

HANDOUT 28: THE 5 STEPS OF COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING WORKSHEET

1. SITUATION

Ask yourself, “What happened that made me upset?” Write down a brief description of the situation.

Situation:

2. FEELING

Circle your strongest feeling (if more than one, use a separate sheet for each feeling):

Fear/Anxiety Sadness/Depression Guilt/Shame Anger

3. THOUGHT

Ask yourself, “What am I thinking that is leading me to feel this way?” Use your Guide to Thoughts and Feelings handout to identify the thought that is most strongly related to the feeling circled above. Write down your thought(s) below and circle the thought most strongly related to the feeling.

Thought: _____

If your thought is a Problematic Thinking Style, circle which one(s):

All-or-Nothing	Overgeneralizing	Must/Should/Never
Catastrophizing	Emotional Reasoning	Overestimation of Risk
Self-Blame		

4. EVALUATE YOUR THOUGHT:

Things that DO support my thought:

[illegible]

Things that DO NOT support my thought:

Ask yourself, “What evidence do I have for this thought?” “Is the alternative way to look at this situation?” “How would someone else about the situation?” Use the questions from Handout 27 for help.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

5. MAKE A DECISION

Ask yourself, “Do things mostly support my thought or do things mostly NOT support my thought?”

☐ **NO**, the evidence does *not* support my thought.

If the evidence does NOT support your thought, come up with a new and more accurate thought that is supported by the evidence. These thoughts are usually more balanced and helpful, and are associated with less distress. Write your new thought in the space below. Remember, if you have your old upsetting thought in a similar situation in the future, replace it with your new and more accurate thought.

New Thought

Optional Action Plan: Although your new and more accurate thought should be less distressing than your old thought, you may nevertheless still find it somewhat distressing. In this situation, you should then develop an Action Plan. Complete the Action Plan worksheet (see Handout 29) to address the problem situation and alleviate your distress.

☐ **YES**, the evidence *does* support my thought.

If the evidence DOES support your thought, decide what you need to do next in order to deal with the situation. Ask yourself, “Do I need to get more information about what to do?” “Do I need to get some help?” “Do I need to take steps to make sure I am safe?” Complete the Action Plan worksheet (see Handout 29) to address the problem situation and alleviate your distress.