

## Handling emotions

Who said?	What did they say?	Key learning
Counsellor	We decided to discuss how you handle your emotions in this session - right Suraj?	
Patient	Yes, that is really important for me. I have a really bad relationship with my father. We often get into fights, and most of the times after we have these fights, I go and drink alcohol.	
Counsellor	Can you tell me how you feel when you have fights with your father?	Open-ended question, Identification of feelings
Patient	I feel terribly upset when he starts scolding me about minor things.	
Counsellor	Hmm... what happens after that?	
Patient	I just cannot tolerate him scolding me for no good reason. I lose my temper and I also start thinking that he still treats me like a kid. Then I cannot hold myself back from getting angry with him even more.	
Counsellor	So your father scolding you for small things makes you angry and upset?	
Patient	Yes	
Counsellor	But does it happen every time when your father scolds you?	Explore different ways in which the same situation is handled by the patient
Patient	Most of the times, I guess. But sometimes I just ignore him, thinking that he is getting old and I should not argue with him.	
Counsellor	And what happens when you react to his scolding in that way?	
Patient	I just get up and leave the place as that helps me to control my anger.	

Counsellor	Have you realised one thing Suraj? Though the event of your father scolding you remains the same, your reaction varies. Sometimes you become angry and at other times you don't. What might be the reason for this?	Reflection, helps patient understand how he already handles the same situation in different ways, asks for clarification
Patient	No I don't know why.	
Counsellor	Can I explain to you what I think is happening?	
Patient	Yes sure.	
Counsellor	Generally we tend to believe that our emotions are a reaction to the situation; but if that was so, your reaction to the situation of your father scolding you would be the same every time he scolds you. But as you yourself mentioned, this is not the case – right?	Summary and reflection, showing different reactions to the same situation
Patient	Right	
Counsellor	Your reactions to the situation changed in the second instance because you changed your thinking. The first time, you were thinking that your father is treating you like a kid and hence you had feelings of anger. But the second time you were thinking that your father is getting old so you should not take his comments too seriously and so you were able to ignore them and control your anger.	Explains to patient how different ways of thinking can lead to different emotions in the same situations
Patient	Yes that's right	
Counsellor	So can you summarise what we have discussed just now?	
Patient	Whatever the situation is, I should think positively and not allow my emotions to take control of my life.	
Counsellor	That is a great summary. So, what will you do when your father starts scolding you again?	
Patient	I will just think that he is getting old and I should	

	not get into an argument with him.	
Counsellor	Great! Hopefully if you control your anger, then you may not think of going for a drink?	
Patient	That's true - I generally do not drink if I am not angry.	
Counsellor	So how about trying that over the next week?	
Patient	Yes, sure I will.	