

CBT Diamond Example

A worked example of the CBT diamond

Research-informed use. Common stress, worry, intrusive thoughts, and formal disorders are not treated as interchangeable. Cognitive and exposure-based tools require context; intensive exposure or response prevention is planned treatment, not an instruction to confront severe distress alone.

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

A three-page worked example that walks one situation around the CBT diamond: the triggering event, the negative automatic thought, the body sensations and emotions that followed, and the response and takeaway. It accompanies the blank CBT Diamond worksheet.

HOW TO USE IT

Read the example with a client before they complete their own diamond.

AT A GLANCE

AUDIENCE	Client Resource
FORMAT	Two-page handout
FAMILY	CBT · anxiety · OCD · panic

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PAGES

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QUESTION PAGES

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CBT Diamond Example

CBT Diamond Example · question bank

COLLABORATIVE PROMPT MENU · ADAPT, SKIP, OR REPHRASE AS NEEDED

— CBT DIAMOND

— N EGATIVE TH OU GH TS

— IF IT BREAKS DOWN, IT BREAKS DOWN - NOT THE

— WORST THING TO HAPPEN.

— IF IT BREAKS DOWN I CAN COPE.

— I HAVE FRIENDS/FAMILY THAT WOULD

— SUPPORT ME IF I NEEDED IT.

— IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY, PEOPLE

— B OD Y SENS A T IONS

— WILL UNDERSTAND.

— + R ESPONSE

— I'M GOING TO BE LATE IF THIS CAR BREAKS DOWN.

— WHY DOES BAD STUFF ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?

— I CAN'T AFFORD THIS.

— I'M SUCH A LOSER.

— IF IT BREAKS DOWN HOW AM I GOING TO GET

— TO WORK THIS WEEK? WHAT AM I

— SECO NDA RY

— GOING TO DO?

— EMO TI O NS

— SITUATION:

— W H A T H A P P E N E D ?

— DATE:

— MY CAR STARTED TO SPUTTER ON THE HIGHWAY

— S E C O N D T H O U G H T S

— TENSE

— SWEATY

— HEART RACING

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COLLABORATIVE PROMPT MENU · ADAPT, SKIP, OR REPHRASE AS NEEDED

SENSE OF URGENCY	BODY
PIT IN STOMACH	C O P I N G S K I L L S + P R O B L E M S O L V I N G
MIND RACING	I'M NOT GOING TO BOTHER
TUNNEL VISION	WORRYING ABOUT THINGS
CUSP OF AN ANXIETY	THAT HAVEN'T HAPPENED
ATTACK	YET. I CAN COPE!
THOUGHTS	DEEP BREATHING.
ANXIOUS 2/10	ROLL DOWN WINDOW FOR FRESH AIR.
FEAR 1/10	WAIT FOR CAR TO BREAK DOWN (IF IT
HOPELESS 0/10	DOES) AND THEN LOOK UP MECHANICS.
RELAXED 7/10	IF MY CAR'S FINE FOR THE DRIVE I'LL MAKE
ACCEPTING 6/10	AN APPOINTMENT FOR THIS WEEK TO GET IT
TAKE AWAY:	LOOKED AT.
W H A T ' S T H E L E S S O N L E A R N E D ?	CALL THE PERSON I'M MEETING AND LET THEM

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COLLABORATIVE PROMPT MENU · ADAPT, SKIP, OR REPHRASE AS NEEDED

— KNOW CALMLY THAT MY CAR IS ON THE FRITZ

— AND THAT THERE’S A 50/50 CHANCE I MIGHT

— NOT MAKE IT.

— CONTINUE DRIVING AT A RELAXED SPEED.

— PUT ON CALMING MUSIC.

— DEAL WITH IT AS IT COMES UP AND LET
EXCESS

— WORRY GO.

— EMOTIONS

— N EGATIV E EMO TI O NS

— ANXIOUS 10/10

— FEAR 8/10

— HOPELESS 5/10

— REACTION

— SPEED ON THE HIGHWAY.

— START LOOKING AT MECHANICS ON MY

— PHONE I CAN CALL AS I DRIVE.

— CALL THE PERSON I’M MEETING

— FREAKING OUT ABOUT MY CAR.

— BECOME +++ IRRITABLE WITH OTHER DRIVERS
ON THE

— ROAD AND DRIVE DANGEROUSLY.

— N EGATIVE REAC TION