CBTm

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY WITH MINDFULNESS

THÉRAPIE COGNITIVO-COMPORTEMENTALE DE LA PLEINE CONSCIENCE

Class 1 Handouts

Mindfulness Exercise - *Mindful Breathing*

Testing Your Thoughts

Healthy Thinking Introduction

Thinking Traps

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MINDFUL BREATHING

Find a comfortable sitting posture. Put your feet flat on the ground and try to straighten your back. Gently close your eyes. Let your shoulders drop down and away from your ears. Pay attention to your breathing and just allow yourself to continue to breathe naturally.

Now, rest your hands gently on your belly with the fingertips of each hand lightly touching in the middle. Breathe in smoothly through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth. Continue to take slow, smooth breaths. When you breathe in, notice your belly push your hands gently apart, as you fill your lower lungs with air. When you breathe out, notice your belly sink back towards your spine as you release your breath.

You can imagine that your belly is a balloon. Fill it with air and then watch it deflate. Now continue to focus on the gentle inhalation and exhalation of your breath. In... and out... If any other thoughts or images come into your mind during this exercise, just notice them, and gently bring your attention back to your breath.

You may also become aware of physical sensations or feelings in your body. Simply notice them, and then again, bring your mind back to your breath. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts or feelings any meaning in this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and bring your mind back to your breath. It's normal for your mind to wander. Simply notice that your mind has wandered and gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Continue to focus on your breathing and stay in this relaxed state for as long as you like. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and bring your attention back to your surroundings.

Testing Your Thoughts



CATCH IT

1. What is the situation?
2. What am I thinking or imagining?
3. How much do I believe it? *(a little, medium, or a lot)*
4. How does that thought make me feel? *(e.g., angry, sad, nervous, etc.)*
5. How strong is the feeling on a scale of 0-100?



CHECK IT

6. What makes me think the thought is true?
7. What makes me think the thought is not completely true?
8. What's the worst that could happen?
9. What's the best that could happen?
10. What will probably happen?



CHANGE IT

11. What will happen if I keep telling myself the same thought?
12. What could happen if I changed my thinking?
13. What would I tell my friend _____ if this happened to them?
14. What's another way of thinking about this?
15. How do I feel now? Rerate the intensity on a scale of 0-100.

Testing Your Thoughts

CATCH IT



1. What is the situation?

   I had a slip after 3 weeks of sobriety.

2. What am I thinking or imagining?

   I am a failure. I will never be able to live a sober life.

3. How much do I believe it? *(a little, medium, or a lot)*

   I believe it a lot.

4. How does that thought make me feel? *(e.g., angry, sad, nervous, etc.)*

   Nervous, frustrated, guilt

5. How strong is the feeling on a scale of 0-100?

   About a 90 out of 100.

CHECK IT



6. What makes me think the thought is true?

   I drank even after I promised myself I wouldn't drink.

7. What makes me think the thought is not completely true?

   I have been able to quit drinking before. I haven't had a drink for weeks before this slip.

8. What's the worst that could happen?

   I start drinking again.

9. What's the best that could happen?

   I continue my goal and continue getting healthier.

10. What will probably happen?

    I will have hard days and I will resume my goal to be sober.

CHANGE IT



11. What will happen if I keep telling myself the same thought?

    I will feel upset and hopeless.

12. What could happen if I changed my thinking?

    I will feel pretty good about myself.

13. What would I tell my friend _____Pat_____ if this happened to them?

    Don't be so hard on yourself. Take one day at a time and keep trying.

14. What's another way of thinking about this?

    I will continue with my goal and will call my supports when I need to.

15. How do I feel now? Rerate the intensity on a scale of 0-100.

    A bit better. Feeling about a 20 out of 100 in terms of nervousness.

Testing Your Thoughts



CATCH IT

1. What is the situation?

   I had a stressful day at work and am now home alone and feel the need to use.

2. What am I thinking or imagining?

   I had a hard day and it will help me feel better. I deserve to use.

3. How much do I believe it? *(a little, medium, or a lot)*

   I believe it a lot.

4. How does that thought make me feel? *(e.g., angry, sad, nervous, etc.)*

   Stressed, anxious

5. How strong is the feeling on a scale of 0-100?

   About a 80 out of 100.



CHECK IT

6. What makes me think the thought is true?

   In the past, using has helped me feel good in the moment. I usually use to unwind.

7. What makes me think the thought is not completely true?

   The relief in temporary and I often feel worse the day after.

8. What's the worst that could happen?

   I will feel uncomfortable and will be anxious all night.

9. What's the best that could happen?

   I can leave stress at work and can find healthier ways to relax at home.

10. What will probably happen?

    I will distract myself tonight and start a new day tomorrow.



CHANGE IT

11. What will happen if I keep telling myself the same thought?

    I will use and feel worse. I might miss work tomorrow.

12. What could happen if I changed my thinking?

    I can learn to relax without substances and I will feel pretty good about myself.

13. What would I tell my friend _____Sam_____ if this happened to them?

    You don't need to use to relax. Let hang out and get your mind off it.

14. What's another way of thinking about this?

    I will continue with my goal and will call my supports when I need to.

15. How do I feel now? Rerate the intensity on a scale of 0-100.

    A bit better. About 50 out of 100 now.

Testing Your Thoughts

CATCH IT



1. What is the situation?

   Joanne yelled at me.

2. What am I thinking or imagining?

   She'll never call me again.

3. How much do I believe it? *(a little, medium, or a lot)*

   I believe it a lot.

4. How does that thought make me feel? *(e.g., angry, sad, nervous, etc.)*

   Sad.

5. How strong is the feeling on a scale of 0-100?

   About a 90 out of 100.

CHECK IT



6. What makes me think the thought is true?

   She seems pretty mad.

7. What makes me think the thought is not completely true?

   She's gotten mad at me before but she seems to get over it.

8. What's the worst that could happen?

   I'd lose my best friend.

9. What's the best that could happen?

   She'll call back right away and apologize.

10. What will probably happen?

    She'll act cold for a few days and then I'll call her.

CHANGE IT



11. What will happen if I keep telling myself the same thought?

    I'll keep feeling upset.

12. What could happen if I changed my thinking?

    I could feel better, maybe call her sooner.

13. What would I tell my friend _____Sam_____ if this happened to them?

    Don't worry, just wait two days and call.

14. What's another way of thinking about this?

    She's got a real temper but she doesn't stay mad. I'll try calling her in a few days.

15. How do I feel now? Rerate the intensity on a scale of 0-100.

    A little bit better. I feel a bit less sad. About a 45 out of 100 now.

WHAT IS HEALTHY THINKING?

People often see their feelings as being determined by events, situations, or other people. This belief is reflected in statements such as "You make me so angry," "Public speaking makes me nervous," or "Not being in a relationship makes me depressed". These types of statements suggest that external factors are directly and entirely responsible for how we feel. However, what we think about these situations or what they mean to us will affect whether a situation will lead to anxiety, anger, or joy.

For example, you are walking down the street and see a friend who does not wave or say hi to you. How would you feel if you thought, "How rude, she can not even take the time to acknowledge me!"? What if you thought, "She must not want to be friends anymore; I'm too boring to be part of that group."? How about if you thought, "She must be in a rush and didn't see me."? You would probably feel very different with these different views on why a friend did not acknowledge you. Our thoughts affect how we feel and how we respond to situations.



Automatic Thoughts

Thoughts can become a habit or automatic, just like biting our nails or eating while watching TV. These thoughts can occur so quickly that we may not even realize that the thought has occurred. When automatic thoughts tend to be mostly negative (e.g., I made a mistake – I'm so stupid), they can cause emotional distress.

Adapted from heretohelp.bc.ca and cci.health.wa.gov.au

What is Healthy Thinking?

Healthy thinking is not just positive thinking. There are often negative situations that occur. It would not be helpful to see only the good in every situation, such as losing your job or failing a test. It is normal and healthy to be upset and to have some negative thoughts when these types of situations happen. Healthy thinking is about seeing the entire situation - the good, the bad, and the neutral - and using all of this information to decide what to do. Healthy thinking is about seeing life in a balanced and complete way, rather than only focusing on the negative or positive parts.

Thinking Traps

Everyone falls into thinking traps sometimes. It's most likely to happen when you feel sad, anxious or angry. Thinking traps are also more likely to happen when you're under stress or not taking good care of yourself, e.g. not enough sleep. Individuals with anxiety and depression tend to fall into thinking traps more often, which can trigger and maintain anxiety and depression.



Adapted from heretohelp.bc.ca and cci.health.wa.gov.au

Common Thinking Traps

All or Nothing Thinking 	Thinking in extremes. *"If I'm not perfect, I have failed."* *"Either I do it right or not at all."*	*"What if I slip and will never be able to quit?"* **Dispute:** *A slip doesn't mean that I've undone all of my hard work. I can learn from this experience.*
Mental Filter 	Only paying attention to certain types of evidence ("that doesn't count"). Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes.	*"I didn't talk to many people at the party, I'm boring."* **Dispute:** *I had some good conversations with the people I did talk to and I did enjoy the food and music as well.*
Emotional Reasoning 	Assuming that because we feel a certain way, what we think must be true. *"I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot."* *"I feel anxious, I can't cope without using."*	*"I can't cope with anxiety without having a drink."* **Dispute:** *Even though I feel uncomfortable, I can rely on my skills and support system, knowing these feelings will pass.*
Labelling 	Assigning labels to ourselves or other people. *"I'm a loser." "I'm failure."* *"They're such an idiot."*	*"There's no point in trying again because I am such a failure."* **Dispute:** *It is human to make mistakes. I can learn from them and continue on my recovery journey.*
Fortune Telling 	Predicting that something bad will happen, without any evidence.	*"I feel nervous so I cannot enjoy myself."* **Dispute:** *Even if it feels different, that doesn't mean my time will be less enjoyable.*

Common Thinking Traps

Over-generalizing



Seeing a pattern based upon a single event or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw. Words like "always" or "never" are often used.

"I can never do anything right."

Dispute: *This one mistake doesn't mean I fail at everything.*

Demands



Words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty or like we failed. If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration.

"I should be able to handle this without getting cravings."

Dispute: *It's understandable and normal to have cravings.*

Personalization



Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.

"My spouse looks irritable today. I must have done something to upset them."

Dispute: *My spouse is irritable, I wonder what is going on for them.*

Catastrophizing & Minimization



Blowing things out of proportion, or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important.

Undermining progress.

"I stumbled over my words during a conversation at work, so I'll probably lose my job."

Dispute: *Not likely* 🙂

GETTING UNSTUCK FROM A THINKING TRAP

Below are some strategies to help deal with common thinking traps. It is not usually helpful to tell yourself to stop thinking that way. Often, when we push away thoughts, they are more likely to pop up again (e.g., try not to think about a pink elephant for 30 seconds). It's more helpful to carefully examine a thought to see if it is accurate, or if there is a more balanced way to think about the situation.

1. Feeling or Thought?

It can be easy to confuse thoughts and feelings. In every day conversations we often use the terms interchangeably. For example, we might say "I think I am anxious" or "I feel like everyone is laughing at me." When we are challenging our thinking traps, it's helpful to very clearly separate our thoughts and our feelings.

To do this you can ask yourself:

- What is the situation? What are the "facts" that everyone would agree on if they saw a videotape of the event?
- What are your thoughts? What are you telling yourself about the meaning of the situation?
- What are your emotions? How do you feel (typically one word)?
- What are your behaviours? How are you reacting and what are you doing to cope?

2. Find any 'Thinking Traps'

Examine your different thoughts and compare them to the list of thinking traps. It is common to fall into more than one trap. Find any that might apply to you.

3. Challenge the thinking traps

Start to examine your thoughts like a scientist or a detective looking for hard evidence. What are the facts?

- **Examine the evidence:** Is there evidence for or against your thought? Make sure you look at evidence on both sides.
- **Double-standard:** Ask yourself what you would think if someone else was in this situation.
- **Survey method:** Ask other people that you trust if they agree with your thoughts. For example, if you think you are a bad parent because your child is acting up, you could ask other parents if they have ever had a similar problem.
- **Conduct an experiment:** Test your beliefs to collect more real-world evidence that could support or refute your thought. For example, if you think your friends don't want to spend time with you, call a few friends to make plans and see if they all say no.



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