

Connecting Your Thoughts and Feelings

Objective

To improve your awareness of how your thoughts might influence your feelings by tracking their connection.

You Should Know

If you have been practicing noticing and labeling your thoughts, especially your negative thoughts, you have undoubtedly noticed that certain lines of thought can generate certain difficult feelings. Habitual negative thoughts can make us feel lonely, worthless, sad, angry, frustrated, irritated, anxious, or scared—sometimes mildly, sometimes intensely.

One way to manage problems is to get better and better at linking up your thoughts with your feelings. You are learning to be mindful of that connection; that is, you are learning to stop, notice, and reflect on your thoughts. Congratulations! Now we'll look at the next step: connecting your thoughts and feelings.

What to Do

In this exercise, you'll add the feeling or feelings to the chain you've been working on. Record for the next week any situation when you are triggered. Noticing and recording the connections is an act of personal empowerment. You are saying, "I am not just a victim of circumstances out of my control. I can get to know myself and learn to take charge of the behaviors and reactions that stem from my thoughts and feelings."

Date/Location	Situation	Habitual thought	Type of thought	Feeling	Reflection

Reflections on This Exercise

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

Is there anything in particular you learned from this exercise?
