

Cognitive Restructuring

Sometimes our thoughts become biased and we mentally filter out other more balanced perspectives, and even maximise the negative ones! This is because distorted thinking keeps us safe. Thinking this way protects us from situations that may 'threaten' us. The problem is, thinking this way doesn't actually solve anything, and in the long run makes us avoid things and feel even worse. Cognitive restructuring can help us see a more balanced perspective. Cognitive restructuring is not telling us our thoughts are wrong, it looks at the accuracy of our thoughts by putting our thoughts on trial to see if we are condemning ourselves unfairly.

What is your thought? Notice and label your thought

What was your thought? Were there any images? What were you doing? Where were you? What did you try to do to help?

Rate how much you believe your thought on the line out of 100%



What emotions do you feel? Write any emotions in the box below in one word

Four empty rounded rectangular boxes arranged horizontally, intended for writing emotions.

Rate the intensity of each emotion on the line out of 100%



Evidence For;

What are the **facts** and **evidence** that support the accuracy of this thought? Remember, feelings and opinions are **not** objective facts.

Evidence Against;

What are the **facts** and **evidence** that this thought isn't completely accurate? If you rated your belief in your thought less than 100%, why do you not believe in your thought 100%? List at least 5 points.

What other perspectives might you take on this thought?

- Is this thought a fact or opinion?
- Are these thoughts helpful?
- How is this thought trying to help you?
- Are these thoughts just trying to protect you?
- What would a close friend say to you about this?
- Does this thought help you achieve your goals?
- What would you say to a friend if they had this thought?
- Are you unfairly discounting anything that might contradict your thought?
- Have you had similar thoughts to this before that turned out not to be true?
- How will you think about this thought in 10 years?

Are there any unhelpful thinking patterns in this thought?

If required, use the 'Unhelpful Thinking Patterns' worksheet to refresh your mind.

Personalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catastrophising	<input type="checkbox"/>	What if's	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polarised Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jumping to Conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hindsight bias	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Filtering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overgeneralising	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others/ Self-blaming	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional Reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Should', 'Must', 'Have to'	<input type="checkbox"/>	Needing to be right	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labelling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Magnification & Minimisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fallacies	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is a more balanced alternative thought?

Taking into consideration factual evidence, other perspectives and possible unhelpful thinking patterns, what is a more balanced alternative thought? What thought is kinder and fairer to you?

What would it mean if this alternative more balanced thought was true? Would you need to do anything?

How does your balanced thought make you feel?

Changing how you think will change how you feel. Based on your more balanced thought being more accurate, how do you feel now? How would you re-score your believability in your old thought on the previous page? How would you re-score your emotions on the previous page? Why are your thought and emotion scores different?

Remember: The aim of cognitive restructuring is not to disprove your thoughts. The aim is to realise that there are other possible explanations on the same issue and your thoughts might not be 100% accurate or fair to you.