



CBT Cognitive Restructuring Technique Worksheet

RESTRUCTURING THE MIND

Cognitive behavioral therapy or CBT is used as a common talk therapy or psychotherapy treatment method. The cognitive behavioral therapy treatment method was developed based on the works of Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis in the 1960s. Since then, cognitive behavioral therapy has been proven as a successful method in assessing and treating a variety of mental health problems.

Cognitive behavioral therapy treatment usually involves the changing of behavioral patterns or cognitive restructuring. There are a variety of cognitive restructuring techniques that can be used in cognitive behavioral therapy treatment. Read on to learn more about cognitive behavioral therapy and cognitive restructuring techniques.

COVERED IN THIS PAPER:

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Cognitive Restructuring Worksheet



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WHAT IS CBT?

CBT stands for cognitive behavioral therapy. CBT is a form of psychological treatment that is used to address a number of mental health problems such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety Disorders
- Alcohol or Drug Use Problems
- Marital Issues
- PTSD
- OCD
- Eating Disorders
- Severe Mental Illness

Much research has been done on CBT treatment, both in laboratory and clinical settings. There is ample evidence showing that CBT is one of the most effective psychological therapy treatments available for patients today.



WHAT IS CBT?

CBT treatment has been proven useful in addressing all of the following challenges:

- Managing the symptoms of mental illness.
- Preventing a relapse with mental health problems.
- Treating certain symptoms associated with mental health struggles.
- Coping with grief or loss.
- Dealing with a medical illness.
- Managing chronic physical symptoms.
- Resolving relationship conflicts by learning better ways to communicate.
- Overcoming any emotional trauma related to abuse or violence.
- Learning techniques that make coping with stressful situations easier.
- Identifying techniques that help with the overall management of emotions.



WHAT IS CBT?

CBT is based on three core principles, including:

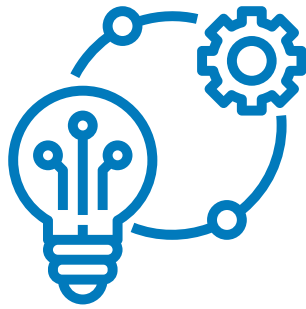
- Faulty or unhelpful ways of thinking contribute to psychological problems.
- Learned patterns or unhelpful behavior contribute to psychological problems.
- Patients struggling with any type of psychological problem can lessen their symptoms and lead more productive lives by learning better coping methods.

Based on the core principles, CBT treatment incorporates efforts to change behavioral patterns in order to achieve improvement in a patient's daily life. Therapists seek to change behavioral patterns in their patients through various cognitive restructuring techniques.



WHAT IS COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING?

Cognitive restructuring is the process of identifying and then comparing any negative or irrational thoughts. Negative or irrational thoughts are also known as cognitive distortions. While all individuals have cognitive distortions, having excess is closely linked to many mental health struggles. Therefore, it is beneficial to address cognitive distortions and seek to overcome them through various cognitive restructuring techniques.



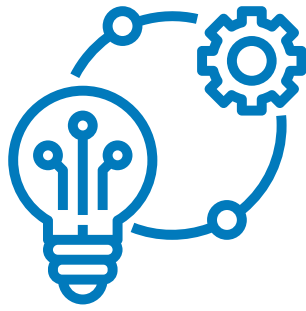
TYPES OF COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING TECHNIQUES

Hypothesis Testing

A fundamental cognitive restructuring technique is hypothesis testing. With hypothesis testing, therapists help patients investigate the validity of a specific belief that they hold through experimentation and empirical data.

Thought Challenging

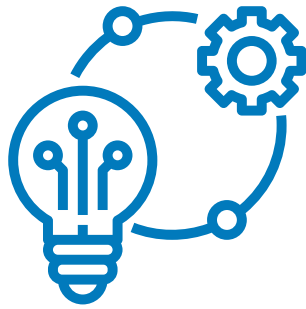
Examining and reality-testing thoughts and images is a popular cognitive restructuring technique that is commonly referred to as thought challenging. With this technique, patients are asked to examine the validity or accuracy of their negative thoughts or images.



TYPES OF COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING TECHNIQUES

Information-Giving

Many patients struggle with mental health issues because they lack critical information about their struggles. Through the information-giving technique, patients can be given helpful information in the form of handouts or reading that seeks to lessen their psychological distress.



TYPES OF COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING TECHNIQUES

Socratic Dialogue

Through Socratic dialogue, therapists ask patients a series of carefully sequenced questions to help identify specific problems, assist patients with identifying negative thoughts or beliefs, examine the meaning of these events, and discuss ramifications that stem from certain thoughts or behaviors. Through this cognitive restructuring technique, patients can make reflections on how they think or assume to promote cognitive change.



COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING WORKSHEET

Now that we've discussed some of the most common types of cognitive restructuring techniques, it is time to see some of these techniques in application. In the following worksheet template, an example of a cognitive restructuring technique is outlined.

The following is a templated cognitive restructuring worksheet example that you can build off of for your practice.



COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING WORKSHEET

Directions:

Thoughts come and go in our brains every day. Some thoughts may be fleeting, while others keep recurring. Some of these recurring thoughts can hold great power over us and negatively or harmfully impact our daily lives. Think about a recurring thought you have that seems to bring about negative feelings or emotions.

Spend a few moments thinking about this thought and how it affects your daily life. Then take as much time as you need to answer the following questions in regard to this specific thought. Be sure to elaborate, and explain why or why not in your answers.



COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING WORKSHEET

Thought to be questioned:

1. What is the evidence for this thought? Against it?
2. Is this thought based on facts or on feelings?
3. What complexities surround this thought?
4. What assumptions am I making about this thought? Am I misinterpreting any evidence?
5. How might someone else interpret the same thought or situation? How could their interpretation be different than yours?
6. Could your thought or assumptions be exaggerated from what is true?
7. Do facts support my thought or assumption? What are they?
8. Where did I learn this thought or assumption? Did it come from a reliable source?
9. Is my thought probable and likely, or is it an example of a worst case scenario?



COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING WORKSHEET

The Socratic Dialogue and Questions Worksheet template outlined above can be used to help patients better identify harmful or limiting irrational negative thoughts that they hold. The worksheet also helps patients to understand why they hold these thoughts or beliefs and how these beliefs could be negatively impacting their daily life and overall mental health. This worksheet is just one of many examples of cognitive restructuring techniques.



CONCLUSION

Overall, cognitive restructuring techniques have the power to help individuals struggling with mental health problems by identifying irrational negative thoughts that could be worsening their mental health. Cognitive restructuring techniques also allow the opportunity to come up with strategies to promote positive cognitive change once irrational negative thoughts or beliefs have been properly identified.

For more resources on CBT techniques and worksheets, visit KASA's Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Resource Library.

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