

# Journey to Wellbeing Session Five 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.**

# Alternative Thoughts

Last week we discussed NATs and how they can impact our mood. We also looked at how we can start to question these thoughts using positive coping statements and “the big five”. We can take this even further by using cognitive restructuring (CR). CR is a way of retraining our brain to think differently. Negative thinking becomes a habit and challenging thoughts is the way to break that habit.

## Step One

Write down negative thoughts in the diary from Session 4. We need to get used to identifying our thoughts to be able to challenge them. Writing them down makes us notice them faster and this means we can put the skills into place sooner.

## Step Two

Reflect on the thoughts you have written down and pick out the “hot” thought. This can either be a thought that just keeps coming back to us over and over again, or it can be the one that causes the highest emotional impact. **It can be hard to challenge thoughts that we have high belief in**, so it is a good idea to start with thoughts with a belief rating of 60% or lower.

## Step Three

Challenge your thought using the worksheet on the next page. Remember to re-rate your belief in the negative thought **after** you have challenged it to see if your belief has changed. You can also come up with a new “alternative” thought which takes into account all the evidence.

### Some points to remember..

- Thought challenging can take time to change the way we think. We’re trying to break a long established habit, so don’t be discouraged if you don’t see change straight away. Keep going!
- The evidence that we bring to our challenging **must** be factual. Remember we are “taking our thought to court”. Only bring evidence that is fact based, **not** opinion or emotion based. Think about whether your evidence would stand up in a court of law.
- If you are struggling to come up with evidence, try asking yourself some of the “big five” questions.

<b>My Thought</b>	<b>How Much I Believe It (%)</b>
<b>Evidence That Supports This Thought</b>	<b>Evidence That Doesn't Support This Thought</b>
<b>How Much Do I Believe This Thought Now?</b>	<b>Revised/More Realistic Thought</b>

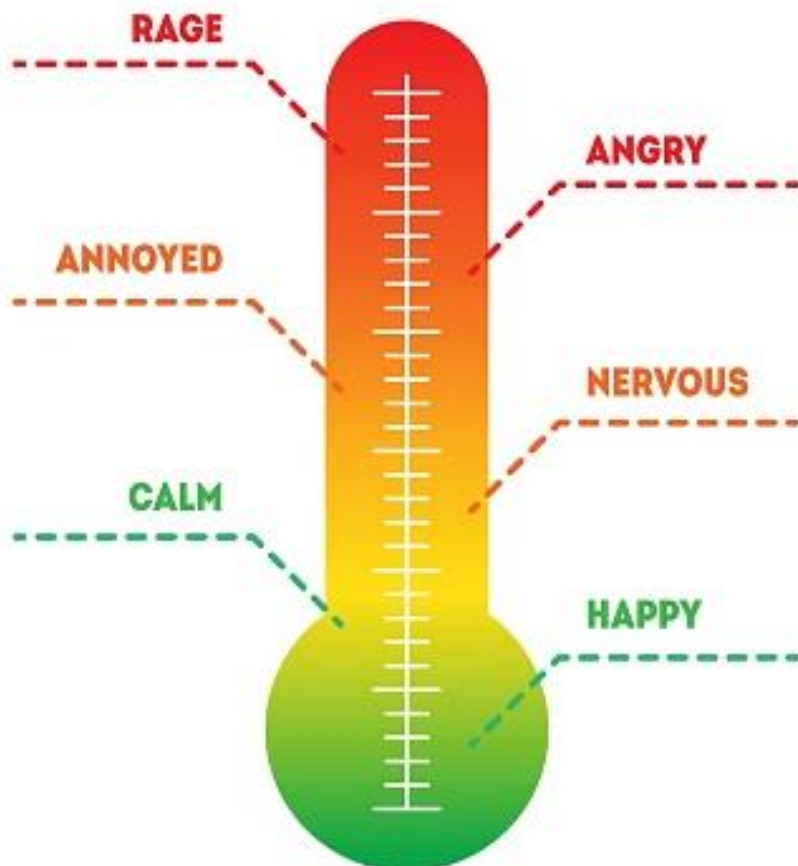
# Anger and Irritability

Anger is a normal human emotion and in the right circumstances, and to the right degree, can be helpful. However if we struggle to manage anger, it can cause negative consequences for ourselves and those around us.

Anger doesn't come out of the blue (although it can sometimes feel like that sometimes). It is a gradual process and there are usually early warning signs. If we can recognise these then we can stop anger before it escalates.

**Use the thermometer below to write down your early warning signs of anger. They could be physical symptoms, thoughts, or behaviours.**

## ANGER THERMOMETER



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# Anger and Irritability

## Blocking Techniques

Blocking techniques can be used when we notice our early warning signs to “block” the anger and prevent the motion escalating.

Walk away or spend some time outside	Count to ten/count backwards	Breathing techniques
Distract yourself	Focus on un-tensing your muscles	Imagery – prepare a calming image ahead of time and visualise it when you notice early warning signs
Spend time with animals (if you have any)	Exercise	Use humour (only laugh at yourself, laughing at others can increase their anger)

## Thought Challenging

We can apply the thought challenging techniques we have discussed to managing angry thoughts too. Catching the thoughts early will help us to challenge them. We can ask ourselves the following questions:

1. What would an outsider think if they were in my shoes?
2. If the situation were reversed, what would I want the other person to be thinking about me?
3. How strongly do I believe these thoughts?
4. Are there any other explanations for this?
5. Have my perceptions of similar situations been wrong before?
6. How does this thought benefit me? Does it help me get a good outcome from the situation?

## Cooling Thoughts

In all situations, there are many different ways of thinking about it. If we find ourselves having a lot of angry thoughts, we can try to balance these out with “cooler” thoughts.

For example:

Situation	Angry Thoughts	Cooling Thoughts
I arrange to meet a friend for lunch and they are 10 minutes late	<p>They must be trying to make a fool of me</p> <p>They are rude and disrespectful</p> <p>I haven't got time to waste waiting, who do they think they are?</p>	<p>This isn't personal, they probably got held up.</p> <p>They aren't the best time keeper, but they don't mean to be rude</p> <p>I can wait another 5 minutes, I'll call them to rearrange if they aren't here by then</p>

Balancing thoughts out like this prevents the anger from escalating. It can be used in conjunction with blocking techniques. Try it yourself in the table below.

Situation	Angry Thoughts	Cooling Thoughts

**Remember, if you're struggling to come up with “cooling” thoughts, you can use the questions above to help challenge angry thoughts.**



# The “ABC” of Anger

**A** – awareness of early warning signs, angry thoughts, and difficult situations.

**B** – block the escalation of anger by using pausing techniques.

**C** – challenge the angry thought, change the behaviour, communicate effectively (more on communication next week!)



**Use the space below to make a list of the techniques you will try next time you notice your early warning signs of anger...**


# Session Five Notes

## Homework:

- Continue thought diary and try challenging unhelpful thoughts
- Create your own anger thermometer
- Try blocking techniques
- Create alternative thoughts of angry perceptions
- Make a plan of the techniques you will use next time you notice your early warning signs of anger

# Home Practice

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

