

QC55 Ken's abbreviated formulation - Example

Ken is a 24-year-old man presenting with low mood and worry regarding dropping out of university and his future prospects. In particular, he has begun disengaging from friends, family, work, and study. Factors which increase his vulnerability to low mood and worry include his bicultural identity which prioritises privacy (reducing social support), his sense of indebtedness to his parents for their sacrifices in moving to Australia (contributes to fear of failing), and his difficulties with self-organisation (lacks skills for independent study). The trigger for Ken's initial experience of low mood and worry was failing subjects at university; however, Ken now experiences low mood and worry whenever he compares himself to a peer, and whenever he believes he has failed at any task. A key perpetuating factor is a number of core beliefs centred around failure. These core beliefs cause Ken to feel ashamed which, in turn, causes him to avoid his friends and family, university, work, and other domains of his life. This disengagement is experienced by Ken as further evidence of failure, which perpetuates the cycle. Ken appears to ruminate about his core beliefs of failure, which intensifies his low mood and worry. In addition, his low energy and low motivation (associated with poor self-care) likely contributes to his avoidance. Protective factors for Ken include: supportive family and friends, previous success at high school and at work, previous ability to adapt, openness in session, and desire to be well.