

Challenging Thoughts: Cognitive Restructuring

A useful tool in reframing and reshaping thought processes that comes from cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is cognitive restructuring. It helps in becoming aware of and challenging thoughts based on how realistic and true they are. Use this worksheet to better understand and challenge your thoughts.

Example

What thought did you experience?

- I thought to myself “I can’t do anything right, I’m a failure.”

Describe the situation associated with the thought. What was happening that caused the thought?

- I forgot about something that I was supposed to get done by a certain time. Because I forgot, it didn’t get done.

How did this thought make you feel? Are there any particular emotions associated with this thought?

- I didn’t feel good, I felt pretty bad about myself and guilty for forgetting.

What evidence do you have that supports your thought?

- The evidence I have for the thought is that I did make a mistake by forgetting.

What evidence do you have against your thought? If this is difficult to answer, how might someone else view the situation and the thought? Alternatively, what would you say to a friend experiencing the same thing?

- The evidence I have against the thought is that a mistake doesn’t make me a failure, and I have done things right before.

Thinking back to your evidence for and against your thought, how could you view this situation differently? If you were to view this situation through this perspective, how do you think you would feel?

- I could view this situation differently by remembering that I am human, I made a mistake and that doesn’t make me a failure.
- I think I wouldn’t feel as bad about myself, I might still feel a bit guilty for forgetting, but I won’t be as hard on myself.



What thought did you experience?

Describe the situation associated with the thought. What was happening that caused the thought?

How did this thought make you feel? Are there any particular emotions associated with this thought?

What evidence do you have that supports your thought?

What evidence do you have against your thought? If this is difficult to answer, how might someone else view the situation and the thought? Alternatively, what would you say to a friend experiencing the same thing?



Thinking back to your evidence for and against your thought, how could you view this situation differently? If you were to view this situation through this perspective, how do you think you would feel?



RELEARNING
HUMAN