Cognitive Restructuring Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring is a <u>CBT technique</u> that helps individuals recognize and challenge negative, unhelpful thoughts, examine the evidence for and against these thoughts, and develop more supportive alternatives. For someone with <u>panic disorder</u>, cognitive restructuring can be effective in breaking the cycle of catastrophic thinking that often fuels anxiety and panic, helping to reduce feelings of fear and regain a sense of control.

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

What you think

Example: I hear a weird noise on this plane. It's going to crash any second!



Here is an example of how a negative thought causes negative emotions and behaviors. Using cognitive restructuring to change the thoughts can change the emotions and behaviors.



Flying in an Airplane NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

What you do

BEHAVIOR

Example: You start to hyperventilate and yell to the flight attendant to stop the plane.

What you feel

Example: You feel terrified and have a sense of impending doom.

REPLACEMENT THOUGHTS

What you think

Example: Noises are common on planes and don't mean something is wrong. I will listen to the plane crew to determine if I should be worried.



If you have a positive thought following a triggering event, positive emotions and behaviors follow. Those positive behaviors lead to more positive thoughts, and the positive cycle continues.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Triggering
Event
Flying in an
Airplane

POSITIVE EMOTIONS

What you do

Example: You're able to relax enough on the flight to watch a movie and get through the trip without panic.

What you feel

Example: Feeling steady and calm.





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THOUGHT

What you think in a situation Ex: I'm the worst friend

EMOTION

How you feel
Ex: I feel sad and hopeless

BEHAVIOR

How you act in the situation Ex: Isolate and withdraw

It's important to understand that our automatic thoughts affect our feelings and influence our behavior.

You can recognize unhealthy thought patterns that are causing you increased anxiety and panic attacks by practicing cognitive restructuring. Use the questions below each time you're experiencing unwanted thoughts that lead to unhealthy behaviors.

Thoughts	
Is my thought factual?	
What evidence do I have to support my thought?	
What would someone else say about the situation?	
Is it possible to view this situation differently?	



Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our <u>strict editorial standards</u> ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust Choosing Therapy.com









Best Online Therapy

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

Best Online Psychiatry

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.





Best Mental Health Apps

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

Therapist Directory

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.



