ThoughtCheck™

Date _____

Thought record

Steps 1 to 7 of the ThoughtCheck app, on paper. You can skip any step. Patterns and feelings are on the back.

1 What happened? Where you were, and only the facts, as a camera would see it.

_____

_____

2 How do you feel? Mark the closest one.

☐ Worried ☐ Angry ☐ Sad ☐ Ashamed ☐ Embarrassed ☐ Overwhelmed ☐ Frustrated ☐ Lonely ☐ Not sure

A more exact word, if you have one: _____

How strong is it? Circle a number.

0 = not at all | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 = the strongest

3 What is the thought? One sentence, the way it sounded in your head.

_____

_____

Then say to yourself: "This is a thought. It might not be a fact."

4 Which pattern is it? Mark any that fit. See the back for examples.

☐ Guessing what others think ☐ Guessing what will happen ☐ Expecting the worst ☐ All or nothing

☐ Strict rules ☐ Calling yourself names ☐ Treating a feeling as a fact ☐ One time means every time

☐ Taking it personally ☐ Only seeing the bad ☐ None of these fit

5 The evidence Facts only, not feelings.

Facts that support the thought

_____

_____

_____

Facts that don't support it

_____

_____

_____

6 A fairer thought Look at your facts from step 5. Do they support the thought? Mark one.

☐ **The facts don't fully support it**

A fairer thought. It doesn't have to be positive, only fair.

_____

_____

☐ **The facts mostly support it**

One small step you could take:

_____

Something kind to tell yourself:

_____

7 The feeling now Circle how strong the same feeling is now.

0 = not at all | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 = the strongest

Do you feel any of these now too? ☐ Calm ☐ Relieved ☐ Proud ☐ Grateful

In crisis? Call or text 988 (US and Canada). UK: call Samaritans on 116 123. Elsewhere: findahelpline.com

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ThoughtCheck™

Thinking patterns

These are common ways of thinking that go further than the facts. Everyone does them sometimes. Naming one makes it easier to question.

Guessing what others think (mind reading)
Deciding what someone thinks when they have not told you.
"She thinks I'm useless."

Guessing what will happen (fortune telling)
Deciding what will happen before it happens.
"The meeting will go badly."

Expecting the worst (catastrophizing)
Deciding the worst possible result will happen.
"One mistake means I'll get fired."

All or nothing
Seeing only perfect or total failure, nothing between.
"If it isn't perfect, it's worthless."

Strict rules (should statements)
Rules about how you or others must act, often with "should" or "must".
"I should never ask for help."

Calling yourself names (labeling)
Calling yourself one harsh word because of one event.
"I'm an idiot."

Treating a feeling as a fact (emotional reasoning)
Deciding something is true because you feel it strongly.
"I feel stupid, so I am stupid."

One time means every time (overgeneralizing)
Using one event to make a rule about everything.
"This always happens to me."

Taking it personally (personalizing)
Deciding something is about you, or your fault, when other things could explain it.
"They didn't say hello, so I must have done something wrong."

Only seeing the bad (mental filter)
Noticing only what went wrong and leaving out what went well.
"One person frowned, so the whole talk was a failure."

Not sure what you feel? Check your body.

Worried
Tight chest, fast heart

Angry
Hot face, clenched jaw

Sad
Heavy body, tearful

Ashamed
Want to hide, look down

Embarrassed
Face goes red, want to leave

Overwhelmed
Too much at once, want to shut down

Frustrated
Tense hands, want to push back

Lonely
Empty feeling, want contact

Questions that help with step 5

- What would I tell a friend who had this thought?
- Do I know this for sure, or am I guessing?
- Has this happened before, and how did it actually turn out?
- Is there another reason this could have happened?

Something kind to tell yourself (step 6)

- This is hard, and it makes sense that I feel this way.
- I can take one small step, even if I can't fix all of it.
- I don't have to handle this alone. I can ask someone for help.

A thought is not always true. You can stop, check it against the facts, and write a fairer one.

A self-help tool, not therapy. In crisis, call or text 988 (US and Canada), or call Samaritans on 116 123 (UK). Elsewhere: findahelpline.com

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