

Social Skills Training

Basic SST implementation structure

1. Identifying the problem

Firstly, the major social problem needs to be identified. For example, are the problems with socialising predominantly a fear of large gatherings of people? Or speaking to people at work? Through discussion, work out together what his might be.

2. *Setting the goals*

This will include a broad overall goal as well as focused goals that may change from session to session. For SST, the broad overall goal may be the ability to socialise comfortably in the classroom, whereas the individual goals will be skill-specific (e.g. learning how to greet someone, ask how they are and respond appropriately).

Once each goal or skill is mastered, the goal for the next session becomes more difficult. Keeping the overall goal in mind will help you overcome times when you feel like giving up on the therapy.

3. Modelling

Before the client is expected to perform the skill, model the skill they are focusing on, so that they can see exactly what needs to do before attempting to do it themselves.

4. Roleplaying

After the modelling, the client should be asked to roleplay. This practice is a very important aspect of SST. It may feel odd to roleplay, but until they have practised the skill, it is hard to use it outside the safety and confinement that therapy sessions provide.

5. Feedback

Provide feedback to the client at the end of each session. This feedback will help the client to identify strengths and weaknesses, and the things they especially need to work on and practise.

6. Homework!

In between sessions, set little "homework" challenges that the client is required to do in throughout the week. Usually the homework will carry on directly from the session, so that they practise the new skill learnt. Depending on their success at meeting the challenge, there will be a focus on a new, more difficult skill in the next session.