

Thought Record

SITUATION	OLD THOUGHT	EMOTION	INTENSITY 0-10	NEW THOUGHT	INTENSITY 0-10

COUNTERING QUESTIONS: **Is it true?** What's the evidence for and against this thought? What's the worst that could happen if it were true? How likely is that really? Is there another more likely explanation? **Is it helpful?** Does this thought make me feel better? If my friend were in this situation, what would I tell them? **Can I handle it?** What could I do if this were true?

Instructions

You can use a Thought Record to help you "catch-and-counter" thinking errors. It is best to complete a record about a difficult situation in which you had strong emotions. The record should be completed close in time to the situation so you can still remember your thoughts about it but not so close that you are too upset to reflect on it. Complete the following steps:

- **Identify the Situation.** Briefly describe the situation (in one sentence or less) as objectively as possible without including your thoughts or feelings about it. For example, "I tripped and 3 to 4 people laughed" and not "Everyone laughed at me when I tripped because they are all mean and think I'm a stupid loser."
- Skip to the Emotions Column and **Identify the Emotions** that you had at the time. Emotions can be written in one word and this word is usually a synonym for one of the 6 universal emotions: joy, fear, anger, disgust, sadness, or surprise. You can have more than one emotion about a situation. List all the emotions you had.
- **Rate the Intensity of the Emotions** on a scale from 0-10.
- Go back to the Old Thoughts Column and **Identify the Old Thoughts** running through your head at the moment. Thoughts can be words, sentences, or images. Use each emotion you listed as an anchor and work backwards to figure out what thoughts led to that emotion.
- **Examine the Old Thoughts** for thinking errors and then counter them by asking yourself the following questions: Is It true? Is It helpful? Can I handle it?
- **Develop a New Thought** and write in in the New Thoughts column. This new thought should be both true and helpful.
- **Re-Rate the Intensity of the Emotions** on a scale from 0-10. Did the intensity decrease? If not, go back to work on developing your new thought until you create something that is even more helpful to you.