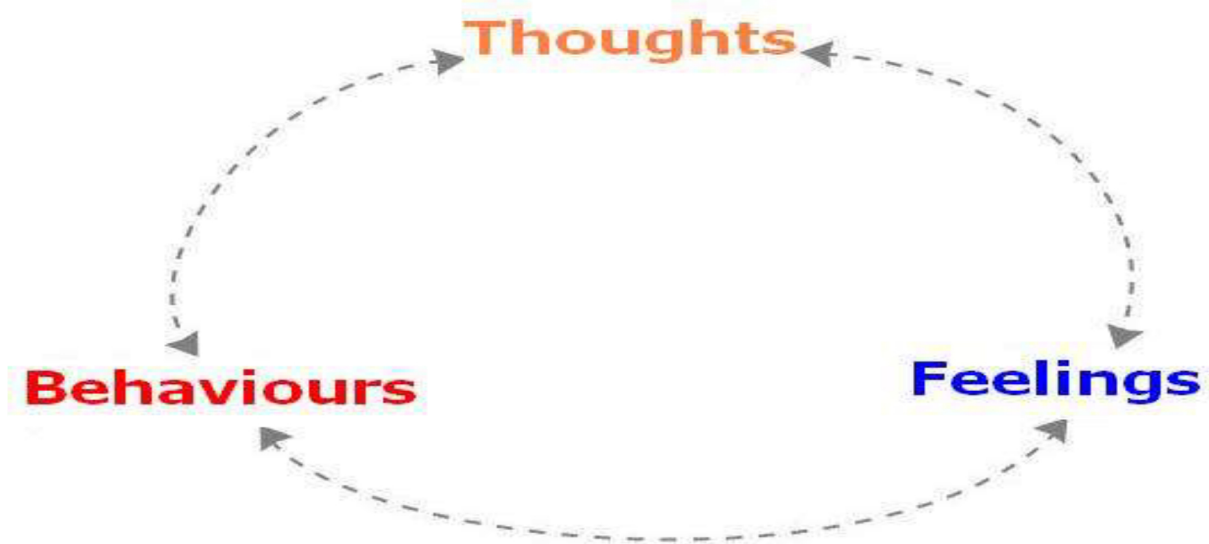


**An Introductory
Self-Help Course
in
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy**

Step Three



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2009-2013

Step 3

Making Changes - Behaviours

Changing what we normally do can greatly affect the way we feel and think.

When you look at your 'Vicious Cycle' form/s where you wrote down your thoughts, feelings (emotions and physical sensations) and behaviours, notice particularly what you wrote for 'behaviours'. Very often we react automatically, without considering our actions or the consequences of them.



- What helped you cope and get through it?
- What didn't I do or what did I avoid doing?
- What automatic reactions did I have?
- What would other people have seen me doing?
- What were the consequences of what I did? What happened later because of it? Did it affect the way I felt later?

Now ask yourself, what could I have done differently?

- What would someone else have done in that situation? (it might help to think about particular people that you know, and what they might have done differently)
- Have there been times in the past when I would have done something else?
- If I had paused, and taken a breath, what would I have done?

Write down several options that you might have done differently if it had occurred to you, then ask yourself:

- If I had tried that, how would the situation have been different?
- How would it have affected what I felt?
- How would it have affected what I thought?
- Would it have been more helpful or effective for me, another person or for the situation?
- What would the consequences have been of doing something differently?

Dealing with Distressing Situations:



Practise and learn to **STOP** and take a breath before considering what action to take. Just simply pausing and taking a breath when feeling distressed can help us to see the situation more clearly, and help us decide what action to take.

Choose to do what works!

When considering your options, ask yourself:

- Will it be effective and appropriate?
- Is it in proportion to the event?
- Is it in keeping with my values and principles?
- What will be the consequences of my action?
- What is best for me and most helpful for this situation?



Some suggestions for coping with crises and distressing emotions:

- Do something different (to what you normally do)
- Pause, take a breath
- [Mindfulness](#) - learn [Mindful Breathing](#) (pages 45-49)
- Focus your attention fully on another activity - [Mindful activity](#) (page 46)
- [Relaxation techniques](#) - try lots and find one that works for you

- [Put on some music](#) - sing and dance along, or just listen attentively (use music that is likely to help you feel your desired emotion - avoid sad songs if you're depressed)



- [Meditation](#) or Prayer

- Help others
- Be with others - contact a friend, visit family
- Talk to someone
- Grounding techniques - look around you, what do you see, hear, smell, sense? Hold a comforting object.
- Physical exercise - walk, swim, go to the gym
- Engage in a hobby or other interest - if you don't have one, find one! What have you enjoyed in the past? What have you sometimes thought about doing but not got around to?
- Write down your thoughts and feelings - get them out of your head
- Just take one step at a time - don't plan too far ahead
- Pamper yourself - do something you really enjoy, or something relaxing



- Positive self-talk - encourage yourself, tell yourself: I can do this, I am strong and capable - find an affirmation that works for you (even if you don't believe it at first!). Write it down and memorise it for when you need it. See [Affirmations](#) on page 41
- Do something creative
- Use Safe Place [Imagery](#) (page 54)
- Tell yourself: "This will pass, it's only temporary". "I've got through this before, I can do it now". When we're going through a tunnel and become fearful of being trapped, there's no point in stopping - we just have to carry on in order to reach the end of the tunnel. That light is there, and waiting!



Activity & Physical Exercise

Just increasing our activity and exercise levels can make an enormous impact on our mood by:

- Making us feel better about ourselves
- Making us feel less tired
- Motivating us to do more
- Improving our ability to think more clearly
- Helping us think about something other than focussing on our unhelpful thoughts
- Using up the adrenaline resources created by anxiety and anger
- Increasing motivation
- Giving us a sense of achievement
- Enjoyment
- Being with other people
- Stimulating the body to produce natural anti-depressants
- Making us generally more healthy
- Stimulating our appetite



Schedule activities each day which give you a sense of:

- ❖ **A**chievement
- ❖ **C**loseness to others
- ❖ **E**njoyment



- It's important to get a healthy balance of activities which give you a sense of achievement, enjoyment and being close to others. Choose activities which are important to you, have positive meanings, or are purposeful, and you might want to plan rest periods too.
- Keep your goals realistic – set achievable limits. E.g. aim to walk for 15 minutes rather than a half-marathon, or wash the dishes rather than spring clean the whole house. Don't set yourself up to fail! You can build up your activity over time.

Use either or both of these sheets to record what you do and how it affects your mood.

- ❖ **Activity Diary**
- ❖ **Weekly Planner**
- ❖ **ACE Log**

Use the Treatment Plan to help you plan what you need to do more of or start, or what you can do less of or stop:

- ❖ **Treatment Plan**
- ❖ **More information at**
- ❖ **Problem Solving Worksheet**
- ❖ **Communication Styles**



Breathing and Relaxation helps to combat the body's adrenaline (fight & flight) response that occurs in Anxiety and Anger, and the agitation and ruminating thoughts of Depression.

Try different relaxation techniques - some will work better for you than others.

You will find Mindful Breathing techniques on Page 47

See the links at bottom of this webpage for more information about behaviours and other relaxation techniques: .

Activity Diary

Write briefly in each box: **What you did** (brief description), one word that describes your **Mood**, and rate the intensity of your mood on a scale of 0 - 100%, your sense of Achievement for the activity on a scale of 0-10 (A0 - 10) your sense of Closeness to others (C0 - 10), and sense of Enjoyment (E 0-10). An activity may be sitting down, or lying in bed, not only washing dishes, walking etc.

(Write in each box) Example: Watching TV with son, Sad 60%, A0, C7, E4

| Day → Time ↓ | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 6 - 8 am | | | | | | | |
| 8 - 10 am | | | | | | | |
| 10am - 12noon | | | | | | | |
| 12 - 2pm | | | | | | | |
| 2 - 4pm | | | | | | | |
| 4 - 6pm | | | | | | | |
| 6 - 8pm | | | | | | | |
| 8 - 10pm | | | | | | | |
| 10pm - 12mn | | | | | | | |

After completing the diary, you might notice patterns in your mood variations, and how particular activities affect your mood. You will then be able to plan a more healthy range of activities which give you a sense of Achievement, Enjoyment and Closeness (using the same form if you want to).

Weekly Planner

Plan activities each day, keeping a balance of activities which include Work, Rest and Play. Pace yourself!

| Day | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Morning | | | | | | | |
| Afternoon | | | | | | | |
| Evening | | | | | | | |








ACE Log

(Achievement, Closeness, Enjoyment)

Our mood can be greatly affected by what we do, when, and with whom. Keep track of what you do each day which gives you a sense of Achievement, Closeness to others, and Enjoyment. Write down the day, date and time, the activity, and rate the sense of Achievement, Closeness and Enjoyment on a scale of 0 (none) – 10 (maximum), or simply tick the relevant ACE columns.

| Day Date Time | Activity – what you did, who you were with | Achievement | Closeness | Enjoyment |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | A | C | E |
| Monday 10 th 7pm | <i>Example: Played computer games after tea</i> | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Tuesday 11 th 10am | <i>Example: Telephoned Miriam and invited her around for coffee</i> | 4 | 9 | 8 |
| | | | | |
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Multimodal Treatment Plan

| Modality | Problem | Plan |
|--|---------|--|
| <p>Behaviour Actions, coping strategies, reactions, what I do, what I avoid doing</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Affect / Emotions What I feel emotionally E.g. depressed, angry, anxious, stressed, sad.</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Sensation See, hear, taste, smell, touch, pain, tension, sexuality</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Imagery Thinking in pictures, self image, fantasies</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Cognition Thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, values, opinions, thinking styles</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Interpersonal Communicating and being with others, Relationships</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |
| <p>Drugs / Biology Physical exercise, health, diet, sexual health, alcohol, weight, smoking, caffeine etc</p>  | | <p><i>Do less of, or stop:</i></p> <p><i>Do more of, or start:</i></p> |

Problem Solving Worksheet

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Step 1 | Identify the Problem Break it down into smaller steps and decide what you need to action first |
| Step 2 | Brainstorm and write down as many ideas as you can that might help solve the problem, no matter how silly they seem – don't dismiss any possible solutions. |
| Step 3 | Consider the pros and cons of each possible solution, using a separate piece of paper. |
| Step 4 | Choose one of the possible solutions that looks likely to work, based on the advantages and disadvantages |
| Step 5 | Plan out step-by-step what you need to do to carry out this solution. What? When? How? With whom or what? What could cause problems? How can you get around those problems? Is this realistic and achievable? |
| Step 6 | Do it! Carry out the plan |
| Step 7 | Review how it went. Was it helpful? Did you achieve what you set out to achieve? If not, how could you have done it differently? Did you achieve any progress, however small, towards your goal? What have you learned? |
| Step 8 | If you achieved your goal – consider tackling the next step of your original problem. If you didn't fully achieve your goal – make adjustments to your chosen solution, or return to steps 3 and 4 and choose another possible solution. |

Communication Styles

Passive



Assertive



Aggressive



General

Compliant, submissive, talks little, vague non-committal communication, puts self down, praises others

"I don't mind...that's fine....yes alright"

Actions and expressions fit with words spoken, firm but polite and clear messages, respectful of self and others

"That's a good idea, and how about if we did this too..." or "I can see that, but I'd really like..."

Sarcastic, harsh, always right, superior, know it all, interrupts, talks over others, critical, put-downs, patronising, disrespectful of others

"This is what we're doing, if you don't like it, tough"

Beliefs

You're okay, I'm not

Has no opinion other than that the other person/s are always more important, so it doesn't matter what they think anyway

I'm okay, you're okay

Believes or acts as if all the individuals involved are equal, each deserving of respect, and no more entitled than the other to have things done their way

I'm okay, you're not

Believe they are entitled to have things done their way, the way they want it to be done, because they are right, and others (and their needs) are less important

Eyes

Avoids eye contact, looks down, teary, pleading

Warm, welcoming, friendly, comfortable eye contact

Narrow, emotion-less, staring, expressionless

Posture

Makes body smaller – stooped, leaning, hunched shoulders

Relaxed, open, welcoming

Makes body bigger – upright, head high, shoulders out, hands on hips, feet apart

Hands

Together, fidgety, clammy

Open, friendly and appropriate gestures

Pointing fingers, making fists, clenched, hands on hips

Consequences

Give in to others, don't get what we want/need, self-critical thoughts, miserable

Good relationships with others, happy with outcome and to compromise

Make enemies, upset others and self, feel angry and resentful

In Step Four we will look more closely at breaking the vicious cycles by targeting the thoughts and thinking styles associated with particular problems. We will learn how to choose healthy alternatives which will have a positive impact on how we think, feel and react.

If you need help with Step Three, please see this page for individual and personal support from the author, an accredited CBT Therapist:

If printing out the whole self-help course, you can dispose of the Step Three cover page (page 16), and replace this page (28) with the first page (28) of Step Four