



Thought Record

Slow down a spiraling thought and check whether it's telling you the truth.

When we're upset, the mind moves fast, and the first thought that appears isn't always the most accurate one. In cognitive behavioral therapy, writing a thought down lets you step back, weigh the evidence, and decide for yourself what's fair to believe. With practice, the unhelpful patterns get easier to spot and easier to answer.

How it works

- 1. Name the situation** When and where did it happen? What set off the feeling?
- 2. Label your emotions** What did you feel, and how strong was each one (0–100%)?
- 3. Catch the thoughts** What ran through your mind? Underline the “hot” thought — the one that stings most.
- 4. Evidence for** What genuine facts seem to support the hot thought?
- 5. Evidence against** What facts don't fit it? What would you tell a friend who said this?
- 6. Build a balanced thought** A fairer, fuller view that accounts for all the evidence.
- 7. Re-rate your emotions** How strong are the feelings now? Notice what shifted.

A worked example

Step	Example
1 · Situation	Sunday night. Saw friends post photos from a hangout I wasn't invited to.
2 · Emotions	Hurt 80%, anxious 65%, lonely 70%.
3 · Thoughts	“They don't actually like me. People always leave me out.” (hot thought)
4 · Evidence for	I wasn't asked this time. I've felt left out before.
5 · Evidence against	They texted me twice this week. It was last-minute and small. One event isn't “always.”
6 · Balanced thought	I missed one casual hangout, which stings — but the wider picture says these friendships are real.
7 · Re-rate	Hurt 40%, anxious 30%, lonely 35%.

Bring this worksheet to your next appointment.

Your Thought Record

Fill this in for one situation. Copy the page for as many as you need.

Date / situation

When, where, what triggered it?

Emotions

Name each feeling, rate 0–100%

Automatic thoughts

Underline the “hot” thought

Evidence for the hot thought

Just the facts

Evidence against it

What doesn't fit?

Balanced thought

A fairer, fuller view

Re-rate your emotions

How strong now, 0–100%?

Bring this worksheet to your next appointment.