



Focus on the Present for Acceptance

When we focus on the present it helps us accept the current reality as it is, without judgement. Use the following chart to record the ways in which you can accept your current situation.

Distressing Reality	Ways to Objectively Accept Reality
Ex: I have no money	Ex: I have no money because I don't have a job. If I apply for jobs I can earn money, pay my bills and have more money for hobbies. I am going to apply to jobs at local stores to start earning money.



Acceptance

Acceptance is an exercise that will help you deal with negative emotions and experiences. Use this worksheet to identify, consider, and understand a situation or emotion you are struggling to accept.

The goal is to help you acknowledge that you cannot control every aspect of what you experience. Rather, you can accept this lack of control and choose to respond mindfully instead of reacting emotionally. This acceptance can help you move beyond the distress you experience without trying to change or control the situation.

This worksheet has 5 sections:

- Box 1 is a space for you to determine or specify the problem or situation that you find problematic or painful.
- The second step is to describe the role your behaviour played in this situation keeping in mind that you do not control others' behaviour. Part b) of this step is for recounting how others' behaviour contributed to the situation. In the third part, try to determine what you could control and what you could not.
- Use Box 3 to write about your reaction to the situation. The prompts should help you differentiate between emotional (often impulsive) reactions and mindful responses.
- Box 4 invites you to think about the impact of your reactions on those around you.
- Box 5 is a space for you to identify more mindful, considered ways to respond in the future.

Remember and try to accept that you can only control your own actions and behaviours. Acceptance is about appreciating that we cannot control others behaviour. We can, however, control our own actions in a way that minimizes our distress when we find ourselves experiencing difficult situations.



Acceptance

1. What is the problem or situation that you find problematic or painful?

What happened prior to the situation that arose? How did it occur? How did it unfold? Who was there? What emotions did you experience during this situation?

2. What role did your behaviour play in this situation? How about others' behaviour?

a) Describe your actions and behaviours during this experience and consider how your actions influenced what occurred. Remember, you cannot control how others will act.

b) How did other people's behaviour influence the situation? How did their actions contribute to what happened?

c) What were you able to control during this situation? What were you unable to control?



Acceptance (Cont..)

3. Consider and describe your reactions to the situation.

How did you react, act, or behave to what occurred? What effects did your reactions have on you emotionally? Remember that a response is considered, deliberate behaviour. A reaction, in contrast, is when you allow emotions to guide your behaviour.

4. What was the impact of your reaction on others around you?

Describe how they acted or behaved when you reacted the way you did.

5. How might you behave next time so that you can minimize your reactive response?

How could you respond, instead of reacting, to reduce your own emotional distress?



Acceptance Coping Mantras

Try repeating one of the following phrases to practice acceptance of a situation.

- It is what it is.
- So it goes.
- You have no power over me.
- This is how it has to be.
- I can't change the past.
- I can't predict the future.
- There is no point in getting upset over the past. It's already done and gone.
- I am strong, I will survive the present crisis.
- I can't go back in time, I can't control the past.
- Everything in the past has led up to this moment.
- Right now, everything is as it should be based on past events.
- I can't predict the future.
- I have no control over other people.
- I will not always agree or like it. That's ok.

Or create your own mantra! Some people prefer to use phrases from a favourite song, or religious text. Buddhist mantras such as "Om mani padme hum" are often repeated as a calming, grounding or selfsoothing technique.



Thought Record Worksheet

The Thought Record worksheet provides a template for clients to monitor their thoughts and emotions, evaluate their thinking, and explore adaptive responding. It is particularly helpful for those clients who are experiencing negative or dysfunctional thoughts and feelings.

The worksheet has 7 steps:

1. On the far left column, there is space to write down the date and time a dysfunctional thought arose.
2. The second column is where the situation is listed. Instruct the client to describe - in detail - the event that led up to the dysfunctional thought.
3. The third column is for the automatic thought. This is where the dysfunctional automatic thought is recorded, along with a rating of belief in the thought on a scale from 0% to 100%.
4. The next column is where the emotion(s) elicited by this thought are listed, also with a rating of intensity on a scale from 0% to 100%.
5. The fifth column is where the client will identify which cognitive distortion(s) they are experiencing with regards to this specific dysfunctional thought, such as all-or-nothing thinking, filtering, jumping to conclusions, etc.
6. The second to last column is for the user to write down alternative thoughts, more positive and functional thoughts that can replace the negative one.
7. Finally, the last column is for the user to write down the outcome of this exercise.

Were you able to confront the dysfunctional thought? Did you write down a convincing alternative thought? Did your belief in the thought and/or the intensity of your emotion(s) decrease?



Thought Record Worksheet

Worksheet

Directions: When you notice your mood drop, take a moment to notice what thoughts are passing through your mind, and then jot these down in the Automatic Thoughts column. Then, complete the rest of the row (i.e., date & time, situation, and so on).

Date & time	Situation	Automatic thought(s)	Emotion(s)	Alternative thought(s)	Outcome
	What were you doing?	What exactly were you thoughts at the time? And how much did you believe each thought (0-100%)?	How did you feel at the time? And how intense was the emotion (0-100%)?	What evidence is there that the automatic thought is true? Is there an alternative explanation	How much do you believe in the original automatic thought now (0-100%)? How do you feel now (0-100%)? What can you do now?