have said it differently?

Illustration of Communication Skills

Scenario

- Eduardo is a 15-year-old. He found out that his friends formed a Biology study group and did not invite him to join. They meet on Tuesdays after school, and often go out after. Although Eduardo has an A in Biology and doesn't need any extra help, he feels left out and is worried that his friends no longer want him around.

Using Communication Skills



Sample Scenarios

You are upset with your friends because they went to the movies and didn't ask you to go with them. Role-play talking to two of your friends about this. Pick two people to play your friends.

Every time you go out with your friends, your boyfriend/girlfriend calls you every 5 minutes on your cell phone. What might you say to your boyfriend/girlfriend? Pick someone to play your significant other.

You are upset with two of your friends because they posted a really awful picture of you on their Facebook page. Role-play talking to two of your friends about this. Pick two people to play your friends.

You are upset because your teacher gave you a bad grade on an assignment. You need to talk to her about it. What can you say? Pick someone to play the teacher.

Your friend is sending lot and lots of text messages to a boy/girl you like, trying to flirt with them. What can you say to your friend? Pick someone to play your friend.

You get an email/text from a friend who keeps calling you "fat" (or something embarrassing). You decide it's time to talk to your friend about it. Pick someone to play your friend.

Group Sessions:

Middle Phase (Sessions 4 - 6)

- Sessions 4 to 6 - Practice Makes Perfect
 - **Review the communication skills**
 - Role-play scenarios
 - Transition to role-playing scenarios that adolescents bring in from “real life”
 - Praise participation
 - Emphasize practice at home

Group Sessions:

Later Phase (Sessions 7 - 8)

- Overall Goals:
 - Identify positive friendship qualities
 - Teach and practice skills related to making and keeping friends
 - Practice identifying and solving challenging peer situations
 - Being left out/ignored
 - Being upset about someone talking behind your back or revealing secrets

Group Sessions: Later Phase (Sessions 7 - 8)

- Session 7: I Get By With A Little Help From My Friends
 - Discuss “getting to know” others and friendship qualities
 - Exercise: identifying positive friendship characteristics
 - Discuss and identify supportive adults
- Apply the discussion to adolescent situations and role-play
 - Pick scenarios in advance or solicit from the adolescents

Exercise:

Identifying positive friendship characteristics

- Members write down a positive characteristic of each group member
- Leaders collect and read the different statements
- Activity bolsters self-esteem and leads to a discussion of important friendship characteristics:
 - Good listening skills
 - Emotional availability
 - Physical proximity
 - Trustworthiness
 - Ability to maintain confidence
 - Is fun to spend time with
 - Is concerned about your happiness/well being
 - Provides help when needed

Friendship Scenarios (see handouts)

Friendship Scenarios

The following scenarios focus on making and keeping friends and could be useful in session 7, which focuses on Friendships and Social Support. However, they may be used throughout the course of the intervention as examples of interpersonal scenarios.

- 1) Ria changed schools this year and is slowly starting to meet new people. When she walks into the cafeteria at lunchtime, she sees some classmates eating and talking at a table nearby. She starts to walk towards them to ask if she can sit with them, but then gets too nervous and just walks by.
- 2) A couple months ago, Andrea's school started a drama club. Andrea loves to act but doesn't know if it's too late to join the club. She's worried that it will be weird to join late, since everyone probably knows each other already. She doesn't want to be the odd one out if everyone else is already friends. She also doesn't want to be behind and "out of the loop."
- 3) You and Tyler have been best friends since Kindergarten. You live across the street from one another, have always been in the same class, and have lots of friends in common. In the past month or two, though, Tyler's been spending most of his time with new lacrosse friends and doesn't seem to have as much time for you. You're starting to feel excluded and left out, like you don't have your best friend anymore.
- 4) Your mom gave you four tickets to see Four Houses on Friday. You can only invite three other people, but you're not sure whom you should take with you. You know you'll invite your best friend, but if you invite Sandy, you have to invite her best friend Mandy. If you do that, Mikaela will get mad at you, because she's been saving a seat at lunch for you every day this year.

Group Sessions:

Later Phase (Sessions 7 - 8)

- Session 8: Tweet this! No bullying allowed!!
 - Discuss peer and cyber victimization
 - Exercise and discussion: identifying and handling challenging peer situations (pick in advance or solicit from the group)
 - Apply discussion to adolescents' own situations and role-play them

Exercise:

Identify and handle challenging peer situations

- Select challenging peer events (leaders and/or group)
- Group members read each scenario and lead discussion:
 - Do's:
 - Calm down
 - Decide whether to confront the offending person, using skills taught in group
 - Tell others who could support you
 - If appropriate, report the event
 - Check and take charge of your privacy settings on social media
 - Focus your energy on positive and supportive friendships
 - Don't's
 - Retaliate
 - Ignore the situation, hoping it will go away
 - Other?

Peer Victimization Scenarios (handout)

Peer Victimization Scenarios

The following scenarios focus on peer victimization experiences and could be useful in session 8, which focuses on Handling Peer Harassment and Cyber Experiences. However, they may be used throughout the course of the intervention to illustrate communication analysis and interpersonal techniques.

1. Savannah is a 17-year old girl. She had taken some “sexy” pictures of herself and sent them to her boyfriend. When they broke up, her boyfriend sent all of her pictures to everyone he knew. Now, it seems like almost everyone has seen her pictures.
2. Last week, someone started a rumor that Naomi slept with her best friend’s ex. It spread like wildfire and now the whole school knows about it. Naomi has tried telling people that it’s not true, but doesn’t know what to do. So many people already believe the rumor and think Naomi is lying when she tries to clear things up.
3. You are on Tumblr, and you see that someone has created a slam page about your friend. The page is really mean, and you’re not sure if your friend knows that the page exists. You’re not sure if you should tell them, or if it might be better to just not say anything. You also know the people that made the page, and you’re not sure how to bring up the issue with them.
4. You and Tyler have been best friends since Kindergarten. You live across the street from one another, have always been in the same class, and have lots of friends in common. In the past month or two, though, Tyler’s been spending most of his time with new lacrosse friends and doesn’t seem to have as much time for you. You’re starting to feel excluded and left out, like you don’t have your best friend anymore.

Group Sessions: Termination (Sessions 9 – 10)*

- Sessions 9 - 10 – Keep Calm and Carry On
 - Mark transition to the end of group
 - Discuss communication and problem-solving skills learned
 - Discuss skill maintenance, social support, and overcoming obstacles
 - Discuss adolescents' experience of being in group
 - Solicit adolescents' feedback on group content and process
 - Graduation ceremony!

Graduation Certificate

Party and ceremony to mark the end of the program

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

AWARDED TO

For successful completion of the
 U Talk Program!

Awarded this ___ day of _____, 2013

Signed



Discussion and Questions

- How can you apply UTalk?
 - What challenges might arise?
 - Other questions????
-
- For More Information
 - Readings
 - Contact information:
 - alagreca@miami.edu



Thank you!!