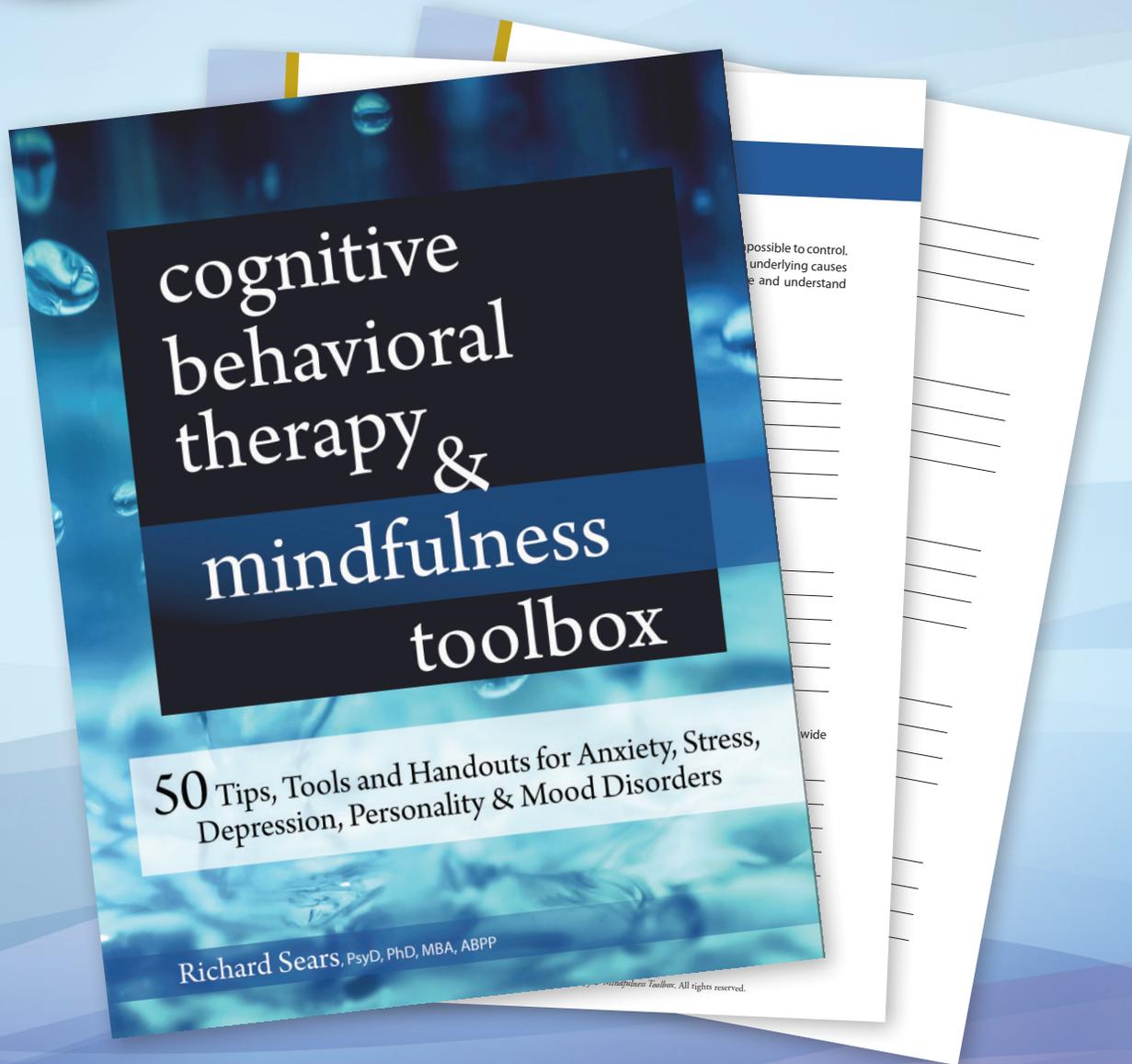




CBT & Mindfulness WORKSHEETS



Practical and engaging printable
tool to use with your clients

Introduction to the Analyzing Behavior Worksheet

Before diving into the behavioral analysis worksheet here, it's worth noting just how many different schools of psychotherapy there are. Prochaska and Norcross (2010) have noted that there are at least 880 different, distinct schools of psychotherapy. How can there be so many different ways of doing therapy, all claiming to be the "right" way?

Researchers have done meta-analyses to discover the common factors underlying all these seemingly different approaches (Duncan, Miller, Wampold, & Hubble, 2010). Though the numbers vary depending on how the metaanalyses are done, the research done by Bruce Wampold is commonly cited (Wampold & Imel, 2015). It appears that 40% of change in psychotherapy is due to extratherapeutic factors. Clients bring their own innate strengths to the psychotherapy process, such as perseverance or risk-taking. Or something happens in their environment that sparks a change — they get a new job, they join a spiritual community, or their partner gets more involved. In other words, the biggest percentage of change is happening outside the therapy room. Of course, knowing this, we can work with clients to improve their relationships and connect them to resources.

The next biggest change factor is the therapeutic relationship, which accounts for 30% of the variance. We all know that having good rapport and a strong working alliance is essential for all of psychotherapy. Because the therapeutic relationship matters, be careful not to make positive reinforcement too forced or artificial.

While the principles of classical and operant conditioning are very simple, they can be applied in many ways to a variety of seemingly intractable problems. Pay attention to what may be reinforcing the behavior. Consider what got the problem behavior started, and what might be keeping it going, as well as how to extinguish it. This worksheet will help, and can be used by you or by your clients.

Analyzing Behavior

Some behaviors can appear very baffling to us at first, seeming random and impossible to control. However, through careful observation, we are likely to discover that there are underlying causes and conditions for the behaviors. Use this worksheet to help you investigate and understand problem behaviors.

In as much detail as you can, write out exactly what the problem behavior is.

How often does the behavior occur? How intense does it get? How long does it last?

Behaviors do not occur in a vacuum. In what context(s) does this behavior occur? Consider a wide variety of environmental factors like setting, people, and time of day.

How do other people react to the problem behavior? What do other people do during and after the problem behavior?

Consider what classical conditioning may have taken place. Are there specific stimuli or triggers associated with this behavior, either now or in the past? What is going on right before the problem behavior?

Behaviors often continue because the person is getting something from them. What are the positive reinforcers? What might be gained from this behavior, either now or in the past? (attention, an object, a pleasant activity, etc.)

Some behaviors continue due to negative reinforcement. What might this behavior help the person avoid? (an unpleasant activity, a person they don't like, a strong emotion, etc.)

What are some alternative ways the person might achieve their desired goals?

Sometimes, directly fighting an old behavior only makes it a bigger issue. It can often be more helpful to reinforce or reward a new, more appropriate behavior. What are some alternative behaviors that you can differentially reinforce? (For example, if you praise a child for creatively playing with clay, they are less likely to use their hands for hitting siblings.)

Don't forget to pay attention to the positive qualities of the person. What are the person's strengths? Is there a context in which the "problem" behavior might be/have been appropriate? How can the person's strengths be helpful in moving toward change?

Remember to be patient as you investigate this problem behavior, as it may have become a deeply ingrained, nearly unconscious habit. Work to avoid inadvertently reinforcing the old behaviors, and be quick to reinforce even small changes in the direction of improvement. Experiment with interventions, knowing that the behavior may get a little worse at first, and let the outcome determine if what you are doing is really working. If your initial intervention fails, and the behavior continues, go back through the entire worksheet again until you discover what you were missing.

Introduction to the Mindful Inquiry and Practice Log

Mindfulness is a conscious, intentional activity, and differs in this respect from hypnosis, relaxation exercises, and other forms of meditation. Since mindfulness simply means paying attention, it will never tell you what to do. It is up to you to choose where you want to place your attention.

There are no “shoulds” in mindfulness. If right now, you were thinking about other things and having a hard time paying attention to what you were reading, I would not tell you that you should stop thinking about other things and pay attention to my words. If I were there, I would simply ask you, “Are you thinking about those other things on purpose?”

The important question here is, “How is this working for me?” If something is not going the way you want it to be going, awareness is a good tool to have.

Mindfulness is an active, dynamic process. Even though we might regularly practice mindfulness while sitting still, the point is to bring greater awareness into more of the experiences of our daily lives, such as our relationships and our work, whether those moments are fun or extremely challenging.

As a mental health professional, not only will clients appreciate you being more present with them, but you will also reduce your own stress levels if you can keep your attention on the moment you are in. No matter what else you have to do later, no matter how many phone calls you have to make, or reports you have to write, you cannot do them when you are with a client. When we let go of our struggles with our present moment experiences, even if they are painful, we can use that energy to consciously build a life worth living.

MINDFUL INQUIRY

Processing a mindfulness exercise with clients immediately afterward is called mindful inquiry (Kabat-Zinn, 2013; Sears, 2015; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2013; Woods, 2013), which is arguably even more important than doing the exercise itself. You never know for certain what clients are actually doing in their heads during a mindfulness exercise, so processing it with them models the skills and attitudes that you want them to eventually internalize for themselves. In the MBCT protocol, for example, we typically ask clients three questions after introducing a new mindfulness exercise.

The first question is simply, "What did you notice during that exercise?" The therapist encourages clients to pay attention to their thoughts, emotions, body sensations, and other sensory experiences. The therapist models acceptance and nonjudgment by responding in a similar way to all clients, regardless of whether they had a "good" or "bad" experience. When follow up questions are asked, they invite the clients to look more deeply into their own experiences. For example, if clients say they fell asleep, the therapist might ask how they knew they fell asleep, what the first signs of sleepiness were, or what thoughts, emotions, and/or body sensations were present.

The second question is basically, "How is what you just did different from the way you normally do things?" This highlights awareness of what the client was doing differently during the exercise, so that they realize that by consciously doing something different, they can have a different experience.

The third question is where the rubber meets the road. "Why do you think we're doing this? What's the practical value? How can you use this in your daily life? How can an exercise like this help your stress, anxiety, depression, pain, or whatever it is you came here for?" Most clients are already thinking this, especially the first few times they practice mindfulness, so it is best to make the question explicit. Since clients know their own lives better than the therapist does, they often come up with creative and powerful ways in which they can apply the material. Also, from a social psychology perspective, if clients come up with their own reasons for doing the exercises, they are more likely to try them. Telling clients they need to do something because it is good for them often fosters resistance, as well as implies that they have to get rid of uncomfortable experiences, thoughts, or feelings right away. Staying present with whatever they bring up helps them viscerally experience the nonjudgmental attitude of acceptance of how things are in the moment. It is just about noticing.

This is especially true for the clients who are the most vocal in the early sessions with complaints like, "I have REAL pain, I've got REAL problems! How is sitting here supposed to help with all the things I have to deal with?!" Time and time again, these clients are the ones who at the end of an eight-week mindfulness program will say, "Thank you so much for staying present with me through all my complaints, and all my emotional ups and downs, because you taught me how to do that for myself."

That is the power of mindful inquiry.

The worksheet that follows can be useful for both you and your clients to practice the skills of mindful inquiry after an exercise.

Mindful Inquiry and Practice Log

Use this worksheet to process the mindfulness exercises you are practicing. Since mindfulness is about paying attention, working through these questions will deepen your capacity to be present with your own experiences. It can also serve as a record of how your experiences and insights change over time. **A number of free mindfulness recordings are available online, including the author's website, www.psych-insights.com/mindfulness**

Circle which mindfulness exercise(s) you did:

Body Scan	Breath	Entire Body	Seeing
Hearing	3-Minute Breathing Space	Working with a Difficulty	Choiceless Awareness
Walking	Yoga	Loving-kindness	Other _____

What did you notice during the exercise?

What thoughts were present?

How did they change over the course of the exercise?

What emotions were present?

How and where did you experience the emotions in your body?

Did the emotions change over time? If so, in what way?

What physical sensations did you notice?

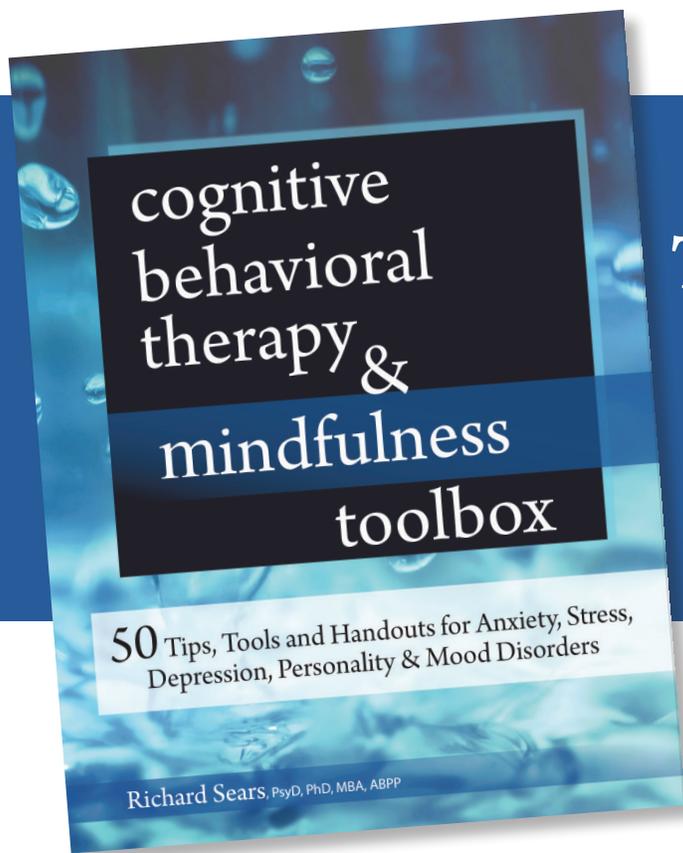
How did the physical sensations change over the course of the exercise?

What did you notice with your other senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting)?

Did you notice interactions between your thoughts, emotions, body sensations, and/or sensory experiences?

What else did you notice about this exercise?

Did you experience anything differently during this exercise as compared to how you normally operate in your daily life?



Get the Complete 50 Tips, Tools and Handouts for Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Personality and Mood Disorders

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has been an effective intervention for decades, but few clinicians have discovered the powerful treatment results of combining CBT with Mindfulness.

Clinical psychologist and mindfulness expert Dr. Richard Sears has created a practical, engaging skills manual that clearly defines the principles of CBT and then demonstrates steps for integrating mindfulness practices into therapy—all drawing from the latest research. Straight-forward explanations and dozens of worksheets provide fresh insights and new tools to move therapy forward when treating stress, anxiety, panic, depression, pain, trauma, addictions, and other issues.

“Richard Sears is that rare psychologist and mindfulness trainer who brings decades of authentic training in classical meditation methods into contact with the razor’s edge of our most recent research developments. Having a chance to train with Richard is a gift, and this book is like your own private session of advanced mindfulness work with a master teacher. This book has my highest recommendation.”

-Dennis Tirch, PhD, author of 6 books,
Founding Director, The Center for
Compassion Focused Therapy

“This is a treasure trove for clinicians who wish to integrate first, second and third wave cognitive-behavioral therapies in their work. Dr. Sears is a master clinician and meditation teacher who skillfully synthesized the essence of these approaches in succinct and scientifically grounded text. He also created a collection of handouts that are both engaging and simple to use. Both the handouts and the resources Dr. Sears has assembled will help clinicians and their clients effectively address many of the issues commonly brought to therapy.”

-Louanne Davis, PsyD, author of
Meditations for Healing Trauma, clinical
psychologist, certified MBSR instructor

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