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FORM 2.2

How Thoughts Create Feelings

Our thoughts are often related to how we feel. For example, the thought "I will do poorly on the exam" may lead to the feelings of anxiety and sadness. Alternatively, the thought "I will do well on the exam" may lead to the feelings of calmness and confidence. In the form below, please identify your thoughts in the left column and the feelings that these thoughts give rise to in the right column.

Thought: I think . . .	**Feeling:** Therefore, I feel . . .

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FORM 2.7

Checklist of Cognitive Distortions

1. **Mind reading:** You assume that you know what people think without having sufficient evidence of their thoughts. For example: "He thinks I'm a loser."
2. **Fortune telling:** You predict the future—that things will get worse or that there is danger ahead. For example: "I'll fail that exam" or "I won't get the job."
3. **Catastrophizing:** You believe that what has happened or will happen will be so awful and unbearable that you won't be able to stand it. For example: "It would be terrible if I failed."
4. **Labeling:** You assign global negative traits to yourself and others. For example: "I'm undesirable" or "He's a rotten person."
5. **Discounting positives:** You claim that the positive accomplishments you or others attain are trivial. For example: "That's what wives are supposed to do—so it doesn't count when she's nice to me" or "Those successes were easy, so they don't matter."
6. **Negative filter:** You focus almost exclusively on the negatives and seldom notice the positives. For example: "Look at all of the people who don't like me."
7. **Overgeneralizing:** You perceive a global pattern of negatives on the basis of a single incident. For example: "This generally happens to me. I seem to fail at a lot of things."
8. **Dichotomous thinking:** You view events, or people, in all-or-nothing terms. For example: "I get rejected by everyone" or "It was a waste of time."
9. **"Shoulds":** You interpret events in terms of how things should be rather than simply focusing on what is. For example: "I should do well. If I don't, then I'm a failure."
10. **Personalizing:** You attribute a disproportionate amount of the blame for negative events to yourself and fail to see that certain events are also caused by others. For example: "My marriage ended because I failed."
11. **Blaming:** You focus on the other person as the source of your negative feelings and you refuse to take responsibility for changing yourself. For example: "She's to blame for the way I feel now" or "My parents caused all my problems."
12. **Unfair comparisons:** You interpret events in terms of standards that are unrealistic by focusing primarily on others who do better than you and then judging yourself inferior in the comparison. For example: "She's more successful than I am" or "Others did better than I did on the test."
13. **Regret orientation:** You focus on the idea that you could have done better in the past, rather than on what you could do better now. For example: "I could have had a better job if I had tried" or "I shouldn't have said that."
14. **What if?:** You ask a series of questions about "what if" something happens, and you are never satisfied with any of the answers. For example: "Yeah, but what if I get anxious?" or "What if I can't catch my breath?"
15. **Emotional reasoning:** You let your feelings guide your interpretation of reality. For example, "I feel depressed; therefore, my marriage is not working out."
16. **Inability to disconfirm:** You reject any evidence or arguments that might contradict your negative thoughts. For example, when you have the thought "I'm unlovable," you reject as irrelevant any evidence that people like you. Consequently, your thought cannot be refuted. Another example: "That's not the real issue. There are deeper problems. There are other factors."
17. **Judgment focus:** You view yourself, others, and events in terms of black-or-white white evaluations (good–bad or superior–inferior), rather than simply describing, accepting, or understanding. You are continually measuring yourself and others according to arbitrary standards and finding that you and others fall short. You are focused on the judgments of others as well as your own judgments of yourself. For example: "I didn't perform well in college" or "If I take up tennis, I won't do well" or "Look how successful she is. I'm not successful."

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FORM 4.8

Learning from Lapses

Consider a behavior that you have been making progress on—for example, exercise, diet, drinking less, smoking less, etc. Write it down in the first column (e.g., "Exercising three times per week"). In the middle column, write down what made you lapse from your desired behavior (e.g., "I was too tired to exercise"). In the right-hand column, write down what you learned to make things better (e.g., "I can exercise even if I am tired" or "I can pick up my exercise routine tomorrow"). Lapses or relapses are learning experiences.

The behavior I am concerned about is: _____

What was working before	What made me lapse	What I learned to make things better in the future
What are the advantages of using lapses or mistakes as learning experiences?		
What are the disadvantages?		

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FORM 6.5

Mood and Decision Making

Sometimes when we make decisions, we base our thinking on our mood or emotions at the time. For example, when we are sad or anxious, we might make decisions based on a pessimistic view. When we are feeling secure and happy, we might make decisions based on our positive mood. In the left-hand column, write down some current or past decisions that you have considered. In the middle column, write out how you would approach this decision if you were feeling down or anxious. Then, in the right-hand column, write how you might think about this if you were feeling happy or secure. What differences do you notice?

Decision I would consider	How I would think of this if I were in a negative mood	How I would think of this if I were in a positive mood

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FORM 7.1

Detached Mindfulness

Sometimes a thought occurs in our mind and we have a hard time letting it go. We get hijacked by the thought, dwell on it, and think it is important. The detached mindfulness technique allows you to stand back and observe the thought as if you were watching a movie or watching clouds pass in the sky. Try this for 10 minutes each day; simply observe your thought without doing anything. Doing nothing is the goal. Observe and let it go. After you have practiced this detached mindful awareness, fill out the form below. In the left-hand column, write down what distracted you from simply observing that you were having a thought. Did you think of other things? Were you distracted? In the middle column, write down the advantages of simply observing a thought rather than engaging it, responding to it, or obeying it. In the right-hand column, write down the disadvantages of simply observing and letting go of these intrusive thoughts.

Distractions I noticed in trying to stand back and observe	**Advantages of simply observing and letting go**	**Disadvantages of observing and letting go**

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FORM 8.14

Keeping Track of Worries for Worry Time

In the form below you can keep track of the worries you have at different times of the day or night. Set aside 30 minutes each day when you will focus on your worries. At all other times, write down the worries using the form below.

Situation that triggered this worry	My specific worry	Have I had this worry before?

Worry Time

Write out your worries using the following form. After the 30 minutes of worry time, answer each of the questions.

Time/date:	Duration (minutes):
Place:	
Anxiety at start of worry time (0–100%):	Anxiety at end of worry time (0–100%):

(continued)

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Worries:

Common themes in my worrying:

What are the costs and benefits of worrying about this?
Costs:

Benefits:

Is this a productive or unproductive worry?

Is there any productive action I can take today that will help solve this problem?

Would I be better off if I accepted my limitation at the current time—that I might not know, there is nothing I can do, or there is always some uncertainty?

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FORM 9.4

Considering Alternatives

When we are upset, we often focus on one point of view—our own—not realizing that there are many different ways of viewing things. Consider the current situation and your point of view. Describe the situation in the left-hand column and your negative thoughts—your "interpretations"—in the middle column. Now, in the right-hand column, list different ways of seeing the current situation—different interpretations, behaviors, and opportunities you might pursue, etc.

Describe the current situation that is bothering you.	**What are your negative thoughts?**	**What are some different ways of viewing this situation? Are there new opportunities made available? Are there different possibilities you could pursue? List these.**

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FORM 9.10

Asking for Things That Are Important to Me

Imagine you have lost everything—your senses, your body, your memory, your family, job, possessions—absolutely everything. Then list what you want back, in order of importance, and make a case for why you want each back.

What I want back	Why it's important to me

What have I not been appreciating in my daily life?
Was there a time when I did not have these things or these people in my life?
Why have I ignored these things/people?
What have I been focused on that has distracted me from appreciating these things/people?
How can I show appreciation this week for these things/people?
How will I feel if I do appreciate these things/people?

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