

CBT Skill Acquisition: The Change Companies[®], *The Courage to Change Series*

Background

Interactive Journaling[®] is an evidence-based process that is rooted in a cognitive-behavioral approach. Though several theories exist to describe why people improve as a result of participating in a cognitive-behavioral therapy-based (CBT) program, the acquisition of particular skills related to cognitive restructuring and behavioral activation scores are two factors that consistently predict behavior change.

With a foundation in cognitive-behavioral therapy, The Change Companies[®], *The Courage to Change Series* is intended to provide support for people under supervision, preparing to leave a custody setting, or in the community. In *The Courage to Change*, participants develop a record of their commitments and progress throughout supervision and a roadmap to success in their efforts to make positive behavior change.

Description

The CBTSA: *The Courage to Change Series* instrument is a 43-item, self-report questionnaire that measures current CBT skills use among participants using *Interactive Journaling*[®]. It is designed to be completed by participants at two time points: prior to orientation and following completion of *The Courage to Change* curriculum. It is estimated that it will take approximately 15 minutes for people to complete this paper-pencil measure.

This measure is a modified version of the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Skills Questionnaire (CBTSQ), an instrument with sound psychometric properties, including good overall internal consistency (overall: $\alpha = .91$; BA: $\alpha = .85$; CR: $\alpha = .88$). A validation study (Jacob, Christopher and Neuhaus, 2011) reported expected correlations with a variety of constructs among a large sample of patients receiving intensive CBT in a partial hospital setting.

There are three factors measured by this instrument: Behavioral Activation (BA: 7 items), Cognitive Restructuring (CR: 9 items) and *The Courage to Change Objectives*: 27 items).

Scoring

Sum the responses for each factor to compute a factor score:

Behavioral Activation items = 1 4 5 9 10 11 13

Cognitive Restructuring items = 2 3 6 7 8 12 14 15 16

The Courage to Change Series Objectives = 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43

BA factor scores range from 0 to 35, and higher scores indicate greater use of BA skills.

CR factor scores range from 0 to 45, and higher scores indicate greater use of CR skills.

The Courage to Change factor scores range from 0 to 135, with higher scores indicating greater understanding of Journal content.

Journal-specific scores can be calculated in the following way:

Questions 17-19 *Getting Started Journal*

Questions 20-22 *Rational Thinking Journal*
Questions 23-25 *Self-control Journal*
Questions 26-28 *Recreation and Leisure Journal*
Questions 29-31 *Social Values Journal*
Questions 32-34 *Substance Use Journal*
Questions 35-37 *Family Ties Journal*
Questions 38-40 *Peer Relationships Journal*
Questions 41-43 *Seeking Employment Journal*

A total score can be calculated by summing the BA, CR and *The Courage to Change* factor scores.

Data Entry and Analysis

To understand changes in scores in participants completing the program, the appropriate statistical test is a paired t-test. A paired t-test measures whether means from a within-subjects test group vary prior to and after being exposed to *The Courage to Change* Series curriculum.

We recommend you store participant summary data at an item level (i.e., with all 50 items individually entered to allow computation of factor scores, Journal-specific scores and total scores) in an electronic spreadsheet, assigning participants a unique ID and storing data without identifying information for HIPAA compliance reasons. Note that in order to complete this analysis, you must have matched data, meaning the same identifier must be used for participants at each time point.

Train for Change Inc.[®] offers comprehensive evaluation and reporting packages. Please contact us for further information by calling 888-889-8866 or emailing info@trainforchange.net.

Reporting Scores

When presenting test scores, here is a suggested introductory statement:

“A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare pre- and post-test scores for (n=xx) people participating in our program that utilized The Change Companies[®], *The Courage to Change* Series curriculum. There was a (significant/not a significant) difference in pre-test scores (M=___, SD=___) and post-test scores (M=___, SD=___); $t(_) = _$, $p = _$.”

References

Jacob, K. S., Christopher, M. S., & Neuhaus, E. C. (2011). Development and validation of the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Skills Questionnaire (CBTSQ). *Behavior Modification*, 35, 595-611.