

# **Class #4: Identifying and Correcting Unhelpful Thoughts**

## **What We Will Cover in Class #4:**

1. Review homework
  - Relaxation Diary
  - Diary of Thoughts, focusing on Section #4 (Stop Signs) and Section #5 (Identifying Unhelpful Ways of Thinking)
2. Practice coming up with adaptive thoughts when you are frustrated or angry.
3. How to increase your adaptive thoughts. In particular: "10 Ways to Change Your Thoughts"
4. Relaxation Ratings and Practice
5. Discussion of homework for the next class.

## Conquering Distorted Thoughts

As we discussed in the last class, our thinking can strongly affect our emotions. We described ten types of distorted thoughts. The first step in improving our mood is to recognize our distorted thoughts. The second step is to replace these distorted thoughts with more positive and more realistic thoughts. You can use the descriptions below to identify which adaptive thought may be most helpful in your situation. We have also provided some examples of more adaptive self-statements.

### Thinking "All or Nothing"

Keep things in perspective. Nothing is all bad or all good. "If I look hard enough, I can find something positive in every situation."

### Overgeneralizing

When we get in a tough situation, we often worry that nothing will ever improve. The fact is that things change. "What happens today will not happen forever. I can make it through today."

### Mental Filter

Acknowledge the negative but focus more on the positive. "Sure, there are negative things, but there are positive things, too. It's up to me to decide which to focus on."

## Discounting the Positive

Accept and affirm the positive. "The positive things people say about me are true."

### Jumping to Conclusions

Don't take things personally or try to predict the future. "I can ask questions instead of taking this personally. There's probably a good explanation."

### Exaggerating or Reducing the Significance of Events

Treat yourself in the same, gentle, accepting way that you treat those you love. "I have my flaws, but I also have my strengths. I'm not going to beat myself up about this."

### Reasoning Emotionally

Don't let emotions do your reasoning for you. "I accept my feelings but attempt to see things more objectively."

### Thinking "I Should"

There is more than one correct way to do things. "My way isn't necessarily the best way for others. I have the right to make my own decisions just as they have the right to make theirs."

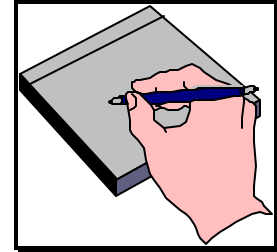
## Personalizing

Don't take the blame for others' behavior. "Although I care about them, I'm not responsible for their decisions"

### Homework to Do Before Class #5

1. Daily Relaxation Practice and Ratings: use the Relaxation Diary.

2. Read "Conquering Distorted Thoughts."
3. Diary of Thoughts: complete all sections of *at least* 1 blank Diary of Thoughts for next time, including Section 6 on Adaptive Thoughts. We encourage you to do several diaries each week if possible. For instructions on how to complete the section "Adaptive Thoughts," please read "Conquering Distorted



## Please Use This Space for Taking Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

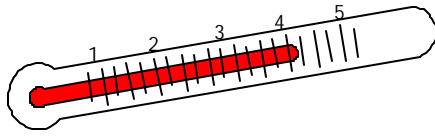
---

---



# Relaxation Diary: Tension Rating Scale

## Use This Scale to Rate Your Level of Tension



- 1 = Not at all tense
- 2 = Slightly tense
- 3 = Moderately tense
- 4 = Really tense
- 5 = Terribly tense

### In-Class Practice Rating:

Before the relaxation exercise, I felt (rate your tension from 1 to 5): \_\_\_\_\_

After the relaxation exercise, I felt (rate your tension from 1 to 5): \_\_\_\_\_

DATE	TENSION	COMMENTS (why I felt this way, etc.)
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	
	Before relaxing: _____ After relaxing: _____	



## Diary of Thoughts

### 1. Situation Causing Me to Feel Upset or Angry

---

---

---

---

### 2. My Feelings

---

---

---

---

### 3. Automatic or Negative Thoughts I Had About Myself in This Situation

---

---

---

---

### 4. Danger Signals, Stop Signs

---

---

---

---

### 5. Distortions, Unhelpful Thought Patterns

---

---

---

---

### 6. Adaptive Thoughts, More Adaptive Ways to See the Situation

---

---

---

---

## Diary of Thoughts: Model/Example

### 1. Situation Causing Me to Feel Upset or Angry

My husband urinated on the floor.

---

---

---

### 2. My Feelings

Anger!

---

---

---

### 3. Automatic or Negative Thoughts I Had About Myself in This Situation

Once again! He does this so I don't have time to go out.

---

---

---

### 4. Danger Signals, Stop Signs

Breathe deeply. Tell yourself: "Relax!" Notice the tension in your shoulders. Remember how they felt when you were relaxed.

---

---

---

### 5. Distortions, Unhelpful Thought Patterns

Mind Reading.

---

Personalizing.

---

---

---

### 6. Adaptive Thoughts, More Adaptive Ways to See the Situation

I can cope with the situation. I've done so before, without getting angry, and I can do so again.

---

---

---