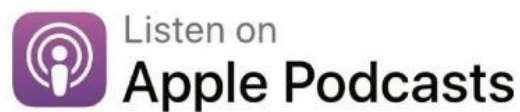
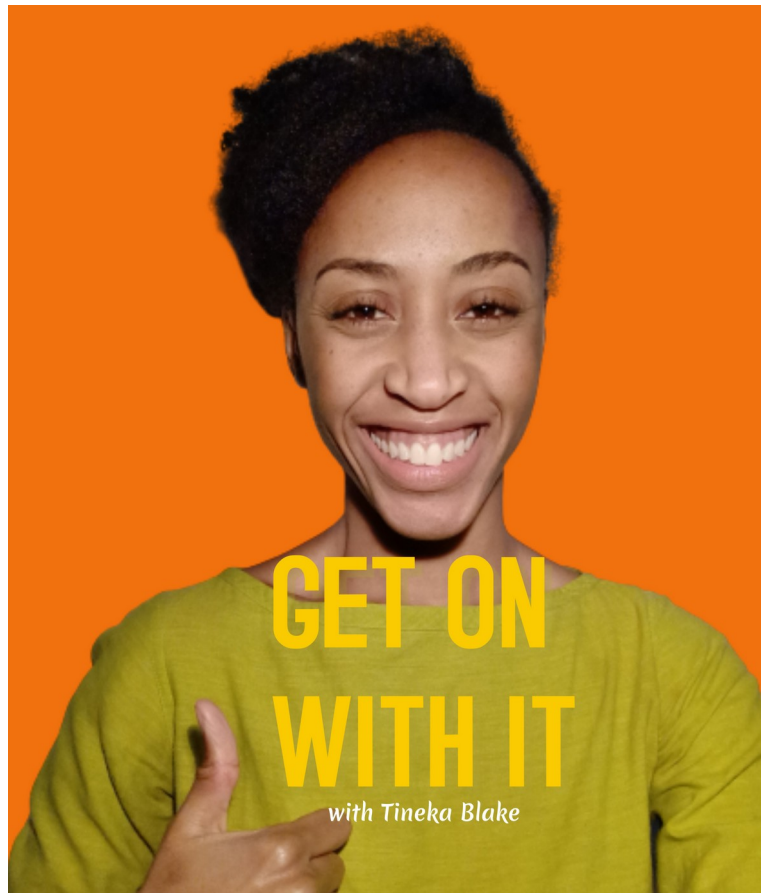


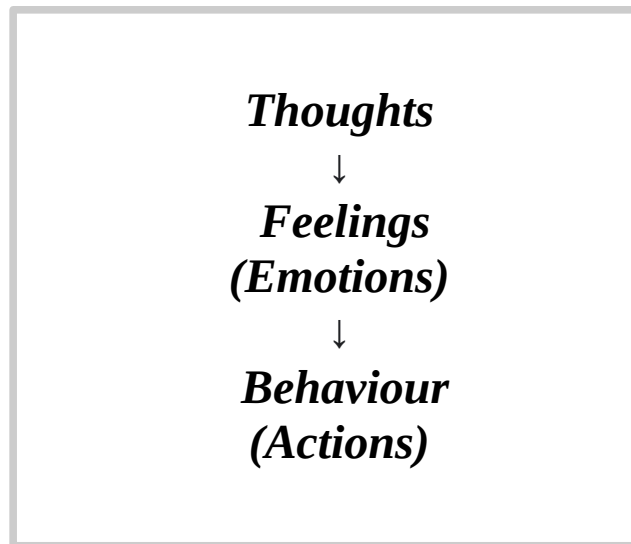
**Anxiety Workbook**  
**By Tineka Blake**



Listen to the Anxiety Podcast Episode to accompany this workbook

Write your answers down with pen and paper!  
It doesn't work as well, typing answers down on a phone/computer.

### **Understanding the Cognitive Model** (Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)



Your *thoughts* cause your *feelings (emotions)* which cause your *behaviour (actions)*.

*Feelings and emotions mean the same thing. These two terms can be used interchangeably.*

*Behaviour and actions mean the same thing. These two terms can be used interchangeably.*

## Let's do an example together...

**Situation:** *You are required to give a presentation at work in front of a large group of your colleagues.*

***Thought***

*"I bet I'll make a fool of myself in front of everyone"*



***Feeling***

*anxious, worried, scared*



***Behaviour***

*Start procrastinating, look for attempts to get out of doing the presentation, starts rushing last minute to pull everything together...*

If you think about the outcome/result here, it probably isn't going to be the best presentation you've ever given, since it will be rushed and under-rehearsed. Now let's look at what happens in the exact same situation, if you start with a different thought...

**Situation:** *You are required to give a presentation at work in front of a large group of your colleagues.*

***Thought***

*"I'm going to practice this presentation and do my best"*



***Feeling***

*confident, anticipatory, excited*



***Behaviour***

*Practices and completes the presentation in.*

Since you *start* with a more balanced/positive thought, that triggers a different feeling, behaviour, and chances are you'll have a better outcome/result.

## **Example of CBT worksheet**

### **Situation**

When was it? Where were you? What were you doing? Who else was present?  
*Yesterday, when working from home, I emailed my manager to say that the last minute work request was too much, and I am unable to complete it in the given time frame. I have not received a reply since.....*

### **Emotion**

1) Describe the emotion in one word. (For example, fear, angry, sad, anxious, worry, concern)

2) Rate the intensity of the emotion (0-100%)

*Fear (80%).....*

### **Automatic Thoughts (or imagery)**

What thoughts are going through your mind about the situation? Just write down anything thing that comes to mind. (If you feel stuck: what do you think about the situation? How would it affect your future/life? What would be the worst case scenario? Does it concern the way people may think about you?)  
*I shouldn't have wrote what I did. I'm going to look incompetent now, especially because I was actually aiming for a promotion in these next few weeks. I should have just done the work at home during my own time and not told her. Who am I tell my boss that it's too much? Other colleagues don't seem to do or receive as much work as me. I think it's because she believes that I can do it and I want to prove to her that I can. I really do think I deserve that promotion, I do so much for our team! Maybe I should send her another email to apologise... I wouldn't want her to think badly of me. I'm such a idiot! I just wish I never sent it now. None of this would have happened if David would have completed his work on time. Then I wouldn't have been given this extra work last minute. I feel like such an idiot for saying yes. But that's my fault. I always say yes to last minute requests. I need to stop. But if I say no to work, they'll all think I'm incompetent. I may even lose my job if I fail to keep up! I cannot afford that right now, especially in Coronavirus times! How would I find a new job now? There are no jobs!! I feel like I've really messed it up and I can't go back on what I did now. I just really hope that I haven't blown it...*

**Select the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT).** This is the thought that is most strongly connected to the negative emotion. Rate how strongly you believe in that thought (0-100%).

*If I say no to work, they'll all think I'm incompetent (90%).....*

### **Arguments/proof to support the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT)**

- *Rosy got fired a few months ago due to not producing anything, or contributing to the team*
- *An employee must do all the work that their manager asks them to do*
- *I get paid a monthly salary to work, so 100% percent of the time (excluding my lunch break) should be productive!*
- *David made a side remark once about how I've kept this job only because I'm good friends with one of the manager's wives, not because of my talent.*
- *I feel like an imposter most of the time...*

### **Arguments/proof against the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT)**

- *As human being, I also have a right to say no to things, especially last minute extra work requests!*
- *Who in my team is even thinking so much about me and my competences? They all have their own worries, concerns and personal challenges right now, especially in Coronavirus times.*
- *It's not possible to be 100% productive, 100% of the time. It's necessary and healthy to take breaks in the day to refresh the mind and the body.*
- *What somebody thinks of me actually has nothing to do with me, if somebody thinks I am incompetent that's based on their standard of competence/incompetence.*
- *I work to the best of my ability and if it wasn't enough already, why would I be in talks with management for a promotion?*

**What new, More Balanced and Realistic Thought (MBRT) can be drawn from both arguments? Rate how strongly you believe in that thought now? (0-100%)**

*I am a person that tries my best at work, and I have contributed to producing value so far. As a human being I have a right to express my feelings and opinions (including if I feel her last minute requests are unrealistic to complete in time). Any reaction that I will receive from my manager, I will be able to handle, responsibly. And I know that whatever she replies will be based on her own thoughts and beliefs of what is acceptable. Plus, I didn't say anything bad or unprofessional in the email. It was simply a response to a question! (100%).*

**Imagine in the future, a similar situation and then taking the thought of the MBRT. What emotions would you then experience, and how strong would they be from 0-100%? Assertive, calm, responsible and empowered (95%)**

## CBT worksheet

## Situation

*When was it? Where were you? What were you doing? Who else was present?*

.....

.....

.....

## Emotion

1) Describe the emotion in one word. (For example, fear, angry, sad, anxious, worry, concern)

2) Rate the intensity of the emotion (0-100%)

.....

### Automatic Thoughts (or imagery)

What thoughts are going through your mind about the situation? Just write down anything thing that comes to mind. (If you feel stuck: what do you think about the situation? How would it affect your future/life? What would be the worst case scenario? Does it concern the way people may think about you?)

This image shows a full page of dot grid paper. It features approximately 20 horizontal rows of small black dots, evenly spaced across the page. The dots are arranged in straight lines, providing a guide for handwriting or drawing. There is no text or other markings on the page.

**Select the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT).** *This is the thought that is most strongly connected to the negative emotion. Rate how strongly you believe in that thought (0-100%).*

.....  
.....

**Arguments/proof to support the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT)**

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**Arguments/proof against the Most Important Negative Thought (MINT)**

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**What new, More Balanced and Realistic Thought (MBRT) can be drawn from both arguments?** *Rate how strongly you believe in that thought now? (0-100%)*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Imagine in the future, a similar situation and then taking the thought of the MBRT.** *What emotions would you then experience, and how strong would they be from 0-100%?*

.....  
.....

## Emotions List

**Negative Emotions** – Feel free to also use others outside of this list

Sad	Shame	Down	Unhappy
Anxious	Worried	Panicky	Frightened
Guilty	Remorseful	Bad	Ashamed
Inferior	Worthless	Inadequate	Incompetent
Lonely	Unloved	Unwanted	Rejected
Alone	Abandoned	Embarrassed	Foolish
Humiliated	Self-conscious	Hopeless	Discouraged
Frustrated	Stuck	Thrawted	Defeated
Angry	Mad	Resentful	Annoyed
Irritated	Upset	Furious	Overwhelmed

**Positive Emotions** – Feel free to also use others outside of this list

Happy	Ecstatic	Admirable	Energetic
Cheerful	Calm	Confident	Genuine
Pleasant	Wonderful	Dedicated	Delighted
Empowered	Elated	Content	Responsible
Harmonious	Peaceful	Relaxed	Elevated
Honest	Fantastic	Independent	Motivated
Love	Safe	Admiration	Sympathy
Respect	Kindness	Dreaminess	Confident
Desire	Joy	Amusement	Relief
Anticipation	Hope	Courage	Satisfaction



## Anxiety inducing thought patterns

An anxiety inducing thought pattern (or cognitive distortion according to Beck, 1980) 'is an exaggerated or irrational thought pattern that keeps you circulating in anxiety. **Can you spot which patterns you typically use? Go through the 'Automatic Thoughts' sections in the example CBT worksheet and your completed CBT worksheet and start to identify which patterns you see.** This is not to criticise yourself! It is simply to create some awareness of what you are doing so when you next catch yourself repeating this patterns next time, you can self-correct :)

### 1. All or Nothing thinking

Also known as black and white thinking.

People think they are a success or a failure; either they are good or bad; there is no in-between.

*Example:* You eat one spoonful of ice cream. You then think you're a complete failure for breaking your new healthy eating plan. You now think that you've 'ruined it all' and you end eating the whole tub of ice cream!

### 2. Overgeneralising

When you overgeneralise, you makes hasty remarks using insufficient evidence. If something bad happens only *once*, you presume it to happen over and over again.

Example: You're asked out on a first date, but *not* a second one. You're distraught as you tell your friend, "This always happens to me! I'll never find love!"

### 3. Filtering

This is when a person dwells *only* on the negative details of a situation and filters out the positive.

Example: You get a compliment and positive feedback about a presentation that you did at work, along with *one* small piece of criticism. For several days following that presentation, you dwell on the single piece of negative feedback given, dismissing all of the positive!

### 4. Disqualifying the positive

Disqualifying the positive is when you reject the positive experiences by insisting they don't matter for some reason or other. A negative belief is maintained despite contradiction by everyday experiences. You disqualifying the positive.

Examples include: *Anyone could have done as well.*

*They are just congratulating me to be nice.*

### 5. Jumping to conclusions

Reaching preliminary conclusions with little or no evidence.

- **Mind-reading.** You assume that people are reacting negatively to you  
Example: You assume that because you sit alone at lunch, everyone else must think you're a 'loser'.

- **Fortune-telling:** You predict that things will turn out badly.  
Example: You tell yourself that your situation will never improve; the consequence of that thought being that you will continue *not* to take action to improve your life, making that result come true!

## 6. Magnification and minimization

Giving a higher probability to a perceived failure. An analogous saying is "making a mountain out of a molehill". You blow things out of proportion or minimise them. Also known as catastrophizing – where you give greater weight to the worst possible outcome, however unlikely it may be.

Example: *Of course it's going to go wrong!*  
*It always goes wrong for me.*

## 7. Emotional reasoning

*You reason from your feelings.*

Example: *"I feel incompetent, therefore I must be incompetent".*

## 8. Making "must" or "should" statements

You use "must", "should", "ought to", "have to", "need to" statements. These statements are negative because they cause you to feel guilty and upset at yourself. When adding another layer of negative feeling about yourself, doesn't help!!

Example: After completing a presentation, you believe that you *should not* have made so many mistakes.

## 9. Labeling and mislabeling

A form of overgeneralisation; attributing a person's actions to his or her character instead of to an attribute. We've talked about this!

Example: "I made a mistake" becomes "*I am* a loser"

Example: "I feel anxious" becomes I am an anxious person.

## 10. Blame

You find fault instead of trying to *solve* the problem.

- **Self-blame:** You blame yourself for something that you weren't entirely responsible for
- **Other-blame:** You blame others and overlook the ways you've contributed to the problem

Example: *It's all my fault. I shouldn't have said that. It's my fault if Rachel gets in trouble for that.*

*It's all due to my parents, they're the reason I'm like this!! I can't help it or try to change at this point.*

**The next time you catch yourself using any (or all) of these patterns, please congratulate yourself on your new awareness and think about how you could replace it with a more healthy thought/pattern.**

*Example: I've just caught myself saying "this always happens to me!". This actually has only happened to me once so I see I'm 'overgeneralising'. And you know what it's totally okay. Actually I'm really glad I caught myself! Next time I want to say this phrase, I can say to myself instead... "S\*^% happens to us all and I'm going to get through it. I can handle it!!!".*

Empower yourself to change your thoughts!

Changing your thoughts, will change your feelings (you won't feel as anxious) and that will empower you to take a different action (behaviour), which will lead to a completely different result!

Remember, this is a *process*. It is not likely at all that you will catch yourself doing all of these on the first time. So give your self 1,001 chances to do so. And when you get to 1,001, reset the counter and give yourself 1,001 more!! Changing your mind's patterns is one of the hardest things you can do. But so worthwhile. So pick up that machete and make a new path for yourself! You will change your LIFE with these efforts!!

So keep up the hard and great work. Your future self will thank you for it!!!

Tineka x

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