

HANDOUT 3-B

YOUR PAYOFF LIST

Take some time to think about what you want to get from therapy. You will be more motivated to complete therapy if you have a clear picture of your goals. You are encouraged to develop a “payoff list.” A payoff should be a specific, detailed, and emotionally charged description of what you hope to get from therapy. It is very important that you be specific and concrete. For example, if you want to lose weight you might say you want to “be healthier.” That is fine for a start, but it’s probably too vague to keep you on your diet/exercise plan when the going gets tough. However, imagine your payoff as “I can go on hikes, do yard work, and play tennis without losing my breath. I will live a long, healthy, and vibrant life until well into my 90s. I can attend the graduations and weddings of my children and grandchildren. I can play with my grandchildren.” Can you see how this might be more motivating?

Use the form below to help you put together your payoffs. Use the questions to help guide your writing.

What negative feelings do you want to have less of? (e.g., worry, panic, etc.)

What positive feelings do you want more of? (e.g., calm, confident, relaxed, self-assured)

What behaviors do you want to be able to do? (e.g., travel, go to social events, ask the boss for a raise)

What will be the benefit of those behaviors? (e.g., If I get the raise, I will have \$10,000 more income, which will allow me to put my child in private school.)

Now write your payoffs below. Write them in the first-person, present tense, as if they were already true. Once you have developed your payoff list, post it somewhere you can review it often.