

Cognitive Restructuring



The Final Step

To reduce stress, restructure your thoughts using cognitive skills. Identify HOT thoughts, examine evidence, recognize distortions, and apply problem-solving and acceptance skills. Use the below form to practice evaluating a thought and reframe or restructure the thought for a more balanced perspective on your situation. You can measure how effective this is by rating the intensity of emotions both before and after you complete this process.

Step #1: Identify the negative automatic thought:

Step #2: List the cognitive distortion(s):

Step #3: Explore the evidence:

Question 1: Likelihood

How likely is this thought?
How sure am I?
Have I predicted this before?
Has it come true before?

Question 2: Severity

If the thought did happen, could I cope?
What would I do?
Would it matter in another day, week, month or year?

Step #4: Write down the evidence:

Step #5: Adjust your thoughts and if needed- problem solve:

Is there another way to view this? Is there a way to improve the situation?

Are there things outside of my control that I can't change and can let go?
What can I do to adjust or cope?

TIP: If your negative thought frequently occurs, write your evidence on something you can carry with you as a reminder. Re-read it when you have the thought.

