



Take a SEAT!

Also called the *Dysfunctional Thought Record*, the *SEAT Method* (Situation, Emotion, Automatic Thought, Truth) is the most important CBT skill of all. It uses some of the other tools in this toolbox. You need to know this method well and can find *SEAT Method* sheets on the *CCCT* website, *Toolbox* page. If you are beginning to feel something you don't like, take a seat and do a SEAT!

Cost-Benefit Analysis

When you get stuck on a decision, take a piece of paper and draw a line down the center from top to bottom. At the top of the left side write "Costs/Disadvantages" and at the top of the right "Benefits/Advantages". Then write all the "costs" you can think of if you choose to do or think something and then all the "benefits" if you choose to do/think it. Weigh them out against each other and see if doing or thinking it is worth it.

Make it Gray



Things in life are very rarely black or white. When you fall into the *All or Nothing Thinking* cognitive distortion you are doing black/white thinking. Instead look hard for both the "up" and "down" sides of situations, people, and yourself. So for "what a total failure that was" reframe as "part of that didn't work out but this other part seemed to be OK." For yourself, "it's true I didn't do this part well and yet I think I did this other part pretty well" or "OK, so I screwed up a little and it's also true that I have ___ positive qualities." Make untrue black/white statements more true by seeing *both* sides: admitting that the truth is probably some shade of gray.

Thought Substitution

Sometimes the best way to handle a negative thought is simply to substitute another, more realistic thought in its place. In this way you don't fight the negative, distorted thought, you just knock it out and replace it with a more truthful one.

Gimme Five



Here's the truth: every problem has *some* potential solutions. There are at least five (usually many more) options you have with each issue/problem you face. On a piece of paper, come up with five options and write them down. Be creative, think big, ignore the rules: what are five different things you could do if you had no fear of failure? Gimme five of them and feel the doors to a potential solution open.

Accept Without Exception



When you think something negative or critical of yourself, look honestly for what is both *not true* about the statement and for the part that is *true*. Then recreate the statement so that it is more realistic: *reject* the distorted part and *accept* the portion that is true. Example, "I can't do anything right" is not *totally* true for anyone. A more accurate statement is "I do sometimes make mistakes—that's part of being human and I am working on doing better." Accept, without exception, what is true about your *behavior* and reject what isn't.

The CBT Toolbox is a product of the *Coastal Center for Cognitive Therapy* and Dr. Michael M. Grant.

The Toolbox is designed to help you work on your own as your own therapist using some of the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) tools and techniques you learned while working with Dr. Grant.

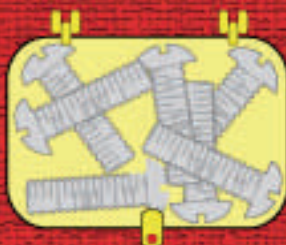
The descriptions of the tools in this toolbox are just short reminders of a variety of useful techniques you can use when you "get stuck".

If you have any questions about how to use these or other tools in your work as your own therapist, check out the *Toolbox* page on the CCCT website www.coastalcognitive.com. If you still have trouble, call the office at (843) 839-9028 for quick advice on the phone if you have seen Dr. Grant at any time in the past as a patient.

You may also schedule a session or two to help you get over the "hump". One or two coaching sessions can make all the difference and their availability to you may help you feel confident that you have the support you need, when you need it.

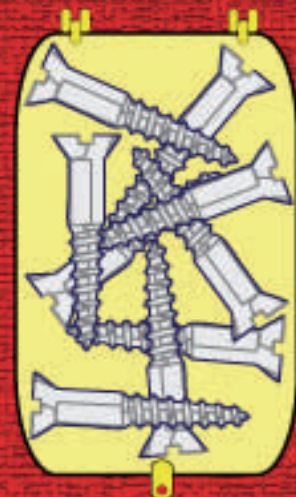


Myrtle Beach, SC • 843.839.9028
www.coastalcognitive.com



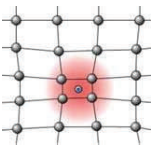
Manufactured by
Coastal Center for Cognitive Therapy, PA
www.coastalcognitive.com

Made in U.S.A.



CBT TOOLBOX

Identify the Distortions



Use the list of *cognitive distortions* given you by Dr. Grant to identify the kind of distortion a particular automatic thought/image/idea of yours is. Once you can see that the thought/image/idea is distorted, you can gain more power over it and can repair it so that it gives you an undistorted view of reality—key in changing your mood.

Do an Experiment

Test out how accurate your negative thoughts and predictions are by doing something that will prove/disprove them. If you think you will fail at something, break it into small steps and give it a try. Don't be satisfied with what you *think*—you could be wrong—test it!



Coping Cards



Make a list of the negative or intrusive thoughts that cause you the most trouble. Get some 3 x 5 cards and, on each, write that negative/intrusive thought on one side and the opposite, positive, realistic thought that can replace it on the other side. Whenever you get stuck on the old thought, pull out the card with that written on it, and read the realistic alternative over several times, even out loud. Keep the cards with you to use when thoughts give you problems. See website *Toolbox* page for help.

Baby Steps



If you feel overwhelmed you may be falling into the *Magnification* distortion and/or you may be taking on too much, too soon. Think of your goal and break all the things you need to do to achieve it into the *smallest steps possible*. Then arrange them in order, from first step to last. You can tell if the steps are small enough because you will feel "OK, I can easily do that" when you look at it. Keep breaking a step up until you feel that way about all the steps. Then, look at the first small step and write next to it a time you can do it today. Then do it and feel better.

Daily Activity Schedule

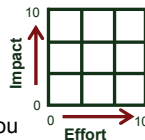
This is helpful especially if you are having a hard time getting going. Create a little chart with each hour of the day in a column on the left side of the page. Then, across the top of the page, make columns for the days of the week. Look at the box created by the hour and day you are currently in and, starting there, write in the activity you are doing. Next to it write down a rating from 0 - 100 of the mood you are in when you doing that activity. This will help you identify what you are doing when you feel the worst and may help you see what changes in behavior will help you feel better. Get a sheet at the *CCCT* website *Toolbox* page.

Can the Can't

Be careful of your use of "can't" because it takes away all your power and leaves you feeling helpless. The truth is you are not helpless. There is ALWAYS something, no matter how small, you CAN do. Get someone to help you count how many times you say "can't" and "can" them. Say "choose not to" instead...because that is much more true and acknowledges that the power is in you.



Impact/Effort Grid



If you are stuck and don't know what to do about a goal you have, write down all the things you can think of to do about it. Then, rate each on a scale of 0 (lowest) - 10 (highest) in terms of how much *effort* it will require and how much of a positive *impact* it might make. Draw a little grid like the one shown here. Now plot each of your rated items in terms of impact and effort. Look for the items that give you the **biggest impact for the least effort**—they may be the first things to tackle that make the biggest difference.

Define Your Terms

When you use a word, especially if you fall into *Labeling* yourself, ask "what does that word/label really mean—what is it's definition?" Totally forget about yourself for a minute and define the word/label in terms of real behavior—what does that word/label look like? Write that definition down and then ask yourself, does that *really* apply to me, 100% of the time? If not, see the tool *Change the Word*.

Pleasure Predicting



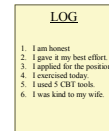
Doing things again is important in combating depression. If you are feeling that activities won't bring any pleasure and so you think "why try?" write down several potential activities or items you could do today. Next to each write a prediction of how much you think you would enjoy each using a scale 0 (least satisfying) - 100 (most satisfying). Then go and do some of the activities and, when done, honestly rate how satisfying each was. Compare the *predicted* and *actual* satisfaction levels. If you enjoyed some more than predicted that tells you that you may have been saying "no" too quickly to doing things (*Fortune Telling* that they would not bring satisfaction) and would be happier if you did more activities like these.

The No-Blame Game

Instead of taking all the blame for a problem, look hard for all the other reasons that problem may have been created. If you want to work on solving the problem, start focusing on ALL the issues that caused it and stop feeling guilty or bad about yourself. Stop blaming yourself for the whole thing—you are not that powerful! Ask what you can learn about what you did/didn't do and what you can do to fix the part under your control.



Positive Self-Statement Log



Keep a log of all the positive things you do, think, say, and feel in a day. Write down, also, all the positive qualities you have, even if you don't have them 100%. After you have a number of things written down take a good look at it: this is the *evidence* that you are not a failure, loser, or whatever other negative *label* you are applying to yourself. If this evidence is true, can the belief that you are no good be true? NO! So, give up the faulty belief and believe the *evidence*.

Kill the Double-Standard



When you are thinking negatively about yourself, ask yourself "would I think this way about my best friend?" or "would I talk this way to someone with a problem like this?" Then ask "what would I say to him/her?" Notice that you would probably be a lot more encouraging to someone else than yourself. So, why the double standard?—the *unrealistically* high one for you and the *realistic* one for someone else? Kill the double-standard and talk to yourself in the same realistic way you would to a friend you care about.

What If?



This is good when you fall into the *Fortune Telling* or *Mind Reading* distortions. When you imagine or think that something is going to turn out badly, go ahead and imagine it. Think "what is the worst that could happen?" Write that down on a piece of paper and then write "what if?" after it. Think of what would happen next and how you would deal with it. Sometimes our fears decrease when we actually "go there" in our minds and face the "worst case scenario". As we do, we often see that even the worst thing that could happen is something we could deal with in some way and could live beyond. When you see that you can survive the worst and still move on, your fear of that outcome will wither. So, go ahead, imagine "what if?"