

FIVE STEP THINKING DIARY PHOTOCOPY BEFORE USE

Instructions – How to complete this Diary:

Keep a diary of any “problem” times or when you experienced any of the following unhelpful feelings:
 Depression – Anxiety – Fear – Anger – Hurt – Jealousy – Guilt – Shame – Embarrassment

Complete **STEP 1** - what were you doing/what 'triggered' your feelings/behaviour?

Complete **STEP 2** - make a note of your unhelpful feelings and behaviour - **RATE** how unhelpful your feelings and behaviour are on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = helpful to 10 = unhelpful).

OFTEN WE APPEAR TO GO FROM STEP 1 TO STEP 2 WITHOUT BEING FULLY AWARE OF WHAT WE WERE THINKING - consider what you were thinking in relation to **STEP 1** and complete **STEP 3**

Be aware of when you are telling yourself absolute demands about yourself, others, or the world. These often take the form of **SHOULD, OUGHT OR MUST** type thoughts, or extreme beliefs, for example 'I should...' 'They must...' 'It would be AWFUL', 'I can't bear it', 'I can't stand it' etc.

Now complete **STEP 4** and **STEP 5**:

STEP 4 - identify more 'helpful' thoughts that allow you, others and the world to be fallible (less than perfect!). Ask yourself the following questions about your **STEP 3** Thoughts:

1 what musts, shoulds, oughts or **ABSOLUTE** demands am I telling myself about **STEP 1**

2 Where is it written that these things are **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL** for me to obtain or achieve or have - rather than accept that I may strongly want, wish, desire or prefer them?

3 Who says I can only accept situations. people, myself, the world if I am 100% comfortable?

4 If my best friend or someone I loved thought this way what would I tell them to help them feel less stressed and think more realistically?

Using these questions **NOW** rephrase your thoughts in a more helpful way.

New thoughts may include strong preferences, wishes, wants, desires, for example 'I'd really prefer to...' rather than unhelpful demands, for example 'I or **THEY** or **IT MUST/SHOULD/OUGHT...**'

Once you have identified more helpful thoughts **START TO PRACTICE TELLING YOURSELF THESE**. Write them down, rehearse them and **PRACTICE THINKING DIFFERENTLY**.

STEP 5 - Use techniques to help you manage unhelpful feelings. These include Relaxation techniques (for example, breathing exercises, physical exercise etc.) and Distraction techniques (for example, focusing on something positive, listening to music etc.) and distract yourself from unhelpful thinking habits.

The aim is to experience more helpful feelings and behaviour, for example **MORE HELPFUL FEELINGS** are: concern, annoyance, regret, remorse, sadness etc.

AND ACCEPT SOME DISCOMFORT OR FRUSTRATION IN LIFE AS NORMAL HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

NOW RATE how helpful and realistic your feelings and behaviour are on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = helpful to 10 = unhelpful) when you think more helpfully.

STEP 1 What was I doing/situation/'trigger'?	STEP 2 Unhelpful feelings/behaviours RATE on scale of 0=low to 10=high INTENSITY	STEP 3 What I was telling myself/unhelpful negative thoughts/shoulds.. oughts...musts	STEP 4 More helpful or realistic/constructive thoughts I could think instead	STEP 5 How I might feel or behavior in a more helpful/realistic way	NOTES Often we go straight to our feelings and behaviour in reaction to a 'trigger' without being fully aware of what we are telling ourselves about the event or situation or memory. Actively challenge unhelpful thinking and use relaxation techniques to feel more in control.
AN EXAMPLE: ATTENDING A JOB INTERVIEW	Feel anxious (Rate 8) Feel sick (Rate 7) Start to perspire (Rate 8)	"If I don't get this job it will be awful. The interviewers will see how nervous I am and think I am stupid. I mustn't appear stupid.I shouldn't be here."	"I would like this job - if I don't succeed it does not make me a failure. I can see this interview as a good chance to rehearse. Calm down."	Relax posture - Smile! Stay Calm - keep breathing slowly. Feel in control.	At the end of each column is an example to help you think about situations where you experience unhelpful feelings/behavior