

Exercise 4 -Thought records

Type: Experiential – Cognitive behavioural Method (Reappraisal of emotional stimulus & reappraisal via perspective taking)

Learning goal:

The idea behind this activity is that people can reduce and regulate unwanted feelings and behaviours by challenging irrational thoughts, and the thought log is often the first step in this process. Thought logs are used so as individuals to become more aware of the irrational thoughts, to recognize how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours interact and influence one another. After identifying harmful irrational thoughts, the user will be able to intervene, and begin changing them.

Specificities: The activity is implemented both individually and in group.

Duration: 1 hour (20 min for filling in the Thought Log & 40 min for group discussion)

Material needed: Thoughts log (fillable pdf)

Instructions: Think of experiences/events from your past that evoked negative emotions and thoughts. Write them down and then try to change your thought into a rational one and try to imagine a positive outcome of this event. Fill –in the attached thoughts log. Write down at least 3 events.

Questions for reflection:

- How easy was it for you to change your thoughts and find a rational one?
- Was it easier to find positive outcomes when the event under discussion wasn't the one you have experienced?
- What did you learn over this activity?
- Present to your team an event that was difficult for you to deal with and you had also difficulty in finding a new rational statement and let others give you their opinions. (all participants should have the chance to share an event).

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Useful information for the trainer:

Explain to learners the way thoughts are influencing the way we behave. By providing examples try to help them understand how an irrational thought can bring up a negative emotion and influence the way a person behaves. Then, emphasize that the aim of this activity is not to reject our emotions, but to accept them and then try to approach them using a more positive way of thinking. Then provide them with the “Thoughts log” and ask them to write down at least 3 experiences that evoked negative emotions and thoughts and then to try to think of positive thoughts and outcomes.

When the learners finish with this task, you can come back in group to work further on this activity. Collect at least one event from each participant in order to discuss in groups the thoughts, emotions arisen and possible positive thoughts and outcomes. Ask the participants to imagine themselves in the situation depicted and view the stimulus as detached observers, in order to come up with positive outcomes.

Then discuss on the reflection questions.

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