

Thought Record

CBT is based on the idea that it is not what happens to us that determines how we feel, but how we think about what happens to us. When situations occur, we have specific thoughts about the situations called *automatic thoughts*. These thoughts produce the emotions we experience. *Thought records* are a specific type of journaling activity designed to help you become more aware of the connection between your automatic thoughts and feelings. Thought records also help you grow to be more active in challenging and replacing these thoughts. The more you practice, the better you become at thinking in more functional and adaptive ways. Use the chart below to begin replacing your negative automatic thoughts with more positive alternative thoughts.

| Situation | Automatic Thought | Emotion | Alternative Thought | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were you doing when you experienced the emotion? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was going through your mind? Was it words? An image? A memory? • What type of cognitive distortion does this thought represent? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emotions did you feel during the situation? • How would you rate the intensity of each emotion from 0-100%? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you do to maintain an attitude of openness and acceptance in this situation? • What's the worst that could happen? What could you do then? • What advice would you give to a friend? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you rate the intensity of your emotion now (0-100%)? • What goal-directed activity can you engage in now? |