

Mindset Booklet
Challenging Negative Thoughts



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Mindset Changes

This worksheet will help you recognize and overcome mental roadblocks by using your brain's ability to change (known as neuroplasticity), to shift from your Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs) into positive thinking patterns.

Interesting Information

The Window of Tolerance:

Everyone has a window of tolerance. It is the state of being where we feel safe and secure, open, curious, present in the moment, clear and in control of our thoughts, behaviours and responses. When we are triggered, we fall out of our window of tolerance and into either a:

Hyper-Aroused state: where we become emotionally reactive, impulsive, overwhelmed, and more extreme with our outwardly projected behaviours. Our minds in this state tend to be racing or obsessive and uncontrolled.

Hypo- Aroused State: Where we become numb, distressed, drained, isolationists, hopeless, emotional empty. We can disassociate or unable to look forward to our future. Our thoughts become cloudy and foggy in this state where you cannot think clearly or with focus.

Your brain can change: From birth your brain forms neural pathways that become automatic. From how we behave, to how we think, how we form opinions, and how we perceive the world. It is generally a passive experience. This exercise will help you become conscious of these changes and start actively altering your perception of the world. Through actively changing your thoughts and your emotional and physical behaviours.

What alters your Brain: Our automatic responses, the way we perceive our experiences, are generally formed by the age of 10. At this point they are subconscious. Every experience, traumatic or otherwise, changes your neural pathways, weakening them or building them stronger. By becoming aware of your ANTs, you can start rewiring your brain and start forming new neural pathways that will become your automatic responses.

What is Trauma: Trauma is often considered to be extreme situations, in fact Trauma is when you experience an emotional situation that affects you negatively. Trauma is subjective since everyone experiences and reacts to trauma differently. What one person can handle others cannot. You are not weak to have had a traumatic experience, even if you feel that way. The feeling of weakness is a wish your mind, body, and soul makes hoping the experience will go away. It is fear, survival, and self-protection. Trauma can rewire your brain to the point that you have a small window of tolerance and will continue to rule your thoughts and behaviours until you decide to take control again.

Thoughts lead to emotions then behaviours: Your first response to a situation are your thoughts which lead to your emotional responses, which then influence your behaviours. This highlights the importance of being aware of your reactions.

Activity to reframe triggers positively:

The prompts in this activity will help you to reflect on a triggering event, exploring your thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and behaviours around that situation and to understand your ANTs (Automatic Negative Thoughts). It then guides you to transform your negative automatic thoughts into positive ones to foster healthier emotional and physical responses. Through this process and repetition, you will begin to create a automatic response to pause when you are triggered and consider how the situation is affecting you and how you can consciously respond to the situation.

How to complete the activity:

Now, I want you to consider a time where you felt triggered. How did it affect your mind and body? What thoughts came to mind? What emotions did you feel? Where did the emotions occur within your body? How did you react?

Once you are ready to start doing the work to make the changes answer the following questions.

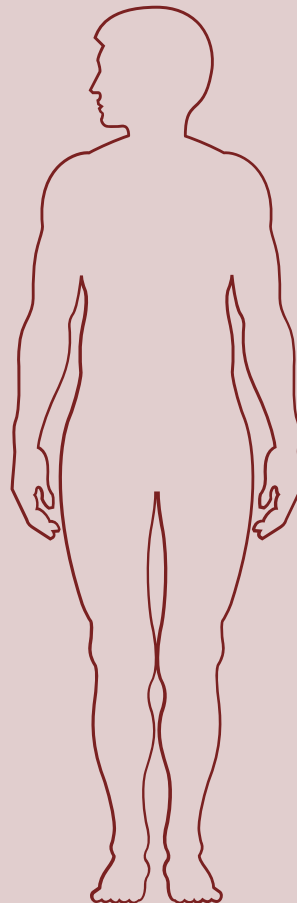
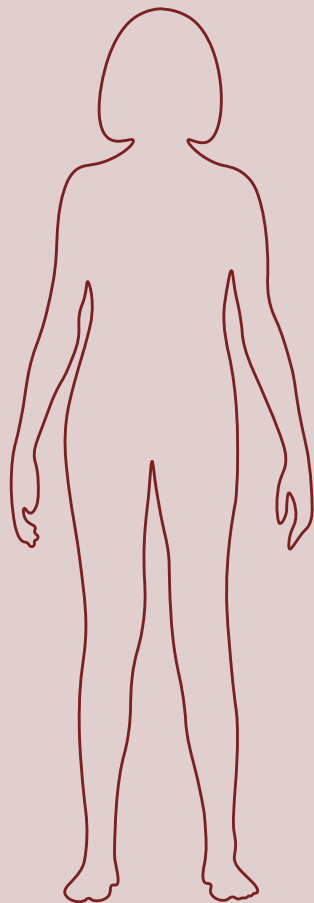
What triggered me? Was it something someone said, was it a behaviour, an event, a situation, etc. Explain the situation

What thoughts did I have during this situation?

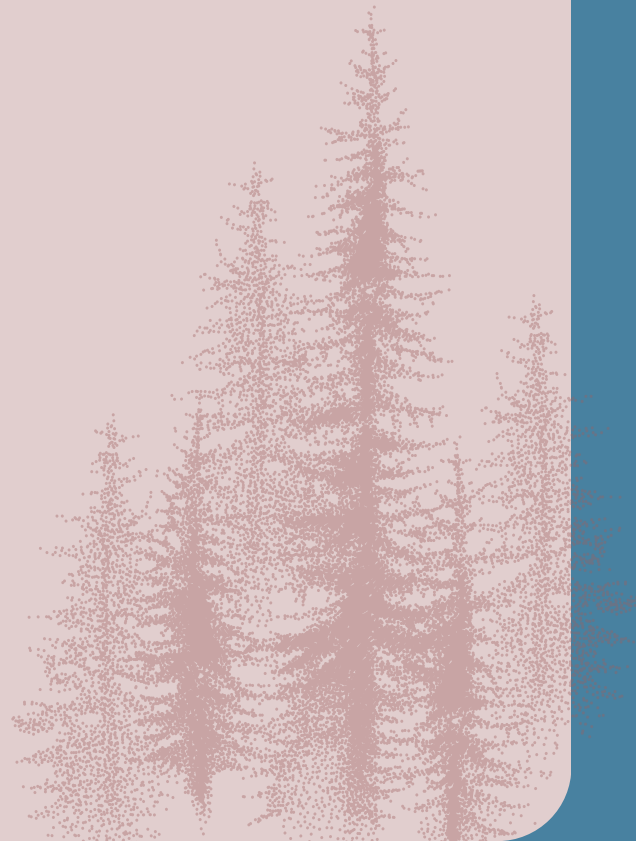
What emotions did I feel?



***How did my emotions show up in my body? Where did you feel them?
What did they feel like? How did your emotions affect your physical
body?***



What behaviours or urges did I experience with these thoughts and emotions?



Reframing your thoughts

Our thoughts have a powerful influence on how we feel about ourselves.

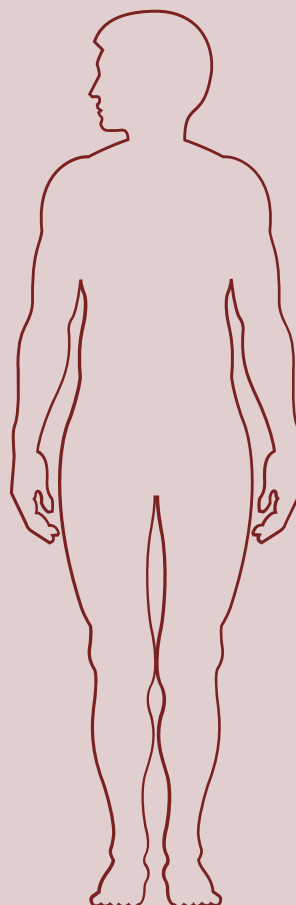
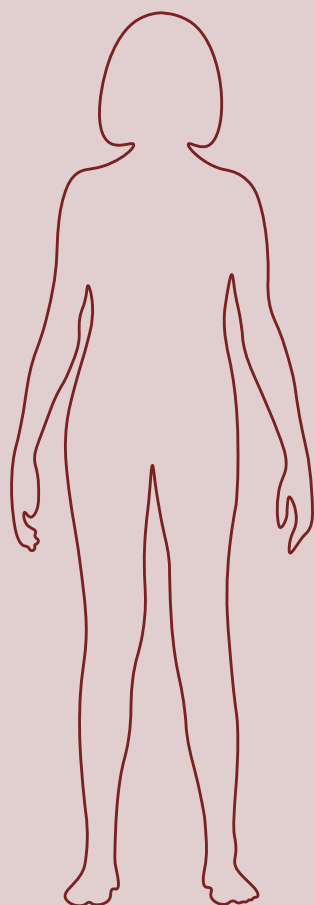
For instance, negative thoughts can bring us down, while positive thoughts can lift our spirits. This section of the exercise is where you will consider and record positive thoughts, and actions you can take to mitigate your negative ANT's (Automatic Negative Thoughts)

What positive thoughts could I have had in that moment?

What emotions would show up in response to these thoughts?



How would these emotions affect my body? Where do I feel these emotions?



What behaviours or urges would I experience with these thoughts and emotions?

This activity can be repeated as often as you need. You can also use this activity to create your own affirmations to continue dismantling your

ANT's



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