

## The Impact of the Guidance Technique of Stopping Negative Thinking on reducing Psychological Reluctance in Swimming Lessons among Female Students of Physical Education and Sports Science

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### Abstract

The significance of the current research lies in studying the impact of the Guidance Technique (Stopping Negative Thinking) to reduce psychological reluctance in swimming lessons among female students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences highlighting the concept of psychological reluctance and how to confront it in the swimming lessons. The research provides a comprehensive and integrated theoretical framework that benefits the guiding process, contributing to the development of guiding programs that help reduce or eliminate psychological reluctance. Additionally, this research offers a psychological reluctance scale, aiding in the evaluation and diagnosis of students for the purpose of guiding them. The research addressed an important segment represented by female students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, so the aim of the current research is to identify the impact of the guidance program according to the method (stopping negative thinking) to reduce psychological reluctance in the swimming lesson among female students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, and achieving the research goal required the construction of two tools, namely: Firstly, a psychological reluctance scale in swimming lessons for female students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences. Secondly, a guiding program using the (Stopping Negative Thinking) method, consisting of 12 guiding sessions for female students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Baghdad, who exhibited high scores on the psychological reluctance scale in swimming lessons.

To achieve this objective, the researchers employed the descriptive survey approach in developing the psychological reluctance scale and used the experimental method, with a pre-test and post-test design, for both the experimental and control groups, aligning with the research problem. The results indicated that the guiding

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method (Stopping Negative Thinking) had a significant effect in reducing psychological reluctance among female students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, with a statistically significant difference compared to the control group.

**Keywords:** Guidance Technique, Stopping Negative Thinking, reducing Psychological Reluctance, Swimming.

### Introduction

Sports psychology is one of the human sciences that is relied upon to harness all capabilities and potential in modifying and properly directing athletic behavior by regulating and controlling emotions, ultimately achieving the best possible performance. Numerous psychological studies and research have emphasized that many psychological conditions, as well as failures in sports performance or academic achievement and the inability to attain favorable results, can be attributed to a variety of psychological factors and causes.

Psychological guiding has become one of the important disciplines in modern human life, particularly in the field of sports, due to the increasing need for students to receive guidance in overcoming challenges and solving their problems. With the intensification of psychological pressures, guiding has a clear and specific goal: to assist students in changing their behavior, better understanding themselves, comprehending their current circumstances, and anticipating future expectations. It aims to resolve their issues and develop their various potentials, enabling them to meet their personal needs within the framework of the psychology of learning and education.

Guiding services play an effective role in fostering students' motivation, including the motivation for academic achievement, and providing technical assistance that enables students to solve their problems. Guiding tasks must be based on sound principles and methods (Ali & Khalaf, 2021).

Cognitive approaches are considered important concepts in psychology due to their connection to individuals' emotions and behaviors in various situations. Through these cognitive approaches, we can reasonably predict the type of behavior individuals with different cognitive styles might exhibit when facing life's challenges. Since each individual possesses a system of cognitive processes, which are essentially functions of the brain, each cognitive process has its own distinctive style. This style reflects the individual's behavior in processing cognitive operations (Jawad & Khalaf, 2017).

The method of stopping negative thinking is considered a cognitive-behavioral technique that holds significant importance for students in identifying and addressing incorrect and negative thoughts that lead to maladjustment, defeat, and failure. This method encourages students to refrain from such thoughts and monitor their feelings and behavior towards themselves through well-planned counseling programs designed for this purpose, providing students with successful experiences to elevate them. The importance of the technique of stopping negative thinking lies in reducing incorrect and negative thoughts, enabling students to understand themselves and their environment,

and fostering a sense of responsibility by confronting situations and events that may lead to failure.

The significance of this study emerges from its aim to help students regulate negative and incorrect thoughts that manifest through illogical imaginations and behaviors, preventing their infiltration and controlling and eliminating them. This is achieved by assisting students, through the guidance counselor, in regulating incorrect thoughts and beliefs, and modifying the negative behaviors that cause psychological hesitation in learning and performing swimming skills. These thoughts and behaviors are replaced with new ones that enhance the student's effectiveness and achieve personal adjustment.

Among the previous studies that addressed this topic is the study by Ibrahim (2013), which aimed to explore a guiding program to reduce psychological reluctance among students of the College of Physical Education in some gymnastics skills. To achieve the research objectives, the researcher developed a psychological reluctance scale, relying on the scale by Firas Hussein. Another study by Sahi (2017) aimed to identify the effectiveness of two guiding methods (self-talk and stopping negative thinking) in reducing psychological reluctance among high school students by testing null hypotheses, Al-Mutani (2014) examined an educational guiding program using the self-examination approach to suppress psychological reluctance in performing the snatch lift among students of the College of Physical Education. Hatem (2013) concluded that there is a variance between the level of psychological reluctance and the accuracy of shooting in football players and found no significant difference between psychological reluctance and shooting accuracy due to the lack of attention to the psychological aspect. Therefore, the researcher recommended the necessity of psychological preparation during the implementation of training programs. Abu Al-Tayyib's (2020) study indicated that emotional intelligence and its dimensions (autonomy, social communication, and adaptability) have an impact on reducing psychological reluctance in swimmers of the Jordanian national team. Additionally, the study by Thanon (2012) sought to determine the degree of psychological reluctance among athletes of individual sports from the University of Mosul colleges and to explore the relationship between the degree of psychological reluctance and the performance level of athletes in individual sports. Finally, the study by Al-Bachari (2005) aimed to investigate the effect of the methods of stopping thinking and role-playing in developing aesthetic values among high school students.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

Swimming is a unique sporting activity compared to other sports, as it takes place in an aquatic environment. This setting causes students to feel anxious due to their negative thoughts and undesirable ideas, leading to a state of fear and hesitation. This is accompanied by changes in cognitive functions, resulting in diminished mental abilities and difficulty concentrating. All of this stems from the way students think and their anticipation of danger when learning and performing swimming skills.

Psychological guiding programs, whether developmental, preventive, or therapeutic, have proven effective in creating positive changes in students' thoughts and behaviors.

Based on the above, and through the researcher's review of the scientific references and previous studies, it became evident that there is a scarcity of research addressing the impact of a guiding approach (stopping negative thinking) in reducing psychological reluctance during swimming lessons among students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To develop a scale for psychological reluctance during swimming lessons among students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences.
2. To design a guiding program based on the method of "stopping negative thinking" to reduce psychological reluctance during swimming lessons among students of Physical Education and Sports Sciences.

### Research Procedures

The two researchers used the experimental approach with two equivalent groups: a control group and an experimental group, which was deemed suitable for the research problem. The research population included students from the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at Baghdad University and Al-Mustansiriya University, totaling 231 students. The researcher selected a sample from the first and second-year students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, totaling 209 students. This sample included second-year students from Baghdad University (Jadriya), first-year students from Baghdad University (Al-Waziriya), and first-year students from Al-Mustansiriya University for the academic year 2023-2024. The sample was divided into: 10 students for the pilot study, 120 students for scale development, and 79 students for the main application.

### Research Tools:

The researchers utilized the following devices and tools: an initial version of the psychological reluctance scale questionnaire, a questionnaire for expert and specialist opinions on the content of guiding sessions, one camera, an HP computer, a data projector, and office supplies (papers, pens).

### Field Research Procedures:

#### Constructing Scale Items:

Constructing psychological scale items is a crucial step in completing their construction. The items were prepared in both positive and negative formats (Appendix 1), with a total of 31 items distributed across three domains. The first domain, negative thinking, consists of 11 items; the second domain, fear, contains 10 items; and the third domain, self-confidence, includes 10 items. Each item has five response options: "Completely applies to me," "Applies to me," "Sometimes applies to me," "Does not apply to me," and "Does not apply to me at all."

#### Scientific Foundations of the Scale:

##### 1. Logical Validity:

Achieved by defining the theoretical concept of psychological reluctance, determining its domains, and developing items for each domain.

## 2. Apparent Validity:

This type of validity is achieved by presenting the scale items to a group of experts before its application, in order to assess the appropriateness of these items in measuring the intended characteristic. The experts also evaluate whether the wording of the items is suitable for second-year students of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences and whether each item belongs to its respective domain. The panel consisted of 11 experts specialized in the field of sports psychology. The scale designer ensures the reliability of their opinions and feedback, taking into account the judgments agreed upon by the majority. Based on this, the researcher reformulated some items according to the experts' suggestions and deleted others due to lack of agreement, while keeping the items supported by the majority. The percentage of acceptance or rejection of these items was calculated. Through the experts' scientific observations, it was confirmed that the psychological hesitation scale measures the variable for which it was designed. This type of validity was thus confirmed for the psychological hesitation scale, establishing its logical soundness.

## 3. Construct Validity:

The researcher verified the construct validity (theoretical validity) of the psychological hesitation scale through the following indicators: Calculating the Discriminatory Power of the Items: This was done using the extreme groups method, based on the scores obtained by the sample group during the construction phase. The researcher identified the items that were able to distinguish between different levels of psychological hesitation and retained them, while weak items that failed to distinguish were excluded. Item-Total Correlation Method: All items of the psychological hesitation scale showed acceptable and statistically significant correlations at the (0.05) level. The researcher used the item-total correlation method to evaluate the relationship between each item's score and the total score of the scale. Correlation of Each Domain's Items with Their Respective Domain: Pearson's correlation coefficient was used, and the results showed that all items within each domain (negative thinking, fear, and self-confidence) had acceptable and statistically significant correlations at the (0.05) level. Relationship Between the Domains of Psychological Hesitation: The correlations between the three domains were also examined, further supporting the validity of the scale. Moreover, Anastasi (1976, p. 154) emphasized that internal consistency of the scale's items, as well as the item-total correlation within each domain, are key indicators of construct validity. The researcher confirmed this in the statistical analysis of the scale's items, with all items showing statistically significant results. Based on these indicators, the scale is considered valid both in terms of content and construct.

### **Reliability**

To calculate the reliability coefficient, the scale was administered to a sample of 79 students, selected randomly.

The researcher used two methods to calculate the reliability of the scale:

- **Cronbach's Alpha for Internal Consistency:**

The researcher employed this method to determine the reliability of the psychological reluctance drive scale. This type of reliability, known as internal consistency, indicates the strength of the correlations between the items on the test. If all items are truly measuring the same trait, they should be correlated with each other. The degree of internal correlation among the items is what determines the alpha coefficient (Bahie, 1999, p. 18).

To calculate reliability using this method, 120 reliability forms were used, and the Cronbach's Alpha formula was applied. The resulting reliability coefficient was (0.71), indicating that the scale is internally consistent, as this formula reflects the degree of internal consistency of the scale's items.

- **Test-Retest Method:**

The reliability coefficient calculated using the test-retest method is referred to as the stability coefficient, as it represents the correlation coefficient between the scores of the first and second applications of the test on the same individuals, with a time interval in between (Murphy, 1988, p. 65).

To calculate the reliability coefficient using this method, the researcher administered the test to a sample of 100 female students from the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences. The test was reapplied to the same group two weeks after the initial administration. Pearson's correlation coefficient was then computed between the scores of the two test administrations, resulting in a reliability coefficient of 0.80 with a significance value of 0.00, confirming the test's validity and reliability.

### **Objectivity of the Scale:**

After collecting and analyzing the data from the test and its retest, it was evident that all items were clear to the sample. The test featured multiple-choice options that allowed only one correct answer per item, with no open-ended questions. Thus, the questionnaire demonstrated a high level of objectivity, ensuring that there could be no discrepancies in the scores obtained by the sample participants.

### Final Application of the Scale:

After analyzing the items of the psychological reluctance scale and determining the discriminative power of each item, as well as calculating the correlation between the score of each item and the total score of the scale, the final version of the scale consisted of 25 items. The response options were based on a five-point Likert scale (correction key) as follows: "Completely applies to me," "Mostly applies to me," "Sometimes applies to me," "Does not apply to me," and "Completely does not apply to me," with corresponding scores of (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) respectively. For negatively worded items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), the scoring was reversed. The maximum score on the scale is 125, the minimum score is 25, and the hypothetical mean is 75 points.

### Application of the Guidance Method:

After randomly distributing the sample into two groups, the researcher applied the guidance method to the experimental group, leaving the control group without any intervention. The experimental group underwent the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique following an agreement with the participating students. The application of the method lasted for six weeks, consisting of 12 guidance sessions, with two sessions held each week. The program began on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, and concluded on Sunday, March 31, 2024. Each session lasted 45 minutes.

The first guidance session for the experimental group took place on Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 10:15 AM, while the second session was held on Sundays during the same time. The sessions were conducted weekly on Sundays and Wednesdays. After completing the guidance method, the researcher administered a post-test of the psychological reluctance scale to both groups. A follow-up test was scheduled for Sunday, April 14, 2024, to verify the continuity of the program's impact and its effectiveness. The sessions were conducted in locations such as the pool and the exam halls.

### Statistical Methods:

- 1) Independent Samples T-Test: Used to compare the means of two independent groups.
- 2) Paired Samples T-Test: Used to compare the means of two related groups.
- 3) Pearson Correlation Coefficient: Measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables.
- 4) Standard Score Formula: Calculates the standardized score or z-score for individual data points.
- 5) Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient: Assesses the internal consistency or reliability of the scale.
- 6) Standard Error Formula: Determines the standard deviation of the sampling distribution.
- 7) Percentage Calculation: Used to express data in terms of percentages.

The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analyzing the research data.

**Presentation, analysis and discussion of the results:**

The presentation and discussion focus on the results of comparing the mean scores between the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group using the psychological reluctance scale. This analysis aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention by examining changes in the average scores of the participants before and after the implementation of the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique.

Table 1

This table shows the mean scores and standard deviations of the experimental group, as well as the t-value, before and after applying the guidance program (the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique) on the psychological reluctance scale.

variable	pre		post		Standard error	Calculated t-value	Indicator value	Indicator	
	E.G	D	E.G	D					
psychological reluctance	87.70	5.20	53.60	4.29	34.10	1.26	27.06	0.000	moral

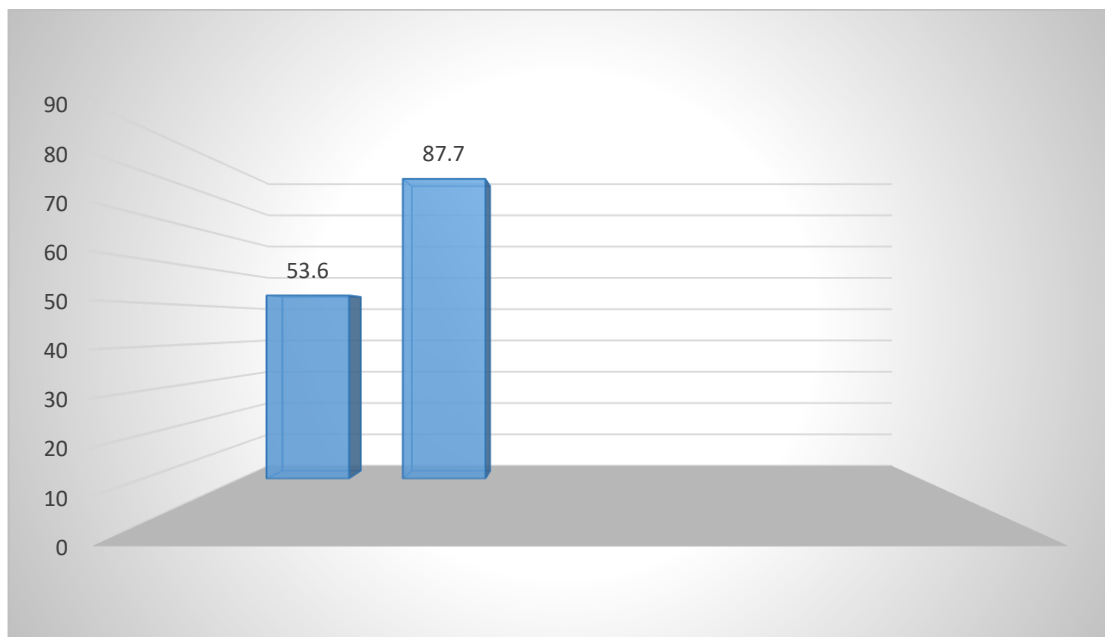
The results presented in Table 1 indicate that the pre-test mean score for the experimental group was 87.70. According to the scale used in this study, this mean score reflects a high level of psychological reluctance among the participants. The standard deviation for the pre-test was 5.20.

Following the application of the guidance program using the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique, the post-test mean score was 53.60. This suggests a reduction in psychological reluctance among the participants. The standard deviation for the post-test was 4.29.

To determine the statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test mean scores, the calculated t-value was 27.6, with a significance value of 0.000. This indicates that the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, with 9 degrees of freedom, favoring the post-test scores.



The researcher attributes these results to the impact of the guidance program and the techniques used in the "Stop Negative Thinking" approach, which was applied to the experimental group over twelve sessions. The program effectively reduced psychological reluctance by employing cognitive-behavioral techniques and activities, leading to significant changes in the participants' scores and demonstrating the effectiveness of the "Stop Negative Thinking" method.



**Figure (1) shows the arithmetic averages between the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group on the psychological reluctance scale**  
**Presenting, analyzing and discussing the results of the post-tests of the research groups on the psychological reluctance scale:**

**Table (2)**

**Tukey's test values for balancing the mean scores of the students on the psychological frequency scale**

Comparison number	Groups	Arithmetic average	Variance Between Mean Scores:	value Tukey) (	Indicator value	Statistical indicator	Variances Direction
1	Experimental group	53.60	33.20	4.33	0.00	indicate	for the experimental group
	Control group	86.80					

It is observed that there is a significant difference in the psychological reluctance variable between the experimental group and the control group. The researcher attributes these differences to the fact that the experimental group received the guidance program using the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique regularly, whereas the control group did not receive any guidance program and only experienced the teaching method employed by the swimming instructor.

The researcher attributes the results to the following reasons:

- 1) Effectiveness of the Guidance Techniques: The guidance program was effective and successful in changing the students' thoughts and behaviors. The techniques used played a significant role in helping students move away from mental distractions, such as fear and anxiety about injury, drowning, hesitation, and confusion when entering the swimming pool. (Salih et al., 2024)
- 2) Impact of Psychological Factors on Performance: Performance is greatly influenced by psychological factors, such as whether the student perceives the swimming lesson environment as safe or threatening, based on their thought patterns. Psychological reluctance is, from the researcher's perspective, (Nashwan, 2024) a direct result of the student's self-perception and their view of the surrounding environment (the swimming lesson). The guidance program worked to alter the student's perceptions of the swimming lesson, helping them to view it as a safe environment. The use of positive reinforcement by the counselor to correct negative thoughts and replace them with rational and logical ones had a noticeable effect on modifying the student's behavior and the success of the guidance program. (Kadhim, 2024a)

Scientific Approach to Guidance Theories and Techniques: The application of guidance theories and their techniques in a scientific manner had a clear impact on the success of the counseling process. Cognitive-behavioral guiding, (Nashwan & Alzoubi, 2022) which involves cognitive processes such as thinking, perception, and imagination, directly affects individuals. (Abdulhusein et al., 2024) This approach helps the counselee learn new behavioral skills and cognitive structures. The guide's role is to diagnose distorted cognitive processes and organize learning experiences that will change unwanted beliefs and behavior patterns. Additionally, the "Stop Negative Thinking" approach, based on cognitive-behavioral theory, effectively helps the counselee recognize false beliefs by training them to identify distorted or unrealistic emotions and deal with problems to alleviate them. (Kadhim, 2024b) This method aims to identify and address incorrect thinking and manage pressures that lead to false beliefs, with the goal of replacing them. Collaboration between the counselor and the counselee, and building a relationship to take responsibility and make sound decisions based on credibility in confronting illogical thoughts, is crucial. This involves reorganizing the counselee's thoughts to make them more rational (Beck, 1985, p. 1432).

### Conclusions and Recommendations:

- 1) The two researchers found that the guidance program based on the "Stop Negative Thinking" technique was effective and demonstrated success in reducing psychological reluctance among physical education and sports science students.
- 2) It was evident that the techniques used in the "Stop Negative Thinking" approach had a significant impact on decreasing psychological reluctance during swimming lessons for these students.

The researchers recommend placing a strong emphasis on cognitive-behavioral guidance programs due to their effective role in modifying students' psychological



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perceptions of sports activities taught in the College of Physical Education and Sports Science, such as swimming, gymnastics, and others. Further research should be conducted to explore the relationship between the current variable of psychological reluctance and the performance of specific skills in other sports studied in the College of Physical Education and Sports Science. The researchers also suggest encouraging swimming instructors to prioritize guidance programs, as they play a crucial role in the learning process of swimming.

**Appendices**  
**Appendix (1)**

**Psychological Reluctance Scale in its Initial Form**

Dear Student,

The researcher aims to conduct a study titled: "The Impact of Two Guiding Techniques (Stopping Negative Thinking – Self-Talk) on Reducing Psychological Reluctance in Swimming Lessons Among Physical Education and Sport Science Students."

Therefore, you are kindly requested to fill out the attached questionnaire with accuracy and honesty, expressing your personal opinion, while considering the following notes:

- Read each statement carefully, and once you understand its meaning, mark (√) next to the statement that applies to you.
- Answer directly based on what applies to you personally. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers; all responses are based on your personal assessment.
- There is no need to mention your name.
- Be assured that your responses will remain confidential and will be used solely for scientific research purposes. Therefore, please answer all statements accurately and truthfully without leaving any unanswered.

The answer is as in the following example:

No.	Paragraphs	Completely applies to me	Applies to me	Sometimes applies to me	Does not apply to me	Doesn't apply to me at all
1		√				
2				√		

<b>The researcher</b> <b>Tiba Zaid Hikmat</b>	<b>The supervisor</b> <b>Prof. Dr. Ali Subhi Khelef</b>
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No.	Paragraphs	Completely applies to me	Applies to me	Sometimes applies to me	Does not apply to me	Doesn't apply to me at all
1	I find learning how to swim difficult.					
2	The fear of failure makes me hesitant to enter the swimming pool.					
3	I feel capable of learning swimming skills.					
4	I believe my physical abilities do not qualify me to learn swimming.					
5	I fear drowning when I enter the swimming pool.					
6	The mockery of some students distracts me.					
7	I become pessimistic when I enter the swimming class.					
8	I am afraid of learning swimming skills because they are performed in a water environment.					
9	I feel ashamed, which causes me to lose confidence in the swimming class.					
10	The swimming class is my weak point.					
11	I am afraid of getting injured.					
12	I feel hopeless about achieving a high grade in the swimming subject.					
13	No matter how hard I try, it is difficult to learn swimming.					
14	I avoid the swimming class due to the fear of failure.					
15	I have the ambition to improve my swimming skills.					

16	At the beginning of the new academic year, if I fail to learn swimming, I won't learn it afterward.					
17	I fear being mocked by others in the swimming class.					
18	I feel that my academic performance in swimming is weaker compared to my peers.					
19	Everything around me in the swimming class makes me feel bored.					
20	The blame from others increases my fear of the swimming class.					
21	I feel frustrated when the swimming instructor criticizes me.					
22	I will compensate for my failure in learning swimming through success in other subjects.					
23	I feel tense when I enter the swimming pool.					
24	I feel embarrassed by the looks of the instructors and classmates in the swimming class.					
25	I feel that females are incapable of learning swimming skills.					
26	I feel anxious before entering the swimming pool.					
27	I have the experience to learn swimming skills.					
28	When I enter the swimming pool, I think negatively.					
29	Failing to learn swimming skills diminishes my value in the eyes of others.					
30	I feel brave when entering the swimming pool.					
31	When I fail to learn swimming skills, I feel extremely frustrated.					

**Appendix (2)**  
**Sample of a Guiding Session**  
**Experimental Group for the Negative Thinking Stopping Technique**

**Session Title: Reducing Feelings of Anxiety**  
**Session Duration: 45 minutes**

Session Title	Needs	General Objective	Specific Objectives	Techniques and Activities	Formative Assessment
Reducing anxiety	<p>1- To introduce the experimental group members to the concept of anxiety and its manifestations in a simplified scientific manner.</p> <p>2- To reduce feelings of anxiety.</p> <p>3- To identify the incorrect and negative thoughts and beliefs that trigger hesitation and anxiety among the experimental group members.</p>	<p>Helping the members of the guiding group understand the importance of effective confrontation of problems and thoughts that lead to feelings of anxiety.</p>	<p>Enabling the counselee to:</p> <p>1. Understand the meaning of anxiety and its manifestations.</p> <p>2. Comprehend anxiety in general and how the feeling of anxiety can be reduced.</p>	<p>1- Welcome and greet the members of the experimental group.</p> <p>2- The researcher will employ various techniques to reduce feelings of anxiety through methods such as questioning, role-playing, and discussion.</p> <p>3- The researcher will explain the concept of anxiety and then outline the steps the students should follow to handle situations and events occurring in the swimming class and how to reduce feelings of anxiety.</p>	<p>1- The meaning of anxiety and how to reduce feelings of anxiety, along with a summary of what was covered during the session.</p> <p>2- The level of benefit and understanding of the topic, and their impressions about the importance of confronting incorrect and negative thoughts and beliefs that trigger anxiety in the swimming class, as well as developing skills that can reduce anxiety.</p>

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