

CBT Journaling Worksheet

A simple exercise to help you understand and calm stressful thoughts

Cognitive Behavioral Journaling helps you notice stressful thoughts and gently challenge them. This can reduce emotional overwhelm and help your mind feel clearer.

You only need **5–10 minutes**.

1. What happened?

Describe the situation briefly.

Example:

“Received many work emails while cooking dinner and felt pressured to reply immediately.”

Your situation:

2. What did you feel?

Write the emotions you felt and rate how strong they were from 0 to 10.

Example:

Overwhelmed – 8

Frustrated—6

Emotion: _____ Intensity (0–10): _____

Emotion: _____ Intensity (0–10): _____

Note: You can also write it in detail.

3. What thoughts came to your mind?

Write the thoughts that appeared automatically.

Example:

“I can’t keep up.”

“This will never stop.”

Your thoughts:

4. Is this thought completely true?

Ask yourself:

- What makes this thought feel true?
- What evidence supports this thought?
- Is there another way to look at the situation?
- What evidence goes against this thought?

Supporting evidence:

Evidence against it:

Another way to look at the situation

5. A more balanced thought

Write a kinder, more realistic thought.

Example:

“Today feels overwhelming, but I’ve handled difficult days before.”

Your balanced thought:

Note: You can also write how you handled it before.

6. How do you feel now?

Rate your emotions again.

Emotion: _____ New intensity (0–10): _____

Emotion: _____ New intensity (0–10): _____

Even a small drop shows your mind is beginning to relax.

Small reminder

Your thoughts are not always facts.

Sometimes they are simply your mind reacting to stress.

Writing them down helps you see them more clearly.