

HARMONISING



PERCEPTUAL TOOLS

A Variety of Reference Tools to Help You Analyse Your Thoughts and Feelings

These tools are often used by Counsellors and Psychotherapists to enable clients to see themselves more clearly.

Often it is extremely difficult to view our lives, experiences, thoughts, and feelings in any way objectively. All of these can help.

The Circle of Control

Things I Cannot Control

The weather

What others believe

The past

The future

Death

My age

Things I Can Control

My values and beliefs

What I post online

What I say about other people

My actions

How I spend my spare time

My goals

Who I spend time with

My honesty

My boundaries

What I say

My thoughts

Other people's opinions

Other people's actions

Reactions to my boundaries

What other people think

5,4,3,2,1

Grounding Technique

This technique can really help re-establish control in situation of panic / anxiety.

Take a deep breath and then identify:

5 Things you can FEEL

4 Things you can SEE

3 Things you can HEAR

2 Things you can SMELL

1 Thing you can TASTE

Anxiety Coping Statements

THIS FEELING WILL PASS

MY ANXIETY DOES NOT DEFINE ME

I AM SAFE AND I WILL BE OK

NOT ALL THOUGHTS ARE TRUE FACTS

I CAN COPE. I AM STRONG

JUST KEEP BREATHING

Types of Self-Care

1: PHYSICAL

Sleep, stretching, physical activity, healthy eating and rest.

2: EMOTIONAL

Stress management, gratitude, acts of kindness, forgiveness and compassion.

3: SOCIAL

Personal boundaries, support systems, positive social media and spending time with loved ones.

4: SPIRITUAL

Time alone, space, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, connection and nature.

5: PERSONAL

Hobbies, self-identity, doing the things that bring you enjoyment.

6: SPACE

Safety, organisation, clean and tidy, security and stability.

7: WORK

Time management, work boundaries, break time and knowledge.

Interpersonal Effectiveness

D.E.A.R. M.A.N.

How to best express your feelings to others, avoid conflict and maintain boundaries.

DESCRIBE the situation simply. Stick to the facts by avoiding opinion or interpretation.

EXPRESS how you are feeling by using “I” statements. Don’t assume that the other person knows how you feel.

ASSERT. Say what you need. Don’t beat about the bush. Be firm and clear.

REINFORCE. Reward people who respond well and explain the positive effects of getting what you want or need.

MINDFUL. Maintain your position and keep your mind on your goals. Don’t steer off from the objective of the interaction.

APPEAR. Use a confident voice, body language and make good eye contact. This will help you appear confident.

NEGOTIATE. Remember that you aren’t demanding anything, you are asking for something. Be open to negotiation.

Cognitive Distortions

Holding Our Thoughts to Account

MENTAL FILTER: Only paying attention to some types of evidence. Focusing on your failures while avoiding seeing your success.

CATASTROPHISING: Only seeing the worst possible outcome of an event or situation. As a result, worries become escalated, and thoughts become exaggerated.

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS: Assuming that you know what other people are thinking. Predicting the future.

OVERGENERALISING: The process of concluding that just because something happened to you once before, it will occur over and over again. It is negative thinking based on only 1 or 2 experiences.

EMOTIONAL REASONING: You believe that just because you feel a certain way, then justifying that your thoughts must be true.

BLACK AND WHITE: You see things as good or bad, Right or wrong, Or all or nothing. It fails to see the whole picture, and by only seeing black or white you ignore the middle ground. Possibly the more reasonable ground.

LABELLING: Putting labels on yourself and others.

“I’m unlovable”

“They are an idiot”

SHOULD STATEMENTS: Believing that things should be a certain way. Using “should”, “must” or “ought” statements directed at yourself. This thinking results in feelings of guilt, shame and self-loathing.

BLAMING: Placing the blame on others instead of owning up to your mistakes or sharing the responsibility. Taking on the victim mentality.

PERSONALISATION: Taking things personally and thinking that what other people do results from your actions. You may blame yourself for things that were totally out of your control.

Distress Tolerance

S.T.O.P.

STOP:

Interrupt your negative thinking with the command STOP! And pause with what you were doing.

TAKE A BREATH:

Practice some deep breathing techniques to slow your heart rate down.

OBSERVE:

Observe your thoughts, feelings and behaviour. How does your body feel?

PROCEED:

Purposefully and mindfully proceed with your next activity, one step at a time.

FACT OR IMAGINATION?

What happened?

What is my perception of this?

What are the objective facts?

What are the beliefs appearing as facts? (See Cognitive Distortions)

What could I alter about my perception of this?

REMEMBER:

It is ok to have bad days

Your mental health struggles are not your fault

You are not defined by your achievements

You have come a long way

Comparing yourself to others is time you could spend
on yourself

Self-care is not optional. It is necessary

We all have flaws and weaknesses

‘Done’ is better than ‘perfect’



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