

Journey to Wellbeing Session Four Workbook



Course Overview

Session 1: Identifying Symptoms, Introduction to CBT, Routine Regulation, and Goals

Session 2: Changing Behaviours (Behavioural Activation and Physical Activity)

Session 3: Changing Behaviours (panic and exposure, worry management, and problem solving)

Session 4: Changing Thoughts (unhelpful thinking styles and positive coping statements)

Session 5: Changing Thoughts (thought challenging and anger)

Session 6: Communication, Recap, and Relapse Prevention

“Journey to Wellbeing” provides skills for symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. It is based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques and consists of six weekly sessions, all with a different focus.

Thoughts

We have thousands of thoughts go through our head each day and when we are experiencing symptoms indicative of depression and/or anxiety we might start to find our thoughts become more negative and effect us more.

Neutral Thoughts

Neutral thoughts are factual and do not tend to have an impact on our emotions. They are often descriptive about what is going on around us or a statement.

Positive Thoughts

These thoughts are empowering and have a positive impact on our emotions. They can make us feel more hopeful and increase our confidence in solving problems.

Negative Thoughts

Negative thoughts can make us feel low and decrease our confidence in our ability to cope or solve problems.

Some examples...

Positive Thoughts	Neutral Thoughts	Negative Thoughts
Plans were cancelled but we can always reschedule	It's raining today	Things always go wrong for me
Things are tough at the moment but I know they can get better	I need to get some milk	My friends don't want to spend time with me
It's okay to make mistakes	It's 10am	I'm bad at my job
I'm sure I can think of a way to approach this situation	Berlin is the capital city of Germany	I'm useless

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

Sometimes our negative thoughts can become automatic which can make them more difficult to spot. Starting to identify which unhelpful thinking habits we experience is the first step to breaking the habit. There are a number of ways of thinking that can be unhelpful and can make anxiety worse. Some of the unhelpful thinking habits we can slip into include:

TYPE OF THINKING STYLE	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
All or Nothing	Thinking in extremes with no middle ground. Something can only be good or bad, right or wrong, rather than anything in between.	<i>I need to do something perfectly or it's a waste of time</i> <i>Everybody hates me</i>
Overgeneralising	Evidence drawn from one experience or from a small set of experiences are applied to all or most other situations.	<i>Bad things always happen to me</i> <i>I always fail at everything</i>
Selective thinking	Only paying attention to the negative interpretation of the situation and discounting everything else. The opposite of wearing "rose tinted" glasses.	<i>This week has been terrible. I can't think of a single good thing that has happened.</i>
Catastrophising	"Worst case" thoughts and images about what might happen in the future. Often exaggerating what might happen.	<i>If I'm late to work I'll be fired and unable to pay my bills</i> <i>If I tell her how I feel, she'll leave me and I'll be on my own</i>
Emotional Reasoning	Assuming negative emotions reflect what is happening in reality or provide evidence for our negative thoughts.	<i>I feel scared, so the situation must be dangerous</i>
Mind Reading	Assuming that we know what others are thinking, often about us.	<i>They think I'm boring</i> <i>They don't like me</i>

Shoulds and Musts	Thinking or saying that we “must” or “should” do something, placing unrealistic expectations on ourselves as well as internal pressure.	<i>I must never make mistakes</i> <i>I should be able to cope with this better</i>
Personalising	Putting too much responsibility on ourselves for events or situations which may have little or nothing to do with us.	<i>He’s being quiet because I’m boring</i> <i>It’s my fault they didn’t enjoy themselves at the party</i>
Self put-downs	Putting ourselves down and being critical about ourselves	<i>I’m a failure</i> <i>I can’t do anything right</i>
Jumping to negative conclusions	drawing a negative conclusion when there is little or no evidence to support it.	<i>I am going to fail</i> <i>Things will go wrong</i>

We all use unhelpful thinking habits from time to time. When we are feeling negative emotions, we are more likely to have thoughts that fit with that emotion which makes these habits more likely to occur. If we can start to identify when we are thinking this way, it can help us distance ourselves from those thoughts.

Keeping a Thought Diary

Writing down our thoughts increases our awareness of them and also helps us to identify any unhelpful thinking habits we may be using. Writing down our thoughts helps:

- Slow our thoughts down
 - Helps us focus
- Helps us remember what we felt and thought in specific situations
 - Helps us process our thoughts

Use the thought diary on the next page to help you record and identify your thoughts and unhelpful thinking habits.

Situation <i>What? Where? Who? When?</i>	Emotion <i>How intense is the emotion from 0-100%</i>	Negative Thought	Belief <i>From 0-100% rate how true you think this is</i>

Questioning our Thoughts

Recognising and labelling our thoughts is the first step to changing the way we think but without questioning and challenging our thoughts, we may struggle to reduce the impact they have on us.

The Big Five Thought Challenges

The “Big Five” are some basic questions we can ask ourselves to begin to see a different perspective on our thoughts and distance ourselves from them.

1. What is the evidence?

What evidence do I have to support my thoughts? What evidence do I have against them?

2. What alternative views are there?

How would someone else view this situation? How would I have viewed it if I was not feeling low or stressed or anxious? If a friend had this thought, what would I tell him or her? What evidence do I have to back these alternatives?

3. What is the effect of thinking this way?

Does it help me or hinder me from coping with the situation? What would be the effect of thinking less negatively? What’s the worst that could happen? How likely is it to happen? Even if it did could I live through it?

4. What thinking errors am I making?

Identify any unhelpful thinking styles. Am I thinking in an all or nothing way? Am I concentrating on my weaknesses and forgetting my strengths? Am I blaming myself for something which is not my fault? Am I taking something personally which has little or nothing to do with me? Am I predicting the future negatively? Am I overlooking solutions to problems on the assumption that they will not work? Am I assuming that I know what other people are thinking without checking with them?

5. What action can I take?

By challenging negative thinking and allowing yourself to think more positively new solutions will probably open up for you. Positive thinking will suggest different ways of coping that you might not have considered.

Positive Coping Statements

We can develop positive coping strategies to use in situations we find difficult or stressful. This can make us feel more confident. When preparing for a stressful event or situation (e.g. a job interview, an appointment, a family gathering) consider statements that will help:

1. Before the event
2. During the event
3. After the event

Before the Event	During the Event	After the Event
<i>It will be enjoyable once I get started.</i>	<i>I can do this. I AM doing this.</i>	<i>It was difficult but I did it. I can be proud of myself.</i>
<i>I can get through this.</i>	<i>I can only do my best.</i>	<i>It wasn't as bad as I was expecting.</i>
<i>Let me think of the best way to approach this.</i>	<i>I have survived this feeling before. I can do it again.</i>	<i>I did it well.</i>
<i>I am going to be okay.</i>	<i>If I get tense, I'll take a breather and relax.</i>	<i>It is possible not to be scared.</i>

Some of these may work for you but the best will be the ones you write yourself. You can keep these statements near you like in your bag, in a note on your phone, stuck to your fridge, wherever is easily accessible to you!

Session Four Notes

Between sessions:

- Keep a thought diary
- Identify unhelpful thinking habits
- Start questioning thoughts or create some positive coping statements

Home Practice

(use this tool kit to remind you of the tools to practice)



