

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Thought Records

Assumptions:

- Changing emotional, behavioral, and thought patterns can be challenging; CBT is one option that may be useful.
- CBT is a process which includes teaching/learning, guided practice, and feedback to develop new skills over time.
- Thought records can be a useful way to learn, track progress, and enhance communication between therapist and client.
- Typically, a strong emotional response is the key signal to determine which situations to include in a thought record.

Process Goals Often Related to Thought Records:

Catch: Increase awareness of cognitive processes (thoughts, images, impulses).

Check: Learn to detach from and evaluate your own thought processes.

Change: Develop cognitive flexibility by considering alternate ways of viewing situations that are healthier for you.

Information Typically Monitored on a Thought Record Worksheet:

Situation: Who? What? When? Where?

Emotions: What were your feelings? How strong (numerical rating) were your feelings?

Thoughts: What were you thinking? What were you saying to yourself? Any mantras or MP3's playing?

Images: Any memories? Any images that were not thoughts?

Impulses: Any strong desires to do or say things? What did your body want to do?

Evaluation of Own Processes: Which thought/image/impulse was most closely related to the emotion? If that thought was true, what would that mean about you or the world? How valid (numerical rating) is the most important thought? What evidence is there for and against this thought? How important is that thought now and in the future? How does thinking this way impact you (pros/cons of thinking this way)?

Alternative Views: How can you view the situation differently? How can you think of the situation in a more balanced way? What are worst case, best case, and most realistic case scenarios? What would you tell a friend in your situation? How could you react to this situation in a way that would help you achieve your goals? What can you accept about the situation?

CBT Thought Record

Situation:

Emotions:

Thoughts, Images, Impulses:

Evaluation of Own Processes:

Alternative Views:

Notes or questions about this record: