



Think about your
upcoming week.
PLANNING
is an antidote to
OVERWHELM.


aka: "Don't Believe
Everything You Think!"



Weekly Goal



Possibilities + Problems



Fun Stuff

 **Key Messages** Use CBT skills to alter thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

- 1 Become aware of your uncomfortable feelings and identify them.
- 2 Identify the thoughts, behaviours, and physical sensations that go with your uncomfortable feelings.
- 3 Learn about the common **thinking traps** that underly your thoughts.
- 4 Challenge yourself to **THINK** your way to a healthier story. Ask, "Is this thought really **True?** **Helpful?** **Inspiring?** **Meeting Needs** of my healthy self? **Kind?**"
- 5 Practice body calming strategies when uncomfortable feelings arise.
- 6 Surprise Yourself! Consider doing the opposite of what you'd usually do
- 7 Deepen this impact by adding a visual of how you will feel, think, and act.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) treats mood, anxiety, and other mental health concerns. If you find this introduction to CBT helpful, consider taking an MSP-funded CBT course to learn the skills.



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy



CBT addresses how our feelings, thoughts, body sensations, and actions are interrelated. It focuses on modifying our thoughts and behaviours. Our feelings change in response to a change in our thoughts, body sensations, and behaviours.

This diagram shows how our thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours are interrelated. A change in one area influences the other areas.

Expand your awareness by paying attention to all four areas—thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours—while remaining curious and open-minded.



The main way to change feelings of anxiety and depression is to change our thoughts, actions, and body sensations.

To manage intense feelings, use strategies organized within these three areas:

- 1 Re-frame Thoughts
- 2 Change Behaviour
- 3 Calm the Body

CBT SKILLS + ADHD

The neurodevelopmental symptoms of ADHD (such as poor concentration, forgetfulness, and difficulty with problem solving) lead to impaired functioning in a number of life areas.

- ✓ When you have ADHD, your thoughts can become negative and distorted because of a history of both real and perceived setbacks.
- ✓ Persistent negative and distorted thoughts set the scene for developing problems with sadness and anxiety.

- ✓ The things that you do, and how you feel in your body, can also make you feel sad or anxious.
- ✓ Strategies used in CBT can help you to alter strong feelings.
- ✓ Target thoughts, feelings, or physical sensations that you want to change. Apply a strategy (described later).
- ✓ Changing your patterns takes time. You will need to practice.

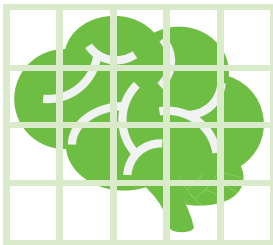


Thinking Traps

IDENTIFY AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

Before thoughts can be re-framed, you need to be able to identify them.

- 1 In a kind and open-minded way, identify the moment when you feel depressed or anxious. If it's hard to identify your feelings in the moment, notice a change in your physical sensations (e.g., you feel your heart racing) or a change in your actions. (e.g., you raise your voice).
- 2 With curiosity, identify what you are thinking in this moment. You may not have a clear thought. It could be an image that pops into your mind (e.g., a critical boss).



RE-FRAME THOUGHTS

Once the **AUTOMATIC THOUGHT** is identified, you can identify the **THINKING TRAP**.

The next page describes common Thinking Traps for people with ADHD.

- 1 With an open mind, challenge the Thinking Trap. Ask:
 - ✓ Is it really **T** rue?
 - ✓ Is it **H** elpful?
 - ✓ Is it **I** nspiring?
 - ✓ Does this way of thinking meet the **N** eeds of my healthy self?
 - ✓ Is it **K** ind (to me)?



Dive deeper
by completing
the exercise
on Page 10
of this session.



Thinking Traps

ALL-OR-NONE THINKING

(also known as *Black and White Thinking*)
There is no grey. You are either perfect or a complete failure. There is no in-between.

MENTAL FILTERING

Negative Mental Filtering: Seeing only the failures.

Disqualifying the Positive: Acknowledging positives but minimizing them and finding excuses to turn them into negatives.

OVERGENERALIZING

"People never listen to me." "I never do well in school." "Nothing good ever happens to me."

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

Mind Reading: Imagining that we know what others are thinking.

Fortune Telling: Predicting how things will work out—usually not well—without evidence.

CATASTROPHIZING

Magnification: Over-exaggerating negatives. Going directly to the worst-case scenario.

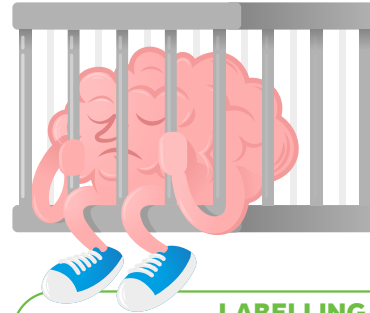
Minimization: Minimizing positive experiences. Downplaying the importance of positives.

PERSONALIZATION

Taking things personally, which leads to a direct and personal reaction to what others do or say, even if it is unrelated. Assuming you have been excluded intentionally or targeted.

BLAMING

Blaming other people or circumstances for negative events that are your responsibility.



LABELLING

Assigning judgment to yourself or to others based on one negative incident.
"I'm stupid." "I'm such a loser."

ALWAYS BEING RIGHT

Needing to be right, always. Internalizing personal opinions as facts. Going to great lengths to demonstrate being correct.

SHOULD STATEMENTS

Enforcing 'should do', 'must do', or 'shouldn't do' statements as rules for oneself and for others.

EMOTIONAL REASONING

Any feelings must be true. Accepting emotion as fact and blocking all logical reasoning. Assuming that the negative feeling is the only truth.

CONTROL FALLACIES

External: Thinking that life is completely controlled by external factors, which leads to a sense of powerlessness.

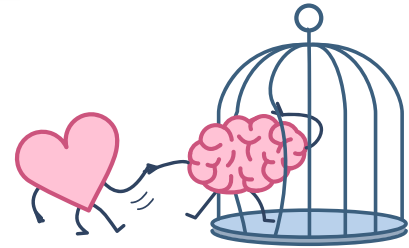
Internal: Believing that by having control of ourselves and our surroundings we are responsible for the feelings of others.

FAIRNESS IS THE NORM

Belief that all things must always be fair and equal.



Thinking Traps

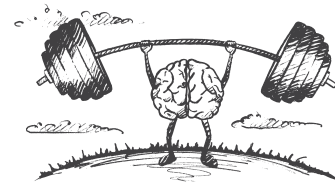


UNHELPFUL (AUTOMATIC) THOUGHT	THINKING TRAP	CHALLENGE THE TRAP	HEALTHIER THOUGHT
I will never get this job.	Catastrophizing Over-Generalizing All-or-None Thinking	I might have enough experience to qualify for this job. I won't know if I don't try.	I will use the experience to practice my interview skills. If this job doesn't work out, I will be ready for my next interview.
Everyone else seems to know what to do. What's wrong with me?	Jumping to Conclusions Personalizing Mind Reading	How do I know the experience of others? Is comparing myself to others helpful?	Other people might be confused. If I ask for clarification, it will probably help someone else too. I am capable in many ways.
I should be able to get my work done on time.	Should Statement	This task was much harder than the others.	Next time, I will double the time I think I need for this type of work.
The only way I can get work done is at the last minute. I need the pressure.	All-or-None Thinking Mental Filter	What emotional cost does this pattern have on me and on others around me?	I am choosing to get my work done with less stress. Inch by inch, everything's a cinch.
I don't deserve to be here.	Magnification Personalization Disqualifying the Positive	What do I experience by blowing things out of proportion? Whose voice is this?	I may feel awkward here, but I deserve the chance! Feelings aren't facts. Thoughts aren't facts.



Behaviour Change

This chart shows how we can challenge ourselves to change our behaviours.



EMOTION	UNHELPFUL THOUGHT	PHYSICAL SENSATIONS	MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIOUR URGE	CHALLENGE THE URGE!
Anxious Nervous Scared	Themes of threat, judgment by others. I am in danger. I will be humiliated or embarrassed.	Muscles tense Sweaty palms Racing heart Butterflies/nausea	Flee (flight response) Freeze Avoid	Fake It, Literally! By acting confident, our physical sensations adjust to the new feeling. Master the Fear! Do what you are avoiding, even just a little bit. Name It! Helps you to get distance.
Sad Down Hopeless	Themes of loss, self-criticism, hopelessness. I am worthless. Nobody likes me. Nothing ever goes well. I am a failure.	Lethargic Foggy Run down Craving food or substances	Withdraw Pull away Isolate	Get Active! Exercise. Act Happy! see <i>Fake It</i> above. Connect! Reach out. Take the Initiative! Schedule Your Day! Get Pro-Active! Plan for good things.



Behaviour Change



While it may feel comfortable in the short term, following our habitual urges and usual patterns can lead to bigger problems.

Work through these imaginary scenarios. Be curious and open-minded. People with ADHD often struggle with being on time. This example works through several scenarios: arriving barely on time; arriving late; not going at all; and, arriving early.

Typically, if you're already a bit late, you avoid going to a meeting or appointment. When you feel this way, experiment by behaving in the opposite way from your urge. Rather than avoiding, get to the meeting as best you can.

- 1 Imagine arriving to the meeting right on time. What would be your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours?"

- 2 Imagine arriving a few minutes late for the meeting. What would be your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours?"

- 3 Imagine that you didn't change your behaviour and instead stayed home. Write down your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours.

- 4 Imagine that you arrive five minutes early for your meeting. What are your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and behaviours?"



Calming the Body

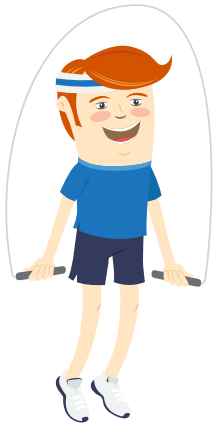
Changing body sensations changes how you feel and think. These strategies are scientifically proven; experiment to find the one that works best for you. It will take practice and time before you see results.

SLOW BREATHING

- 1 Breathe in, then breathe out. Your goal is to inhale *less air* than you exhale.
- 2 Breathe from your abdomen, not from your chest. Put your hand on your abdomen and make sure that it is moving up and down.

Options:

- ✓ Breathe in through your nostrils (five seconds in), then breathe out through your mouth (five seconds out).
- ✓ Breathe in for five seconds, then breathe out for seven seconds (adjust time as needed).
- ✓ Continue this exercise for one to two minutes.



EXERCISE

- ✓ Do physical activity that raises your heart rate.
- ✓ 45 minutes of brisk walking is ideal, but anything done for 10 minutes or more is better than nothing.
- ✓ You can walk, run, or skip rope.
- ✓ Put on your favourite music and dance.



7-MINUTE WORKOUT

This popular workout method, also called High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), doesn't require a gym or weights. Very short exercises help to raise your heart rate. Search for 7-minute HIIT workout apps or online.



Calming the Body

"Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy."

~ Thich Naht Hanh



MONA LISA SMILE

- 1 Keep your mouth closed, and turn the corners of your mouth slightly upward.
- 2 Stay like that for at least 20 seconds. Notice any difference in how you feel?

COLD WATER

- ✓ Splash cold water on your face. Even better, dunk your face in a sink full of cold water and hold your breath for 20–30 seconds.



PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- ✓ Starting from toe to head, tense one muscle group for five seconds, then release. Tense your toes and release, then your calf muscles, thigh muscles, abdomen, triceps, fists, and jaw in succession, then scrunch your face. You can also reverse the order.
- ✓ Notice the difference in feeling when your muscles are tensed and when they are relaxed.

BOX BREATHING

This popular breathing technique can be used anytime, anywhere. Practice will make the technique second nature.

- 1 Breathe in through your nose while counting to four slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.
- 2 Hold your breath inside while counting slowly to four. Keep your mouth and nose relaxed.
- 3 Begin to slowly exhale for four seconds.
- 4 Repeat Steps 1 to 3 at least three times.

OPTIONAL TECHNIQUE: 4-4-4-4 BREATHING

- ✓ Breathe in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, breathe out for four seconds, hold for four seconds.





DEEPER DIVE!
Putting it All Together

Practice the three strategies:

- ✓ Change Thoughts
- ✓ Change Behaviours
- ✓ Calm the Body

This week, use an example from a situation when your mood or anxiety were activated. When you get to **Column 6** (Putting it Together) select your response from EITHER **Column 3, 4, or 5**. Then, in **Column 6**, modify that response by using a skill that you have learned in this course. How does this new response feel to you?

1 SITUATION	2 WHAT I'M FEELING: EMOTIONS	3 WHAT I'M FEELING: BODY SENSATIONS	4 WHAT I'M THINKING: THOUGHTS + THINKING TRAPS	5 WHAT I'M DOING	6 PUTTING IT TOGETHER
SAMPLE I have a team deadline this week.	Worried Hopeless Overwhelmed	Shaking Heart Racing Tensed Muscles	"Others will see that I don't know what I'm doing. I am sure to slow everyone else down with my terrible work." <i>Labelling, Disqualifying the Positive, Catastrophizing</i>	I am avoiding doing my part of the work. I am eating a lot of food. I am cleaning my house.	I feel my heart racing. I will do a breathing exercise, noticing how the sensation may change and how I may feel differently.

