


CBT Cognitive Restructuring Thought Record

Challenging and changing the content of our thoughts can profoundly shape how we feel and behave. This is known as cognitive restructuring. The four layers of thinking that influence unhelpful thoughts are **negative automatic thoughts, beliefs, irrational rules, and dysfunctional assumptions**. The column on the left guides you in evaluating the content of your unhelpful thoughts through the lens of these layers of thinking. In the column on the right, you list the new helpful thoughts and beliefs you developed through your nonjudgemental analysis of your unhelpful thoughts. Reviewing exercise 1.6, *Exploring the Many Faces of Denial on p.61 of Facing the Shadow*, along with the examples listed below, can help guide your thought through this process.

Situation / Trigger/ Thought		Cognitive Restructuring Evaluation Criteria
Something happens around you, or you have a distressing thought or feeling.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What facts support a positive or more realistic interpretation? 2. What would an independent observer say? 3. In retrospect, What would I say to myself a few days later? 4. Is holding on to this thought helpful? 5. If someone you cared for or loved was experiencing the exact same thought, what positive interpretations would you tell them? <p><i>Use the information and new helpful thoughts you develop below as future self-talking points. Your self-talking points can be used in the future when experiencing the same unhelpful thought pattern.</i></p>
Negative Automatic Thoughts	→	Restructured Negative Automatic Thoughts
<p>These automatic thoughts can be explicit or at the very edge of our conscious awareness. They form an internal monologue that can negatively influence how we automatically interpret situations, react, and feel.</p> <p><i>I can't cope, They don't like me, I am stupid, I always mess up, It's not fair, I hate it</i></p>		
Beliefs	→	Restructured Beliefs
<p>Fundamental, absolutist, and generalized beliefs about ourselves, other people, the world, and the future. They are developed in response to early life experiences and can be divided into three categories: helplessness, lovability, and worthlessness.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> <i>I am vulnerable, weak, needy, a victim, and likely to be hurt.</i> <i>I am unlikable, unwanted, will be rejected or abandoned, and will always be alone.</i> <i>I am worthless, unacceptable, crazy, broken, nothing.</i></p>		
Irrational Rules	→	Restructured Irrational Rules
<p>Irrational thinking rules, or "rigid" rules, are often based on inflexible demands or expectations, which are often formed in childhood and expressed as "shoulds" or "musts."</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> <i>I must always work hard; People can't be trusted; I should always be strong; There is no point in trying; I will ultimately fail; I should not be anxious.</i></p>		
Dysfunctional Assumptions	→	Restructured Dysfunctional Assumptions
<p>These assumptions are deeply rooted, dysfunctional, and engrained thinking reflexes. They operate like knee-jerk reactions and are often expressed as conditional "if-then" statements.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> <i>If I am criticized, then I am no good.</i> <i>If I don't deliver 100%, then it proves I am a failure.</i> <i>If I don't get attention, I am unwanted or disliked.</i> <i>If I can't think of something interesting to say, people will think I am boring.</i> <i>If I always work hard, I will be a success.</i></p>		