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Rx: Books



Times are tough. Stress is high. Getting to therapy may prove more risk than it's worth these days. At the same time, patients and clinicians alike are struggling.¹

Some people may have lost health insurance, no longer able to afford therapy that they need.² Some patients make it to the psychiatrist or primary care provider for a prescription, but cannot handle a weekly appointment on top of everything else. Children, once engaged when play therapy meant new toys in a cool office with a fun lady, now stare blankly at a virtual therapy screen, itching to get outside and feel normal. Teens are zoomed out and zoned out from online school. Other individuals would never have bared their soul in therapy anyway even when it was affordable, accessible, and “safe” pre-COVID.

These days any number of reasons get in the way of people getting the help that they need. There are only so many of us around; we can have expertise only in so many areas; and we can tolerate only so many hours of struggling to read facial expressions on a frozen doxy screen.³ I often rely on excellent clinician—authors to help me help someone. Sometimes I augment medication with at home bibliotherapy, by assigning workbook chapters in between medication management appointments. Other times I use a research manual as a crutch to buttress my limited knowledge of a therapeutic protocol, when there is no better alternative in my community. And when patients need it, they get it all: medication, weekly therapy, and a workbook to help structure treatment, increase accountability around homework between visits, and clarify concepts I butcher on my first try in session.

For younger children, the right book can be a much more palatable and therapeutic psychoeducational tool than an hour with me. Having parents serve as “therapy-extenders” by reading bibliotherapy together with their child at home serves as a “three-fer”: the child learns, the parent learns, and I can save face-to-face sessions for troubleshooting or broaching more advanced topics. I often tell budget-conscious caregivers who are rightfully anxious for quick progress that the more they practice the concepts taught in session, the more bang for the buck they'll get,

and the faster their kid will make it back to the playground after school rather than being stuck in a doctor's office.

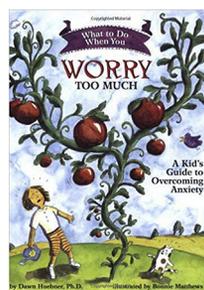
What follows is a list of the “self-help” resources and therapy workbooks I rely on—my top 5 for anxiety in this stressful era, are featured below with cover images. I've learned that it is important to pick the right book for the right patient; it's not one size fits all. So, don't take my word for it; skim a few in each category, and see which ones feel right for your practice. Mendel *et al.* provide a lovely Clinical Perspectives that summarizes the rationale for and evidence behind bibliotherapy in their 2016 *JAACAP* article.⁴ Consider the following table a starting point, and please let us know if you have new personal favorites worthy of a future book review in *JAACAP*. See Table S1, available online, for a more comprehensive list.

ANGER

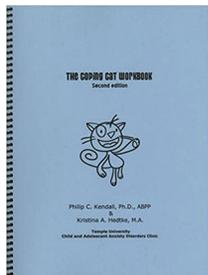
- *What to Do When Your Temper Flares: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Problems with Anger (What-to-Do Guides for Kids)*
- *How to Take the Grrrr Out of Anger*
- *Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens: Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills, for Helping You Manage Mood Swings, Control Angry Outbursts, Get Along with Others (an Instant Help Book for Teens)*

ANXIETY

- *Taming Sneaky Fears: Leo the Lion's Story of Bravery & Inside the Lion's Den: The Workbook*



What To Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety (What to Do Guides for Kids)



The Coping Cat Workbook

- *Please Explain Anxiety to Me! Simple Biology and Solutions for Children and Parents (Growing with Love)*
- *Playing With Anxiety: Casey's Guide for Teens and Kids*
- *Outsmarting Worry (An Older Kid's Guide to Managing Anxiety)*
- *My Anxious Mind: A Teen's Guide to Managing Anxiety and Panic*
- *The Anxiety Survival Guide for Teens*
- *Mastery of Your Anxiety and Worry: Workbook (Treatments That Work)*
- *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook*
- *Freeing Your Child from Anxiety: Practical Strategies to Overcome Fears, Worries and Phobias and Be Prepared for Life—from Toddlers to Teens*
- *Helping Your Anxious Child: A Step By Step Guide for Parents*
- *The Coping Cat Parent Companion*

ANXIETY/OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

- *Treating Childhood and Adolescent Anxiety: A Guide for Caregivers*

ANXIETY/DEPRESSION

- *Therapy Quest: An Interactive Quest Through Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (A Robinson Self-Help Guide)*

ANXIETY/DEPRESSION/TRAUMA

- *Superhero Therapy: Mindfulness Skills to Help Teens and Young Adults Deal with Anxiety, Depression, and Trauma*
- *Harry Potter Therapy: An Unauthorized Self-Help Book from the Restricted Section*

ATTENTION-DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

- *The Survival Guide for Kids with ADHD*
- *Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention: A Book for Kids About ADHD*
- *Cory Stories: A Kid's Book about Living with ADHD*

AUTISM

- *Different Like Me: My Book of Autism Heroes*
- *Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome: A User Guide to Adolescence*
- *Overcoming Anxiety and Depression on the Autism Spectrum: A Self Help Guide Using CBT*
- *A Parent's Guide to High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder, Second Edition: How to Meet the Challenges and Help Your Child Thrive*
- *A Practical Guide to Autism: What Every Parent, Family Member, and Teacher Needs to Know*

BEREAVEMENT

- *Nothing Was the Same: A Memoir*

BIPOLAR DISORDER

- *The Bipolar Workbook for Teens: DBT Skills to Help You Control Mood Swings*
- *The Bipolar Disorder Survival Guide: What You and Your Family Need to Know*

BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

- *Coping with BPD: DBT and CBT Skills to Soothe the Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder*
- *Borderline Personality Disorder in Adolescents: What To Do When Your Teen Has BPD: A Complete Guide for Families*

DEPRESSION

- *Beyond the Blues: A Workbook to Help Teens Overcome Depression*
- *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*
- *Mind Over Mood, Second Edition: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think*

EATING DISORDER

- *Help Your Teenager Beat an Eating Disorder*

INSOMNIA

- *What to Do When You Dread Your Bed: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Problems with Sleep (What to Do Guides for Kids)*
- *When Children Don't Sleep Well: Interventions for Pediatric Sleep Disorders Parent Workbook*

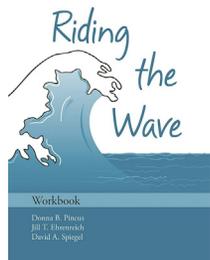
NONSUICIDAL SELF-INJURY

- *Helping Teens Who Cut, Second Edition: Using DBT Skills to End Self Injury*

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

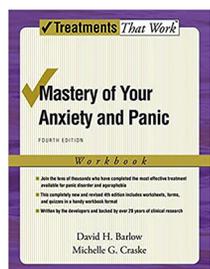
- *What To Do When Your Brain Gets Stuck: A Kids Guide to Overcoming OCD (What-to-Do Guides for Kids)*
- *Take Control of OCD: The Ultimate Guide for Kids with OCD*
- *Talking Back to OCD: The Program that Helps Kids and Teens Say “No, Way” and Parents Say “Way to Go”*
- *It’s Only a False Alarm: A Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Program Workbook*
- *Getting Over OCD: A 10-Step Workbook for Taking Back Your Life (The Guilford Self-Help Workbook Series)*
- *The OCD Workbook: Your Guide to Breaking Free from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (A New Harbinger Self-Help Workbook)*
- *Understanding OCD: A Guide for Parents and Professionals*
- *Freeing Your Child From Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: A Powerful, Practical Program for Parents of Children and Adolescents*

PANIC DISORDER



Riding the Wave Workbook (Treatments That Work)

- *Facing Panic: Self Help for People with Panic Attacks*



Mastery of Your Anxiety and Panic: Workbook (Treatments That Work)

PERFECTIONISM

- *What to Do When Mistakes Make You Quake (What-to-Do Guides for Kids)*
- *The Perfectionism Workbook for Teens: Activities to Help You Reduce Anxiety and Get Things Done*

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

- *Prolonged Exposure Therapy for Teens Workbook (Treatments That Work)*
- *The PTSD Workbook: Simple Effective Techniques for Overcoming Traumatic Stress Symptoms*
- *Reclaiming Your Life From a Traumatic Experience: A Prolonged Exposure Treatment Program Workbook (Treatments That Work)*

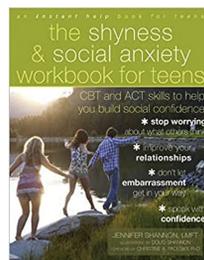
PHYSICIAN WELL-BEING

- *Staying Human During Residency Training: How to Survive and Thrive after Medical School (North American version)*
- *Staying Human During the Foundation Programme and Beyond (UK adaptation)*

SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

- *When Children Refuse School: A Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Approach Parent Workbook (Treatments That Work)*

SOCIAL ANXIETY



The Shyness and Social Anxiety Workbook for Teens: CBT and ACT Skills to Help You Build Social Confidence

- *Managing Social Anxiety: A Cognitive Behavioral Approach Workbook (Treatments That Work)*

SUICIDE

- *Children, Teens and Suicide Loss*
- *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools*
- *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Medical Schools*
- *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Physician Residency/Fellowship Programs*
- *Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide*
- *In Her Wake: A Child Psychiatrist Explores the Mystery of Her Mother’s Suicide*

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American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Psychiatric Association, IACAPAP, and the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. She has served on the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Consumer Issues Committee, the American Psychiatric Association Committee on Medical Education and Lifelong Learning, the American Psychiatric Association Physician Wellbeing and Burnout Committee, the IACAPAP Executive Board, and as chair of the Yale Child Study Center Alumni Organization.

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All statements expressed in this column are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. See the Instructions for Authors for information about the preparation and submission of Book Forums.

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