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THOUGHT RECORDS

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GLOSSARY

Thought: A mental process involving the formulation of ideas, images, and sensations. Thoughts can be conscious or unconscious and can influence emotions and behaviors.

Negative Automatic Thoughts (NATs): Spontaneous, reflexive, and often distorted thoughts that occur in response to specific situations. NATs are typically negative and can contribute to distressing emotions.

Disturbing Thoughts: Thoughts that cause discomfort, anxiety, or distress. These thoughts can be irrational, intrusive, or obsessive, leading to negative emotions and behaviors.:

Examples of Thoughts:

Positive Thought: "I am capable and can handle challenges."
Negative Automatic Thought (NAT): "I will definitely fail; I'm not good enough."
Disturbing Thoughts: What if something happens to my family?

Emotion: One-word sensations reflecting a person's state of mind, often accompanied by physiological changes in the body. Emotions can range from positive (joy, love) to negative (anger, fear) and can influence behavior and perception.
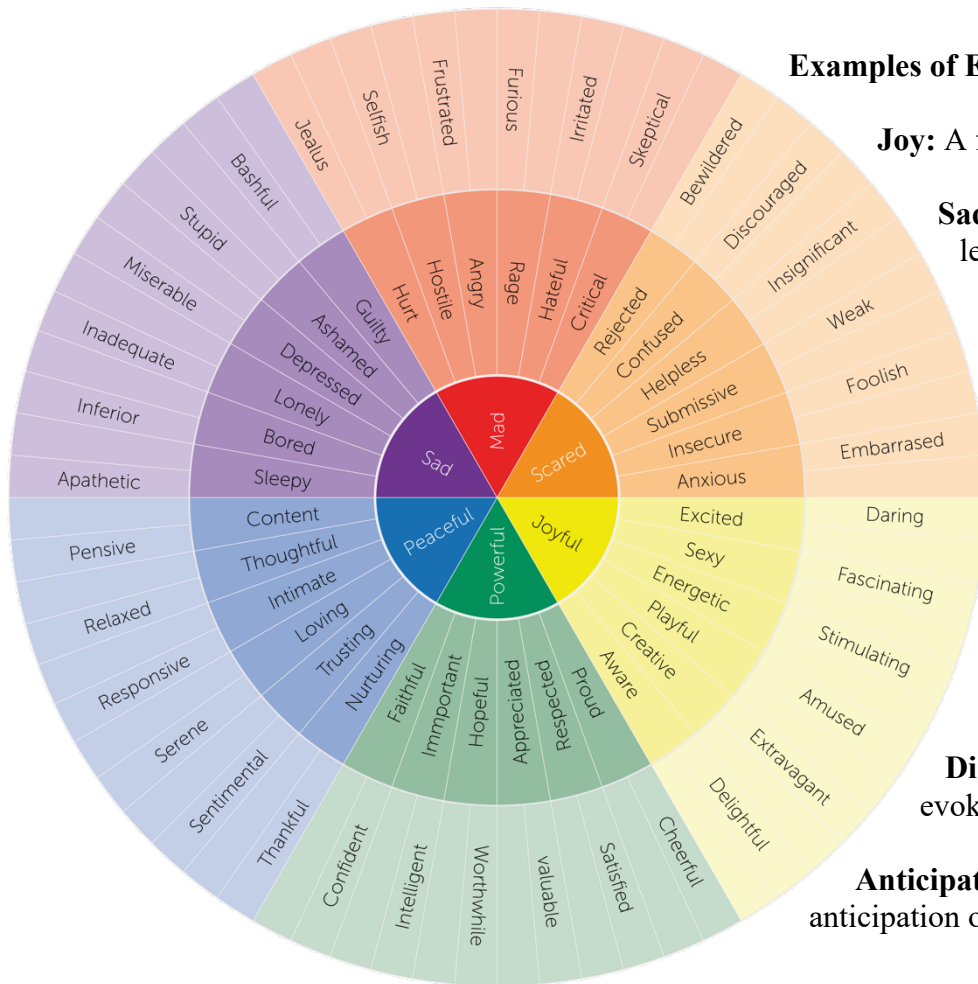
Examples of Emotions:

Joy: A feeling of great pleasure or happiness. For example, winning a game can evoke joy.

Sadness: A state of feeling sorrow or unhappiness. For example, losing a loved one can lead to sadness.

Anger: A strong feeling of displeasure or hostility. For example, being unfairly treated can cause anger.

Fear: An emotional response to a perceived threat. For example, fear of heights can cause anxiety in high places.

Love: A deep affection and care for someone or something. For example, the love for family can be a powerful and positive emotion.

Surprise: A sudden feeling of astonishment or amazement. For example, unexpected good news can elicit surprise.

Disgust: A strong feeling of revulsion or repugnance. For example, seeing spoiled food can evoke disgust.

Anticipation: An emotion involving excitement about something expected. For example, the anticipation of a vacation can bring positive excitement.

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Cognitive Distortions: Irrational or biased patterns of thinking that can lead to negative automatic thoughts. Common cognitive distortions include:

- **All-or-Nothing Thinking (Black-and-White Thinking):** Seeing things in extreme categories with no middle ground. For example, thinking, "If I'm not the best, I'm a failure."
- **Catastrophizing:** Expecting the worst possible outcome, even when there is no logical reason to believe it will happen. For example, thinking, "If I fail this test, my life is over."
- **Overgeneralization:** Making broad, negative conclusions based on a single incident or piece of evidence. For example, after one rejection, thinking, "I always mess things up in relationships."
- **Mental Filtering:** Focusing exclusively on negative aspects while ignoring positive aspects of a situation. For example, dwelling on one criticism and ignoring numerous compliments.
- **Discounting the Positive:** Rejecting positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or another. For example, dismissing praise by saying, "They're just being polite."
- **Mind Reading:** Assuming you know what others are thinking and that they view you negatively. For example, believing, "I know they think I'm stupid."
- **Fortune Telling:** Predicting that things will turn out badly, even when there is no evidence to support this prediction. For example, thinking, "I know I'll fail the interview."
- **Magnification (Catastrophizing) or Minimization:** Exaggerating or downplaying the importance of events or qualities. For example, making a small mistake and thinking, "I'm a total failure."

- **Should Statements:** Using critical statements to motivate yourself. For example, thinking, "I should be able to handle this; I shouldn't feel this way."
- **Personalization:** Taking responsibility for events over which the person has no control, or assuming others are reacting negatively because of something the person did or said. For example, if a friend cancels plans, thinking, "They must not like me anymore because I did something wrong."

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CBT THOUGHT RECORD – Description								
Date & Time:	Situation/Trigger:	Emotional Response:	Automatic Thought(s):	Evidence For:	Evidence Against:	Alternative Thought(s):	Re-rate Your Emotion:	Outcome/Action:
[Enter date and time of the situation]	Describe the situation that triggered your negative emotions. Be specific and detailed.	Identify the thoughts that went through your mind in response to the situation. What did you automatically think or believe?	List any evidence that supports the automatic thought(s). What makes you think these thoughts might be true?	List any evidence that contradicts or challenges the automatic thought(s). What reasons do you have to doubt the validity of these thoughts?	Generate more balanced, rational, and positive thoughts. What might be a more balanced way to think about this situation?	Generate more balanced, rational, and positive thoughts. What might be a more balanced way to think about this situation?	Re-rate the intensity of your emotions after considering the alternative thoughts. Has the intensity changed? If so, how much?	Describe any new behaviors or actions you can take based on your alternative thoughts. What can you do to cope with the situation more effectively?
REFLECTIONS:Reflect on what you've learned from this exercise. Did challenging your thoughts make a difference in how you felt? What insights have you gained?								

CBT THOUGHT RECORD - EXAMPLE

Date & Time:	Situation/Trigger:	Emotional Response:	Automatic Thought(s):	Evidence For:	Evidence Against:	Alternative Thought(s):	Re-rate Your Emotion:	Outcome/Action:
October 20, 2023, 3:00 PM	I was asked to present a project proposal during a team meeting at work.	Nervous 90%, Anxious 70%	"I'm going to mess up the presentation. They'll think I'm incompetent, and my colleagues will lose respect for me."	I made a mistake in my last presentation, and my boss pointed it out. I'm not as experienced as some of my colleagues. Everyone in the team seems so confident except me.	I have successfully presented projects in the past, receiving positive feedback. My colleagues have also made mistakes in their presentations; it's a part of the learning process. I have prepared thoroughly for this presentation, and I know the project inside out.	"I am well-prepared for this presentation, and everyone makes mistakes sometimes. I will do my best, and that's all anyone can ask for."	Nervous 70%, Anxious 50%	I will take a few deep breaths before the presentation to calm my nerves. I will focus on the content of my proposal and remind myself that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. After the presentation, I will reflect on what went well, regardless of the outcome.

REFLECTIONS: Challenging my automatic thoughts helped me realize that it's normal to feel nervous before a presentation. By reminding myself of my preparation and past successes, I felt more confident. During the presentation, I concentrated on the material, and even though I stumbled a bit, I kept going. Afterward, I received constructive feedback, which I can use to improve my skills further. Overall, the experience was challenging but manageable, and I learned that I can cope with my anxiety in these situations.

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REFLECTIONS: Reflect on what you've learned from this exercise. Did challenging your thoughts make a difference in how you felt? What insights have you gained?