

CBT Thought Record

Use this when a situation triggers a strong emotion or automatic thought. Aim for a response that is more accurate and useful - not simply more positive.

1 Notice -> 2 Examine -> 3 Respond

Situation

What happened? Stick to observable details where possible.

Emotion(s)

Name the emotion and rate intensity from 0-100.

Automatic thought

What went through your mind? Which thought felt most emotionally charged?

Evidence that supports the thought

Facts only. What genuinely points in this direction?

Evidence that does not support it

What facts, context, or alternative explanations are easy to overlook?

Balanced response

Write a response that fits the evidence. It can still acknowledge risk, uncertainty, or difficulty.

Next useful step

Reframe, plan, accept, test, ask, wait - or do nothing for now.

Re-rate the emotion

What is the intensity now (0-100)? What changed, if anything?

Automatic Thoughts: Catch the Thought

Automatic thoughts are quick words, images, meanings, or predictions that appear in response to a situation. This sheet helps you slow them down enough to see what your mind added.

Catch it -> Name it -> Separate fact from interpretation

Trigger / situation

What was happening just before the emotion shifted?

First thought, image, or meaning

Write the first thing that flashed through your mind - even if it seems irrational, embarrassing, or incomplete.

Emotion + intensity

What did you feel? Rate each emotion 0-100.

Body sensations

What did you notice physically?

The hot thought

Which thought best explains why the emotion became strong? Rewrite it as one clear sentence.

Camera test: what is observable?

What could a camera, audio recording, or neutral witness confirm?

What did my mind add?

Predictions, interpretations, assumptions, labels, or mind reading.

What deserves attention next?

Do I need to reframe the thought, solve a real problem, get information, tolerate uncertainty, or simply let the thought pass?

Cognitive Distortions Finder

Cognitive distortions are recurring thinking patterns that can make an interpretation less accurate or less useful. A distortion is a clue to examine the thought - not proof that the thought is false.

Start with one thought. Check any patterns that might be influencing it.

Thought to examine

Write the thought exactly as it showed up.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ All-or-nothing thinking
Seeing only extremes: success/failure, good/bad, always/never. | ☐ Overgeneralization
Turning one event into a broad rule about the future or yourself. |
| ☐ Catastrophizing
Treating a feared possibility as if it is likely or unmanageable. | ☐ Mental filter
Focusing narrowly on negative information while missing relevant context. |
| ☐ Mind reading
Assuming you know what another person thinks without enough evidence. | ☐ Discounting positives
Explaining away evidence that does not fit the negative conclusion. |
| ☐ Fortune telling
Predicting a future outcome as though it is already known. | ☐ Labelling
Turning a mistake or behaviour into a fixed identity label. |
| ☐ Emotional reasoning
Treating a feeling as proof: "I feel it, therefore it must be true." | ☐ Should statements
Using rigid rules about how you, others, or life must be. |

Which pattern(s) fit - and which do not?

Do not force a label. Note only the patterns that genuinely help you understand the thought.

A more accurate version

Keep what is true. Remove exaggeration, certainty you do not have, or conclusions that go beyond the evidence.

Reframe the Thought

Reframing is not positive thinking. The goal is to build a response that better fits the evidence, context, uncertainty, and what you can actually do.

Accuracy over positivity

Situation

What happened?

Automatic thought

Write the thought in one sentence. If there are several, choose the one with the strongest emotional charge.

What supports it?

Facts, context, or real risks.

What complicates it?

Missing information, alternative explanations, exceptions, or evidence pointing elsewhere.

What kind of response fits?

Is this mainly an interpretation to reframe, a real problem to plan for, something to accept, or a prediction you can test?

Balanced reframe

Write a response you can actually believe. It can include uncertainty, difficulty, and limits.

Next step

What would you do differently if you held the balanced view for the next hour?

What Do I Know? What Am I Predicting? What Can I Do?

Use this when your mind is filling in missing information. Separate facts from predictions, then decide whether any useful action is actually available.

Facts -> Predictions -> Actions -> Uncertainty

The question or worry

What is your mind trying to figure out?

1. What I know

Observable facts. What could a camera, record, or reliable source confirm?

2. What I am predicting

Guesses, assumptions, interpretations, feared outcomes, or mind reading.

3. What I can do

A useful action, question, plan, boundary, or information source - if one exists.

What remains uncertain?

Write the part you cannot reliably know yet, even after reasonable action or information gathering.

Enough information rule

What would count as enough information to move forward?

What can stay unanswered for now?

Name the question you are willing to carry without solving immediately.

Behavioral Experiment Planner

Use a small, safe real-world test to gather evidence about a prediction. The goal is not to prove yourself right or wrong - it is to learn.

Predict -> Test -> Observe -> Update

Belief or prediction

Make it specific enough to test. Example: "If I ask one question in the meeting, people will think I am incompetent."

How strongly do I believe it?

0-100% before the experiment.

What would count as evidence?

What observable result would support or weaken the prediction?

Small, safe experiment

What will you actually do? Keep the test proportionate and avoid unnecessary risk.

Safety behaviours to reduce

What do you usually do to prevent the feared outcome or feel certain?
Reduce only what is safe and appropriate.

What I will observe

What facts will you collect instead of relying only on how anxious you feel?

What happened?

Describe the result without grading yourself.

What did I learn?

What was expected, unexpected, or still uncertain?

Belief now

Re-rate 0-100%. What would be a fair updated belief?

Worry, Problem or Uncertainty?

Not every anxious thought needs the same response. Use this sheet to decide whether there is a problem to solve, information to obtain, or uncertainty that cannot be removed yet.

Choose the response that fits the problem

The worry

Write the question, prediction, or situation that is taking up your attention.

A. A real problem ☐

Something is happening and a useful action is available.

Response: Plan / act

B. Missing information ☐

A reliable answer can reasonably be obtained.

Response: Ask / check once

C. Uncertainty ☐

No reliable answer is available yet, or reasonable action is already complete.

Response: Allow / wait / continue

Which category fits best - and why?

If more than one fits, separate the solvable part from the uncertain part.

If action or information is available

What is the next proportionate step? When will you stop once the useful step is complete?

If no reliable answer is available

What question will remain unanswered? What can you return your attention to instead?

My enough-information rule

Complete: "For this situation, enough information means..."

Next reasonable step

What will you do after this worksheet - including choosing to wait or do nothing?

Rumination Exit Worksheet

Rumination can feel productive while repeatedly circling the same question. This sheet helps you check whether thinking is still producing information - and choose an exit when it is not.

Ask: "What do I know now that I did not know 10 minutes ago?"

The loop

What question, conversation, mistake, or future scenario keeps replaying?

What has this thinking produced?

New facts? A decision? A useful action? A clearer question?

What is it trying to give me?

Certainty, reassurance, an explanation, control, self-punishment, prevention?

10-minute test

What do I know now that I did not know 10 minutes ago? If the answer is "nothing," the loop may no longer be solving the problem.

Choose an exit:

- ☐ Take one concrete action
- ☐ Get one piece of needed information
- ☐ Schedule a specific time to revisit it
- ☐ Let the question remain unanswered for now
- ☐ Shift attention to a chosen activity

My exit plan

What will I do for the next 10-20 minutes instead of continuing the loop?

If the thought returns

Write one sentence you can use without reopening the whole debate. Example: "I have already thought about this; I will return to it at 6 pm if needed."
