CBT INDIVIDUAL CHECK-IN

Thoughts | Emotions | Behaviors | Skills | Next steps

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 | How am I doing today?

Current mood (check all that apply):

☐ Calm ☐ Anxious ☐ Sad ☐ Angry ☐ Hopeful ☐ Overwhelmed ☐ Other

Emotional intensity (0 = none; 10 = extreme):

☐ 0-2 Low ☐ 3-4 Mild ☐ 5-7 Moderate ☐ 8-10 High

Biggest stressor or situation since my last session:

2 | CBT thought - feeling - behavior check

Situation: What happened? Stick to observable facts.

Automatic thought: What went through my mind?

Emotions and body sensations: What did I notice?

Behavior / urge: What did I do, avoid, or want to do?

3 | Safety and coping check

Any safety concern or urge to harm myself or anyone else?

☐ No ☐ Yes - discuss with clinician

Changes in alcohol, cannabis, substances, or other coping behaviors?

☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Prefer to discuss

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Challenge unhelpful thinking and choose an intentional response

4 | Look at the thought from a new angle

What evidence supports my automatic thought? What evidence does not?

Am I mind-reading, catastrophizing, overgeneralizing, or thinking all-or-nothing?

A more balanced, realistic thought I can practice:

5 | Skills, strengths, and self-care

Skills used this week:

- [ ] Breathing
- [ ] Grounding
- [ ] Problem solving
- [ ] Boundaries
- [ ] Mindfulness
- [ ] Behavioral activation

What helped? What did I learn about myself?

One meaningful action I will take before my next session:

6 | Session focus and progress

What I most want help with today:

One goal or small step to practice (when, where, and how):

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS & SKILL EXPLANATIONS

Use these definitions when completing your check-in. An automatic thought is a quick interpretation, not necessarily a fact. The goal of CBT is to notice patterns, evaluate interpretations, and practice helpful actions.

Understanding thoughts, feelings, and patterns

CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy): A structured approach that explores how thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and actions influence one another.

Trigger / situation: The event or circumstance preceding a reaction; describe what a camera could observe. *Example: A friend did not reply to my message.*

Automatic thought: A fast, often habitual meaning or prediction that pops into your mind. It may be inaccurate or incomplete. *Example: They are upset with me.*

Emotion: A feeling such as sadness, worry, anger, guilt, or joy; rate its strength from 0 to 10. *Example: Anxiety: 7/10.*

Body sensation: A physical response associated with emotion. *Example: Tight chest, tense shoulders, racing heart.*

Behavior / urge: What you do or feel pulled to do, including avoidance, reassurance seeking, or helpful coping. *Example: I reread my text five times.*

Cognitive distortion: A common thinking habit that can make a situation seem more threatening or certain than evidence supports.

Mind-reading: Assuming you know what someone else thinks without checking. *Example: My supervisor thinks I am incompetent.*

Catastrophizing: Predicting the worst outcome or treating it as inevitable. *Example: One mistake means I will lose my job.*

Overgeneralizing: Drawing a broad conclusion from one or a few events. *Example: This went badly; nothing ever works out.*

All-or-nothing thinking: Seeing only extremes and missing the middle ground. *Example: If I am not perfect, I am a failure.*

Evidence check: Look for facts supporting and challenging your thought, rather than relying only on feelings.

Balanced thought / cognitive reframe: A fair, believable interpretation that considers multiple possibilities without forcing positivity. *Example: They may be busy; I do not know why they have not replied.*

CBT coping skills

Controlled breathing: Slow, comfortable breathing to settle physical arousal; avoid forcing deep breaths. *Example: Breathe in gently for 4 counts and out for 6, if comfortable.*

Grounding: Bring attention to present-moment sights, sounds, and sensations rather than getting caught in rumination. *Example: Name 5 things you can see.*

Mindfulness: Notice thoughts and feelings without judging them or needing to obey them. *Example: I notice the thought that I will fail.*

Problem solving: Identify a practical problem, brainstorm options, choose one, and review what happened. *Example: Ask for clarification about a deadline.*

Boundaries: Clearly state what you will or will not do while respecting others. *Example: I can talk once we are both calm.*

Behavioral activation: Schedule manageable, meaningful activities even when motivation is low. *Example: Take a 10-minute walk or call a supportive friend.*

Self-care: Actions that support rest, health, relationships, and emotional well-being.

Action step: A small, specific behavior you intend to practice, with a time and place. *Example: After breakfast Wednesday, I will write one thought record.*

Practice reminder: Write the facts, identify the automatic thought, name the feeling, and choose a thoughtful response. A balanced thought does not mean dismissing real concerns.