

PSYCHOLOGYTOOLS

Fact Or Opinion

British English

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Fact Or Opinion

Description

Much of the time we respond to our thought processes as if they reflect facts about the world, whereas they more often represent opinions or assumptions. Being able to tell the difference between facts and opinions is a critical skill in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Balanced thinking comes from the process of challenging our thinking - analysing what it is that we think we know, and why it is that we know it. The *Fact Or Opinion* worksheet helps clients to differentiate between facts and opinions – a useful starting-point in beginning to challenge the validity of negative thoughts.

Instructions

This is a Psychology Tools information handout. Suggested uses include:

- Client handout – use as a psychoeducation resource
- Discussion point – use to provoke a discussion and explore client beliefs
- Therapist learning tool – improve your familiarity with a psychological construct
- Teaching resource – use as a learning tool during training

References

Beck, A.T., Rush, A.J., Shaw, B.F., & Emery, G. (1979). *Cognitive therapy of depression*. New York: Guilford.

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CBT Lesson #1: Thoughts are not facts

It is common to assume that thoughts are equivalent to facts. This is not always the case however and it often takes a bit of practice to work out whether one of our thoughts is a fact or an opinion.

For the statements below, practise deciding whether it is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
1. "I'm a bad person"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. "Sam told me that she didn't like what I said about her"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. "Nothing ever goes right"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. "This will be a disaster"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. "I'm not as attractive as they are"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. "I failed the test"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. "I am overweight"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. "He shouted at me"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. "I'm selfish"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. "There's something wrong with me"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. "I'm lazy"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. "I didn't lend my friend money when they asked"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. "My feet are too big"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. "I'm ugly"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. "No-one will ever love me"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answers: Facts (2, 6, 7, 8, 12), Opinions (1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16)

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