

12

Cyberbullying Recovery Clinical Practice Workbook

A clinically branded, function-preserving edition retaining the original exercises, psychoeducation, checklists, logs, planning tools, and response space.

DSM-5-TR · ICD-11 CLINICAL ALIGNMENT

1 · Recognizing Forms of Cyberbullying

2 · Identifying Your Feelings

3 · Managing Immediate Emotional Responses

4 · Strategies for Responding to Cyberbullying

5 · Talking About Your Experience

6 · Developing a Support System

7 · Building a Positive Self-Image

8 · Developing Healthy Coping Mechanisms

9 · Overcoming Social Anxiety Post-Cyberbullying

10 · Safe Internet Use Practices

11 · Creating Healthy Digital Boundaries

12 · Establishing a New Online Identity

How to use this workbook

- Use this workbook selectively and collaboratively; it is educational and does not replace individualized assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medical care, or crisis services.
- Skip, pause, or modify any activity that increases distress, danger, shame, or loss of functioning. Adapt language for culture, disability, neurodivergence, health, resources, and lived context.
- Ratings in this workbook are reflection tools unless a named, validated measure and interpretation are explicitly provided.

Contents

Recognizing Forms of Cyberbullying	4
Identifying Your Feelings	5
Managing Immediate Emotional Responses	7
Strategies for Responding to Cyberbullying	10
Talking About Your Experience	12
Developing a Support System	14
Building a Positive Self-Image	15
Developing Healthy Coping Mechanisms.....	20
Overcoming Social Anxiety Post-Cyberbullying.....	24
Safe Internet Use Practices	27
Creating Healthy Digital Boundaries	29
Establishing a New Online Identity	32

Recognizing Forms of Cyberbullying

- Below are common forms of cyberbullying. Check off the ones that you have experienced or add more to the list:

- ☐ **Harassing Messages:** Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages.
- ☐ **Cyberstalking:** Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating. Engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for their safety.
- ☐ **Spreading False and Malicious Rumors:** Spreading untrue statements about a person to damage their reputation or friendships.
- ☐ **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else to make them look bad, get them in trouble, or create danger for them.
- ☐ **Outing:** Sharing someone's personal or private information without their permission, or tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, then sharing it online.
- ☐ **Exclusion:** Intentionally excluding someone from an online group, such as group chats or gaming sites.
- ☐ **Flaming:** Online fights where scornful messages are posted on websites, forums, or blogs.
- ☐ **Identity Theft/Phishing:** Stealing someone's password and/or hijacking their online accounts to send or post incriminating or humiliating pictures, videos, or information.
- ☐ **Photo/Video Shaming:** Taking, sending, or posting photos or videos of someone without their consent, especially in situations meant to embarrass or humiliate them.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Identifying Your Feelings

1. Reflecting on the Incident

- Think about a specific incident of cyberbullying that you experienced.

Write a brief description of what happened, focusing on the facts of the situation.

2. Identifying Immediate Emotional Responses

- Reflect on your initial emotional response to the cyberbullying incident.

List the emotions you felt right after the incident occurred. Rate the intensity of the emotion on a scale from 1 (very mild) to 10 (very intense).

3. Recognizing Secondary Emotions

- Often, our initial emotions can lead to secondary feelings that might emerge hours, days, or even weeks after the incident. Identify any emotions you've experienced later on.

- Emotion: _____

- Explanation (why you think this emotion emerged):

4. Physical Sensations

- Emotional responses can also trigger physical sensations or reactions.

Identify any physical sensations you experienced in response to the cyberbullying.

5. Long-Term Emotional Impact

- Consider the long-term emotional impact the cyberbullying has had on you. Reflect on any changes in your feelings, self-perception, or behavior.

Managing Immediate Emotional Responses

Use the following techniques to manage emotional distress:

Breathing Technique

- Find a quiet place. Sit or lie down comfortably.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, counting to four.
- Hold your breath for a count of four.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth, counting to eight.
- Repeat this process for a few minutes until you feel more relaxed.

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique:

- 5 things you can see.
- 4 things you can touch.
- 3 things you can hear.
- 2 things you can smell.
- 1 thing you can taste.

Object Focus:

- Pick any object within your sight.
- Focus all your attention on this object, examining its colors, shapes, and texture.
- Think about its purpose, how it's made, and any memories associated with it.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring your focus back to the object.
- Continue this focused observation for a few minutes.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

- Find a comfortable position sitting or lying down.
- Starting with your toes, tense the muscles as tightly as you can for 5 seconds.
- Relax the muscles immediately, noticing the contrast to the tension.
- Gradually work your way up through the body - feet, legs, abdomen, hands, arms, shoulders, neck, and face, tensing and relaxing each muscle group.
- Take a few deep breaths after completing the whole body, noticing the sensations of relaxation.

Positive Visualization:

- Close your eyes and picture a peaceful place.
- Imagine yourself in this place, experiencing it with all your senses.
- Focus on the calm and safety of this place until you feel more relaxed.

Writing It Down:

- Grab a piece of paper or open a digital note.
- Write down what you're feeling and why.
- Reflect on what you've written, acknowledging your feelings and considering possible next steps to address them.

- Use the following chart to track and assess the impact of strategies you try.

Coping Technique	Immediate Impact	Effectiveness (1-10)
<i>e.g., Deep Breathing</i>	<i>Felt calmer, reduced anxiety</i>	8

Coping Technique	Immediate Impact	Effectiveness (1-10)

Strategies for Responding to Cyberbullying

1. Documenting the Incident

- When cyberbullying occurs, keeping a record can be crucial for any future actions you might take. Briefly describe what happened, including dates and times.

- Note any evidence you have (screenshots, messages, emails) and where it's stored.

2. Immediate Response Strategies

- Choosing how to respond immediately after recognizing you're being cyberbullied can influence the outcome. Develop a plan for how to respond to negative or harmful interactions online.

- **Do Not Respond Directly:** Cyberbullies often seek a reaction. Consider not engaging directly with them.

- **Block the Offender:** Most platforms offer the option to block users who are harassing others.

- **Report the Behavior:** Many social media platforms and online services have reporting mechanisms for abuse.

3. Legal and School/Workplace Considerations

- In some cases, cyberbullying may warrant legal action or need to be addressed in a school or workplace setting. If the cyberbullying includes threats, consider consulting with a legal professional or law enforcement.

- Potential Reporting/Legal Steps:

Talking About Your Experience

1. Preparing to Share Your Story

- Who do you feel safe sharing your story with? (e.g., trusted friend, family member, therapist)

- When and where will you share your story? Choose a time and place where you feel comfortable and won't be interrupted.

- What are the key points or messages you want to convey? It might be how the experience affected you, what support you need, or advice for others.

- Are there any aspects of your story you're not comfortable discussing in detail?

2. Reflecting on the Benefits

- Reflect on the potential benefits of sharing your cyberbullying experience. How might sharing your experience contribute to your own healing process?

- Could your story help others who might be going through a similar situation?

Developing a Support System

1. Identifying Potential Supporters

- List individuals or groups that can be part of your support system. Consider family members, friends, teachers, counselors, or online communities that have shown understanding and empathy.

2. Understanding the Types of Support Needed

- Different situations require different types of support. Identify what kind of support you need from your system.

- **Emotional Support:** Who can you turn to when you need to talk about your feelings?

- **Advice and Guidance:** Who can provide you with advice on handling cyberbullying situations?

- **Intervention Support:** If the situation escalates, who can help you take action (reporting the bullying, contacting authorities)?

Building a Positive Self-Image

Self-image refers to perception that one has of oneself. It encompasses how individuals see themselves, including their beliefs about their appearance, abilities, and worth.

1. Understanding Self-Image

- Reflect on how your self-image has been affected by cyberbullying. Consider the differences in how you viewed yourself before and after the incident(s).

- Self-Image Before Cyberbullying:

- Self-Image After Cyberbullying:

2. Identifying Strengths and Qualities

- Despite the negative impact of cyberbullying, it's important to remember and recognize your strengths and positive qualities. Write down at least 5 personal strengths or qualities you possess (e.g., resilience, optimism, confidence, reliability, emotional intelligence, etc.)

- Provide an example for each strength where it has positively impacted your life or the lives of others.

3. Challenging Negative Thoughts

- Cyberbullying can instill negative thoughts and beliefs about oneself. Challenge these thoughts to rebuild a positive self-image. Write a negative thought you've had about yourself as a result of cyberbullying.

Example: "I'll always be a target."

- List evidence or reasons why this thought is not accurate.

Example: I have friends, family, or support networks that stand by me and can help create a safer environment.

- Create a positive statement to counter the negative thought.

Example: "I am resilient and capable of overcoming challenges. I can navigate difficult situations and protect my well-being."

4. Discovering Lessons Learned

- Every challenging experience can teach us something. Reflect on what this experience has taught you about yourself, others, or life in general.

- What did you discover about your own strength, resilience, or values?

- What did you learn about how people behave online and how it affects others?

5. Planning Positive Actions

- Identify a positive action you can take as a result of this experience (e.g., advocating for cyberbullying awareness, helping others who have been cyberbullied).

- Outline steps for how you will implement this action.

6. Setting Goals for Self-Improvement

- Setting personal goals can help improve self-esteem and encourage positive self-growth. Identify goals you would like to achieve that you believe will help improve your self-image. The following are some suggestions. Check off the ones that may be helpful or add more to the list:

- ☐ **Learn a New Skill:** Choose something you're interested in and dedicate time to mastering it, whether it's a language, instrument, or coding.
- ☐ **Develop a Fitness Routine:** Focus on creating a physical activity plan that you enjoy and is sustainable, aiming for consistency rather than perfection.

- ☐ **Volunteer:** Give back to your community or support a cause you care about, which can provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment.
- ☐ **Read More:** Challenge yourself to read books that interest you or help you grow, setting a reading goal that excites you.
- ☐ **Pursue a Passion Project:** Dedicate time to a project or hobby that you're passionate about, allowing for creative expression.
- ☐ **Improve Financial Health:** Create and work towards financial goals, such as saving a certain amount, budgeting more effectively, or reducing debt.
- ☐ **Prioritize Self-Care:** Make self-care a regular part of your routine, recognizing it as an essential aspect of maintaining mental and physical health.

- Outline actionable steps you can take to achieve this goal.

Developing Healthy Coping Mechanisms

1. Understanding Your Current Coping Mechanisms

- Reflect on how you currently cope with stress or emotional pain, especially related to experiences of cyberbullying.
- List Current Coping Mechanisms. For each mechanism listed, evaluate its effectiveness (Helpful, Somewhat Helpful, Not Helpful).

Current Coping Mechanisms	Effectiveness
<i>e.g. Procrastination</i>	<i>Not Effective:</i> While it may temporarily relieve stress, it leads to increased anxiety and stress in the long run due to accumulating tasks and looming deadlines.

2. Identifying Triggers and Stressors

- Understanding what triggers your stress or emotional pain is crucial in developing effective coping mechanisms. For each trigger listed, note your physical and emotional responses.

Stress Triggers	Physical and Emotional Responses
<i>e.g. Conflicts with colleagues</i>	<i>Increased heart rate</i> <i>Irritability and short temper</i>

3. Healthy Coping Mechanisms

- Based on your triggers and current coping strategies, develop a list of healthy coping mechanisms to try. The following are some suggestions. Check off the ones that may be helpful or add more to the list:

- ☐ **Deep Breathing Exercises:** Calms the nervous system and reduces stress.
- ☐ **Regular Physical Activity:** Boosts mood and decreases stress.
- ☐ **Mindfulness Meditation:** Enhances present-moment awareness and relaxation.

- ❑ **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Relieves muscle tension and reduces stress.
- ❑ **Journaling:** Provides an outlet for expressing thoughts and feelings.
- ❑ **Positive Self-Talk:** Encourages resilience and counters negative thinking.
- ❑ **Practicing Gratitude:** Shifts focus to the positive aspects of life.
- ❑ **Creative Arts (Painting, Drawing, Writing):** Offers an expressive outlet and relaxation.
- ❑ **Engaging in Hobbies:** Provides joy and a break from stress.
- ❑ **Social Support:** Sharing feelings with friends or family for emotional support.
- ❑ **Laughter:** Releases endorphins and reduces stress.
- ❑ **Spending Time in Nature:** Boosts mood and reduces feelings of stress.
- ❑ **Digital Detox:** Taking breaks from electronic devices to decrease stress.
- ❑ **Pet Therapy:** Spending time with animals to reduce stress and increase happiness.
- ❑ **Cultivating Spirituality or Faith:** Finding comfort and purpose through spiritual practices.
- ❑ **Problem-Solving:** Approaching challenges systematically to find solutions.
- ❑ **Gardening:** Connecting with nature and enjoying the satisfaction of nurturing plants.
- ❑ **Water Therapy (Swimming, Hydrotherapy):** Reduces stress through soothing water movements.
- ❑ **Acupuncture:** Can help reduce stress and anxiety through needle therapy.

- ☐ **Sauna or Steam Room:** Uses heat to relax muscles and relieve tension.
- ☐ **Practicing Forgiveness:** Reducing anger and resentment by forgiving others and oneself.
- ☐ **Scheduled Worry Time:** Allotting a specific time to worry, then moving on with your day.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

4. Reflecting on Effectiveness

- After trying the chosen coping mechanisms, reflect on their effectiveness and your experience using them.

Coping Technique	Immediate Impact	Effectiveness (1-10)

Overcoming Social Anxiety Post-Cyberbullying

1. Understanding Your Social Anxiety

- Reflect on your feelings about social interactions following your experience with cyberbullying. Identify specific situations or triggers that heighten your anxiety.

- Symptoms you experience (e.g., nervousness, avoidance):

- Specific social situations that trigger anxiety (e.g., being tagged in pictures or posts, attending events with large groups):

2. Identifying Negative Thought Patterns

- Social anxiety often stems from negative thoughts or beliefs about oneself in social situations. Identify any negative thoughts you have about social interactions post-cyberbullying.

Example:

Negative Thought: *"I am always going to be judged and rejected in social settings because of what happened online."*

Evidence Challenging This Thought: *I can remember instances where social interactions were positive, and you felt accepted and valued.*

Positive Counterstatement: *"Not everyone is judgmental. Each social interaction is a new opportunity to build positive connections."*

- Negative Thought: _____

- Evidence Challenging This Thought:

- Positive Counterstatement:

3. Gradual Exposure Plan

Gradual exposure therapy is a technique used to help individuals confront their fears by gradually and systematically exposing themselves to the feared situation in a controlled way. This approach can help desensitize them to social situations they find intimidating, ultimately reducing anxiety over time.

Low Anxiety-Inducing Situations

Start with minimally stressful situations to build confidence.

Example:

- *Comment on a friend's post on social media.*

- *Have a brief text conversation with a friend.*
- *Join an online forum related to a hobby or interest without the pressure to interact.*

Moderate to Higher Anxiety-Inducing Situations

Increase interaction level in controlled settings.

Example:

- *Participate in an online group chat with friends or family.*
- *Share a post or photo on social media about a neutral topic.*
- *Attend a virtual meeting or a webinar where interaction is optional.*

- After each stage, evaluate your feelings and anxiety levels. If a particular step feels overwhelmingly stressful, it's okay to spend more time there or adjust the activities to make them more manageable.

Safe Internet Use Practices

1. Understanding Your Online Presence

- Reflect on your current online activities and presence. Note the social media platforms, forums, or online communities you participate in.

- Have you checked your privacy settings on these platforms recently?
Yes/No

- What type of information do you share online? (e.g., personal details, location, feelings)

2. Enhancing Online Privacy

- Evaluate and adjust your privacy settings to protect your information. Go through each platform you use and adjust your privacy settings to control who can see your posts, contact you, and find your profile.

- Limit the amount of personal information you share online, including your address, phone number, and birthdate.

- Review your friend or follow lists. Are there individuals who should not have access to your information?

3. Recognizing and Managing Risks

List any online behaviors that could increase your risk of encountering cyberbullying (e.g., engaging in arguments online, sharing sensitive personal information). For each behavior listed, identify a strategy to mitigate the risk.

Triggering Behaviors	Management Strategies
<i>e.g., Using Social Media Without Privacy Controls</i>	<i>Regularly review and adjust your account's privacy settings to ensure that your information and posts are only visible to intended audiences.</i>

Creating Healthy Digital Boundaries

1. Assessing Your Digital Habits

- Reflect on your current digital habits to understand where you might need to set or strengthen boundaries.
- Estimate how much time you spend online daily and which platforms you use most.

- Note the types of interactions you typically have online (positive, negative, neutral) and with whom.

- Consider what personal information (e.g., location, contact details, personal life details) you share online.

2. Setting Healthy Digital Boundaries

- Based on your assessment, identify specific, actionable boundaries you can set. The following are some suggestions. Check off the ones that apply or add more to the list:

- ☐ **Engagement Limits:** Decide how much time you'll spend on social media each day and stick to it to prevent overuse.
- ☐ **Friend Requests:** Accept friend or connection requests only from people you know personally.
- ☐ **Location Sharing:** Disable location sharing on social media apps and avoid posting your location in real-time.
- ☐ **Personal Information:** Limit the personal information you share on profiles and in posts, such as your address, phone number, and birthdate.
- ☐ **Contact Information Sharing:** Share your email address and phone number only with trusted contacts and for necessary communications.
- ☐ **Commenting on Posts:** Choose not to engage with or comment on posts that could lead to conflict or negative interactions.
- ☐ **Privacy Settings:** Regularly review and adjust privacy settings on social media platforms to control who can see your content.
- ☐ **Tagging in Posts:** Ask friends to not tag you in posts or photos without your permission, and utilize platform settings to review tags before they appear on your profile.
- ☐ **Clicking Links:** Be cautious about clicking links in emails or messages, especially from unknown senders, to avoid phishing scams.

3. Implementing Your Boundaries

Decide how you will remind yourself to stick to these boundaries (e.g., setting alarms, using apps).

4. Communicating Your Boundaries

- Consider how and when you'll communicate your digital boundaries to friends, family, and online connections. Write a brief script or points to cover when explaining your new digital boundaries to others.

Establishing a New Online Identity

1. Reflecting on Your Current Online Identity

- How do you feel about your current online identity? Are there aspects you wish to change or leave behind?

2. Defining Your New Online Identity

- Identify values that are important to you and that you want your online presence to reflect.

- List interests or hobbies you wish to explore or share online.

- If applicable, describe how you want to be perceived online. What message or image do you want to convey?

3. Planning Your New Online Presence

- Decide which platforms are best suited to your values and interests.
Consider starting with platforms that offer strong privacy controls.

- Plan for setting up new accounts. Consider using variations of your name or pseudonyms that don't easily tie back to your old identity.

- Outline the privacy settings you will use for each account to protect your identity and manage who can see your content and interact with you.

4. Engaging With Online Communities

- What type of content do you plan to share? How does it reflect your values and interests?

- Identify communities or groups you want to join that align with your interests. Plan how you will engage in a way that is respectful and positive.

5. Maintaining Digital Wellness

- Plan regular breaks from social media to rejuvenate and maintain perspective.

2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

Classification status

- DSM-5-TR: No standalone DSM-5-TR diagnosis under the workbook title · educational/contextual topic unless a separately assessed disorder applies
- ICD-11 CDDR: No dedicated ICD-11 CDDR mental-disorder code under the workbook title · educational/contextual topic unless another coded condition is established
- This workbook is non-diagnostic. A title, checklist, or completed activity never establishes a diagnosis.

Pages requiring the updated interpretation

- The audit identified source pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. The statements below supersede incompatible diagnostic, scoring, safety, or resource wording on those pages.

Diagnostic and differential limits

- Use Cyberbullying Recovery material to support assessment or intervention planning, not to assign a diagnosis. Evaluate duration, severity, clinically significant distress or impairment, developmental and cultural context, medical/substance causes, exclusions, and relevant differentials.

Document-specific corrections

- Keep Cyberbullying Recovery explicitly non-diagnostic; its exercises organize experience and goals but do not establish a mental disorder or causal explanation.
- Supersede diagnostic-sounding scoring on pages [2, 5, 29]: disclose whether each tool is validated or author-created, remove unsupported thresholds, and separate symptom monitoring from diagnosis.
- Revise exposure content on pages [25] to require consent, an objectively safe graded hierarchy, condition-specific response guidance, progress review, and stop/reassessment criteria; never equate flooding with effective exposure.
- Clinically review medical or treatment statements on pages [22]; remove prescriptive medication advice, clarify coordination with licensed medical care, and update contraindications or urgent warning signs for the specific topic.
- Replace crisis wording on pages [2] with the current U.S. 988 call/text/chat pathway, 911 or nearest emergency department for immediate danger/medical emergency, and a direction to use verified local services outside the United States.

Measures, scoring, and permissions

- Pages [2, 5, 29] contain named, implied, or author-created screening/rating content . These scores are not diagnostic unless the exact instrument, version, validation population, administration, and interpretation are established. Identify provenance for every item set and scoring rule. Obtain publisher permission/license when required; otherwise remove cutoffs and label it as a nonvalidated reflection checklist, or replace it with a properly licensed measure without altering its wording/scoring.

Intervention scope and contraindications

- For Cyberbullying Recovery, exposure must be voluntary, graded, condition-specific, and conducted only in objectively safe and lawful situations. Do not prescribe flooding; screen medical limitations, trauma cues, dissociation, intoxication, and whether avoidance reflects real danger rather than phobic fear.

Crisis and current resources

- For Cyberbullying Recovery, use: · If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. In the U.S., call or text 988 or use 988lifeline.org for 24/7 crisis support. Outside the U.S., use verified local emergency and crisis services. · Verify all topic-specific agencies and links at publication.

Authoritative references

- <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/updates-to-dsm/updates-to-dsm-5-tr-criteria-text>
- <https://www.psychiatry.org/getmedia/b68a5776-f88c-45c7-9535-fd219d7aa5cb/APA-DSM5TR-Update-September-2025.pdf>

2026 Clinical Alignment

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- <https://icd.who.int/browse/2026-01/mms/en>
- <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240077263>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/988>
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- <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance>
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