

Fantasy at Root of Fears What-If Technique*

Name _____

Date: _____

<p>This technique will help identify the fantasy or negative thought at the root of your fears. Write a ‘what-if’ negative thought in box # 1. Then follow the arrows downward asking yourself each time, <i>“What’s the worst thing that could happen if that were true?”</i> A new negative thought or fantasy will come to mind. Write it down under the arrow and repeat the process several times. Finally, ask yourself, <i>“How likely is it that this would happen? What are the odds? What chance? And could I live with it if it did?”</i></p> <p><u>Flooding Technique</u> – if the fantasies are disturbing and anxiety increases continue. The cognitive exposure is working. Practice this for homework, doing each step or thought one-at-a-time until anxiety burns itself out.</p>	% before	% after
<p>Circle Emotion: anxious, panicky, nervous, frightened</p>		

0%.....10%.....20%.....40%.....50%.....60%.....70%.....80%.....90%.....100%

Negative Thoughts	% belief before	% belief after	Distortions	Positive Thoughts	% belief										
1.			<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1.	
1	2	3	4	5											
6	7	8	9	10											
↓			<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2.	
1	2	3	4	5											
6	7	8	9	10											
↓			<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3.	
1	2	3	4	5											
6	7	8	9	10											

4.	↓			1	2	3	4	5	4.	
				6	7	8	9	10		

5.	↓			1	2	3	4	5	5.	
				6	7	8	9	10		

6.	↓			1	2	3	4	5	6.	
				6	7	8	9	10		

7.	↓			1	2	3	4	5	7.	
				6	7	8	9	10		

8.	↓			1	2	3	4	5	8.	
				6	7	8	9	10		

Checklist of Cognitive Distortions * or Mind Traps

<p>1. All-or-nothing thinking. You look at things in absolute, black-and-white categories. There is no such thing as a perfectly clean wall, no such person as a perfectly, good one.</p>	<p>6. Magnification or minimization. You blow things way out of proportion or shrink them.</p>
<p>2. Overgeneralization. You take one single event and you generalize it to your entire life.</p>	<p>7. Emotional reasoning. You reason from your feelings: "I <i>feel</i> like an idiot, so I must <i>be</i> one." Feelings do not have brains!</p>
<p>3. Mental filter. You dwell on the negatives, and ignore the positives.</p>	<p>8. Should statements. <i>Self-Directed Shoulds</i> cause feelings of guilt, shame, depression, and worthlessness. <i>Other-Directed Shoulds</i> cause feelings of anger and trigger interpersonal conflict. <i>World-Directed Shoulds</i> cause feelings of frustration and entitlement.</p>
<p>4. Discounting reality. You insist your positive qualities don't count.</p>	<p>9. Labeling. Instead of saying, "I made a mistake. I acted like a jerk. I lost that one." you tell yourself, "I'm a mistake. I'm a jerk" or "I'm a loser."</p>
<p>5. Jumping to conclusions. You jump to conclusions not warranted by the facts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mind-reading. You assume that people are reacting negatively to you. No body can read another's mind! 	<p>10. Self-blame and other-blame.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-blame. You blame yourself for something you weren't entirely responsible for.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortune-telling. You predict that things will turn out badly. No one can tell the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other-blame. You blame others and overlook ways you contributed to the problem.