

CBT Cheat Sheet

Client Name: _____ Age: _____

Gender: _____

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

Date of Session: _____ dd / mm / yyyy

I. PSYCHOEDUCATION

The Cognitive Model

Explain how thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are interconnected, highlighting that negative thought patterns can trigger distressing emotions and maladaptive behaviors. For example, if a client thinks "I'm a failure" (Thought) after making a minor mistake at work, they might feel worthless (Emotion) and subsequently avoid taking on new tasks (Behavior), reinforcing the negative self-view.

Core Concepts

Automatic Thoughts: These are spontaneous, often fleeting thoughts that arise in response to stimuli. For instance, passing a test might trigger the thought, "I am smart," affecting feelings and actions positively.
Beliefs: These are the deeper convictions that shape how we interpret our experiences. Believing "I must be perfect" can lead to anxiety in various situations.
Behaviors: Our actions can both influence and be influenced by our thoughts and emotions. Avoiding social situations due to fear of judgment can increase feelings of loneliness and reinforce beliefs of unworthiness.

Common Cognitive Distortions

All-or-Nothing Thinking: "If my presentation isn't perfect, I've completely failed."
Catastrophizing: Missing a bus and thinking, "Now the whole day is ruined and everything will go wrong."
Mental Filtering: Focusing only on the few negative comments received among many positive ones.
Disqualifying the Positive: Acknowledging compliments on work performance, but thinking they're just being polite.
Overgeneralization: Having one bad date and concluding, "I'll always be alone."
Jumping to Conclusions: Assuming a friend didn't return a text because they're angry with you without concrete evidence.
Should Statements: Constantly thinking "I should be doing better," which can lead to feelings of guilt or inadequacy.

II. TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

Cognitive Techniques

Thought Records: Challenge cognitive distortions by recording events, associated automatic thoughts, emotions, evidence for and against the thoughts, and more balanced thoughts.
Cognitive Defusion: Help the client to observe their thoughts without reacting to them. Activities might include visualizing thoughts like leaves flowing down a stream or clouds in the sky.
Positive Affirmation: Use positive statements to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging, negative thoughts.
Categorizing Thoughts: Assist the client to categorize their thoughts into different types - useful, unhelpful, fact, opinion.

Emotion Techniques

Emotion Awareness Training: Practice recognizing and naming emotions as they arise.
Emotional Role-play: Practice expressing and responding to emotions in different scenarios.
Emotional Drawing: Guide the client to express their emotions visually.
Emotional Self-Soothing: Teach clients techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery.

Behavioral Techniques

Behavioral Activation: Mapping out a weekly schedule that balances work and leisure to combat depression.
Graded Exposure: Designing a step-by-step approach to confront fears.
Assertiveness Training: Help clients express themselves effectively and stand up for their point of view.
Mindful Movement: Incorporate physical activities like yoga or Tai Chi.
Goal Setting and Progress Tracking: Assist clients in setting SMART goals.

Additional Techniques to be Suggested:

III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Thought Diary: Let clients record negative automatic thoughts, the situation in which they occurred, the emotions they felt, and then challenge these thoughts. Behavioral Experiment: Encourage the client to test the validity of their negative beliefs in a controlled way. Relaxation Techniques Practice: Assign daily practice of relaxation techniques learned in session.

Additional Homework Assigned: