

Thought Record

HAVING RECOGNIZED I'M FEELING SOMETHING AND TAKEN TIME TO IDENTIFY THE FEELING(S), I WILL FOLLOW THIS PATTERN IN GUIDING MYSELF.
In a compassionate, non-judgmental way, take a chance to deliberately consider your current thoughts. Carefully consider them as just thoughts, as though looking in from the outside.

Event	Mood	Automatic Thoughts	Cognitive Distortions	Alternative Perceptions	Plan
What happened?	What am I feeling? What can I learn from this feeling?	What am I telling myself right now (negative self-talk)? These can be thoughts, perceptions, feelings or images.	Do any of my thoughts match the cognitive distortions listed below? If so, list them. How would you respond to a friend who had this thought? Would it be true in a court of law?	What is helpful, important, relevant, or true? What would the compassionate me say? Directly challenge the automatic thoughts identified.	What am I going to do based on these lessons to cope in this moment? How does this help me in the future?

1. All-or-nothing thinking: You see things in black and white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.

2. Overgeneralization: You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

3. Mental filter: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolors the entire beaker of water.

4. Disqualifying the positive: You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. You maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.

5. Jumping to conclusions: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.

Mind reading: You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and don't bother to check it out.

The Fortune Teller Error: You anticipate that things will turn out badly and feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.

6. Magnification (catastrophizing) or minimization: You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or the other fellow's imperfections). This is also called the "binocular trick."

7. Emotional reasoning: You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: "I feel it, therefore it must be true."

8. Should statements: You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could be expected to do anything.

Musts and "oughts" are also offenders. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements toward others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.

9. Labeling and mislabeling: This is an extreme form of overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself: "I'm a loser." When someone else's behavior rubs you the wrong way, you attach a negative label. Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

10. Personalization: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event for which, in fact, you were not primarily responsible.