

SELF-ESTEEM

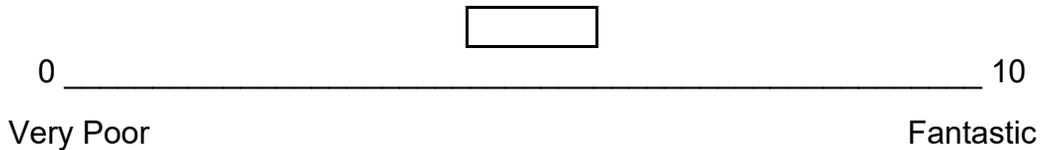
SESSION 2 WORKBOOK



HOW IS LIFE JUST NOW?

* Exercise 1 *

On the scale below where would you rate your current quality of life?



What has changed, got better, worse or has stayed the same since last week that might be contributing to you feeling this way?

What would need to change to help you to move one point up the scale? What would the next point look like? What would you be doing differently? How would other people know that things had changed?

*** Exercise 2 ***

SHORT-TERM GOALS

**Did you meet your short terms goals that you set yourself last week?
Please mark x.**

YES	
NO	

If you answered no, can you identify what prevented you in meeting the goals?

Thinking ahead, what changes do you need to make to achieve your short terms goals?

*** Exercise 3 ***

GROUP TASK

Think about the last time you felt worried, stressed or low:

Where were you, who were you with, what were you doing?

What were you saying to yourself at the time?

How did these thoughts make you feel?

How helpful were these thoughts?

NEGATIVE THINKING AND THE 'BOTTOM LINE'

- Once you have a negative bottom line it can be difficult to change.
- The 'bottom line' is strengthened by negative and biased ways of thinking
- Biased thinking means you tend to focus on negative things and ignore or downplay the positives
- We tend to make anxious predictions when the bottom line might be broken
- We have a tendency to treat such as thoughts as facts, rather than ideas or opinions, despite having very little evidence!
- One of the ways you can start to change the Bottom Line and weaken the vicious cycle is by learning to tackle biased thinking. You can do this by noticing and challenging unhelpful thoughts, such as anxious predictions and self-critical thoughts.
- Through developing a new perspective, your behaviours are less likely to be self-defeating and thus the bottom line belief is less likely to be reinforced and confirmed. This takes time, trial and error, so be patient and kind with yourself and be prepared to go back to the drawing board when setting new goals!

Remember, if the plan doesn't work change the plan but never the goal!

*** Exercise 4 ***

Negative Thinking and Low Self Esteem/Low Confidence

What are the typical things you say to yourself that are negative and unhelpful? Look at the thoughts that you noted down before. Do you have:

THOUGHT	YES/NO
"How do I get out of ..." thoughts (or something similar?)	
"I can't cope with ..." thoughts (or something similar?)	
"What is the point ..." thoughts (or something similar?)	
"I should have ..." thoughts (or something similar?)	
"I am ..." thoughts (or something similar?)	
Any others?	

COMMON UNHELPFUL WAYS OF THINKING

Making anxious predictions...

I overestimate the chances of bad things happening and I underestimate my personal resources to deal with it

Overestimating how bad things will be if something bad does happen (catastrophising)

Underestimating external factors, such as support available from others

Self-Criticism

I am very self-critical, I overlook my strengths and focus on my weak points

All or Nothing Thinking

If things are not perfect then I have failed
Either everything is brilliant or it's a complete disaster

Catastrophising

Imagining and believing that the worst possible thing will happen.

Mind-Reading

Assuming we know what others are thinking (usually about us).
I tend to think other people don't like me / think badly of me, without any evidence

Personalisation

Taking responsibility & blaming yourself for factors that are out with your control
I feel responsible for things going well
It is my fault when things don't work out

Shoulds and Musts

I often say I "must", "should", or "have to"
I want things to be just right / perfect

THOUGHT CHALLENGING SHEET

Situation

My unhelpful thought:

What is the evidence? Is the thought actually true? Am I confusing a thought with a fact?

What unhelpful thinking style do I have? Am I making anxious predictions, catastrophizing, only seeing the negative?

What alternative views are there? What would other people say? What would I say to a friend?

Am I overestimating the chances of disaster, what's the worst that could happen, the best that could happen and the most likely outcome?

If the worst does happen, what could be done about it? How have I coped in similar situations in the past?

Have I had any experiences that show this thought is not completely true all the time?

Think back over your previous unhelpful thoughts. What would be a more positive balanced view point?

More Questions to challenge Anxious Predictions....

1. What is the evidence to support your predictions?
2. What makes you expect the worst? Is your main evidence how you are feeling? Has expecting the worst become a habit?
3. What evidence do I have against my prediction?
4. What are the facts of the current situation?
5. Do they support what I think or contradict it?
6. What alternative views are there?
7. What would I say to a friend who had this thought? Would others agree that your thought is true?
8. Am I overestimating the chances of disaster?
9. What's the worst that could happen, the best that could happen and the most likely thing to happen?
10. What is the worst that can happen?
11. How likely is it? What is the best and most likely outcome (hint: usually somewhere between the best and worst!) Are you less inclined to believe in the best than you were to believe in the worst?
12. If the worst did happen, what could be done about it? What skills and abilities could you draw on to help you deal with it? Past experiences, the support of others etc.

ANXIOUS PREDICTIONS - THOUGHT DIARY

Date/ Time	Situation What were you doing when you began to feel anxious? Who was there? Where were you?	Emotions & Body Sensations (anxiety, panicky, fearful, heart racing, flushed etc.)	Anxious Predictions What exactly went through your mind? Rate strength of belief 0-100%	Precautions What action did you take to stop these predictions coming true? (avoid the situation, safety seeking behaviours)

QUESTIONING ANXIOUS PREDICTIONS

<u>Date/time</u>	<u>Situation</u> What were you doing when you began to feel anxious? Who was there? Where were you?	<u>Emotions & Body Sensations</u> (anxiety, panicky, fearful, heart racing, flushed etc)	<u>Anxious Predictions</u> Rate strength of belief 0-100%	<u>Alternative Perspectives</u> Use the key questions to find other ways of looking at the situation Rate belief 0-100%	<u>Outcome</u> How do you feel now? (emotions, body sensations) How strongly do you believe your original prediction?

THINGS TO TRY AT HOME

- ✓ Notice over the next week the negative thoughts that go through your mind when you feel anxious or low.
- ✓ Try to challenge the negative thoughts by using the techniques discussed we have discussed
- ✓ Notice how you feel differently when you are able to change the way you are thinking.
- ✓ Try to test out your new perspective by acting in a different way.

What are your short term goals for the next week?

It is important that your short term goals are SMART goals.



THOUGHT CHALLENGING SHEET

Situation	
My unhelpful thought	
1. What is the evidence? Is the thought actually true? Am I confusing a thought with a fact?	
2. What unhelpful thinking style do I have? Am I making anxious predictions, catastrophizing, only seeing the negative?	
3. What alternative views are there? What would other people say? What would I say to a friend?	
4. Am I overestimating the chances of disaster, what's the worst that could happen, the best that could happen and the <i>most likely</i> outcome?	
5. If the worst does happen, what could be done about it? How have I coped in similar situations in the past?	
6. Have I had any experiences that show this thought is not completely true all the time?	
Think back over your previous unhelpful thoughts. What would be a more positive balanced view point?	

'THE MENTAL CRUSHER' BUTLER, FENNEL, HACKMAN 2008

'The Mental Crusher' sits outside the entrance to our belief system, and only allows information or 'evidence' which fits with our own belief system to enter. Any contradictory evidence or information (any shape other than a rectangle) is rejected, or made to fit (crushed into a rectangle). In the diagram, the explosion shape is about to enter the Crusher. As it passes through (shown by the arrow), it becomes a rectangle – it's been crushed and distorted to fit. Therefore, our beliefs remain unchanged in spite of apparently contradictory evidence being out there.

