

Mental Health Coaching Program Handout

By Angela Poch, RPC

Download the PowerPoints and resources here:

www.angelapoch.com/nad

Description

Learn the basics of mental health coaching and how you can use this as a ministry or even a career. This 15 hour course will cover key fundamentals from the skills you need to effective techniques in guiding clients to healthy emotions. You will walk away with you some practical tools to use in your practice including the basics of Cognitive Behaviour Theory, faith tools, stress management techniques, and more. This course is aimed at those who would like to work with individuals in setting mental health goals for abundant living.

IMPORTANT: We will be doing breakout rooms to practice several times throughout this program so you will need to have your camera on and microphone working!

Key Learning Objectives

- Identify what is coaching & what makes a good coach
- Understand the foundation of healthy thinking
- Learn the basics of mental health coaching
- TEAM by Dr. David Burns, adapted to coaching
- Acquire some practical tools to get started
- Get direction for starting a coaching practice

Angela Poch Bio

Seventh-day Adventist for 40 years, Angela Poch is a registered professional mental health counsellor, certified master life coach, speaker, vlogger, author, wife, and mother. She helps individuals deal with painful emotions, depression, anxiety, reduce stress, develop healthy relationships, and achieve health & wellness goals. She produces self-help video courses and has been on 3ABN. She has presented at several NAD health summits and is former Vice President of Education for AAHWC and her company, Higher Path – Body Mind Health, has member of ASI for over 20 years. Angela uses powerful integrative Biblical style combining the TEAMCBT by Dr. David Burns (T=testing what works, E=empathy for connection, A=agenda setting collaboration, and M = over 100 methods from several psychology and coaching models) with principles from scripture and The Ministry of Healing in her work with clients. Her primary passion is training therapists and coaches.

DISCLAIMER:

There is much to learn to be a good coach. I've simplified TEAM coaching this program, yet still a lot of information. You won't get it all the first time. I will repeat several concepts that are vital, but I highly recommend follow up and you'll ABSOLUTELY need lots of practice!

Part 1: Introduction to Coaching

What is mental health coaching?

Mental health coaching is supporting clients in achieving healthier, less-distorted thinking through connection, reason, and collaborative tools. It is a peer oriented, non-clinical role that helps clients identify values, clarify goals, and work through obstacles that interfere with progress.

In this program, we'll learn **TEAM* adapted for coaching**, which emphasizes testing what works, deep empathy, respectful collaboration, and effective tools—without stepping into a counselling role.

We do this through empathy, structured conversations, and collaborative problem-solving. Coaches work alongside clients in a peer-oriented role to help them clarify values, set goals, and address obstacles that interfere with progress.

The Language of “Mental Health”

Some countries restrict the term “mental health” to counselling. Some coaches are uncomfortable with that term even where it's not a legal restriction.

- Titles vary by country, culture, and comfort level
- Some regions restrict the term *mental health* to licensed professionals
- Your title should reflect:
 - non-clinical scope
 - focus on thinking, emotions, or the mind
 - language you feel comfortable using publicly
 - Your title should invite clarity—not imply diagnosis or treatment.

Titles vary. Some coaches are legally restricted from using the term mental health in their country, while others simply prefer language that feels more accurate or approachable. There is no single “correct” label—clarity and integrity matter more than the name.

Alternative Title Examples

- Mental Health Coach (*where permitted*)
- Feeling Great Coach (I offer certification for this title)
- Healthy Thinking Coach
- Emotional Wellness Coach
- Mental Fitness Coach
- Emotional Resilience Coach
- Mood Coaching

These are examples only. You are encouraged to choose a title that fits your region, audience, and personal comfort level while staying clearly within a non-clinical scope.

Why do mental health coaching?

- It is an entering wedge and part of the gospel.
- Coaching is peer based, so you can develop a friendship if God leads, unlike counselling.
- Mental health epidemic but not everyone needs therapy!
- Low barrier to entry, you don't need 4-8 years of education or licensing.
- Clients looking for coaching are more willing to find solutions than clients who look to therapy.
- Less rules about what you can and can't say if you feel God leading. IE: "Have you considered the spiritual side of wellness?"
- It's addictive once you start having success!

Mental health coaching meets people where they are—often before they would ever consider therapy or even when therapy isn't working. Because coaching is peer-based and non-clinical, it allows for genuine connection, trust, and collaboration. Many people struggling emotionally are not looking for diagnosis or treatment of mental illness; they want help thinking clearly, finding hope, and making meaningful changes. Coaching provides that support without the intensity or stigma some associate with therapy.

For faith-based coaches, mental health coaching can also serve as an entering wedge—meeting real needs in practical ways while leaving room for spiritual conversations when the client is open. Coaches are not constrained to avoid all spiritual language and can gently explore questions such as meaning, purpose, and faith when appropriate. As coaches begin to see clients experience relief and progress, the work often becomes deeply motivating and fulfilling.

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with people as one who desired their good. He showed sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He invited them, 'Follow Me.'

The Ministry of Healing p73

This work is most effective when it follows a clear, compassionate structure—which is where TEAM coaching comes in.

What does TEAM* Coaching look like?

- Testing: understanding exactly how a client feels and what is working in the coaching session by doing surveys before and after every session. Using tools that quantify and track progress.
- Empathy: Using very specific tools to connect with the client so they feel genuinely understood. Exploring the clients' needs without judgement or direction. Listening for emotional experience and possible goals—not fixing or correcting. Staying warm and curious rather than instructive or directive. Looks something like:
 - Coach: "Can you tell me exactly why you are here today and what I can support you with?"
 - Client: "I want to feel more happiness and joy and get out of this depressed mindset."

- Coach: “You want more joy, and I imagine you might be feeling down, unhappy, maybe unmotivated, can you tell me more how you are feeling right now?”
- *This conversation will go from 15 to 50min or longer in some cases*
- Agenda Setting*: clarifying what the client wants help with and what hidden resistance might be getting in the way of that goal.
 - Coach: “You’ve mentioned feeling down, that a depressed mindset keeps you from enjoying things. Would now be a good time to work on this or do you need to share more, either is ok.”
 - Client: “I’d like to get to work.”
 - Coach: “Can you tell me a moment in time when you felt this way, who were you with, what was going on, etc.? Let’s fill in this Mood Log together to unpack where you are getting stuck.”
 - *More to the Agenda Setting Flow, see Part 3 - This will take about 30 to 50 min.*
- Methods or Tools: using various structured, coach-appropriate tools to reduce obstacles and support healthy, truthful thinking. *See Part 4!*
- We move from T to M systematically and in order, but we will continue to use T and E all through the coaching process!

TEAM coaching follows a clear sequence designed to reduce suffering efficiently and respectfully. Testing ensures that we are not guessing about how the client feels or whether the session is helping. Empathy creates safety, connection, and trust—without which real change rarely occurs. Agenda setting helps the client clarify what they want and surfaces any resistance or obstacles that need to be addressed before moving forward.

Only after these steps do we move into methods or tools. These tools are practical, structured, and collaborative, aimed at reducing obstacles rather than fixing the client. While TEAM moves from Testing to Methods in order, Testing and Empathy continue throughout the subsequent sessions to ensure the work remains aligned with the client’s experience.

Because coaching is non-clinical, it’s important to understand when this approach is—and is not—the right fit.

When is coaching a good approach?

- Reasonably high-functioning people
- People motivated to improve
- Those who want less sucky, unhappy days
- People who get stuck in negative thinking patterns.
- Those doing a program but want more one-on-one support, IE: Nedley’s Depression Program, Recovery Program, etc.

Coaching works best for people who are functioning reasonably well but feel stuck emotionally or mentally. These clients are often motivated to improve and open to examining their thinking patterns. Coaching can also complement structured programs and/or therapy by providing personalized, one-on-one support that helps clients apply what they are learning.

This approach respects autonomy and personal responsibility while remaining supportive and compassionate. It is not designed to replace therapy when therapy is needed, but to serve those who are ready to engage actively in change.

To stay within this scope, it's equally important to be clear about what coaching does *not* involve.

What it doesn't look like:

- Cheerleading: Pushing positivity.
- Teaching: Explaining life, health or other subjects.
- Convincing: Trying to talk clients into changing, thinking differently, or “seeing it your way.”
- Advice-Giving: Telling clients what to do instead of helping them decide for themselves.

Coaching is not about pushing clients to feel better, explaining life to them, or telling them what they should do. These approaches often increase resistance and undermine confidence, not to mention get you into trouble if you don't have all the facts. Instead, coaching supports clients in thinking clearly, understanding themselves, and allowing for their own informed choices. The goal is not compliance or persuasion, but clarity, ownership, and meaningful change.

Coaching VS Counselling:

See PowerPoints for more information....

Coaches	Counsellors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short training / certification optional • NEVER diagnoses or treats • Uses empathy but avoids insight or advising • Looks at the present and future • Uses a goal approach, addressing challenges in the way of those goals • Supports clients in: “How can you get unstuck” style questions • Peer Relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate level training, licensed • Diagnose and treats • Uses empathy, affirmation, education, insight, advising, and normalizing • Looks at the past, present, and the future • Uses all kinds of tools and modalities. • Deals with: “Why am I this way” as well as “How can I get unstuck” questions • Professional Relationship

Coaching is a peer-based, non-clinical role that focuses on helping clients move forward by clarifying goals and reducing obstacles to those goals. Coaches avoid diagnosing, treating, or interpreting clients' experiences and instead support clear thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

Counselling, on the other hand, is a licensed clinical profession that addresses mental illness, diagnosis, and treatment. Counsellors may explore past experiences in depth and use a wide range of therapeutic modalities. Both roles are valuable—but they are not interchangeable, and clarity protects both clients and coaches. Therapist's may use coaching tools and style, such as solution focused therapists or TEAM Therapists, but coaches NEVER do therapy. Hence there can be some confusion because of this overlap.

Because of this overlap it's essential to be clear about when coaching is **not** appropriate.

When coaching is not appropriate – Out of Scope!

- Actively suicidal individuals
- Individuals with severe mental illness
 - Dissociation, delusions or hallucinations
 - Mania, OCD, Severe PTSD, Phobias
 - Eating disorders, Ongoing addictions
 - And so on, more on this in Part 5!

Coaching is not designed to address severe mental illness or situations involving immediate risk. In these cases, professional clinical care is essential. Referring clients to appropriate support is not failure—it is responsible, ethical practice. Clear boundaries protect clients from harm and protect coaches from stepping outside their scope. Coaching works best when individuals are reasonably stable and able to engage collaboratively in change. Within appropriate scope, effective coaching depends far more on who the coach is than on what they know.

Character Traits & Skills

- Disinterested Benevolence
- Humility
- Empathy
- Open to the Holy Spirit
- Personal walk with God

Effective coaching flows from character, learned skills, and good structure, not advanced psychology or human behaviour expertise. Coaches are not required to be spiritually perfect, but they do need to be willing to grow, listen, and be led. These qualities are not fixed. All can be learned, practiced, and strengthened over time.

“Educated workers who are consecrated to God can do service in a greater variety of ways and can accomplish more extensive work than can those who are uneducated. Their discipline of mind places them on vantage ground. But those who have neither great talents nor extensive education may minister acceptably to others. God will use men who are willing to be used.” MH 150

People who can learn to coach are:

- Easy going and good natured
- Allows differences of opinion
- Can pause the impulse to speak, correct, or inform
- Puts other people at ease
- Willing to let the client set the goals
- Can avoid making it about themselves

- Ok with imperfection in themselves and others

Good coaches are not defined by personality type or charisma. They are defined by their ability to listen, stay present, and respect autonomy. Coaching is especially well-suited for people who can tolerate ambiguity, resist the urge to fix, and remain curious rather than corrective.

Self-check

- Are you frequently, consistently sharing the latest in health reform to EVERYONE you meet?
- You find it HARD to not tell EVERYONE about the latest facts on _____(water/flax)?
- Do you find it difficult to ask “strangers” questions about deeper issues?

These questions are meant to invite self-awareness. Coaching requires restraint. If teaching, persuading, or correcting feels urgent, those impulses may need to be gently set aside to allow true collaboration.

Qualities You Do NOT Need

- Insight into human behaviour
- Ability to ‘read’ people,
- Know when someone is lying
- Be extroverted
- Always be 100% emotionally in control
- Know all the latest psychology modalities
- Be able to motivate people

Coaching does not require special powers or expert intuition. The work is not about decoding people or pushing them to change. What matters most is presence, humility, and willingness to follow a structured process.

You aren’t in the driver’s seat, the client is!

“In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess worldly wealth, learning, or eloquence. He asks, ‘Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?’ ... God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image. His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles.” The Ministry of Healing p37

God is not looking for impressive credentials. He looks for humility and availability. Coaches are instruments, not agents of change. The work God blesses reflects His character, not human effort.

Formula for a Good Coach =
Christlike character + education + practicing skills
= Qualification

5 Key Philosophies for a GREAT Coach

- Death of Self* (the Coaches Ego)
- Practice what you preach
- Work with people, not problems
- Client collaboration
- Sitting with Open Hands*

These philosophies shape how coaching feels. They protect against control, burnout, and subtle misuse of influence. Together, they keep coaching relational, respectful, and aligned with both TEAM principles and Biblical values. Let's expand them further.

Death of the Coaches Ego

- When we get in the way it holds up progress.
- When we need something from the client to feel good ourselves we reflect God poorly.
- When we think we know best it derails the clients' needs and strengths.
- When ego is alive we become afraid to fail, to try new things, to be ok with struggles.
- When try to fix people it breaks them and us!

When ego leads, coaching becomes exhausting and ineffective. Letting go of the need to be right, helpful, or impressive creates freedom for client autonomy without coach feeling compassion fatigue. It is exhausting to play God.

Practice what you preach

- We can't give what we don't have.
- Connect with God daily!
- Be willing to make mistakes
- Use the tools on yourself

Coaching is experiential. Using the tools personally builds humility, credibility, and compassion. Coaches who practice the work themselves lead with integrity rather than theory.

Work with people, not problems

- Jesus died for people not to prove a point. He wanted to bridge the gulf sin created in alienating us from the God love.

- Focus on the person's need. We don't need to spend time figuring out "what's wrong with them" or "how they got this way" those are rarely helpful. People can go to therapy for years exploring these without moving forward in fixing what is really hurting them.
- We don't get caught up in toxic positivity or other worldly philosophy.

People are not problems to solve. Coaching focuses on the person's present experience and forward movement, not on dissecting causes or assigning labels.

Client Collaboration

- Let the Holy Spirit work on both you and the client.
- Focus on what they want to work on – Jesus met the people where they were at
- Homework – Clients have a part to play
- Clients need to do the work to get the results. We don't have success by watching or reading, only by applying what we learn for ourselves.

Coaching is collaborative. Clients choose goals, engage the work, and apply what they learn. Coaches support—but do not carry—the process.

Sitting with open hands*

- You can guide and support, but the client remains in the driver's seat
- Love respects choice; clients retain free will and personal values
- You cannot force insight, learning, or change
- It is not your responsibility to change anyone
- Helping too soon, when unwanted, or without collaboration often backfires

"Sitting with open hands" reflects the central role of choice, free will. In TEAM-based coaching, resistance is not something to push through or override—it is information. When coaches try to help too quickly or take over responsibility, progress often stalls or reverses. When clients choose the direction and pace of their work, they are far more likely to engage fully and experience lasting relief.

"We should strive to understand the weakness of others. We know little of the heart trials of those who have been bound in chains of darkness and who lack resolution and moral power." The Ministry of Healing p167

Part 2: Fundamentals

Why people are hurting

Human suffering did not begin with bad habits, weak faith, or difficult circumstances but from a disconnection from the source of all light and life. We were created in God's image—designed for love, connection, trust, and peace. Yet something has gone wrong. As a result of sin, transgression of the law of love, not only our behaviour but **our perception, beliefs, and inner dialogue** have been affected.

This brokenness is not situational. While circumstances, trauma, and relationships can cause real pain, much of our ongoing suffering comes from **how we interpret life, God, ourselves, and others**. Disconnection from God, distorted beliefs about His character, and self-protective, yet erroneous thinking patterns fuel fear, shame, and despair—even in sincere believers.

We need God! We need a full surrender of the heart. At the same time, Scripture and experience both affirm that **God is always at work**, even when people are not aware of Him or open to spiritual conversations. Truth does not originate in human effort; it flows from God Himself. Whether someone is deeply spiritual, unsure of God, or resistant to faith language, God remains active in their life, inviting healing, clarity, and restoration.

As we explore the human condition honestly and compassionately we acknowledge spiritual brokenness without blame, affirm the role of choice and responsibility without shame, and recognizes that healing is often multi-layered—spiritual, relational, mental, and physical.

As coaches, we are not asked to be the Holy Spirit or to convert anyone. We are invited to stay grounded, available, and open—trusting that God can work through truth, insight, and loving presence in ways we cannot control. Our job is to develop our skills of empathy and tools to help our clients think truthfully.

“The cause of this man's affliction also was in his own life... Yet his condition is not hopeless. God does not control our minds without our consent; but every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ.” The Ministry of Healing p93

Why People are Hurting – Global / Universal Picture:

- Human beings were created perfect in God's Image, full of LOVE. In harmony, fulfilled, happy.
- Sin, transgression of the law of love, affects who we are and how we perceive God, not just how we behave.
- We believe the Edenic lie, God won't look out for us so we have to! Self first, antithetical to Love.
- We are fallen—prone to believing lies while being self-protecting and ego centric.
- Other factors – will explore at the end of Part 1

It's our Human Condition, NOT circumstances. Our internal conversation with God, a heart surrendered to His will, love itself, connection to the source of Love, God Himself, that provides

peace and joy. We do suffer when people hurt us, circumstances affect us, but we suffer far more and we continue to suffer from self-defeating internal dialog which comes from being disconnected from God!

Why we suffer on a personal level

- Believing lies and distortions about God
- Believing lies and distortions about ourself
- Believing lies and distortions about others
- Believing lies and distortions about the world around us

We suffer when we don't see the whole truth, and this happens because we are ego centric (human nature). The fix: abiding in Christ along with self-examination of what we are thinking and course correction when we notice we aren't being 100% truthful with ourselves.

Only Jesus can restore us into His Image.

“If happiness is drawn from outside sources and not from the Divine Fount, it will be as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend on any circumstance in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living waters, and happiness and peace drawn from Him will never fail, for He is a well-spring of life. Those who trust in Him can say: ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea ...’ (Psalm 46:1-4)”

Jesus, Name Above All Names p382

Two “Big” Questions:

- Does everyone have to be “converted” to have peace and happiness?
- Why are the “converted” not all experiencing this peace and happiness from the Fount all the time?

First answer, No, Truth is ALWAYS from God, God is always working! Most of us go through some dark valley that requires more than faith and prayer. Why, because God created us to have a relationship with Him and with others.

The Divine Fount is available to ALL

- Truth flows from the Fount, truth is ALWAYS from God
- God loves everyone, is working on everyone, all the time!
- God is love and truth, if you share those you share GOD!
- Focus on the tools to inspire people to consider truth is the source of freedom.

Even if clients don't want anything to do with religion, God is still working in their lives. You can rely on God to give you insight and trust the Holy Spirit will do all in His power to not only help your

client feel better but BE better. Truth flows from the Fount, truth is ALWAYS from God and is God working!

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” James 1:17, NKJV “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Tim 2:4, NKJV

Put your faith in God, He is love, He is working, He can do what you can't. God is not asking you to convert every soul you come in contact with. He is NOT asking you to be the Holy Spirit.

Self-check

- Do I trust God's character and have faith in His word?
- Am I content with my own devotional life?

The mind and body are interconnected

- Sleep, exercise, diet, all play a role (more on this later)
- Relationships, sense of purpose
- Some physical or biological things affect the mind/emotions
- But more often mental health affects physical health.

Human beings are not divided into neat compartments. Physical health affects emotional well-being, but more often emotional distress weakens the body. Scripture and health science both affirm that worry, guilt, fear, from distorted beliefs can undermine vitality and resilience.

Yet above all, spiritual understanding and beliefs about God profoundly influence mental and physical health. Erroneous views of God's character have caused unnecessary suffering throughout history. Healing addresses the whole person—mind, body, relationships, and spirit. But as a mental health coach we focus on the KEY to affect all change, the mind!

***Nine Tenths of Diseases Originate in Mind**—Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here. Perhaps some living home trouble is, like a canker, eating to the very soul and weakening the life-forces. Remorse for sin sometimes undermines the constitution and unbalances the mind. There are erroneous doctrines also, as that of an eternally burning hell and the endless torment of the wicked that, by giving exaggerated and distorted views of the character of God, have produced the same result upon sensitive minds.—Testimonies for the Church 5:444 (1885).*

Before we do a deep dive into how the mind works, I want to get a couple things out of the way—because confusion in these areas often creates fear, mislabeling, or hesitation about coaching. Let's talk about Mental Illness and trauma.

What about Mental Illness & DSM Labels

- Not all distress = mental illness
- Most emotional suffering has no clear biological marker
- Emotions fluctuate, cluster, and are reversible
- DSM uses categories; emotions exist on a continuum
- Coaching targets thinking patterns, not diagnoses
- Dysfunction → refer out

Rather than get in the weeds too much let me refer to an article **David Burns** just wrote on diagnosing and the DSM V (bible for psychiatrists and diagnosing mental illness in USA). He argues we need a clearer distinction between **true biological mental illnesses** and the far more common experience of **emotional suffering that exists on a continuum**. While the DSM has helped legitimize mental health care, it often frames distress in categorical, medical terms that can pathologize normal human emotions such as sadness, anxiety, shame, or discouragement.

Burns points out that most emotional suffering fluctuates in degree, rises and falls together, and lacks consistent biological markers—suggesting it is not a disease in the medical sense, but a reversible state shaped largely by how we think, interpret, and respond to life events.

A measurement-based approach that tracks emotions directly and targets underlying cognitive processes offers a more precise and empowering alternative, reserving medical models for conditions that truly involve identifiable biological dysfunction (such as psychosis, bipolar disorder with mania, or neurocognitive disorders). Labels can sometimes help with access to care, but they can also unintentionally reinforce helplessness when people are taught to see their suffering as fixed or defective.

More information here if you are interested in mental health diagnosis, labeling, and when it is helpful and limitations. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/feeling-good/202512/is-it-time-for-a-new-approach-to-emotional-suffering>

If you notice biological dysfunction or emotional suffering that is too intense for coaching, refer the client to a qualified therapist – more on how to identify this in Part 5.

What about Trauma?

- Some events can be traumatic, but do not necessarily cause clinical trauma
- Trauma can increase vulnerability, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient to cause depression or anxiety
- People respond differently based on biology, upbringing, and thinking patterns
- We don't heal a broken leg by replaying the hiker's mistakes; we set the bone.

Depression and/or anxiety are often described as caused by trauma. Trauma can increase vulnerability, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient to cause these conditions and understanding how they began is not the same as understanding what keeps them going. We don't heal a broken leg by replaying the hiker's mistakes; we set the bone, support healing, and strengthen the system

to reduce future injury. Psychological recovery works the same way. Effective therapies focus on unpacking the present patterns that maintain distress—such as rumination, avoidance, and distorted thinking—while building durable skills that restore emotional stability. When this happens, many people don't just manage symptoms; they experience a recovery so complete and resilient in the present that it functions as a true wellness. Healing isn't about replaying the fall—it's about setting the bone and restoring the system's capacity to heal.

Scripture gives us a powerful example of intense emotional suffering without pathology, distortion, or moral failure.

Jesus Experience in the Garden...

- “the Man of Sorrows pours out His supplications with strong crying and tears. He prays for strength to endure the test in behalf of humanity. He must Himself gain a fresh hold on Omnipotence, for only thus can He contemplate the future. And He pours out His heart longings for His disciples, that in the hour of the power of darkness their faith may not fail. The dew is heavy upon His bowed form, but He heeds it not. The shadows of night gather thickly about Him, but He regards not their gloom.” DA 419 “As the darkness of the coming trial pressed upon Him, He was in loneliness of spirit, in a world that knew Him not.” DA 422
- “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.” (Matthew 26:38) “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me...” (Matt. 26:39)

Jesus cared deeply about humanity at the same time, thought about being separated from His Father. His thoughts about opposing conflict created painful feelings. A deep love for us AND an interconnected love being torn apart, how could we expect anything less than anguish!

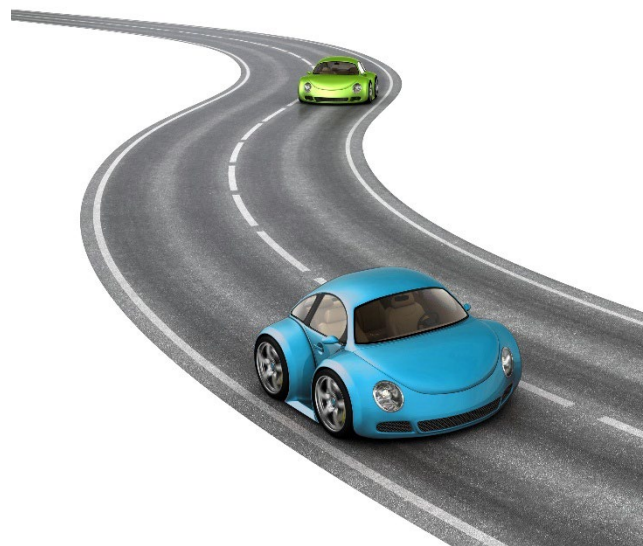
Jesus' suffering does not reflect psychological injury or disorder. It reflects the depth of love, awareness, and meaning He held in that moment. While we can't equate ourselves to the Son of God, Jesus was in His human form, and if he can go through such intense suffering and not have 'trauma' in the clinical sense, we should NOT assume trauma is as common as it's being portrayed, nor that any event actually causes it.

Choice NOT Blame!

- Cause vs Control
- Fault vs Responsibility
- “Responsibility is what we do next — not about who caused the pain/harm.”
- Helping clients regain choice is not victim blaming!

Let's look at Car Accident Analogy that is symbolic to our mental health. Let's imagine for a moment you're driving down the highway, staying in your lane and you see an oncoming car. This car swerves into your lane and they crushed into you so you end up in the ditch with a broken car. Let me ask you who's to blame for the car accident? This is not a trick question. The other person of course!

You were doing everything right while driving on the road. Now, let me ask whose responsibility is it to organize getting your car fixed? In most areas it's your responsibility.



Blame and responsibility doesn't change whether or not the person did this "on purpose". Maybe it was totally unintentional, they fell asleep at the wheel or had a stroke, something out of their own control. Maybe they did it on purpose because they were angry or wanted someone else to hurt because they were hurting. Whatever the motivation of the other person where there was accidental or intentional, your car is broken on the side of the road.

We can even be the cause of the accident with or without anyone else on the road. And sometimes the car just breaks down and we don't know why. Figuring out "the why" will not fix your car. This is good news!!! We don't need to know "the why" to get your car fixed we need to know "what's broken". You can take your car to the mechanic, or fix the car yourself. Either way one needs the right tools for the job to fix the car. This is good news—because recovery does not depend on perfect insight into the past, but on having the right tools in the present.

Will the car be the same as before? Maybe, maybe not. It might always have that lingering clunk or it might be in better condition after getting fixed. God has ways of making beautiful things happen from ugly situations.

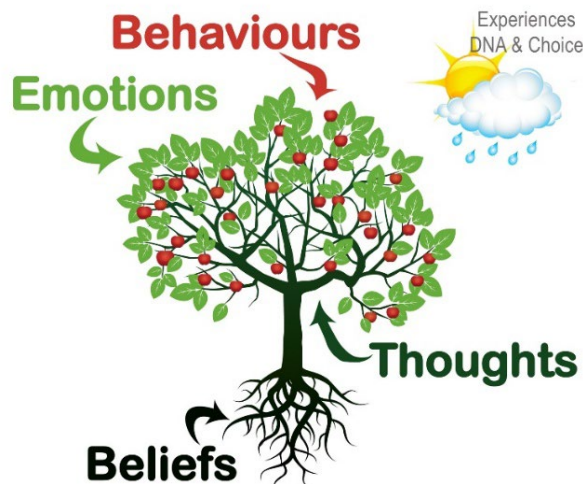
I hope you see the relevance here to our individual suffering and I could unpack every bit of this analogy as it relates to emotional suffering, cause, effect, upbringing, traumatic events, therapy, coaching, self-help and the like. All of the parts of car accident story are symbolic when it comes to being hurt and our suffering and our recovery.

So let's look at fixing the car. First, we'll briefly look at how the car works, then we can see what exactly is broken, and finally we can fix that part (or multiple parts). Instead of starting with causes we often cannot change, we begin with processes we can.

How the mind works

- Our personality, genetics, experiences, and even the many small choices over the years, all play a role in shaping what we believe.
- Our thoughts stem from these beliefs.
- What we think shapes how we feel and influence how we act (behaviours).
- Affect the beliefs, thoughts are affected.
- Change the thoughts and you affect the beliefs!

*"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."
— Proverbs 23:7*



When our thinking is realistic and truthful, emotions tend to be healthy and appropriate—occasionally uncomfortable or even painful. But when we have self-defeating or limiting beliefs, the thinking is distorted, emotions feel unbearable and we suffer far more often than necessary.

Beliefs and thoughts reinforce each other. Over time, repeated thinking patterns strengthen certain beliefs, which then generate familiar emotional responses. This explains why people often experience the same struggles in different situations and why fear drives more fear. Or doubt drives more despair. This follows the Biblical principle of "by beholding we are changed" for better or worse. This does not mean beliefs are chosen consciously or easily—but they can be examined and changed. We do not try to control emotions directly.

The good news is that change is possible from either direction. When thoughts are examined and corrected, beliefs begin to shift. When beliefs change, emotional responses follow.

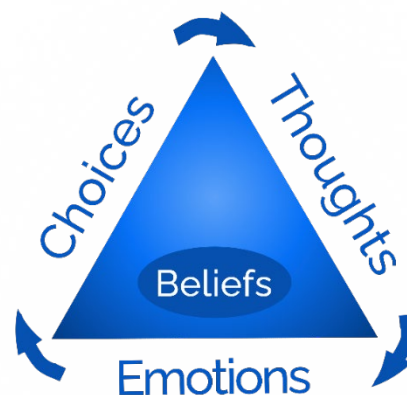
*“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
— Romans 12:2*

The ABC model gives us another simple way to observe this process.

The ABC's of the Mind

- A – Activating Upsetting Event – some kind of trigger, anything from a random thought to a major traumatic event (from minor to major; internal or external).
- B - Belief - what you believe (about yourself, the world, God, others) triggers thoughts
- C - Consequences – the emotional response, good or bad, to your thoughts.
- Optional, D – Decide - if what you believed was accurate, if not you can dispute the thought.

(Adapted from Dr. Albert Ellis's work.)



“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord...” Isaiah 1:18 KJV

The ABC model helps separate events from interpretations. It shows that emotions do not come directly from circumstances, but from beliefs about those circumstances. This distinction restores choice and responsibility without blame. In the ABC model, **every experience activates thinking**, but it is the *meaning we assign*, not the event itself, that determines how we feel.

Disputing a belief is not positive thinking—it is honest thinking. Scripture invites reasoning, reflection, and truth-seeking.

CBT - Psychology that's Biblical

- You have a choice to keep or change your thoughts.
- Correct your thoughts and your emotions will change.
- TEAM* – adds the missing piece!
 - Human nature is flawed
 - All emotions have value
 - More tools!

CBT aligns well with Biblical teaching on choice, responsibility, and transformation. TEAM expands CBT by addressing resistance, emphasizing empathy, and providing a wider range of tools. Emotions are not enemies; they are signals that invite understanding.

Positive vs Negative Emotions

- Healthy Emotions Come in Many Forms: sad, happy, hopeful, upset, down, worried
- No emotion is “bad” by itself
- We don’t need to fix all emotions, all thoughts
- Any emotion can be:
 - healthy and helpful, albeit uncomfortable, or
 - painful and disruptive

Emotions become problematic not because they exist, but because of intensity, duration, or distorted thinking behind them. Healthy emotions—even painful ones—often signal truth and values. Coaching helps distinguish between helpful emotional signals and unnecessary suffering. Our mental health or emotional state is on a scale. Not everything is illness, even anguish of soul!

Example of how the mind works in real life!

Let’s look at an example of this in action. Let me walk you through the circumstances of a REAL story, and you help me figure out what emotions we might have been feeling.

Situation: One day my husband and I were walking down a road that we commonly do for exercise, and we came across a bear. He wasn’t very far away maybe 10 or 20 meters (yards).

What kind of feelings do you we had? Maybe unsure, nervous, or worried??

Let me give you a little more context and let’s see if your answer changes. We had our dog with us who proceeded to bark and the bear wasn’t so happy with that.

What might the emotions be: Fearful, anxious, terrified even?

The answer.... in that situation, for my husband and I, it was none of those!

My husband felt calm and curious. I felt excited and happy.

Of course, it would not have been wrong or bad to feel nervous or fearful. Certainly, bears attack people. But let’s unpack why we felt the way we did in this situation.

Our thoughts were something like:

- The bear looks peaceful.
- I haven’t seen a bear in forever and I’m so excited to take a picture of him.
- Our dog is staying between us and the bear and not getting too close.
- Bear attacks are rare and God is with us either way.

Alternative thoughts, for someone else, maybe new to country living or just has a different personality. Their thoughts might look something more like:

- I don’t know what that bear will do and being attacked would be very painful.
- I don’t know how to read a bear, is this one going to get aggressive or walk away.

With these thoughts they might feel: nervous, on edge, cautious.

Notice from this real-life encounter a couple things.

1. The emotions themselves were not good or bad. They just were what they were.
2. The emotions stem from the thoughts.

BUT there is another alternative. The thoughts could be problematic and filled with errors of thinking. We They might be more like:

- This bear will attack. (jumping to conclusions)
- I will be disfigured and I couldn't handle that. (catastrophic thinking)

These kinds of thoughts are far more upsetting and can plague us long after the event is over. These kinds of thoughts, ones with distortions, lead to more painful emotions and/or intensify the healthy feelings. We can go from nervous to panicky when a bear is simply eating grass and casually looks up. We can go from feeling nervous just in the moment to worrying every time we go for a walk.

Healthy Thinking = Truth, the **WHOLE** truth.

- Healthy thinking is truthful, realistic thinking that is open to God's voice
- The problem is not lack of effort or faith
- Healthy thinking is not:
 - The "power of positive thinking" or prosperity preaching
 - Without negative emotions
 - In complete control of every thought or emotion.

Healthy thinking is not about denying reality, suppressing emotion, or forcing ourselves into a cheerful mindset. It does not mean pretending everything is fine, ignoring pain, or believing we should feel peaceful at all times. It is thinking that is **accurate, balanced, and complete**.

Distorted thoughts often contain *some* truth, which is why they feel so convincing—but they leave out other equally important truths. Healthy thinking brings the *whole picture* into view.

Being open to God's voice does not mean waiting for a feeling or impression. It means allowing truth, reason, Scripture, and reality to correct distorted conclusions about ourselves, others, and God.

David Burns says, "Depression is the world's oldest con." He is pointing out that distorted thoughts *feel* true and persuasive, even when they are not. Depression convinces us we are seeing reality clearly, when in fact our thinking has narrowed and filtered out crucial truths.

The Brain Equation: **Trigger + Beliefs = Thoughts = Emotions**

- Truthful thoughts based on healthy beliefs leading to healthy emotions.
- Negative thoughts lead to unhelpful emotions
- Negative thoughts have distortions, often 3, 5, 8 or more!
- Distorted thinking feels true — we usually believe it 100%

If negative thoughts are not believable they don't cause suffering we simply ignore them.

4 Rules of Negative Thoughts*

- Not a fact or a description of an event.
 - Facts are observable and recordable.
 - Thoughts are interpretations, predictions, or judgments about the facts.
- Not a feeling.
 - Avoid feeling words (sad, anxious, angry).
 - You can put down judgements about the feeling like: "I'm dumb for feeling inferior."
- Not a question.
 - Turn questions into statements.
- Short and concise.
 - One idea per thought.



These rules are not about being technical. They exist because we can't dispute facts, emotions, or questions. We can't nor do we want to change reality. However, there is usually a story we are telling ourselves about the facts, feelings, or questions. First, we will briefly touch on Self-Defeating Beliefs. These are the root of the tree from our earlier analogy.

Self-Defeating Beliefs*

- Deep, often subconscious beliefs about self, others, God, or the world
- Shape how we interpret events and generate negative thoughts
- Can be intentionally changed with a specific process and set of tools
- Often change indirectly when thoughts change
- There are 25 common ones including Perfectionism, Perceived Perfectionism, Achievement Addition, Submissiveness, Superman/Superwoman, Brushfire Fallacy, and many more.

Self-Defeating Beliefs are the deeper assumptions that quietly shape our thinking. The first step is uncovering them since they are subconscious, and I have a free course for you or your clients to do just that on my website: www.angelapoch.com The follow up course on how to change these Self-Defeating Beliefs in your own life (or your clients) is coming soon. Sadly, we don't have time to cover them in this program!

Good news, as you prune the tree so to speak, you affect the roots. That means has clients work on uncovering the distortions in their Negative Thoughts that will inadvertently affect their belief system as well. To do this work on Negative Thoughts, we first need to understand the common ways our minds distort the truth.

10 Cognitive Distortions*

- 1) All-or-Nothing (Black-and-White)** — Seeing things in extremes, with no middle ground or nuance. IE: total success or total failure, with no middle. “If I don’t do this perfectly, it’s a complete disaster.”
- 2) Over-Generalization** — Drawing a sweeping conclusion from a specific mistake or flaw. IE: treat one setback as a never-ending pattern. “This didn’t work, nothing I try ever works.”
- 3) Negative Mental Filter** — Like wearing dark tinted glasses. You focus on what’s wrong, bad, negative and ignore or can’t see everything else that is neutral, beneficial, or positive. “I rushed the presentation; the whole thing was terrible.”
- 4) Discounting the Positive** — Dismissing positive outcomes as unimportant or accidental. IE: You dismiss good things as luck, ‘not counting,’ or ‘not enough.’ “The first exercise was easy, I suck overall.”
- 5) Jumping to Conclusions** — You make a conclusion **without strong and sufficient evidence. Mind Reading:** assuming what others think. **Fortune Telling:** predicting a bad outcome as if it’s certain. Assuming things will always be the same, never change. **Mind reading:** “She didn’t reply— she thinks I’m annoying.” **Fortune telling:** “This meeting will go badly.”
- 6) Magnification / Minimization (Catastrophizing)** — Exaggerating problems or downplaying successes. IE: You blow problems up bigger than they are, or shrink your strengths/efforts. “This mistake is a disaster.”
- 7) Emotional Reasoning** — You treat a feeling as proof of truth. Believing something is true because it feels true. “I feel like a failure, so I must be a failure.”
- 8) Shoulds & Musts** — Rigid rules you’ve created or buy into that create pressure, guilt, or resentment. Using rigid rules about how you or others *ought* to behave. “I should always be productive.”
- NOTE:** There are 2 Legitimate shoulds: Moral shoulds (the 10 commandments) and Natural Shoulds (IE: Gravity – the apple should fall if I drop it.) IF you have done something wrong that’s what confession, repentance, and forgiveness is for!
- 9) Labeling (Personalization)** — Defining yourself or others by a single behaviour or outcome. You turn a mistake into a global identity tag. “I forgot—I’m an idiot.”
- 10) Blame (Self-Blame / Other-Blame)** — You assign fault as the main explanation, instead of looking at causes and next steps. Assigning responsibility without considering all contributing factors. **Self:** “This is all my fault— everything goes wrong because of me.” **Other:** “It’s their fault—I can’t do anything unless they change.”

The more we notice when a thought isn't 100% true, the more we can stop negative thinking in it's tracks. But we can also go in circles if we are too general and just talk in philosophy and theory. To really have healthy thinking we need to be very intentional.

Focus on One Moment to Challenge the Lies

As mentioned, our minds work in patterns. We tend to have the same doubts, issues, and problems throughout our lives. This is good news. We don't have to unpack our entire life to have meaningful change. If we try to look at everything at once—years of events, many situations—we usually go in circles and anything rarely changes. But when we work with one specific moment, we see the same thoughts and patterns that show up everywhere else. Because you bring the same thinking into each situation, changing one moment changes the pattern—and that's what creates lasting relief. To do this we use a worksheet call the Mood Log. We will expand in detail this tool in Part 3. For now, let's just jot a few things down on a modified version.

10 min ACTIVITY – Partial Mood Log

To get the most out of this workshop please follow along. Let's do PART 1 of the Mood log. Think of a time when you personal felt particularly anxious, inadequate, or guilty. Fill in the following:

Triggering Event - When, where, and who was I with (just ONE sentence):

Upsetting Emotions (rate 0-100%):

Anxious		Worried		Nervous		Afraid	
Inadequate		Inferior		Worthless		Defective	
Guilty		Remorseful		Bad		Ashamed	

Negative Thoughts (rate how much you believe the thought 0-100%):

Be very brief! Do not put facts, feelings, or questions. More room next page!

	Belief 0-100%
1.	
2.	
3.	

We've looked at how distorted thinking creates emotional suffering inside us. But most of our pain doesn't stay private—it shows up in relationships. That's where these same patterns become visible, painful, and, importantly, changeable.

Empathic Relationships

Introduction

- Human beings are wired for connection
- Much emotional suffering occurs in relationships
- Much healing also occurs in relationships
- Feeling understood brings relief, even when problems remain

Human beings are wired for connection. Much of our emotional suffering occurs in the context of relationships, and much of our healing does as well. Feeling misunderstood, unseen, or alone often intensifies pain, while feeling heard and valued can bring some immediate relief—though it does not “solve” the underlying problem.

In TEAM-based coaching, empathy is not a soft add-on; it is foundational. This section focuses on developing relational skills that create safety and connection, not on analyzing or fixing relationships.

To understand why empathy is so powerful, we first need to understand why relationships affect mental health in the first place.

Why Relationships Affect Mental Health

- Emotional pain often occurs in relationships
- Healing and growth can also occur in relationships
- Feeling understood reduces emotional intensity and defensiveness
- Human relationships are meaningful but limited
- God is the only fully trustworthy source of security, connection, and love.

Human beings learn some of who they are and what they can expect from life largely through relationships. From early on, interactions with others shape core beliefs about worth, belonging, and competence. When connection feels threatened—through rejection, misunderstanding, criticism, or emotional distance—emotional suffering often intensifies. When connection feels safe, respectful, and attuned, emotional distress often softens.

Not only can we use that in coaching, but we can also provide it. If relationships can intensify suffering, they can also become a context for healing—especially when the relationship itself feels safe and respectful. Importantly, healing and growth also occur in relationships. Feeling understood does not merely “feel nice”; it reduces emotional intensity and invites the client to share what is really going on for them. This is especially important later on when the client might share some disturbing or shameful thoughts. When people feel emotionally safe with another person, they are more willing to reflect honestly, tolerate discomfort, and consider new ways of thinking. In this sense, relationships become a context where change is possible.

People are gregarious by nature. We need relationships to function. From causal ones with the clerk at the bank, to intimate ones with very close friends or romantic partners. This does not

mean constant socializing or perfect relationships. One mistake worldly psychology makes is that we need safe relationships where we can ‘be ourself’ but this is misleading.

Christ is our perfect example. Consider the relationships He had. He had one especially close friend, John. He had two other close companions, Peter and James, and several additional disciples with varying degrees of closeness—the kind of relationships you might invite to a housewarming but not necessarily confide in deeply. Yet on the night of His arrest, all of them fell away and were scattered, just as He foretold (Matthew 26:31). Even His closest companions were limited and imperfect.

Jesus also experienced significant family strain—from a stepfather who nearly “put away” His mother, to stepbrothers who did not believe in Him and treated Him with hostility. Human relationships, even important ones, did not provide Him with perfect understanding or unwavering loyalty.

The only relationship Jesus could trust without limitation was His relationship with His heavenly Father. And yet, Jesus was well balanced, loving, and emotionally whole. His wholeness did not come from having ideal relationships, but from living in truth, love, and purpose before God. When close human bonds are limited or disappointing, living for others—loving, serving, and giving—can become a meaningful bridge rather than a deficit.

“We are prone to look to our fellow men for sympathy and uplifting, instead of looking to Jesus. In His mercy and faithfulness God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm. Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly in God. He knows the sorrows that we feel to the depths of our being, but which we cannot express. When all things seem dark and unexplainable, remember the words of Christ, ‘What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.’ John 13:7.” “Human love may change, but Christ’s love knows no change. When we cry to Him for help, His hand is stretched out to save.” The Ministry of Healing p486, p72

This program won’t cover healthy relationships let me know if you’d like a course on that. It’s a work in progress right now! However, the relational skills taught in this program—especially empathy—often strengthen both coaching relationships and clients’ everyday interactions, simply through modeling.

Why the Coaching Relationship Helps

- The coaching relationship is a healing context, not a fixing role
- Feeling understood reduces defensiveness and resistance
- Safety allows honest reflection and willingness to change
- Empathy interrupts self-protection

The coaching relationship helps not by fixing problems or being the client’s friend, but by creating a safe relational space. When clients feel understood rather than evaluated, emotional intensity decreases and defensiveness softens. This makes honest reflection and meaningful change possible.

From a biblical perspective, this pattern is consistent with how God relates to people. Jesus consistently met people where they were—listening, understanding, and connecting before inviting change. Coaching mirrors this relational posture by prioritizing presence over pressure.

Because the quality of the relationship matters so deeply, coaches need practical skills that help them stay connected when emotions are strong.

Empathy is more than listening

- Empathy is active, intentional, and relational
- It creates connection, hope, clarity, and confidence
- It is the foundation of good coaching and better mental health
- Christ met people where they were.

Empathy is not passive listening or polite attention. It is an active, intentional effort to understand another person's inner experience. In TEAM-based coaching, empathy reduces resistance, increases trust, and creates the emotional safety required for change.

"We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit." The Ministry of Healing p143

Jesus consistently met people where they were—not where they "should" be. This same principle applies in coaching: empathy comes first, and everything else flows from it.

The Five Secrets of Effective Communication provide practical ways to express this kind of empathy in real conversations.

5 Secrets of Effective Communication*

More than words or "talk," these concepts, codified by Dr. Burns, require you to really connect with the client and let go of your own self-interest. As you practice these, you'll build a relationship that is meaningful with whomever you are using them with.

- Disarming Technique (agree and affirm)
- Thought & Feeling Empathy (use their key words)
- I Feel Statements (connect deeper)
- Stroking (encouragement, showing respect)
- Inquiry (favor open ended questions)

The Five Secrets are not just communication techniques; they are relational skills that require letting go of self-interest and focusing fully on the other person. Used well, they build trust, deepen connection, and reduce defensiveness. I can't stress enough how these simple tools are transformative to any relationship!

You may use one, several, or all five in a conversation. They take practice and often feel awkward at first. That is normal. With repetition, they become more natural and transformative—not only in

coaching, but in everyday relationships. They can be used in any order but it often works well to start with Thought and Feeling empathy and end with an Inquiry.

“The Creator of all ideas may impress different minds with the same thought, but each may express it in a different way, yet without contradiction. The fact that this difference exists should not perplex or confuse us. It is seldom that two persons will view and express truth in the very same way. Each dwells on particular points which his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling upon the different objects gives those objects a different hue.” 1 SM 22

1. Disarming Technique*

(Affirmation & Agreement)

The Disarming Technique is empathy expressed under pressure. When emotions are heightened or the relationship feels strained, simple reflection may not be enough to restore safety. Disarming works by affirming what is valid. What can you agree with? Where is the common ground?

Find the truth in what they are saying:

- Used to restore connection during conflict, tension, or emotional escalation
- Especially helpful when the client is defensive or angry with the coach
- Also important when the coach feels triggered
- Find the genuine truth—not relativism or “their truth”
- Often begins with phrases like: Yes, That’s true, You’re right, I agree, Amen, etc.

Examples:

Client says, “You are not listening to me.” Disarming response, “You are right, I was thinking about my response instead of just listening.”

Disarming identifies the truth beneath the words and acknowledges it openly. This reduces defensiveness, repairs connection, and allows empathy to continue. It is especially effective during conflict—whether the client feels angry or uncomfortable with the coach, or the coach notices their own internal reaction.

This is one of the most difficult of the Five Secrets because self must take a back seat. We are often caught up in our own perspective, which is only a partial truth—one piece of the puzzle. If you truly cannot find anything to agree with, skip the Disarming Technique and move to another form of empathy. However, with reflection, it is rare that there is nothing valid to acknowledge.

Once connection is restored—or when the relationship already allows openness—empathy is most often expressed through Thought and Feeling Empathy..

2. Thought & Feeling Empathy*

- Thought Empathy - Using the same words the client used, especially key nouns and adjectives
 - Summarizing is acceptable
 - Do not add your own ideas, use synonyms, or fill in gaps

- Avoid interpreting, giving opinions, or saying “it’s okay”
- Feeling Empathy - Identifying someone's emotions and expressing that to the person.
 - It is appropriate to guess, if you acknowledge uncertainty
 - “I’m wondering if you might be feeling…”
 - “I imagine you might be feeling…”
 - Avoid telling clients how they feel
 - Do not avoid anger - common mistake

Example: Client says, “It’s so hard to get out of bed. I’m just useless.” Coach response, “I wonder if you might be feeling down, inadequate, maybe worthless (FE) when it’s hard to get out of bed (TE).”

Thought and Feeling Empathy communicate deep understanding by staying close to the client’s language and emotional experience. Thought Empathy mirrors the client’s words, showing careful attention without interpretation. Feeling Empathy reflects emotions—sometimes by gently guessing—while clearly acknowledging uncertainty.

Together, these forms of empathy communicate, *“I am with you, and I’m trying to understand your experience as you experience it.”* Avoiding anger is a common mistake; anger often points to values, boundaries, or perceived injustice and deserves empathy like any other emotion.

Empathy can be further strengthened, through limited self-disclosure that keeps the focus on the client yet allows the coaching relationship to deepen. While used with specific intent in coaching, this is one of the more common 5 Secrets in an intimate relationship. If you are practicing the 5 Secrets on friends and family, you might see some really amazing improvement using this tool.

3. I Feel Statements & Self-Disclosure*

- Builds connection and opens doors
- Keep it short and simple
- Be genuine and real
- Common Errors:
 - Passive blame: “I feel X because you did Y”
 - Using self-disclosure to persuade or preach
 - IE: I feel good when I pray. (Trying to get them to pray or see prayer as helpful.)

Example: Client says, “It’s so hard to get out of bed. I’m just useless.” I Feel, “I feel concerned when you say useless. (IF) Do you ever feel like life isn’t worth living? (IN)”

Note: I Feel statements and Self-Disclosure should be paired with another Secret—often Inquiry—to keep the focus on the client.

Many therapists and coaches avoid talking about themselves out of fear that the session will become about them. While that concern is understandable, trying to act as if you do not exist or your feelings don’t matter, create distance and impedes progress. It can unintentionally communicate, *“I’m above you,”* or *“You are here to be fixed.”* Making the client feel misunderstood, isolated, and lonely.

“I Feel” statements, used briefly and thoughtfully, humanize the coach and reduce this hierarchy. They model emotional honesty and presence without shifting focus away from the client. Self-disclosure is not about sharing opinions or correcting beliefs—it is about **authenticity and connection**. When used well, it builds trust and creates a bridge where empathy can flow both ways, while keeping the client’s experience at the center. I’ve had clients who’d been to multiple therapists over the years and after I did an I feel with brief self-disclosure about my own experience relating to their emotion they told me I was the first person to truly understand them.

This makes complete sense and a big reason therapist and coaches fail to fully connect with their clients. Jesus clothed His divinity with humanity, so among other things, we would know He understands! (see Philippians 2:5–7)

“Christ took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity...” Desire of Ages p296 “He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of humanity, what are our wants, and where lies the strength of our temptations; for He was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal. The Lord “telleth the number of the stars;” and yet “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Psalm 147:4, 3.” The Ministry of Healing p71

Self-disclosure can also be a gentle way to share insight at a peer level without acting like you are the expert or the client “must accept” what you have to say. I’ve shared with some depressed clients who have made some mistakes in their life and felt disconnected from God, how I too suffered from depression and when I realized I was trying to control my own happiness by being perfect I was able to see God was always there, waiting for me to see Him as lovely and willing to help me.

Empathy can also be communicated through respect, encouragement, and appreciation, which brings us to **Stroking**.

4. Stroking* (Affirmation & Affection)

- Conveys warmth and respect.
- Tell the client something good about themselves, be specific.
- Alternatively, talk about the client in a respectful way, “I enjoy working with you.”
- Common Errors:
 - Too general, “You are so brave.”
 - Platitudes, “Thank you for sharing.”
 - Insincerity

Example: Client says, “It’s so hard to get out of bed. I’m just useless.” You could say, “You’ve been making an effort to eat breakfast before work.” or “I’m looking forward to working with you on getting out of bed.”

Effective stroking is always **specific and sincere**. It is not praise, flattery, or reassurance. General compliments and polite phrases often miss the mark because they do not reflect real

understanding. When stroking is genuine, it strengthens trust and supports motivation without pressure or expectation. It is well paired with Disarming Technique or I Feel.

From a Biblical perspective, stroking aligns with seeing others as made in God's image. It reflects love that honors worth without conditions. When offered thoughtfully, stroking reminds clients that struggle does not erase value.

While stroking affirms who the client is, empathy deepens further when we invite the client to share more of their experience — which brings us to **Inquiry**.

5. Inquiry*

- Connecting deeper by clarifying
- Showing you care through curiosity
- Uses how or what questions; open-ended is ideal
- Closed questions may be used intentionally
- Allow space for the client to answer — silence has power
- Avoid “why” questions, though they may be used sparingly
- Questions can be specific or general
- Avoid using inquiry to persuade, direct, or push an idea

Example: Client says, “It’s so hard to get out of bed. I’m just useless.” Could ask something like, “Tell me more about what that’s been like for you?”

Well-timed questions deepen understanding and often lead clients to insights they could not reach on their own. Silence is not something to rush past—it gives space for reflection and invites the Holy Spirit to work. While “why” questions can sometimes sound blaming or interrogative, gentle “what” and “how” questions tend to feel safer and more collaborative.

Inquiry must never be used to steer clients toward what the coach thinks they *should* work on. Questions such as “*Do you want to work on feeling less anxious?*” can subtly direct the client. A more open inquiry—“*You mentioned feeling anxious; is that something you want to work on, or is there something else that feels more important?*”—keeps ownership with the client.

The Five Secrets are not meant to be used rigidly or ALWAYS all at once. When combined flexibly, they create a natural, empathic flow that supports connection and change.

All 5 Secrets Combined

The Five Secrets are not meant to be used rigidly or all at once. They work best when combined flexibly.

- The Five Secrets are not meant to be used rigidly or all at once
- They work best when combined flexibly
- Different clients resonate with different forms of empathy

The Five Secrets are designed to work together, not as a fixed formula but as a flexible relational approach. In real conversations, empathy often moves back and forth between the various 5 secrets depending on what the client needs in that moment. The goal is not to “apply” empathy correctly, but to stay connected while the client speaks.

Examples

- Client says, “It’s so hard to get out of bed. I’m just useless.”
- Coach response: “I imagine you’re feeling down and unhappy (Feeling Empathy). I can relate—I’ve struggled with depression myself (I Feel). It’s so true, it really is hard to get out of bed when we feel this way (Disarming / Thought Empathy). Can you tell me more about what this has been like for you? (Inquiry)”

Reminders:

- You do not need to use all five every time
- The order can vary
- Always include the client’s key words (nouns, adjectives, and emotions when stated)
- Different clients resonate with different expressions of empathy

The Five Secrets are meant to function fluidly rather than mechanically. Some clients feel most understood through agreement and affirmation, while others respond more deeply to self-disclosure, encouragement, or thoughtful questions. There is no single “right” combination.

What matters most is that the client feels understood. When used flexibly, the Five Secrets create a natural, respectful dialogue that reduces resistance and builds trust. Using the client’s own words anchors the conversation in their lived experience. *I Feel* statements communicate, “I understand—you’re not alone; I’ve been there too.” *Stroking* conveys respect and care, affirming that you see the client’s efforts and values, and that you are on their side. *Disarming* bridges divides by acknowledging what is valid, and can be especially powerful for clients who have rarely felt supported or agreed with in a meaningful way. *Inquiry* confirms genuine interest, showing the client that you want to understand who they are and what they need.

People differ in how they experience being understood. Some clients respond most strongly to stroking or affirmation. Others connect more deeply through I Feel statements or Disarming. Because you cannot know in advance which form of empathy will matter most, it is important to become comfortable with all five. As a coach, practice the Secrets that feel less natural to you—these are often the ones that will stretch your effectiveness the most.

Even with good intentions, helpers often slip into habits that quietly weaken empathy. Being aware of common mistakes helps keep the work on track.

Common Empathy Errors

- Cheerleading
- Advice giving
- Validation lectures
- Directing the conversation vs client leading
- Trying to helping the client
- Doing empathy only once or initially then forgetting all about it during methods.

Most empathy errors come from a desire to help. When discomfort rises, it is natural to reassure, explain, encourage, or problem-solve. Unfortunately, these responses often increase resistance and make clients feel unheard.

In TEAM-based coaching, empathy is not a warm-up—it is a **continuous process**. Even during methods, empathy must be revisited and maintained. When empathy fades, progress usually stalls. When empathy remains strong, clients stay engaged, open, and willing to try new tools.

Because empathy is a skill—not a personality trait—it improves through deliberate practice, which is exactly what comes next.

20min - PRACTICE the 5 Secrets

Use the 5 Secrets to find out more about your partner and relate with them! You will likely only use 3 or 4 of them at a time but try to use as many as possible even if it's awkward and clunky.

Take notes! This will feel weird and disjointed at first. Gets better with practice.

- **First person:** Describe one thing you found challenging in this class so far and what you are feeling right now.
- **Partner:** use several of the 5 Secrets to respond, make sure to include Thought and Feeling Empathy, plus an Inquiry.
 - Disarming Technique (agree and affirm)
 - Thought & Feeling Empathy (use their words, guess feelings if they don't state them)
 - I Feel Statements (connect deeper by sharing a bit of yourself)
 - Stroking (encouragement, showing respect)
 - Inquiry (favor open ended questions)
- **First person:** Answer the Inquiry
- **Partner:** use more of the 5 Secrets, be sure to include I feel and Stroking on the second round.
- **STOP after 5 mins and Reverse roles**

Why change is hard and helping fails

Most people assume that if someone is suffering, the solution is to help or give advice. Yet good intentions alone rarely produce lasting change. In fact, helping too quickly or before being asked often increases resistance and results in disappointment, frustration, and disconnection.

For decades, psychology experts have searched for the “right” solution to change. There are all kinds of models for change but rather than going in that direction, let's explore something more radical. Something deeper, at the heart of the matter.

Resistance to change is rooted in the **human condition**. From the beginning, sin has distorted trust, leading us to put self first. We want to trust God, yet something holds us back, self-protection. Subconsciously—that God may not fully have our back or is limited in some way so we have to take care of things ourselves, the Edenic Lie! This is the root of all kinds of problems spiritually and emotionally but especially when we might have to let go of things that serve us in some way.

When people suffer, they often cling to familiar patterns—even painful ones—because those patterns offer an advantage of some kind and are tied to deeply held beliefs. In fact, it's often good values, but we are trying to attain them unrealistically, or without context, or by ourselves rather than trusting God will work in, for, and through us. This will make more sense when we do some examples.

Resistance, especially in changing how we think and feel, is not a flaw or lack of motivation—it is **meaningful information**. People resist change for good reasons. When resistance is honored rather than pushed aside, people feel safer, more understood, and far more willing to move forward.

Why coaching (or therapy or self-help) fails:

- Coach hasn't connected fully – Go back to 5 Secrets
- Coach tries too hard! We naturally resist “help” – Sit with Open Hands
- Coach does all the work, teacher can't practice for the student – Homework & Process Resistance
- Client isn't ready and that's ok! – Outcome Resistance
- Coach doesn't have the right tool just yet. – Fail as Fast as We Can – Move onto other tools

Change often fails not because people are stubborn or unmotivated. When a coach pushes, explains, or works harder than the client, resistance increases. Scripture and psychology both affirm that growth cannot be forced; it must be chosen.

TEAM-based coaching treats resistance as information, not pathology. If progress stalls, we check in. Are we going too fast? Did we miss something? Is the client putting in the necessary work between sessions? Let's focus on resistance, we'll deal with the other concerns in Part 3.

Types of Resistance:

Process Resistance*	Outcome Resistance*
<i>Resisting the work that is required for change</i>	<i>Resisting what will happen after the change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's too hard to change • It's doing to take too much time • I'll be uncomfortable • It's unfair I have to do all this work. • Isn't this a medical problem, can't I just take a pill? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll have to give up something (I enjoy, helps me cope, I like, etc.) • I don't deserve X (happiness, peace, etc.) • I should feel X and I'd have to let that go (bad, guilt, etc.) • I won't have any excuses (for further change) • Many, many more!!

Process resistance is about the *cost of DOING change*. Outcome resistance is about the *cost of the RESULTS of change*. Rather than arguing with resistance, we explore it respectfully through Positive Reframing.

Process Resistance*

- There is work to moving forward.
- Brain neuro pathways aren't a computer.
- Tools to address:
 - Dangling the Carrot (inspires hope, helps with motivation)
 - Gentle Ultimatum (what is required for change)
 - Sitting with Open Hands (no judgement if the client isn't ready to do this kind of work)

More on exactly how we do this in Part 3!

Outcome Resistance*

Clients have very good reasons to hold onto the challenges in the way of their goals. WHY...

- Emotions were created for a reason.
- They are connected to our values.
- Positive Reframing of Upsetting Emotions:
 - Does a deep dive into the clients values.
 - Can help some clients feel better about themselves.
 - Helps clients see negative emotions aren't bad.
 - Occasionally, clients realize they don't need to change because the PR crushes a particular SDB! IE: they have emotophobia and see it's ok to have all kinds of emotions.

Outcome resistance assumes that symptoms exist for a reason. Emotions often reflect values, love, responsibility, or conscience. When these reasons are acknowledged, shame decreases and motivation increases. Scripture affirms that emotions themselves are not sinful. Jesus experienced sorrow, anguish, anger, and grief—yet without sin. Emotions become problematic not because they exist, but because of distorted thinking, excessive intensity, or thinking we have to bear it alone!

Side note: God created everything, including emotions. Sin and selfishness were not created, they are the result of the 'absence' of God's character, love.

Positive Reframing does **not** mean saying it's good to be depressed, anxious, or angry. It means recognizing that these emotions serve purposes God designed. Once clients feel understood rather than judged, they are far more willing to change.

Positive Reframing shifts the conversation from "What's wrong with me?" to "What does this say about what I value?" "How does this benefit me?" This reframing often brings some relief and restores self-respect.

How to DO Positive Reframing* of Upsetting Emotions

For each emotion, ask yourself (or the client, but try this on yourself FIRST):

- What are the advantages, functions, and benefits of feeling ____ (sad, worried, guilty)?
- What does it say about you that is positive and awesome?
- See Positive Reframing examples for more ideas of what this looks like

This perspective often helps clients see that discomfort does not equal dysfunction. The goal is not to cling to painful emotions—but to honor their purpose before letting them go.

Positive Reframing* Examples:

Upsetting Event or Trigger: Taking course on becoming a coach, feeling anxious, nervous, inadequate. Positive Reframe of those emotions:

- **Anxious/nervous** – Shows I care about what I am learning. Keeps me vigilant. Helps prevent me from getting distracted.
- **Inadequate** – Shows I'm humble. I'm willing to learn. I am teachable, not superior. I'm realistic as I'm new to all of this.

Upsetting Event or Trigger: Lost my best friend in a car accident when I was driving, feeling sad, down, guilty, ashamed:

- **Sad/Down** – Helps me to connect to her memory. Realistic. Shows I cared about my friend, I'll miss her. I value relationships and this one was meaningful.
- **Guilty/Ashamed** – Helps motivated me to move toward forgiveness. Shows I take responsibility for my actions.

Stuck trying to think of anything good?

Consider: What does it say about a person who didn't feel _____ in that same situation? This works best when you can see the emotion might have value but it doesn't feel comfortable or nice. True, we aren't say you should always feel _____ or that it should be 50, 75, or 100% in intensity.

See Appendix for more ideas.

Why we or the client gets stuck doing Positive Reframing:

1. It's new and takes some effort. We've been programmed to think there are good feelings and bad ones. Keep practicing!
2. The client doesn't have any resistance to change, isn't judging themselves for having the emotion, and can see in some cases the emotion would be reasonable but not in this specific situation. This usually happens AFTER you've done at least one Mood Log already with a client. But be sure it's not #1 or #3.
3. We don't like feeling this way, and judge ourselves for it. IE: I shouldn't feel nervous. I shouldn't cry so much. I shouldn't feel so bad. Etc. Those kinds of thoughts can go onto the Mood Log if they come up.
4. Not all tools work for everyone. I've only had two or three cases in 7 years where this tool just didn't land well for a particular client.

15min ACTIVITY – Positive Reframing

Get out your Mood Log you started last exercise. Pick one emotion and considering your upsetting moment, answer these questions.

- What are the advantages and benefits to feeling _____?
- What does it say about you that is positive and awesome?

Before we get into practical application of the key concepts, let's finish our mental health theory with one more thing. What about all the other factors that contribute to mental health, don't we have to address all of those too?

Other Contributors to Mental Health – The Health Message

What about finding out what causes mental health issues? Don't we need to know the cause to provide deep meaningful recovery? What about other factors relating to mental health?

You might have heard or seen one thing or another “causing” depression, phobia, or other mental health issue. Common ones I've heard are:

- Brain chemistry / neurotransmitters
- Genetics / Personality or temperament
- Hormones (thyroid, menopause, postpartum, PMS)
- Trauma / Adverse childhood experiences / family history
- Chronic stress (work, caregiving, finances)
- Sleep problems
- Physical illness or chronic pain
- Nutrition deficiencies or diet
- Substance use (alcohol, drugs, medications)
- Life events (loss, divorce, illness, accidents)
- Relationship conflict or isolation
- Social factors (poverty, discrimination, instability)
- Spiritual or existential distress

When people struggle emotionally, it's natural to look for some kind of specific cause, a physical explanation or a lifestyle fix. But there is NO clear proof any ONE of these CAUSE mental health issues.

We can look at factors that are *related* to mental health, but before we do, it's important not to confuse that with *cause*. There is a vast difference between causation, correlation, and contribution.

Causation means something directly produces a problem. Example: Touching a hot stove causes a burn. There is a clear and distinct line between one thing and what follows.

Correlation means two things show up together but one doesn't necessarily cause the other. Example: People who carry umbrellas often get wet. But carrying an umbrella doesn't make you wet—it's the rain that causes both. Every person born in 1903 who ate pickles died. Thus pickles are lethal! This is how a lot of folk lore was born.

Contribution means something may influence, worsen, improve, or be part of the whole picture without being the main reason the problem exists or the final and complete solution. Example: Lack of sleep for long periods of time affects metabolism and in turn type 2 diabetes. We can't just sleep better to fix diabetes, nor does lack of sleep cause it.

These might sound obvious, but some correlations can seem a lot more like causation or contribution. Does childhood abuse cause attachment anxiety? We can't reliably answer that by reason alone. Determining causation requires careful scientific study—systematic observation, testing, and repeated findings—not just personal experience.

Many things may contribute to emotional distress; many more are simply connected with it. Just like it's common for people to wear a raincoat in the rain, but wearing a raincoat doesn't make it rain. Understanding this difference helps us keep the focus where it can be most helpful to the client. This is important because for many years people thought just "fixing thinking" was a Band-Aid approach because we weren't dealing with the cause or the root of the issue. I don't know about you, but I for one don't want to offer a temporary fix that is only on the surface.

Sleep, diet, exercise, and environment do matter—and Scripture affirms that we are whole beings, not divided parts. At the same time, experience and research consistently show that most emotional suffering is not caused by a failure to follow health principles, but by how we think, interpret, and relate to ourselves, others, and God.

Let's clarify the role of the Health Message without minimizing it. In TEAM-based coaching, we focus on the mind—and specifically how people think—because that is where change most reliably occurs. There is evidence that thinking plays a central role in emotional distress, but mental health cannot be tested like other diseases. Ethical constraints prevent experimental manipulation, and measurement reactivity means that the act of observing or intervening in thoughts and emotions changes them. Even if variables could be tightly controlled, that control itself would alter the very process being studied.

As coaches, we are called to wisdom, balance, and discernment—offering tools when helpful, never overwhelming, and always keeping heart work central. God reaches people through many pathways. I started as a Nutritionist then became a Health & Wellness Coach. BUT I learned I could do far more good focusing on just mental health, plus it is really rewarding to watch people recover from issues in a few weeks when they had suffered from it for years. Yes, and I don't say this lightly, as a coach I've helped several people move past depression and anxiety who tried years of therapy. But I don't treat any disease or diagnosis. I just focus on teaching healthy thinking, and the rest takes care of itself. That said, there are times I have referred out because it was clear, there was a lot more going on and the person needed more than coaching how to think truthfully.

So, let's briefly look at some other contributors that have been shown in research to be directly related to mental health.

Contributors to Mental Health

- Activity - physical exertion, purpose
- Rest – daily, weekly, respite
- Social – volunteering/service, connection
- Spiritual – how we view God, theology – legalism, hellfire, etc.
- Other – alcohol, drugs, toxins, overall health (water, etc.)
- Factors beyond our control – hormones (PPD, Menopause), genetics, upbringing, disease

Taken together, these contributors remind us that mental health is influenced by many overlapping factors—but influenced is not the same as caused. Sleep, activity, relationships, spiritual beliefs, and physical health can all shape how a person feels, yet none of these reliably explain *why* emotional suffering persists or *how* it resolves. If contributors were causes, then fixing the body or circumstances alone would consistently produce emotional healing—and we know that is often not the case. This is why TEAM-based coaching places primary emphasis on how people think, interpret, and relate to their experiences. Thinking is not the only factor, but it is the most accessible and reliable place for meaningful change to occur.

There are important exceptions. Some individuals experience conditions that significantly impair thinking capacity itself—such as neurological injury, certain genetic or neurodevelopmental conditions, active psychosis, etc. that disrupt perception or memory. In these situations, the issue is not distorted thinking alone, but a reduced ability to think clearly, consistently, or voluntarily. In such cases, medical care, specialized treatment, or long-term clinical support may be essential. TEAM-based coaching does not replace appropriate medical or psychiatric care.

In the Context of Mental Health Coaching

- Physical health practices matter and can support mental health
- Clear thinking requires basic physical stability (sleep, sobriety, nourishment)
- Physical health alone is **not sufficient** for healthy thinking
- You can follow all health principles and still struggle emotionally
- Most emotional suffering is driven by thinking, not physiology

The Health Message matters—but it is not the primary driver of emotional suffering. From years of clinical experience using TEAM, most depression and anxiety resolve through cognitive and emotional work when clients apply the tools consistently. Diet, exercise, and lifestyle habits can support recovery, but they are rarely the missing ingredient. I've almost never had to explain these to help a client get over feelings of depression or anxiety, as TEAMCBT works most of the time, I'd guess about 95%, IF the coach/therapist is properly trained AND if the client puts it into daily practice. There is about 5% of the time where I do have to deal with sleep or some other physical contributor getting in the way. This is why we lead with the mind—and add physical tools when appropriate, not as prerequisites for healing. Physical health practices are **supportive**, not **determinative**. Hope is never lost if a client is uninterested in lifestyle change, and no one needs to “get their health right” before experiencing emotional relief.

God works through many pathways. Some clients are open to changing how they eat or move before they are ready to examine their thinking. Others want relief from emotional pain and are not interested in lifestyle changes at all. Neither approach is wrong.

As coaches, we do not overwhelm, pressure, or prioritize one doorway over another. We stay flexible, discerning, and responsive—trusting God to guide timing and readiness. TEAM tools work even when clients are uninterested in physical health changes. When clients are open, we can gently expand the toolbox.

Sharing the Health Message (When Appropriate)

- Share briefly and only if the client is open
- Never minimize heart work or emotional tools
- Offer resources, don't prescribe

When clients express interest, the Health Message can be shared as an added support—not a requirement. Keep it simple. Keep it optional. The goal is empowerment, not compliance.

If helpful, you may share the free Optimal Health course available at:

<https://angelapoch.com/course/optimal-health/>

(No signup required.)

Many sincere, disciplined people follow every health principle and still struggle because distorted thinking has not been addressed. In fact, over-focus on behavior without addressing the heart and mind can sometimes increase guilt, pressure, or religious OCD. In fact, it is usually the mind affecting the body rather than the other way around.

The Mind ALSO Affects the Body

- Mental and emotional states strongly influence physical health
- Chronic fear, guilt, shame, and self-attack weaken the system
- Peace, hope, and love strengthen the body
- CBT has been used to help people who have chronic pain and other physical disease live happier lives and even reduce symptoms

The mind has enormous influence over the body. When thinking becomes freer, kinder, and more truthful, the body often responds with greater resilience and vitality. While physical illness can affect mood, emotional suffering far more often originates in distorted beliefs and self-defeating internal dialogue.

“The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of right doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.”—Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 13, 1890.

This is why TEAM coaching focuses on restoring clarity, agency, and truth at the level of thought. When peace is restored internally, physical health often improves naturally.

Part 3: Coaching Session

Up to this point, we've been looking at theory. The fundamentals so you can be better prepared for the tools we use in coaching. We've covered how the mind works, why people suffer, why change is hard, and how empathy builds connection. Now we shift from understanding to **doing**.

This section walks through what an actual TEAM-based coaching session looks like—from the first minutes of connection, to setting an agenda, to choosing methods, and assigning homework. TEAM is not a loose conversation or a rigid formula. It is a **structured, relational, and collaborative flow** that protects both the client and the coach from getting lost, overwhelmed, or stuck.

As coaches, we are not trying to fix people. We are learning how to **guide a process** that reliably helps clients think more truthfully, feel relief, and build skills they can use for life.

Keep in mind that this program delivers a lot of information at once. You will not absorb every detail immediately. I strongly recommend reading through this handout multiple times, then reinforcing your learning through the free Basics Course and the Monday Group, where each technique and tool is practiced in small, manageable steps.

TEAM Coaching Overview

TEAM-CBT was created by Dr. David Burns to help therapists work more effectively with clients but the concepts in TEAM can be adapted for use in coaching because it is primarily focused on healthy thinking rather than treatment of a disorder. I've worked with Dr. Burns to understand what can be used for coaches but as always follow all guidelines in your area. In TEAM Coaching we focus on the goal of thinking clients how to think truthfully!

What is TEAM

- Created by renowned CBT pioneer, Dr. David Burns www.feelinggood.com
- T - Testing: Session-by-session assessment of symptoms and coaching relationship and other measurements for tracking progress and testing what works.
- E - Empathy: Accurate, compassionate understanding of the client's unique situation.
- A - Agenda Setting: Pinpoint the goal and what is getting in the way of change, boost motivation.
- M - Methods: Using various tools as needed to establish truthful, helpful thoughts and belief patterns. There are 100+ tools in TEAM from several modalities. We will focus on just 10-15 in this program. Usually that's enough for mood work, occasionally, a particular client needs different ones or if they want to work on Relationships or Habits we use different tools. There are also tools specific to treating a particular issue which we don't do as coaches.
- We move from T to M in order, but we continue to use Testing and Empathy all through the coaching process with a client!

TEAM provides a clear roadmap that prevents coaching from drifting into coach advice-giving, client venting, or endless discussion. Each step serves a specific purpose. Testing reveals and tracks progress. Empathy builds trust and connection. Agenda Setting creates focus and motivation. Methods produce the kind of change the client is looking for from coaching.

Why to use TEAM

- More effective (preliminary research on therapists using TEAM shows it to be up to 8X more effective than traditional therapy in a far less time frame, research is ongoing)
- Structured yet flexible
- Allows for diverse methods including spiritual tools.
- Honor's the clients value system while empowering them to change
- Doesn't use toxic positivity often found in coaching or psychology theories.

While the research on TEAM effectiveness is ongoing, clients tell me they can't believe how quickly we make progress when they've been in therapy for years and found little relief. I get these results from coaching and counselling clients. TEAM is designed to work—not just feel supportive. Its effectiveness comes from a clear system that creates trust, inspires hope, respects human resistance, tracks progress, and moves through methods to see what will work for this client. This approach aligns naturally with Biblical principles of free will, truth, humility, individuality, and transformation of the mind.

TEAM Model Outline over 6 to 12+ Sessions

- Consultation & Intake - Miracle Cure Question
- Testing – Before and after session surveys
- Empathy – 5 Secrets till client feels understood
- Agenda Setting – Invitation, Moment in Time, Positive Reframing, Process Resistance
- Methods – Complete a Mood Log with various tools, Identify & Explain the Distortions, etc.
- Check in on goal. Repeat E to M as needed.
- Relapse Preparation & Termination

Note: Testing & Empathy continues throughout. We start with a consultation to see if we are the right fit for this client. More on the consultation and intake forms in Part 5. We do empathy with a client until they feel understood and we have good rapport. Then we issue an invitation and see if the client is ready to get to work. If client is ready, we move onto goal clarity with a Moment in Time using a Mood Log. We address resistance to change and then start working through various methods to see what works for this client in changing how they think about themselves to be more truthful and compassionate. We know we've been successful because the Mood Log will test the tools we use. After one Mood Log is complete we do Relapse Preparation and the client needs to put all that into practice, they need to be doing Homework throughout, but at this junction they can either continue with coaching (highly recommended they get through 2 or 3 Mood Logs with the coach) or they can terminate coaching and just come back for "tune ups" as needed.

All of this takes between 6 and 12 sessions, sometimes more. It will vary depending on coach skill, how much homework the client is willing to do between sessions, and how long each session is. More on how long it all takes, as well as session by session break down ideas, and what a REAL session looks like later.

Testing: BMS & ETS Surveys

Most assume that if a session feels good, it *was* good. Unfortunately, both research and experience show that even well-trained professionals consistently overestimate how helpful, empathic, or effective they actually are. It's easy to rely on intuition, reassurance, or the client's politeness rather than real feedback. Testing replaces guesswork with clarity. It gives the client a voice and gives the coach immediate, actionable information.

In TEAM coaching, testing is not about grading people or proving competence. It is about humility, accuracy, and growth. We write things down because memory is unreliable, emotions fluctuate, and progress is easiest to see when it's measured. Testing keeps us honest, prevents mediocrity, and helps us course-correct early—before frustration or discouragement sets in.

Why We Test

- What gets measured gets improved
- Coaches (and therapists) consistently over or underestimate:
 - their empathy
 - their effectiveness
 - the client's improvement
- Testing prevents guesswork and mediocrity

Testing is about humility, accuracy, and respecting the client's time and efforts. Even highly trained professionals are poor judges of how well a session went. Testing gives the client a voice and keeps the coach accountable.

It helps you catch missed empathy early, course-correct quickly, and grow skillfully rather than relying on intuition or reassurance.

Therapists with 4 to 8 years of schooling and decades of seeing clients, overestimate their skill, connection, and understanding of the client's needs. How much more for coaches?

Once we understand why testing matters, we can look at some simple tools we'll use every session to track progress and connection.

What We USE to Measure

- **BMS (Brief Mood Survey) ***: Tracks emotions before and after each session, so we can see what worked in that session.
- **ETS (Evaluation of the Session) ***: Measures empathy, alliance, and client satisfaction
- **Mood Log**
 - Measures how the client is feeling about a specific event
 - Records and measure the Negative Thoughts
 - Tests if a positive counter thought is crushing the negative one
 - Tracks progress, what is working to crush negative thoughts
- **Check ins: What's My Grade**

How to use the BMS Survey – General Info

1. Set up your system - Physical forms or Electronic, either fillable PDFs or Google Forms (all provided in the Toolkit), email me for the Coaching version!
2. Introduce the BMS / ETS to clients during consultation/intake. Describe what they are, why you use them, and how they will be issued.

Do	Don't
Talk positively about the surveys.	Apologize for using measurement.
Describe them as integral part of therapy.	Make it seem optional.
Always make use of it, go over it with clients.	Avoid reviewing negative scores.
Always require it.	Let clients begin session without it.

3. Go over the surveys at the beginning of EVERY session.
 - Process the BMS as a whole (section by section). Do NOT read it LINE by LINE! This shouldn't take more than 10 minutes in the first session, 2-3 minutes for subsequent sessions.
 - For the first 1-2 sessions:
 - Spend more time using the survey to build empathy and establish their importance and use. This will ensure compliance. Over time, move toward quick summaries, I take about 30sec-3mins depending on the numbers. IE: if scores go up, if scores are severe, if there are NEW scores.
 - ALWAYS comment on suicide section the first session IE: "I'm glad to see the suicidal ideation score is 0, if that ever changes be sure to let me know." Address ANY score other than 0 on suicidal ideation with a suicidal check in OR if you are untrained, refer them to a therapist.
 - Be specific about any negative feedback and word it positively. IE: "I liked that you wrote ____ for what you liked least because ____ (positive reframing + stroking)."
 - If something stands out, inquire further.
 - Track longitudinally and watch for changes over time. I use a table in the client notes (see Appendix or email me for a copy). You can use a spreadsheet or whatever works.

IMPORTANT: The very first time you see a client you will have only one survey, but for every session after you'll have the before and after from the previous session and the before for the current session, so you'll go over 3 surveys each session after the first one! I do this in 2-3 mins or less. You'll get more efficient with practice and need less time in later sessions.

What it looks like in the first session:

The very first session you can use the BMS as an empathy tool. Take about 5 to 10minutes to process the survey.

What Surveys look like in following sessions:

- Go over the before and after from LAST session and review the process. Point out what scores changed during that session and inquire what was helpful. IE: “I see your sadness feelings when from 10 to 5. Does anything stand out from last week as helpful in reducing those by 50%?”
- Go over the ETS from LAST session, address what they liked Best and Least, address anything less than 20 in the empathy section.
- Be specific about any negative feedback and word it positively. IE: “I liked that you wrote ___ for what you liked least because ___ .”
- Go over the BMS for today’s session.

Each session begins by reviewing what changed since the previous meeting. This includes comparing before-and-after scores on the BMS from the last session and reviewing the coach and session scores from the ETS.

Pay close attention to anything below a perfect score in the empathy section of the ETS. Empathy is foundational; if the client did not feel fully understood, it must be addressed before moving forward. When discussing negative feedback, be specific and respond with openness rather than defensiveness. For example: “I’m really glad you wrote this under what you liked least, because it helps me understand what I missed.” This models humility and reinforces collaboration.

Once feedback from the previous session has been addressed, complete the Brief Mood Survey (BMS) for the current session. This establishes a clear baseline and helps track emotional shifts session by session. Testing is not about evaluation or judgment—it ensures accuracy, keeps the work focused, and prevents both coach and client from relying on guesswork.

Rather than trying to describe every nuance of how this looks in practice, it is often most helpful to see testing done well. I’ll share demonstration videos below so you can observe the flow in real sessions.

More resources:

DEMO – LAST SESSION: <https://angelapoch.com/course/team-basics/lessons/bms-after-examstyle/>

DEMO – Today’s BMS: <https://angelapoch.com/course/team-basics/lessons/testing-bms-before-exam-style/>

Video lesson on the BMS with demo: <https://angelapoch.com/course/team-basics/lessons/testing/>

Empathy: Getting Started with a Client

In TEAM-based coaching, empathy is active, intentional, and measurable. It is the disciplined practice of entering the client's inner world without judgment, correction, or agenda. When done well, empathy reduces suffering, lowers defensiveness, and naturally increases motivation for change.

Scripture models this kind of presence. Christ consistently met people where they were, listened before instructing, and responded to the heart behind the words. As coaches, our task is not to fix or persuade, but to reflect understanding so accurately that clients feel known.

Empathy & Effectiveness Don't Come Easy!

- Use testing (surveys, check ins) to confirm connection and progress
- Start with the **Miracle Cure Question** to clarify what the client wants
- Use the **Five Secrets** and **write it down!**
 - Don't trust yourself (we filter)
 - Don't trust memory
 - Capture nouns, feelings, adjectives
- Use **What's My Grade?** to confirm A-level empathy before moving forward

Empathy and effectiveness don't come easy. Write notes. Don't trust yourself (we filter), and don't trust memory. If you want to reflect accurately, you must capture what the client actually said—especially key nouns, adjectives, and emotion words. Let's look at each of these key steps in detail.

Get Started with the Miracle Cure Question*

- What made you book a session with me?
- If a miracle were to happen right now, what would look different in your life?
- If a miracle were to happen overnight what would the morning look like?
- If you got exactly what you wanted out of working with me, what would that be?
- First session, recap consultation, go over any red flags from intake, dive into 5 Secrets!

We can ask the Miracle Cure Question during the consultation and again first session to start off the first session. During the first session I do a brief recap from my consultation notes as well as address anything that came up in the Intake screening, more on this in Part 5. This grounds the session in where you left off last and gives the client reassurance you heard them last time.

Some clients will know exactly what they want and what is getting in the way. You'll find they can articulate well and things go very smoothly. Other clients have a vague idea, very common, but need more prompting (use more of the questions above followed by lots of 5 Secrets).

Miracle Cure Question Builds Understanding & Empathy

- To set up the positive mental health goal and understand what is getting in the way of that we need to establish a few things:
 - What exactly does the client want?

- Can you, as the coach, provide that?
- Are they willing to have peace and joy even if their circumstances don't change?
- Miracle Cure question is a starting point and a bridge to connect with the client on a deeper level though the 5 Secrets.

These questions help clarify the client's goals while avoiding premature problem-solving. They also gently reveal outcome resistance—what the client hopes will change versus what they may be unwilling to let go of.

Empathy here is not passive. It is active listening that sets the stage for everything that follows.

5 Secrets of Effective Communication* **RECAP**

- Disarming Technique (affirmation)
- Thought & Feeling Empathy (summarizing, paraphrasing, etc.)
- I Feel Statements
- Stroking (encouragement, showing respect)
- Inquiry (open ended questions)

You may use 1, 3, or all 5 in a conversation. It's a lot of work to get these to be natural and they won't be effective without a lot of practice! They sound easy but hard to practice. Not just tools but transformative. At first sounds weird and unnatural.

You won't be able to do A+ empathy if you don't write down exactly what the client is saying!

So how do you know what is A+ Empathy?

What's My Grade*

- Check in – client feels 100% heard and understood
- Anything less than an A → do more empathy
- Let the client tell you what you missed
- Repeat until ready to move forward

After YOU think the client feels heard and understood you can ask, "Can you tell me how I'm doing in understanding you and you feeling supported and heard. What grade would you give me, a B, C-, D?"

How to respond to anything not an A or 20/20

Coach can say something like, "Got it, that's good I'm getting somethings, sounds like I'm missing something, something I'm not getting, can you tell me more?"

Let the client explain and do more 5 Secrets until you feel ready to ask again or the client seems ready to get to work on the issue, they want help with.

Once the client feels deeply understood, we do **not** move immediately into problem-solving or tools. Instead, we pause to invite the client forward. This is where **Agenda Setting** begins—specifically, the *Invitation*—so the client can decide whether and how they want to work on change.

Before we do that, let's practice some Empathy!

30min PRACTICE – Empathy

Vignette – Client Role (Nuzha)

Background and how to start the session (keep brief):

I'm 32, single. Last month I found out my mom had an affair before I was born and the man I thought was my biological father isn't. He adopted me and raised me as his own. I had no idea until now. I feel like my whole identity just cracked.

- “Nothing in my childhood changed, but everything *feels* different.”
- “I don't know why this is hitting me so hard.”
- “Yes—defective, I feel defective the word.”
- “It feels like there's something wrong with me.”
- “I feel alone with this.”

Miracle Cure Question

Coach: *“If a miracle happened in our session, what would be different?”*

Client: “I really want to feel happier and stop feeling like I'm damaged.”

Instructions for the Client Role

- Use some of the information from the background but feel free to make it up as you go.
- Keep responses short! Goal is for the coach to practice giving 5 Secrets!!!

Instructions for the Coach Role

- WRITE it down, practice writing key words while frequently looking up for eye contact. MORE important to write down words for this practice. Over time you'll be able to do both in balance.
- This is **empathy with 5 Secrets**—no sharing insights or helping!
- Try to use all 5 throughout the practice. After a client speaks sometimes use 2 or 3, sometimes 4. Will almost always include some thought and feeling empathy.
- Use the Miracle Cure question whenever it feels right, at the beginning if client is shy or later one. Mostly interested in you practicing the 5 Secrets!

AFTER practicing the above for 12 mins:

- **STOP**
- **Person in Client Role give some feedback – only take a couple mins:**
 - What felt good to hear? Be brief and mention which 5 Secrets you liked.
 - What was missing or could have been improved a bit, based on what you've learned about the 5 Secrets.
- **Reverse roles**

Agenda Setting

Empathy alone won't help the client move forward. That's why many therapists pursue years of training and move from modality to modality—CBT, Solution-Focused, DBT, and others—hoping the next approach will finally unlock change. And yet, even with structured tools, coaches are often surprised by how much resistance shows up. Clients receive empathy, insight, and support, but still don't change. Eventually, the work drifts back into talking, or the client is quietly blamed for “not wanting to get better.”

When coaches and therapists discover TEAM, there's often a sense of relief. We **address resistance directly** and use tools in a clear, intentional order. We stop guessing. We stop pushing. And we stop blaming. Instead, we work collaboratively with the client to understand what's getting in the way and how to move forward.

Many of the coaches I teach are genuinely shocked by the **speed of progress** once Agenda Setting is done well. When resistance is brought into the open and respected, change stops feeling like a battle—and starts feeling possible.

Agenda Setting* Flow

1. Invitation - ask the client if they are ready!
2. Mood Log (Part 1)- get specific about what they want to work on.
3. Positive Reframing - talk about challenges to change.
4. Pivot Question - are they ready to move forward?
5. Process Resistance - are they ready to do the hard work?

Agenda Setting is the bridge between empathy and change. It transforms understanding into movement by clarifying what the client wants and why it may be hard to get there. Rather than assuming motivation, we explore it. Rather than pushing solutions, we collaborate.

1. Invitation

Is the Client Ready or Need More Empathy?

- We will directly ask the client if they are ready!
- It's ok if they need more empathy (talking).
- When you sense the client has shared what they need and you get an A for “What's My Grade” or 20/20 on the ETS you ask:
 - **Example:** “Is now a good time to roll up our sleeves and get to work or would you like more time to share what's going on with you?”
 - **Alternative Example:** “You've told me about x, y, z (emotional issues they've mentioned) and I'm wondering if now is a good time to get to work or if you need to share some more?”
- If Yes, move onto Mood Log Part 1
- If No, fall back to empathy

The Invitation is simple but powerful. It signals an opportunity to move onto solutions with respect for the client's pace and preserves their agency. Many clients are accustomed to being directed or rushed; asking permission immediately lowers resistance and builds trust. If the client isn't ready, we don't push—we return to empathy.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Clients may say “yes,” but then continue talking about their concerns. Functionally, this is a “no” to the Invitation. It means they need more empathy or the core issue has not yet surfaced. This is normal—and exactly why the Invitation exists. When this happens, go back to the 5 Secrets and then after you sense the client shifts toward readiness (or changes topics), re-issue the Invitation.

Once the client is ready, we move from general concerns to one specific moment—and we do that with the Mood Log (or Daily Mood Log, if using Dr. David Burns' toolkit/books).

2. Get Specific

- Depression & Anxiety live in the abstract. Truth is found in specifics.
- The first Mood Log will be revisited across multiple sessions:
 - **Part 1 (For Moment in Time):** Event, emotions, negative thoughts + belief ratings
 - **Part 2 (For Positive Reframing):** Understanding the benefits and values of emotions
 - **Part 3 (For Methods):** Track what works and what doesn't.
- With each client, expect to repeat the TEAM process with 2-3 Mood Logs. Goal: teach **lifelong skills**, not just temporary symptom relief.
- Client will do multiple Mood Logs on their own for exploration and learning.

Clients often want to talk about everything—their history, relationships, personality, and circumstances. While understandable, this almost always leads to overwhelm, circular conversations, and little relief. Depression and anxiety thrive in generalities. We want to get specific so we can deal with the negative thought patterns. Think of the Mood Log as the **structure that holds the entire session together** to keep us on track, not jumping from issue to issue.

Use for Homework (early stage of coaching): Have clients do a few Mood Logs, Part 1 only, between sessions to learn their patterns. They fill in **Triggering/Upsetting Event, Emotions, and Negative Thoughts**. As coaching progresses and they learn tools, they can begin working through the later sections more independently.

Dr. David Burns, “When we understand what was happening at that one brief moment, we will understand everything of importance about that problem. As it turns out, all of your suffering will be encapsulated in that one brief example... One specific problem will simply repeat itself over and over, in slightly different disguises, every time you are depressed, or anxious, or arguing with a friend or family member, or struggling with temptations. So, once you understand the solution to that problem at one specific moment, you will understand the solution to that type of problem at any time in your life.”

If you like the podcast, you can share it with clients: <https://feelinggood.com/2019/03/04/130-whats-fractal-psychotherapy/>

Mood Log Part 1 – How to do it!

- Pick **one moment in time**
- Ask for the Upsetting Event / Trigger: who, what, where, when
- Let the client respond and do some brief 5 Secrets
- Fill in Part 1 of the Mood Log:
 - Walk the client through filling in the emotions and rate the intensity of the emotions
 - Add the Negative Thoughts and rate how much they believe each one.
- **Example:** After client answers yes to invitation... “Ok, great. The best way to start is picking one moment in time. When we unpack what was happening at that one moment, we will understand everything of importance about that problem. Think of it like a Dr doing a blood test. The lab tech doesn’t have to look at all the blood in your body and drain you dry. They can test just one drop on a slide. They zoom in with a microscope to have clarity. That’s what we can do as well. Can you think of a specific time when you felt this way (upset, worried, down, etc.)?”

4 Rules to a Negative Thought – Guiding the Client

1. Don’t put feelings down. You can’t disprove a feeling. These go on the top part of the DML. Instead, write down the thought that triggers each emotion. For example, “I’m really worried about my kids.” This thought cannot be disputed because it’s simply a description of your feelings about your kids, and you really DO feel worried! That’s not distorted. Instead, put the thought that triggers your anxiety. For example, you may be telling yourself, “My kids might get hurt at the gym,” or “I must protect my kids from all danger,” or “My kids will forget I love them.”

2. Don’t write descriptions of facts, events or situations. This is part of your upsetting event. Remember feelings come from the thoughts about the event or yourself. For example: “I failed the exam.” That’s just a description of a situation (failed the exam). Instead, record your interpretation of the event. This make take some unpacking. What are you telling yourself about this event? One helpful trick is simply to ask yourself, “What does ____ (failing the exam, etc.) mean to me? Why is it upsetting?” Then some Negative Thoughts will pop right into your mind. For example, you might be thinking, “I’m a failure,” or “I’ll never get my degree,” or “It’s unfair!”

3. Don’t put down rhetorical questions. Rhetorical questions cannot be directly refuted. However, they nearly always can be converted into Should Statements or hidden claims about yourself or the world around you. For example, “Why am I so shy?” can be converted into, “I *shouldn’t* be so shy.” or “My shyness is abnormal,” or “There’s something wrong with me.”

4. Don’t make long, complicated statements, or incomplete sentences. Avoid long, rambling sentences that cover many different topics. Keep them short and concise, like “I’m an idiot.” Also, avoid Negative Thoughts that consist of a single word or phrase, like “screwed up.” Instead, use complete sentences, like “I’m screwed up.”

Optional rule #5: Do not include thoughts that only involve blaming other people. Other-Blame is a relationship problem, and while there are tools to help you develop more satisfying relationships with the people you care about as well as the people you don’t, these techniques will be radically different from the ones we use on the Mood Log. Note for coaches: Depending on your skill level you make want to use this rule to avoid getting stuck. Other Blame is notoriously difficult for clients to let go and there are many nuances involved in relationship work.

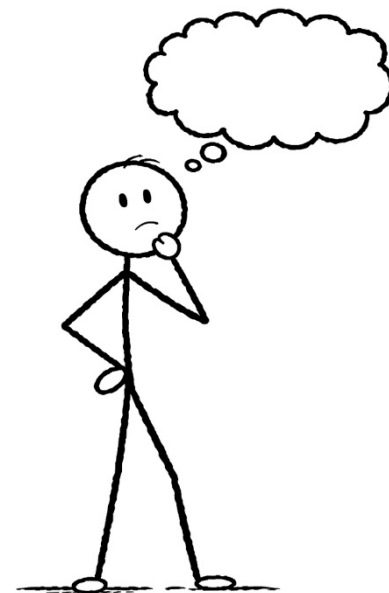
Additional Mood Log Tips

- Explain the 4 Rules of a Negative Thought or not?
- Write down whatever the client says, then help them unpack it with empathy and some questions (ideas from the 4 rules or use modified downward arrow).
 - For example: Client says, “I’d feel embarrassed.”
 - Coach can say, “That makes sense, I’d feel embarrassed too. I see we already wrote down embarrassed under the upsetting emotions, can you tell me what about feeling embarrassed upsets you?”
 - OR use the Modified Downward Arrow: “Why is that upsetting to you, what does that mean about you?”

It’s up to you whether you explain the 4 Rules or not. I usually wait till we get a few thoughts down as they often “get it” without explaining. Especially true if they do the reading homework (more on this in Part 5). I only have to explain the rules occasionally. Either way, I write whatever the client says, then I help them unpack it with some empathy and a few questions. See Rules above for question ideas.

What if a client can’t come up with Negative Thoughts

- Go through each emotion, ask, “What comes up for you when you think about feeling X?” “When I feel X what am I thinking?”
- Ask, “What story are you telling yourself about ____ (read what the client wrote for the upsetting event on the Mood Log)?”
- Say, “It’s ok if you weren’t sure of these exact thoughts in the moment. What comes to mind right now thinking about this event?”
- Do the Individual Downward Arrow*, See Tools in Part 4
- **Stickman Tool:**
 - Draw a stickman/woman on a blank page.
 - Ask, “What might someone (anyone really) going through this (say whatever upsetting or triggering event is on their Mood Log) be thinking if they are feeling _____? (say one of the emotions).
 - Go through each of the emotions.
 - “You’ve got a lot of idea’s here that you imagine this stick man/woman is experiencing. Can you relate to any of these? Which ones resonate with you?”
 - As they respond say, “Let put those on your mood log.”
 - Then ask “how much you believe that thought?”



Occasionally, I’ve only had this happen a couple of times over the years, where the client struggled with coming up with specific negative thoughts. IE: 1. I don’t have any thoughts at all, I just felt anxious. 2. Very vague thoughts. IE: I don’t know who I am now, what is my identity?

What if they still don't "get it"? They keep stating facts/emotions?

- Do some empathy then ask.... "What is your next thought? What follows that?" ask, "What story are you telling yourself?" (Write notes and pick out any NT's you hear, relay those back.)
- Pick one of the facts that keeps coming up and do another Individual Downward Arrow
- Fall back to empathy. Maybe the client isn't quite ready even if they answered yes.

This is very unusual and I've only had it happen once. At this point I referred them out. If the client is unwilling or incapable of stating their thoughts, it's beyond the scope of coaching.

Coach Cheat Sheet Mood Log Part 1 (See Appendix for all)

After Invitation is accepted... Explain it to the Client (Script)

"Instead of trying to look at everything at once, let's pick one short moment when this problem showed up. It should be something that still makes you upset to think about. When we work through one real moment carefully, we start to see the same thoughts and patterns that show up in other situations too. Once you learn how to handle it here, you'll know how to handle it next time. We're not ignoring the bigger picture—this is the fastest way to get unstuck and once we change one moment, we change the pattern of thinking that is the problem."

1. Upsetting or Triggering Event - Ask:

- "Tell me when and where was it, what was happening and who were you with?"

2. Emotions - Ask

- "Did you feel (read through each emotion grouped by theme, pause at each line) Circle or underline all the emotions that apply and ask how much they felt it.
- Rate the emotions they check off as you go. "How worried and nervous do you feel?"

3. Negative Thoughts - Ask:

- "What went through your mind in that moment?" Write down each thought as they say it. I often ask for each emotion, "What comes up when you think about feeling X (emotion)?"
- Rate each thought as you write it down. "How much do you believe that thought?"

NT Reminders & Prompts IF needed:

- Not facts or description of events – "What story are you telling yourself about X (fact, event)"
- Not feelings – "What comes up for you when you think about feeling X?"
- Not questions – "Can you reframe that question into a statement?" OR "What does that question imply?"
- Short, specific statements (break up long ones with multiple ideas) "Let's break this down into two NTs because it's hard to do battle with multiple foes at once."

NOTE: Part 2 and 3 of the Mood Log will come AFTER Positive Reframing!

Once the first part of the Mood Log is complete go onto → **Positive Reframing but first let's practice issuing an invitation and filling in a Mood Log.**

20min PRACTICE – Invitation & Mood Log

Practice issuing an invitation and filling in the Mood Log.

Vignette: Nuzha is 32, single. She found out last month her mother had an affair before she was born, and her dad is not her biological father. Her adopted father treated her as his own, so she had no idea. Client's answer to miracle cure: "I really want to feel happier."

Moment in time when she was particularly unhappy: Yesterday at 5pm when got home from work and sat on the couch, started thinking about her parents and her mom's affair.

Feelings: Sad, Down 70%; Inadequate, Defective 100%; Alone 40%; Bad, Ashamed 90%

Negative Thoughts: I should have known. 100%; I am a mistake. 100%; My dad was forced to love me. 100%; This is why I am broken. 100%

Coach Starts: Say "Empathy, Empathy, Empathy" as a reminder we would have spend some time connecting, then issue the invitation, "You mentioned you really want to feel happier, and I'd be happy to get started working on that, or we can talk some more. Either is fine."

Client: "I'd like to get started."

Coach: "Ok, well I want you to feel happier too. That's a great goal to have and we can work toward that if we look at just one moment in time. When we understand what was happening at that one moment, we will understand everything of importance about that problem. Think of it like a Dr doing a blood test. The lab tech doesn't have to drain you dry and look at every drop of blood in your body. They can test just one drop on a slide. They zoom in to have clarity. That's what we can do as well. Can you think of a specific time when you felt less happy than you wanted to?"

Client: "Yesterday at 5pm when got home from work and sat on the couch, started thinking about her parents and her mom's affair."

Coach: "Ok, let's capture what was going on for you this morning." Pull out Mood Log "Together we will record your emotions and identify some of the negative thoughts you were having. So were you feeling Anxious, worried, or nervous? What about Sad, Down, Unhappy or Disappointed?," Go through Mood Log feelings be sure to put in the intensity numbers. Do one line at a time.

Client: Make up feelings and ratings (or see above for prompts) up to you!

Coach: "Now let's fill in the NT's next. NT are not facts or feelings but rather what are you telling yourself in this situation. What were you telling yourself?"

Client: Share one or two NTs. See above.

STOP after three or four NTs.

STOP & DEBRIEF -- **Client** gives coach feedback

- One thing you liked and thought they did well.
- One thing you thing that could be improved based on what you are all learning so far.

SWITCH ROLES & REPEAT

3. Positive Reframing

See Part 2, let's just dive into to how to do this with clients!

Using the Mood Log in Session – Part 2

- AFTER filling in the Mood Log Negative Thoughts....
- “I would love to see you feeling better. But before we jump in, and this may sound strange, there are some advantages for these feelings. They show some positive and awesome things about you and what you value. Let's pause for a moment to consider these. Can you think of any good reason for feeling X (pick one emotion from their Mood Log)?”
- Prime the pump: “For example maybe..... (choose the first emotion they picked and give an example) what do you think?”
- Have them pull out a piece of paper (or use the worksheet) and create a list of advantages and values together (encouraging them to take the lead but offering suggestions as you feel inspired).
- Be sure to write each one down (you'll give this to them to read over for homework)
- Go through all of the emotion sections.
- **Homework (give at the end of the session)** “For the next couple of days, read over this list. If any thing else comes to mind add it.”

Positive Reframing Example

A Christian who worries about if they are following God fully!

Emotion or Thought <i>(write from Mood Log)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What benefit, advantage, or function does it serve? • What does it say about me that's positive? • Why might I be reluctant to give it up?
Anxious, worried	It protects me from being complacent. Shows I care deeply about serving God well. Helps me to focus on what's important.
Inferior, Defective	Shows I'm not arrogant, keeps me humble. I see my need of a Saviour. Reminds me God will do the work, I cannot change myself.
ETC....	

After you and the client complete the Positive Reframing for all the emotions (you can also do thoughts, but I usually do emotions with most clients) you can ask the Pivot question.

4. Pivot Question – Ready to move forward

We have just honored all the **good reasons to keep their emotions**. Now, instead of convincing the client to change, we ask: **Why would they want to?** This allows motivation to emerge.

Purpose

- Pivot from **reasons not to change** to **reasons to change**
- Invite the client to argue *for* change, which creates motivation
- Curiosity, not persuasion, no sarcasm

Coach Script Examples

Keep your tone gentle and curious.

Option 1: “There are so many great things here (list a few.) I’m wondering why you’d want my help in getting rid of feeling this way when there are so many good things about your feelings of x, w, z (sadness, inadequacy, hopelessness, anxiety, etc. pick a few). We’ve seen that in lots of ways they benefit you and show such great things about you - why would you want to change that?”

Option 2: “We’ve seen how these feelings of ___ actually serve you in some important ways. Knowing that, why would you want to change them?”

Option 3: “There are so many wonderful values and positive things you’ve put down here. (List a few.) I wouldn’t want to change any of these things for you. Why would you want to change how you feel with all these great qualities listed here knowing your circumstances won’t change?”

If the Client Argues for Change

Common responses:

- “It’s too painful.”
- “It’s holding me back.”
- “It’s a double-edged sword.”

Respond with empathy, “That makes a lot of sense.” Then move onto **Process Resistance**

If the Client Does NOT Argue for Change

It is very unusual, but it can happen the client doesn’t argue for change.

There are two general boxes of not wanting to change.

1. The client was just really upset they were emotional in this situation, and they’ve come to realize it’s ok to have emotions and the emotions won’t hurt them. Success!
2. The client is unwilling to make any change in their thinking because they want to hold someone or something else accountable. This is understandable. We’ve been told it’s our parents fault, it’s trauma, it’s a chemical imbalance. It’s not our job to correct this for our clients.

These two very different “not arguing for change” might sound something like:

- “I don’t, I can see I feel normal.”
- “It’s unfair I have to change, my mother was a tyrant.” (or some other version of blame)

If this is the case we Sit with Open Hands and then an inquiry to clarify.

Dealing with Box 1

- Do 5 Secrets and then, “It sounds like you’ve come to see these feelings may have benefits, and maybe you don’t want to change them now. I’m I getting that right?”
- It’s ok for a client to accept their emotions. We can follow up with, “Would you like help dialing down the intensity of these feelings or is there is something else you’d like to work on, either is totally ok.”

Dealing with Box 2

- Paradoxical, More Powerful Response for Box 2: “It sounds like this is working for you, and you do not want to change. Is there something else you’d like help with today?”
- This often prompts a client to argue for change.
- NOTE: It’s not our job to convince. We don’t know what might be under the surface or how God is working on their hearts.
- Follow up: We can go back to 5 Secrets, pray, offer a Miracle Cure Question again AFTER some 5 Secrets.

The Paradox of Open Hands

One of the core paradoxes of change is this: **the more we take the side of “you don’t need to change,” the more clients often discover and express their own desire to change.**

This is **not** reverse psychology. We are not trying to manipulate the client into saying they are ready or trick them into change. We are genuinely open to either outcome. The client is free to move forward—or not—and we support them either way.

Sitting with open hands communicates safety, respect, and freedom. It removes the power struggle and returns responsibility to the client. When we stop persuading, explaining, or pushing, clients frequently begin to argue for change themselves. And if they don’t, that also gives us clarity—**readiness cannot be forced.**

Love invites; it does not coerce. We cannot manufacture motivation or produce change—that belongs to the Holy Spirit. Our role is simply to create the conditions where truth can be seen and change can be freely chosen.

Once the client begins to argue for change, you are ready to move forward—onto **Process Resistance.**

***NOTE:** in TEAM we have a step before Positive Reframing called the Magic Button, and a couple tools after the Pivot Question like the Magic Dial which explains “dialing down the intensity of the emotions” in more detail. I’ve shortened things for this program. If you want to learn it all it is in the FREE follow-up to this program.*

More on that later.

20min PRACTICE – Positive Reframing & Pivot Question

Vignette: Nuzha is 32, single. She found out last month her mother had an affair before she was born and her dad is not her real dad. Her adopted father treated her as his own so she had no idea. **Moment in time:** Yesterday at 5pm when got home from work and sat on the couch, started thinking about her mom's affair.

See sample mood log below

Upsetting Emotions (rate each one from 0-100%):

<i>Anxious</i>	0	Worried	0	Nervous	0	Afraid	0
<i>Sad</i>	20	Down	40	Unhappy	80	Disappointed	60
<i>Inadequate</i>	80	Inferior	100	Worthless	50	Defective	100
<i>Lonely</i>	40	Alone	5	Unwanted	80	Rejected	40
<i>Embarrassed</i>	0	Foolish	0	Humiliated	0	Self-conscious	0
<i>Guilty</i>	70	Remorseful	0	Bad	80	Ashamed	40
<i>Frustrated</i>	0	Stuck	0	Upset	0	Defeated	0
<i>Angry</i>	0	Annoyed	0	Irritated	20	Resentful	10
<i>Hopeless</i>	0	Discouraged	40	Pessimistic	50	Despairing	0

Negative Thoughts (rate how much you believe the thought from 0-100%):

What thoughts were you having in that moment? Be very brief for each thought, but you can put down as many as you like! It's ok if you aren't sure of the exact thoughts, what comes up now?
Do not put down facts, feelings, or questions. If facts or feelings come up ask yourself, "Why would that be upsetting to me?" OR "What would that say about me?" For questions, ask, "What does that imply?"

	Believe 0-100	After p2-3, Re-rate!
1. I should have known.	100%	
2. I am a mistake.	100%	
3. My dad was forced to love me.	100%	
4. This is why I am broken.	100%	

NOTE: You can use any of the positive reframing intro examples or try this new out.

Coach Introduce Positive Reframing: "Empathy, Empathy, Empathy, Invitation. (say this as a reminder of where you are in the model during practice. You would NOT say this in a real session) Now that we have your Mood Log started, I'd like to just pause to reflect on something you may not have considered before. That your feelings have some benefits (they were created by God for a reason) and they show reflect your values. If we don't take some time to look at that, our subconscious gets resistant to changing how we feel because it is protecting all these good things. Would that be ok with you to explore?"

Client: "Sure, but sounds weird, I don't like these feelings."

Coach: "That totally makes sense it does sound weird, it did to me at first too! Let's pull out a piece of paper (word document) and see what we can come up with. Let's look at the emotions you

checked off line by line. What is the advantage or benefit of feeling Sad, Down and Unhappy when you think about your mom's affair?"

Client: "Yum, I'm not sure."

Coach: "Well I wonder if maybe it gives you permission to grieve the change in how you view your father because now you see him differently? What do you think?"

Client: "Yah, that makes sense."

Coach: "Ok, let's write that down. Can you think of any benefits or advantages. Or maybe what it says about you or your values that's positive?"

Client: "Well it shows I care about my father because I'm sad he went through this."

JUST do a few more collaboratively. Spend about 5mins or so on this.

Then pretend you've done ALL of them...

Coach – ISSUE the Pivot Question: "There are so many wonderful values and positive things you've put down here. (List a few.) I wouldn't want to change any of these things. Why would you want to change how you feel with all these great qualities listed here?"

STOP

- **Person in Client Role give some feedback – only take a brief min:**
 - What did you think they did well?
 - What was missing or could have been improved a bit, based on what you've learned?
- **Reverse roles**

5. Process Resistance

Once a client wants change, a new kind of resistance often appears—not resistance to *change itself*, but resistance to the **process required to achieve it**. Many clients sincerely want relief but underestimate the effort involved. If this is not addressed directly, coaching can quietly stall, homework goes undone, and both coach and client may feel frustrated.

The process of getting better will require the client to do somethings in session and outside of session. Is the client ready to do the work to feel better and think clearer?

The Three Components of Process Resistance

1. Dangle the Carrot — *Why do the work?*

- Clarify what the client stands to gain:
 - Less emotional suffering
 - Clearer thinking
 - Increased peace, confidence, or joy
 - Skills they can use for the rest of their life
- This is **not selling or convincing**, it makes the purpose of the work explicit

2. Gentle Ultimatum — What will the work involve?

- Change requires **practice and repetition**
- The coach cannot do the work for the client
- Insight alone is rarely enough

Helpful metaphors:

- You can't train for a marathon in a day; a coach can't get fit on your behalf
- Imagine a piano teacher says just come once a week and I'll do all the practice for you, how long would it take to learn piano?

Homework may include:

- Reading (e.g., Chapters 1–4 of *Feeling Great*)
- Worksheets (e.g., 2–3 Mood Logs per week)
- Skill practice (e.g., 5 minutes a day identifying distortions)
- Facing uncomfortable thoughts or emotions when motivation is low

Homework is **collaborative and flexible**, but it is not optional if change is the goal.

3. Sitting with Open Hands — *No pressure*

- No judgment if this is not what they want
- No convincing, persuading, or “you should”
- No rescuing or doing the work for them
- We respect the client's freedom—even if they choose not to change

Process Resistance is not something to confront or override. It is something to name openly and respectfully. When done well, it prevents false starts, protects the coaching relationship, and clarifies expectations for both parties. The goal is not to persuade the client to work harder, but to ensure that any movement forward is voluntary, informed, and sustainable.

How to Do Process Resistance Example:

“That's great, I'd love to work with you on your _____ (name one or two key emotions from Mood Log), and I have some powerful tools that can help.

At the same time, this kind of change takes effort. The brain needs repetition and practice to build new skills. That would likely mean about **15–30 minutes of daily homework**, which we'd decide on together—some reading, worksheets, and practicing skills, even on days you don't feel like it.

That's asking a lot, and it might not be what you want right now. What do you think? Would you be willing to do this kind of work?”

If the client says yes/I'll work hard- hooray! Go on to the *next step Methods*.

If you hit any resistance outside of clarifying what homework might look like, **Sit with Open Hands**: “That totally makes sense. This is incredibly difficult, and it doesn't sound like that is what you want to do right now. Did I get that right?”

If they continue to resist the process, offer **Fallback Position**.

Fallback Position

- If the client doesn't want to do the work needed (process) to recover, we can use the 'fallback position'
- This looks different for various situations. Decide what this looks like for you, the client, and stage of coaching (we may need Fallback position later in Coaching if progress stalls or client doesn't do any homework).

What it looks like / Examples

- **During a consultation:** "Maybe you'd prefer to see a coach who doesn't require homework?"
- **Very Soft:** "Maybe you'd like to work with me in a more supportive, less change-oriented way for a period of time and then we can re-evaluate?"
- **Medium:** "Is there another problem you'd like to work on?"
- **Firm:** "I'm thinking I am not the right fit for your needs. I want the best for you, that looks like it would be someone else. Perhaps a different kind of coach or even talk-therapy would be more your style. Would you like help finding someone who is a better fit?"

Once the client is willing to engage in the process—and understands what that process involves—we can move forward confidently into **Methods**, where we apply specific tools to change distorted thinking and reduce emotional suffering.

15min PRACTICE – Process Resistance

Practice Process Resistance script. Just read it once or twice then make your own based on the 3 parts: Dangling the Carrot, Gentle Ultimatum, Sitting with Open Hands

Coach Starts: Say, "That's great, I'd love to work with you on feeling less inferior, defective, and guilty. I have some powerful tools that can really help you feel capable, acceptable, and at peace. But to achieve that you'll have to do surveys before and after every session. You'll also have to do about 10 to 20min of homework each day such as reading the book "Feeling Great" by Dr. David Burns plus doing worksheets between sessions. Imagine you wanted to run a marathon and the running coach said all you had to do was jog once a week, you'd never get fit enough at that rate. Our brains are similar, they need repetition. I know this would be asking a lot of you, so I understand if this isn't what you signed up for. Don't get me wrong, I would love to work with you and I am hoping that you want to work with me on this. Are you willing to do this kind of work?"

Client: "Yes, I'm ready!"

- **Person in Client Role give some feedback – only take a brief min:**
 - What did you think they did well?
 - What was missing or could have been improved a bit, based on what you've learned?

Do again with or without script! Get feedback

Reverse roles

Methods the M in TEAM!

Many Methods

- TEAM Tools
- Other CBT Tools
- Faith Tools
- And many more

TEAM is not a single technique—it is a structure with a *toolbox*. Different clients, different thoughts, and different distortions require different approaches. The strength of TEAM lies in flexibility: we are never limited to one method or one way of working. With many tools available, the key question becomes *how* we use them.

Motto: Fail as fast as you can!

- We don't know which tool will work for this thought and this client.
- Use several till we crush the negative thought.
- Keep trying!
- Don't get on a hobby horse!
- Keep note of which tools work (I create a list in the client's chart and on their Mood Log, can also create a separate document for this list.)

“Failing fast” means not getting attached to any one method. If a tool doesn't work, we move on without judgment. Sticking rigidly to a favourite technique can slow progress. Flexibility keeps therapy efficient and client-centred. Keep in mind just because the tool didn't work for one thought, doesn't mean it won't work for another. Also, sometimes tools build on each other and the client still needs some of the basics.

When the right tool *does* work, the impact can be profound.

Tools can work for deep, meaningful, lasting change

- Once a client crushes the negative thoughts getting in the way of their positive mental health goal, they are in effect creating new neural pathways.
- Dr. Mark Noble describes TEAM in terms of “micro-neurosurgery” — replacing or rewiring dysfunctional brain networks (e.g., circuits that generate “I'm not good enough”) with more accurate networks via language and cognitive change! Professor Noble from the University of Rochester in New York is a neuroscientist.

This explains why change in TEAM can be rapid and durable. We are not merely coping with thoughts—we are actively altering the patterns that generate emotional distress. With this many tools, therapists need a clear starting point.

How to Choose Tools

- Start with the first 2 core tools, Identify the Distortions and Explain the Distortions, until these become very obvious to the client and they have memorized all 10 Distortions.

- Some Tools work best for certain distortions but also for different people. Keep track of which ones worked, even in part, for this client. IE: Helped them come up with a Counter thought, Reduced the Negative Thought somewhat, etc.
- Use the Tools List in Appendix, tips on how to pick tools in the list.
- Once a client is on a role crushing their Negative Thoughts, usually 3-5, try the Straightforward Technique or even Externalization of Voices, more on that Part 4.

Distortion-focused work provides structure and prevents random tool-hopping. From there, selection becomes more personalized, guided by the client's response rather than therapist preference. Tool selection becomes easier when we follow a clear process.

Mood Log Part 2 - Working through Negative Thoughts

- 1) Pick ONE thought to start!
- 2) Use a method (See Tool List in Appendix).
- 3) Ask client to create a new more helpful, truthful Counter Thought.
- 4) Ask them to rate their new thought, "How much do you believe that?"
 - a) If not 100%, explore with the client, "Why not?" "What would make it 100%?" If can't get to 100% go back to Step 2
 - b) If 100% go to step 5 (they must believe the new thought 100%!)
- 5) Re-Rate the Negative Thought, "How much do you believe __ (read their NT)?"
 - a) If not crushed (0 to 30% depending on the thought) try another method, Step 2.
 - b) If crushed, move onto another thought, Step 1

(repeat with all the Thoughts on the Mood Log)

This sequence prevents overwhelm and keeps the work precise. One thought at a time, tested and re-tested, ensures genuine cognitive change rather than superficial insight. This process comes fully alive when applied directly in session.

Note: The first few thoughts can be especially challenging. A client may need to use several tools to fully crush a single thought. It can take 20 minutes—or even over an hour—to work through just one. This is normal and not a sign that anything is wrong. As clients practice looking for truth, they get faster at dismantling negative thoughts. After working through a few thoughts, Externalization of Voices (EOV) can be used to significantly expedite the process (see Part 4). With experience, many clients can jump directly to a strong counter-thought without needing to go step-by-step through every tool. This is why reassurance is often important—if clients ask whether it will take this long for every thought, the answer is no.

Counter Thoughts & Conditions for Change

Alternative language for Counter Thought: Positive, Truthful, Healthy, Realistic, or combo!

When the time feels right, if needed, you can do some education on that is needed for changing the impact of a Negative Thought. You can do this the first time the client comes up with a counter thought or later on. Perhaps they come up with strong, effective Counter Thoughts right away, or

maybe they come up with one, but they don't believe it 100% or they believe it but doesn't seem to help. Explain there are certain conditions for change.

Example: "We know that our emotions are caused by our thoughts about an event, and those thoughts often feel 100% true in the moment. To change these negative thoughts, we need a more powerful realistic Counter Thought. That positive thought must meet two conditions:

- The Necessary Condition. It must be 100% true. Half-truths, affirmations, and rationalizations will not be effective enough.
- The Sufficient Condition. It must reduce your belief in the NT at least some.

How much do they believe the new thought?

- If less than 85% or so: "That's ok it's not 100% yet. As you know we've only just started with methods and we many more. Let's try another right now.
- If 85 to 99%: "Great. What's not true about it?" Pause for an answer. "What would make it 100%, what's missing?" IF they can get it to 100% then see below. If they can't, "That's ok it's not 100% yet. As you know we've only just started let's try a different tool.
- If 100%: "That's great. Now how much do you believe ___ (repeat the NT)"?
 - If it's 0: "Wow, you crushed that one fast. Let's pick a new NT to work on."
 - If around 5-30: "Wow, you crushed that one fast. Let me check in with you. Many times ___ (say number) is enough, we can work to get it lower, but I'm wondering what you think? How upsetting is that thought now, from 0-100%?" (if lower than 10 go on to another thought, if higher ask if they want to get it lower or if that's good?"
 - If the Negative Thought is still over 30: "That's a good start. It can be a challenge to crush the first NT but it will get faster as we find the tools that work best for you. Sometimes its even a combination of tools that works well. Let's try another method from our recovery circle."

Mood Log Part 3 – Did it Work?

- Once all negative thoughts are addressed, re-rate the emotions. Were they reduced to acceptable levels?
 - In practice, this occurs the vast majority of the time.
- When complete, have the client read the successful Mood Log daily for one week, weekly for one month, and then as needed. This reinforces the new thinking pattern.

The Mood Log becomes both a treatment tool and a rehearsal mechanism, strengthening the new neural and cognitive pathways over time. With this foundation in Methods, we can now look more closely at how some these specific tools are applied.

Let's start with Identify & Explain the Distortions.

Identify & Explain the Distortions*

Use for ALL negative thoughts. Note: I combine these, but they can be done separately. Identify the Distortions helps the client understand how a thought is NOT true, which can help uncover the truth and in turn a good counter or positive thought. HOW to do it: Share the 10 Cognitive Distortions Handout with the client and ask the client to read over the list and see if they notice any of these in the thought they chose. Explain the Distortions unpacks specific thinking errors and often helps generate a positive counter thought. See Worksheet in Appendix.

20min PRACTICE – Identify & Explain the Distortions

Ideally Use YOUR Mood Log from yesterday. Or use the one from previous practice Vignette with Nuzha on page 56. Use the Handout in the Appendix – 10 Cognitive Distortions. VERY important for the coach to TAKE NOTES, often the client will come up with some really good thinking you can relay back to them.

- Coach: “Let’s pick one thought to get started” Client: Choose one thought
- Coach: MAKE sure you write down the NT, then ask: “Looking at the list of 10 Cognitive Distortions, do you see any distortions in this thought?”
- Client: Choose one of the 10.
- Coach: Write it down and ask, “Why is this NT an example of this Distortion?”
- Client: Answer, make it up as you go.
- Coach: “Why is that a thinking ERROR?” Client: Answer
- Coach: “Why would that be self-defeating?” Client: Answer
- Coach: “What other distortion do you see in this thought?” Client: Answer
- Coach: “Why is this NT an example of this Distortion?” Client: Answer
- Coach: “Why is that a thinking ERROR?” Client: Answer
- Coach: “Why would that be self-defeating?” Client: Answer
- *After you’ve found and unpacked 3 or 4 distortions...*
- Coach: “With that in mind (as you get more familiar with this tool you can repeat anything they said that sounded like the beginning of a positive thought), can you come up with a more Realistic Counter Thought instead of _____ (read their NT).
- Client: Answer
- Coach: “How much do you believe that new thought?”
- Client: Answer 100% for this practice!
- Coach: “Great, and how much do you believe _____ now (read the NT to the client)”
- Client: Answer anything between 20 and 50%.
- Coach: “Great, how about we try another tool and see if we can totally crush this thought?”

STOP & DEBRIEF -- **Client** gives coach feedback

- One thing you liked and thought they did well.
- One thing you thing that could be improved based on what you are all learning so far.

SWITCH ROLES & REPEAT

After The First Mood Log

- Relapse Preparation* - see Part 4
- Reenforce Learning through another Mood Log! This time you don't have to do the Positive Reframing or Process Resistance unless needed, so check in with your client.
- Termination Session - See Part 5

What does a REAL session look like

Watch a real life demo here:

- Sara: <https://vimeo.com/935524101?share=copy>
- Marie: <https://vimeo.com/932471301?share=copy>

NOTE: I can do it all in a 2.5-3 hour session but most clients want accountability and support so my average client is about 8 to 12 sessions 105min long each. More on how long it all takes in Part 5.

Coaching Session Sep Up

- Start the session with their Before/After Survey/ETS.
 - Be brief, less than 5 mins.
 - Just recap any changes or new info.
 - Follow up on anything the client didn't like about the last session.
 - Follow up on any 'lack' in empathy
- Homework Recap
 - Answer any questions or challenges to the Homework. Can use this to transition into today's session after the check in.
 - For more on how to assign homework see Part 5
- Core Session work
 - TEAM Framework or Structure "holds" all kinds of methods and tools.
 - One to two sessions: Connect with the client using the Advanced Empathy 5 Secrets
 - One to two sessions: Agenda & Goal Setting
 - Four to Eight sessions: Use various tools to reach the Goal!
- End the Session with homework assignment
 - Make sure the client can do the homework assigned.
 - See if the client has any ideas for the homework.
 - Check to make sure they understand exactly what is expected between now and the next session.
- Flow chart for the TEAM Model – SEE Appendix!

Assigning Homework

General Guidelines:

- Save 5–10 minutes at the end of each session to assign and explain homework
- Assign educational material:
 - Reading, audio, or other formats
 - Match the client's learning style and current stage
- Assign skill-building exercises, such as:
 - Filling in a couple Mood Logs (first part only)
 - Identifying the Distortions
 - Other tools from the Tool List (See Homework Ideas below)
- Assign behavioral / health-based homework (optional):
 - Prayer (for faith-based coaching)
 - Exercise
 - Sleep improvement strategies
 - Choose only one at a time, then layer gradually across sessions
- Ask the client:
 - If they would like to add any homework
 - If they have questions or concerns
- Write the homework down:
 - On a shared sheet the client can access, or
 - Ensure the client writes it down themselves

Homework is where insight becomes skill. Sessions create understanding, but repetition between sessions is what builds lasting change. Saving time at the end of the session ensures homework is assigned thoughtfully rather than rushed or vague.

Effective homework is matched to the client's capacity and stage of coaching. Behavioral or health-based homework can support emotional work but should always be introduced gradually and intentionally.

Clear documentation matters. When homework is written down, clients are far more likely to follow through and feel confident about what is expected.

Homework Beginning Sessions (Empathy & Agenda Setting)

Key Focus

- These early sessions are primarily about **empathy and orientation**, not rapid change
- Clients are learning **how coaching works**, not just talking about problems
- Learning TEAM-CBT is like learning a **new language**:

- Clients can quickly learn key words and concepts
- Fluency takes time—but far less time than learning an actual language

Recommended Homework

• Reading / Education

- Assign the first few chapters of one of David Burns' books, I especially like *When Panic Attacks* or *Feeling Great* or my book, *The Truth Will Set You Free*
- Purpose: Introduce important concepts such as how emotions, thoughts, and events connect; teach what a Mood Log is and how it's used

• Mood Log Practice (Part 1 Only)

- Ask clients to do **one Mood Log per day** during the first week
 - Be very explicit: clients should fill in **ONLY Part 1**
 - Triggering / Upsetting Event
 - Emotions
 - Negative Thoughts
- Many clients try to fill in the entire Mood Log too early, which leads to confusion and frustration
- Purpose: Build awareness of how thoughts and feelings relate to events; Notice patterns, not fix them yet
- Remind clients: You will only work on **one Mood Log at a time** during sessions

Early homework sets expectations for how coaching will work going forward. The goal is not immediate relief, but familiarity with the process. Clients begin to see that emotional suffering is not random and that thoughts—not events—drive feelings.

Keeping homework simple prevents overwhelm and builds confidence. Daily Mood Logs help clients develop awareness while preserving momentum. Reading assignments provide context so sessions don't feel mysterious or arbitrary.

Once clients understand the Mood Log and feel oriented to the process, homework shifts from observation to **active change**, which happens when we begin working through Methods.

Homework Once You're Working on Methods

Mood Log – Part 2 (and Beyond)

- Emphasize: **ONLY work on one Negative Thought at a time**
 - Do not move on until that thought is fully addressed (“crushed”)
- **Complete any method started in session**
- Assign the **next method** from the Tool List created for *that specific Negative Thought*
- Assign **supporting education**
 - Relevant chapter in the book

- Podcast or resource explaining the method
- **Review successful Counter Thoughts**
 - Daily for one week
 - Weekly for one month
 - Monthly thereafter
- **Continue creating new Mood Logs as needed**
 - Homework Mood Logs should include:
 - Part 1 (Event, Emotions, Negative Thoughts)
 - Identifying the Distortions
 - Do *not* work on these new Mood Logs in session
 - Until the current Mood Log is fully completed

Once you begin working with Methods, homework becomes more focused and disciplined. Clients often want to rush ahead, tackle multiple thoughts, or “sample” tools. This slows progress. Real change comes from depth, not speed.

Staying with one Negative Thought allows repetition, consolidation, and confidence to develop. Reviewing successful Counter Thoughts strengthens new neural pathways and helps clients internalize progress. Creating additional Mood Logs builds awareness, but session work remains anchored to the single Mood Log currently in progress.

Clear boundaries around homework prevent overwhelm, reduce avoidance, and reinforce that coaching is an active learning process—not passive support.

Optional Training Follow-Up

A 1.5-hour video course on assigning homework effectively is available. Email me if you'd like access.

Part 4: TEAM & Faith Methods

In Part 4 we will look at several Tools that can be used to work through a client's Negative Thoughts. But first I want to cover 3 multipurpose tools you'll use repeatedly.

1. Individual Downward Arrow
2. Externalization of Voices
3. Relapse Preparation

Then we'll recap the TEAM Flow in Coaching and how to work with Negative Thoughts. We will explore the conditions of Counter Thoughts, and look at some tips and tricks when working with clients on their Mood Log.

Finally in Part 4 we'll cover several cognitive tools and a few faith-based ones.

More info on TEAM-CBT

- www.YouTube.com/@teamcbt
- Dr. David Burns, "Feeling Good Handbook"
- Podcast, "Feeling Good" on itunes or www.FeelingGood.com
- Angela Poch, TEAM-CBT basics course GOOD follow up to this program FREE if you complete this program tomorrow! www.teamcbt.ca/basics

Individual Downward Arrow*

This is an exploratory tool that can be used during empathy or Agenda Setting. We can also use it to uncover more NT's that are lurking under the surface.

This uncovering tech is an exploratory tool used either to uncover negative thoughts or, one or more Self-Defeating Beliefs (attitudes that are causing problems). It can also be used to drum up negative thoughts if a client is using facts, statements, or questions on the DML. Occasionally this tool itself can defeat a NT itself when used during methods, much like paradoxical magnification. The client sees the absurdity or unlikeliness of this "terrible" thing happening.

While we try to find the "bottom of the barrel," it doesn't matter if you find the bottom. You've usually completed the Downward Arrow chain when you encounter a thought something like:

- "That would mean I was worthless."
- "That would mean life was not worth living (life would be meaningless, etc.)."
- "Then I could never feel happy again (I'd be miserable forever, etc.)."
- Or if the NT's just keep repeating over and over.
- Or if you've done about 8 to 10 rounds of questions.

When to Use

Can be used during empathy, agenda setting (while adding thoughts to the DML), or during methods. Can be used just before termination session to see if there is anything else the client wants to work on.

How to Do

Write the negative thought at the top of a page and draw a downward arrow underneath. Ask, "If this were true, why would it be upsetting to you and what would it mean to you or about you?"

A new negative thought will come up, write the new thought under the arrow.

Repeat several times, up to 8 to 10x.

Three options:

1. If using the Arrow during Empathy – Ask the questions without pulling out a worksheet and keep detailed notes. Give lots of 5 Secrets around each thought that comes up. Use your notes later to prompt the client when filling in the Mood Log. No "debrief" if using during empathy.
2. If using it during Agenda Setting - Add any new NTs that came up to the Mood Log.
3. If using the Arrow during Methods. Ask the client, "What is coming up for you as you look at this list?" "How likely do you think this is to happen?" Do empathy as needed. Add any new NT's to the Mood Log to unpack further if needed.

Tips for Downward Arrow:

- This powerful technique can illicit strong emotions. If client starts to cry, give space (pause, bit of silence, 5 Secrets) then come back when they are ready.

- IE: “Looks like this is painful for you... (pause) I can imagine you feel X. What’s coming up for you?” Do 2-10min of 5 Secrets. “Would now be a good time to go back to the exercise we were doing earlier, looks like this exercise is working to uncover some very important things?”
- Summarize in short, concise sentences if the client says a lot for each round.
- The question is VERY specific do NOT paraphrase! IF this thought were true... or IF this were true... ok but make sure you say IF and “upsetting” etc.
- If you end up in a repeating loop, combine two or three of the thoughts. IE: “No one would like me.” “I’d be a loser.” Add all 3 together, “Imagine no one liked you and you were a loser. Why would that be upsetting, what would that mean about you?”
- The arrow can split. You can end up with two NT coming up at the same time. Just follow one, then go back and follow the other thread.
- Like any tools, you can use the downward arrow more than once.
- It’s ok if you don’t get to the bottom. The process alone can uncover several SDB or NTs.

15min Practice the Downward Arrow

Use one of your own negative thoughts. This tool is hard to do with a ‘fake’ client.

- **CLIENT:** (for practice, share one of your Negative Thoughts before you get started)
- **Coach:** “There is an uncovering technique that might be helpful in discovering some of your underlying negative thoughts. It will consist of me asking you a series of questions repeatedly and you’ll write down your responses. Would you like to give that a try?”
- **CLIENT:** “Sure”
- **Coach:** “So we are going to take a blank piece of paper and at the top write down your negative thought _____ (see Mood Log). Now draw a downward arrow underneath that negative thought. Got it? Ok, so If this thought were true, why would it be upsetting to you and what would it mean to you or about you?”
- **CLIENT** responds.
- **Coach:** “Ok, good, now write that down.” “If this were true, why would it be upsetting to you and what would it mean to you or about you?”
- **CLIENT** responds.
- **Coach:** “Ok, good, now write that down.” “If this were true, why would it be upsetting to you and what would it mean to you or about you?”
- Repeat several times or till you get to the bottom (see above) (for the practice in this training, or you run out of time.)

STOP & DEBRIEF

For practice (not in a real session) SWITCH ROLES & REPEAT

Externalization of Voices* - EOV

This powerful role play method is one of the MOST used tools in TEAM outside of the Straightforward Technique and Identify the Distortions because it works to crush thoughts very quickly AND is an experiential tool that helps a client go from intellectual understanding to gut level change. Coach and client will take turns playing the role of their negative thoughts and positive counter thoughts. The person playing the negative thoughts attacks, and the person playing the positive thoughts tries to defeat the negative thought. We check in who is winning with little / big / huge and use role-reversals when client gets stuck.

It is used in a few different ways:

1. We can use it for any single Negative Thought on the Mood Log to generate a powerful Counter Thought, although I usually save it for the next two options.
2. It is great for solidifying the learning and crushing the rest of the thoughts after a couple thoughts have been done already.
3. EOV is used for relapse preparation either after the client has completed a Mood Log (best time) or during your last session together, or both!

There are 4 Ways to Crush a thought:

- Acceptance Paradox: Use humility and/or humor to find some truth in the thought and accept you're human.
- Self-Defense: Put the lie to the thought.
- CAT - Counterattack Technique: Talk back to the negative voice itself, "I'm not listening to your baloney anymore!!!!"
- Or any combo of the above.

Some key notes on how it's done (See practice for a step by step play book!)

Introduce the technique to the client. See practice.

Coach reads the first Negative Thought EXACTLY how it is written on the Mood log but in Second Person (like you are attacking them). IE: "Hello, Negative Voice speaking, You are a failure." Let them respond as their Positive Voice.

After they respond, ask the client, "who won, me or you?"

If they say "me" (meaning the positive voice), ask small or big.

If they say big, ask, "big or huge." If they say huge, you move onto the next thought.

If they said, "you" (meaning the negative voice) OR it was a small or big win but not huge, ask, "Would you like to try it again or do a role reversal?"

In a role reversal, the client hits you with their negative thought and you try to crush it. Use anything you think will work from your work with them so far or make it up entirely using the 4 Ways to Crush a thought. Try to use #4, the combo of all 3.

After your response ask them, "who won that time, me or you?" If they answer "you" then ask, "was it a small or big win?" If big, ask if it was huge.

If little, or NT won, say, "Do you want me to try again or would you like another go?"

If big or huge win, ask ‘What was big/huge about it?’ Let them respond, then tell them, ‘I’m going to hit you again and you can try that out yourself.’ This way they can use what they learned for themselves. It is NOT a huge win if it doesn’t come from the client. They may intellectually like what you said or are being nice, but they need to have the experience of the win.

Repeat for all the Negative Thoughts on their Mood Log. They can then go over the recording for Homework and write in the Counter Thoughts. They will all be 100% believable because they got to “huge” each time. They can then re-rate the Negative Thoughts and finish up the Mood Log.

Other Tips:

- If your client seems to have difficulty with EOv they may need to identify a few more distortions or use a few more tools first. Or it is possible this might not be the right tool for a client (happens about 2-5% of the time).
- Have them record the session AND TAKE a lot of notes because when the client gets a big win you can use that as insight for a role reversal.
- When the client wins huge, that is the Counter Thought! You can have them write it down on their Mood Log especially if you are NOT recording, or just keep going. Usually the client will get more and more powerful each round.
- If client gives you a big or huge win when you do a role reversal, then ask ‘What was big/huge about it?’ Then right away hit them again so they can experience it for themselves.
- For the CAT, when you demo this be sure to include something along the lines of “my real problem is YOU, my negative voice. Often helpful to combine with some acceptance. IE: “You’re a failure.” CAT: “I do make mistakes but my real problem is listening to your garbage!”

KEY points to remember:

- Record the session (I REQUIRE my clients to record at their end) OR you’ll have to TAKE a lot of notes, I type fast and I barely keep up, some clients I can’t keep up with.
- Clearly identify the roles – who is playing what.
- Three (four) ways to defeat the NT – self-defense, self-acceptance, CAT, or combo
- What level of win? small / big / huge
- Do role reversal if client gets stuck or offer to let the client try again.
- Client needs to get the huge win (not just the coach).
- The client usually gets more and more powerful and comes up with the Counter Thoughts quicker as the rounds continue. This is one of the beauty of this method.

Watch and/or Listen to this tool used:

[Podcast 83](#) OR [Podcast #93 near end of 49 min](#) **David in most of the “live demos”**

Video Lesson: <https://angelapoch.com/course/team-basics/lessons/externalization-of-voices/>

25min Practice & Step by Step How to

Use a Mood Log with 2 to 3 of your own NT's

- **Coach starts:** "I'm wondering if you'd like to try a method called Externalization of Voices that takes all the intellectual work we've done and make it gut level, experiential. Would you like to hear more about this technique?" **Client responds:** sure/yes
- **Coach:** "This is a role play where I will be the negative voice in your head and you try to defeat me. You can defeat me in 4 ways, 1. Self-acceptance where you accept something true about it or yourself with humility and/or humor, 2. Self-defense where you argue against the thought, 3. CAT or counter attack, where you tell the critical inner voice itself to get lost. OR 4. Any combination of these. We'll start with me as negative __ (client's name) and you be yourself, positive ___ (client's name). The negative voice will talk in second person, you. The Positive voice talks in first person. Don't worry if you get stuck, we can do a role reversal and I'll be Positive __. You'll need to record this exercise on your phone and you'll go over the recording for your homework. Do you have any questions?" **Client:** "No, I think I've got it."
- **Coach:** "Ok, great, so who am I?" **Client responds:** "my negative voice."
- **Coach:** "Right, I'm your negative voice and who are you?" **Client:** "myself".
- **Coach:** "That's right! So ___ (client's name), this is your negative voice talking, I just wanted to tell you ____ (NT - word for word but in Second Person You, NO embellishing!)
 - **Client responds:** With a positive/counter thought
- **Coach:** "Who won that round, me or you?" **Client responds:** "I did"
- **Coach:** "Small or Big?" **Client responds:** "Big"
- **Coach:** "Big or Huge?" **Client responds:** "Big"
- **Coach:** "Ok, would you like to do a role reversal or try it again?" **Client:** "role reversal."
- **Coach:** "Ok, you hit me with the NT." **Client:** Says NT.
- **Coach:** Try a combo of acceptance, defense, and CAT. Then ask who won. **Client:** "You did."
- **Coach:** "Small or Big?" **Client:** "Big" **Coach:** "Big or Huge?" **Client:** "Huge"
- **Coach:** "What made it huge?" **Client:** Responds
- **Coach:** "Ok, now you give it a try. This is your negative voice talking, I just wanted to tell you ___ (say client's NT). **Client:** Responds
- **Coach:** "Who won? me or you?"
- REPEAT back and forth till client gets to huge on their own.

FOR the practice... go for a couple rounds as time allows (you have 10min each, 25 min total).

STOP & DEBRIEF -- **Client** gives coach feedback

- One thing you liked.
- One thing you would have improved.

SWITCH ROLES & REPEAT

Relapse Preparation*

Now that we have two foundational tools, Individual Downward Arrow and Externalization of Voices, let's look at Relapse Preparation before moving on to several individual tools.

Relapse in the context of TEAM-CBT therapy or coaching, is when a client reverts in ANY way, however small, to their previous way of thinking, feeling, or behaving.

Examples

- Feeling nervous and inferior after crushing performance anxiety
- Not feeling motivated to get out of bed after working through depressive thinking

Most modalities only see relapse as the goal failure itself. IE: Full symptom return and a need more coaching or therapy. But TEAM-CBT treats any small movement in the wrong direction as a relapse. This is because “relapse,” either way, is often gradual¹

If we address it right away, we can often prevent worse outcomes. We normalize the ebbs and flows of life while avoiding a pathological response by allowing the little steps in the wrong direction, culminating in a full-blown episode of whatever issue the client initially came to you for. It is crucial to long-term recovery/goal success. Not addressing it leads to less optimized long-term outcomes.² It will happen; ignoring it may cause clients to think therapy/coaching failed.

It's not problematic if we address it ahead of time. It is just part of developing healthy coping skills; in fact, it provides an opportunity for reinforcing a client's successes. Often, it's why clients came for therapy/coaching in the first place.¹

1. Melemis, S. M. (2015). Focus: Addiction: Relapse Prevention and the Five Rules of Recovery. *The Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*, 88(3), 325-332.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4553654>

2. Ludgate, J. (2021). Relapse prevention. In A. Wenzel (Ed.), *Handbook of cognitive behavioral therapy: Overview and approaches* (pp. 385–414). American Psychological Association.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0000218-013>

Relapse as Part of Skill Development

- Relapse is **not problematic** when addressed ahead of time
- It is part of developing **healthy coping skills**
- It provides opportunities to:
 - Reinforce past successes
 - Practice recovery repeatedly

Many clients already know *what* helps—they struggle with consistency under stress. Relapse preparation directly targets this gap between insight and application.

Each successful recovery strengthens confidence and speeds future recovery. Over time, relapses tend to become less intense and less frequent as skills are practiced and reinforced.

Because relapse is expected, it should be addressed intentionally and more than once.

Address Relapse Three Times

1. Initial 20-minute consultation

- Introduce relapse as normal and beneficial
- Example framing:

“I have a 100% money-back guarantee—you will relapse. It’s part of being human, and it’s a good thing. What works for you here will work in the future. Relapse allows you to practice success and create new neural pathways.”

2. After successful Mood Log completion

- Prepare the client for future doubts
- Address questions about therapy or coaching success
- Do or Redo **Externalization of Voices** focused on relapse-related thoughts

3. Before the termination session

- Similar process as #2
- Focus on thoughts around the coaching/therapy itself, the therapeutic relationship, and the recovery they’ve experienced overall. IE: NT’s should include: “Therapy was a waste of time/failed/didn’t work, etc.” “I should have stayed in therapy longer.” “My therapist didn’t know what they were talking about.” “I’ll never be fully recovered.” “I’ll always be broken.” Etc.

Each timing serves a different purpose: expectation-setting, reinforcement after success, and preparation for independence. Repetition strengthens understanding and reduces fear when relapse occurs.

Clients learn that recovery is not fragile—it is repeatable.

This prepares the client for concrete, practical relapse strategies.

How to Prepare the Client for Relapse After Mood Log completion

- Psychoeducation: Remind clients that relapse is normal and helpful, Emphasize that practice speeds and solidifies recovery. Relapses tend to become fewer and shorter over time
- Review the tools that worked best, suggest keeping a short, personalized list of go-to tools
- Create and add relapse-related thoughts to the Mood Log
- Use **Externalization of Voices** and **record it**
- Encourage addressing even small “slips” immediately
- Reuse the same Mood Log if thoughts repeat, or create a new one

Relapse preparation is about transfer and maintenance, not new learning. Clients are being taught how to reuse effective tools under future stress.

Addressing small slips quickly allows clients to practice full recovery repeatedly, embedding success and confidence. This section ensures that progress continues beyond sessions and sets the stage for long-term stability.

Tips for Using Tools & TEAM Recap

Let's start with a recap.

Key Steps in the Coaching Process

- Consultation & Intake
- A+ Empathy using the 5 Secrets
- Identify what they want to work on, Miracle Cure Question
- Get specific with ONE moment in time using a Mood Log
- Work through Agenda Setting:
 - Invitation
 - Positive Reframing
 - Pivot Question
- Pick ONE negative thought to work on
- Identify & Explain the Distortions
- Use as many tools as needed until the client crushes that negative thought
 - Belief reduced to less than 20%
 - Replaced with a powerful positive thought they believe 100%
- Repeat with ALL thoughts on the ONE Mood Log
 - Or do 3–4 thoughts and then Externalization of Voices
- Do Relapse Preparation
- Do a couple more Mood Logs
 - Explore some Self-Defeating Beliefs (*not part of this training*)
- Termination of Coaching

See the flowchart in the Appendix!

The TEAM flow is deliberately simple—and that's the point. When sessions get confusing, it's usually because the coach skipped a step, rushed ahead, or tried to do too many things at once. This structure keeps both coach and client on track, not jumping from problem to problem.

Notice the repeated emphasis on **one**: one moment, one Mood Log, one negative thought at a time. Trying to fix everything at once usually means fixing nothing. Depth beats speed every time.

The order also matters. Empathy always comes first, tools come later, and relapse preparation comes *after* real emotional change has occurred—but not so long after they've forgotten what success felt like. When the steps are followed, clients don't just feel better in session; they know how to get better again later.

Steps to Working a Negative Thought

- 1) Pick ONE thought to start!
- 2) Use a method (See Tool List in Appendix).
- 3) Ask client to create a new more helpful, truthful Counter Thought.
- 4) Ask them to rate their new thought, “How much do you believe that?”
 - a) If not 100%, explore with the client, “Why not?” “What would make it 100%?” If can’t get to 100% go back to Step 2
 - b) If 100% go to step 5 (they must believe the new thought 100%!).
- 5) Re-Rate the Negative Thought, “How much do you believe __ (read their NT)?”
 - a) If not crushed (0 to 30% depending on the thought) try another method, Step 2.
 - b) If crushed, move onto another thought, Step 1

(repeat with all the Thoughts on the Mood Log)

Conditions for Change Reminder

Reminder: “We know that our emotions are caused by our thoughts about an event, and those thoughts often feel 100% true in the moment. To change these negative thoughts, we need a more powerful realistic Counter Thought. That positive thought must meet two conditions:

- The Necessary Condition. It must be 100% true. Half-truths, affirmations, and rationalizations will not be effective enough.
- The Sufficient Condition. It must reduce your belief in the NT at least some.

Tips & Tricks for working a Negative Thought

- You may not get to 0% on a Negative Thought (NT) if there is substantial truth in it.
- A reduction from 100% to ~50% is often enough to create meaningful emotional relief.
- If this is the case, ask for current emotional impact, instead of “how true”:
 - “How much is this negative thought affecting you right now, from 0–100%?”
 - OR “How upsetting does this thought feel right now?”
- When a NT contains truth, can follow up with Self-Acceptance and/or Forgiveness tools.

When working through negative thoughts that contain truth, the aim is not to erase reality but to reduce unnecessary suffering. Even a partial reduction in belief or emotional intensity can create significant relief and restore momentum in the session. Measuring how upsetting the thought feels *right now* keeps the focus practical and experience-based rather than intellectual.

If distress remains high because the thought reflects a genuine mistake or limitation try the Self-acceptance and /or Forgiveness tools.

Straightforward Technique*

We don't have to just accept anything that pops into our head as true or realistic.

This tool is very simple, ask the client to try to substitute a more realistic, helpful, counter thought in place of your NT one.

Tell the client they can ask themselves: "Is this NT really true?" "Do I really believe it?" "Is there another way to look at the situation?" Ask the client if they can use this information to generate a counter thought that fulfills the Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for emotional change.

When to Use: Use this technique before or after Identifying the Distortions. It can be use used like Externalization of Voices, that is once a client is on a roll crushing negative thoughts they can try to just come up with a "better" thought instead of going through various tools. This speeds up the progress. Tell client they can use this during the day when a Negative Thought comes up in everyday life. If it doesn't work, then try other tools, and / or a Full Mood Log.

Example Script:

Use any thought on Mood Log.

- **Clinician starts:** Do psychoeducational piece explaining the two rules to a positive thought and ask client the prompting questions, IE: "Since we don't have to just accept anything that pops into our head as true or realistic, we can argue against a negative thought directly. But whatever new thought we come up with must be 100% true and reduce our belief in the negative thought. You can simply ask yourself a few questions. "Is this NT really true?" "Do I really believe it?" "Is there another way to look at the situation?" "
- Client responds: ____
- **Clinician:** "Great, lets write that down. (say out loud the thought as you write it down) How much do you believe that new thought?"
- Client responds: ____
- **Clinician:** "Ok, and how much do you believe the Negative Thought?"
- Client responds, if under 30 as if that's enough? etc. See Working a Negative Thought.
- Note: Can give this to the client for homework. You can say something like, "Sometimes this tool works right away. It works even better after you've developed healthy thinking patterns by using a few tools several times on a couple Mood Logs. But you can always give it a try when you have upsetting thoughts!"

Examine the Evidence*

Description:

“The thoughts that trigger feelings of depression, anxiety, and anger are nearly always distorted and unrealistic, but patients usually don’t realize this because they fool themselves with Emotional Reasoning. For example, if you feel like a hopeless loser, you may assume that you really are one and give up on life. Then nothing changes, so you conclude that things really are hopeless. When patients use Examine the Evidence, they can ask themselves, “What are the facts? What do they show?” They become like scientists who examine information that’s already been published in order to evaluate the validity of a theory or hypothesis.” *ebook pg 591*

Sometimes clients naturally do this when they come up with a counter thought without formally going through this tool on a worksheet. If you notice the client uses any kind of evidence or proof in their positive thoughts, you can point this out and write it on their list of helpful tools.

How to do:

Have them explore the evidence against the thought; this can be done simply by just noticing evidence against thought or do a double column worksheet.

Set up: “Let’s imagine you are a lawyer trying to prove a case (or scientist with hypothesis). Get a sheet of paper and at the top let’s put your negative thought. Draw a line down the middle.”

“On the left side we’ll write down all the evidence in FAVOR of this thought, what proves it true? Remember these facts must stand up in court.” Guide the client to list a few. Ask questions to facilitate as needed. Can offer suggestions.

“On the right side let’s write down all the evidence AGAINST this thought, what is the proof it is false or distorted?” List as many as possible. Ask questions to facilitate as needed. Can offer suggestions.

Debrief: “After looking at all the evidence, what are your conclusions?”

Let the client respond, then ask if they can come up with a more realistic, counter thought.

Why do we look at facts FOR the Negative Thought?

- Deals with any hidden resistance
- Shows the client isn’t dumb for believing this
- Sometimes the client can’t come up with **anything at all**
 - That alone can crush the thought
 - Or dramatically weaken it
 - Clients may laugh and say, “*Nothing... there’s no reason to believe this is true.*”

When we start with the proof “for” the thought we open the door to insight. The client is invited to lay all their cards on the table. This communicates respect and reduces resistance.

It also normalizes the client’s experience. Clients often believe, “*If I think this, there must be something wrong with me.*” This step quietly counters that by showing how emotional reasoning can feel persuasive even when evidence is thin.

And sometimes—this is the fun part—the thought collapses on its own. When clients genuinely try to find proof and come up empty, insight often arrives with a smile or a laugh. At that point, you're not arguing with the thought; the thought has argued itself out of a job.

This sets the stage perfectly for examining the evidence **against** the thought with openness rather than defensiveness.

When Examine the Evidence is good to try:

Use it for any distortion, but especially good for emotional reasoning.

Example / Practice

Upsetting event: Flying from hometown to Chicago, IL Hit turbulence and plane started shaking.

Emotions:	Nervous, frightened, anxious	95%	Distortions:
Thought:	The plane will crash.	100%	FT, ER

- **Coach starts:** “I have a method called Examine the Evidence. It takes an emotionally charged thought and looks for proof if it’s true or not. Would you like to give it a try?”
- **Client responds:** “sure”
- **Coach:** “Let’s imagine we are going to put your thought on trial. We will look at all the evidence both in favour of your thought and against it. So let’s get a piece of paper. At the top will write down your negative thought. Draw a line down the middle of the page vertically. On the left, we’ll write down all the proof for this thought. And on the right side will look at all the evidence against it. Let’s start with the left side. What is some of the evidence in favour of this thought? Remember this evidence must stand up in court.”
- **Client responds:** ___ (Make it up, IE: some planes have crashed in the past, etc. Some things don’t meet the “evidence” criteria, IE: The plane is shaking, others look frightened, etc. Gently question them on these. “Remember this evidence must stand up in court, do you think a jury would buy that as proof?”
- **Coach:** Affirm responses and have them write it down. Offer suggestions based on what you might have heard during empathy (or any you come up with and inquire if they are true or if the client resonates with that) till several items listed.
- **Coach:** “OK great. Now let’s look at all the evidence against this thought?”
- **Client responds:** ___ (make it up. Some ideas: very few planes crash in the news. Flying is been reported safer than driving. Planes are built for turbulence, etc.)
- **Note for Coach:** Affirm responses till several items listed. Based on what the client has already told you through identifying the distortions, or other work you’ve done, you can offer questions that help reveal evidence against their negative thought. You can even sit in silence and let the client really dig deep. The more the client can come up with evidence themselves, the more likely they will crush the NT. However sometimes they need a little prompting, that’s ok too! Especially if this is the first negative thought. The first negative thought can be the most challenging to crush.

- **Coach:** “You’ve come up with some facts for and against this thought. So let me ask you, after looking at all this evidence what are your conclusions? How would you judge this negative thought?”
- Client responds: ___
- **Coach:** “Yeah that makes sense. Can we write that as a counter or positive thought to your negative one? How might you word that?”
- Client responds: ___
- **Coach:** “How much do you believe that new thought?” “How much do you believe the negative thought?” etc. Write it on the Mood Log!!!

Source/References

Therapists’ ebook, “Tools NOT Schools” pg. 591-599

Start at about 18 mins in (it’s fairly short only a couple mins): [Podcast #93](#)

Start at about 7 mins (about 15 mins to listen): <https://feelinggood.com/2018/10/29/112-truth-based-techniques> This Podcast covers Examine the Evidence, Experimental Tech, and Survey. Compares them too. So time well spent for the next 3 weeks or so. It also touches on Hidden Emotion and Reattribution. The podcast does jump around a bit so may be confusing if you are not paying close attention.

“*When Panic Attacks*”, pg. 144-146

Semantic Technique* or Kind Words Matter

We substitute language that's less colorful and emotionally loaded. Instead of thinking, "I shouldn't have made that mistake," you can tell yourself, "It would be preferable if I hadn't made that mistake." Good for all negative thoughts, but especially for Should Statements.

Description:

- Could you imagine Jesus saying cruel things to himself and making harsh rules for himself?
- Words we choose matter. "Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit." Proverbs 16:24, NLT.
- We can speak toward ourselves in a more compassionate Christlike manner.
- Good tool for Should Statements but also can work for: Mental Filter, All or Nothing, Labeling, Self-blame, Other-blame, Emotional Reasoning, and Magnification/Minimization.

Setup and How To:

- Explain the Semantic Method to the client (see description above).
- Ask the client to rewrite their negative thought using softer, kinder, and/or more realistic language. IE: "Can you restate your Negative Thought in a truthful and more compassionate or kind way?"
- You can prompt them: something like: "You can use words like, it would be preferable if or I wish that." You can add scripture if client is Christian.
- Can offer suggestions but I use a different thought as the example. "For example instead of criticizing and telling myself, I didn't socialize my cat so he is terrified of people. I could say, I wish had been able to socialize my cat so he wasn't so afraid of people."

Example:

Can use personal work or one of your clients. But to respect your small group time please prepared ahead of time. Just need one or two sentences vignette, one line for upsetting event, list a few emotions, and at least one NT that is a strong Should Statement or Labeling.

72 year old newly retired widow is regretting waiting so long to retire, didn't retire at 65 as planned because finances weren't good at the time. They are upset they can't share their golden years with spouse who passed away 6 months ago.

Upsetting Event: Went to see son, daughter-in-law and 2 grandkids and while packing the car he felt so alone and upset.			
Emotions:	Lonely/alone 90, sad 70, upset 80, remorseful/guilty 100		Distortions:
Thoughts:	I'm stupid because I didn't saved money when I had the chance.	100%	SS, AON, SB, FT
	I should have retired at 65 so I would have had a few years with my spouse.	100%	SS, AON, FT, DP, SB,

Be Specific*

Instead of making vague generalizations, focus on real problems/areas of growth.

- **Three Key Principles**

- 1. All humans have flaws and shortcomings. We ALL fail at lots of things all the time. There is nothing about us that couldn't be improved. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 2:23
- 2. Failures and shortcomings don't cause our suffering. What does?
- 3. When you accept your shortcomings with grace and/or humor, it will open the door to move forward. "If we confess...(then) He will cleanse us" 1 John 1:9 We need to first confess, accept where we are at!

Good tool for Self-blame, but also for: All or Nothing, Overgeneralization, Mental Filter, Discounting the Positive, Emotional Reasoning, Fortune Telling, and Labeling

How to do it:

- Ask the client (one or more):
 - What specifically do you mean by X (failure, stupid, enough, etc.)?
 - What exactly is X?
 - What specifically happened?
 - Is there something specific I can learn vs arbitrarily judging myself on the general?
- Can ask clarifying questions, this may take some nuance. I ask for the Holy Spirit to lead!

Example:

- NT: "It's too hard."
- What does "too hard" mean?
 - "Almost impossible."
- What exactly is "too hard" or "almost impossible"?
 - "Learning new tools."
- What can you take away from this?
 - "That learning new tools can be hard, but not impossible."
- With that in mind can you come up with a more helpful counter thought?
 - "While it's not easy to learn a new career like mental health coaching, I can learn some today, some tomorrow, and keep moving forward with God's blessing, Nothing is impossible."
- Great, how much do you believe that? ... 100% Let's write it down on the Mood Log... Now, how much do you believe your negative thought? ... 20% ETC
- NOTE: Usually you'll need a lot more exploration, this example was simplistic.

Reattribution*

Clients can find themselves blaming themselves for things they don't have 100% control over. When we use reattribution we are asking clients to consider other factors that might have contributed to the issue/event/problem and getting the client to list as many as they can.

When to Use:

Distortions like: Mental Filter, Should Statements, Labeling, Blame – excellent for self blame. Can be good for Fortune telling and overgeneralization as well.

Setup and How To:

1. Educate & set up: "Many times we blame ourselves for things we don't have 100% control or there are other factors involved. I have a tool to explore this called reattribution, would you like to give that a try?" "Let's get a piece of paper out. At the top write down the negative thought. Now draw a line down the middle of a page. On the left side write, "my part or what I have control over" and on the right side write "out of my control or other factors".
2. Go through as many things the client has direct control over or had a part in. IE: "So, what part of this did you have control over?" (drinking too much, what was said, etc.) Spend as much time as needed making a list. Sometimes they don't come up with much at all, and like Examine the Evidence, this can be an epiphany, or the start of one.
3. Next go through as many things as possible the client didn't have a part in. "What was out of your control? What did others contribute? What other factors are involved?"
4. Debrief: After the client can't produce any more ideas, ask (you can choose one or more):
 - "When you look at all these things you wrote down, what are your thoughts about this?"
 - "What can you learn from the situation?"
 - "So looking at everything you have down here, what conclusions would you draw?"
5. Counter Thought: "Can you come up with a more realistic counter thought?"

Simple Alternative Version: simply them list what other reasons or factors there may be for the upsetting event to have gotten out of hand or not go the way they would have like it to.

Example / Practice

22 year old Engineering major feels ashamed. He/she went to a party and while there asked the host if there were any gluten free items on the buffet. The host paused then said, "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know you were gluten free, let me see what I can find." The host spent 20min making a special dish just for him/her. Now they feel they can't show their face at his house ever again because they feel awkward, nervous and ashamed for putting the host on the spot.

Negative Thought: "I am such a jerk." 100% AON, OG, MF, SS, LB, SB

Coach starts: We've been working on the thought, "I shouldn't be anxious". I'm wondering if you'd like to try another method called "Reattribution". Would you like to hear more about this technique?

Client responds: sure/yes

Coach: Explain the technique, “Many times we blame ourselves for things we don’t have 100% control over or responsible for. So, let’s get a piece of paper out. At the top write down the negative thought. Now draw a line down the middle of a page. On one side write, “my part” and on the other side write “out of my control”. So, what part of this problem did you have control over?” “And what things were out of your control?”

Client responds: make it up as you go!

Coach: Can offer suggestions if client needs. Try to give the client as much space as possible to come up with their own responses. Then do the debrief. “When you look at all these things you wrote down, what are your thoughts about this?” OR “What can you learn from the situation?” OR So looking at everything you have down here, what conclusions would you draw?”

Client responds: ____

Coach: “Great, Let’s see if we can transform that into a positive more realistic thought than “I am such as jerk.” (say their NT out loud).

<i>My Part</i>	<i>Out of my Control / Other Factors</i>

Source/References

Therapists’ ebook, “Tools NOT Schools” pg. 609-614

Podcast #93 starts at 25 min or so

“When Panic Attacks”, pg. 167-169

Feeling Great, pg 104, 477

Feeling Good Handbook, pg. 111-112

Ten Days to Self-Esteem, pg. 99 (short description)

Acceptance Paradox Exploration

Admitting, with warmth and realism, that we are flawed human beings allows clients to stop fighting reality and start relating to themselves with kindness.

- When we fully accept our flaws, they lose much of their power and allow us to move past them. IE: When recognize our need of Christ, we become strong through Him.
- Admitting imperfection with humility can be freeing rather than discouraging.
- Humor can soften rigid self-judgment and reduce emotional intensity.
- Self-acceptance does not excuse behavior; it removes harsh self-condemnation.

How to do it with a client

Introduce: “I have a technique called “The Self-Acceptance Paradox” that looks at the paradox of accepting ones flaws through a series of questions. It’s a bit more confrontational, a bit directive, yet explorative. Would you like to give it a try?” “Instead of defending against your own criticisms, find truth in them and accept your shortcomings. You can tell yourself, “It’s true that I have many inadequacies. In fact, there is very little, if anything, about me that couldn’t be improved considerably. What can you tell yourself with humility and acceptance instead of __ (NT)?” IF the client can’t come up with a powerful Counter Thought, explore the questions below.

Ask these questions with an attitude of curiosity and exploration:

- 1. Clarify what is actually true:** Ask the client, “Looking just at the facts, what part of this thought seems accurate?”
- 2. Locate the self-attack:** “What does this say about you as a person?”
- 3. Test universality** “Do you think this flaw/mistake is unique to you, or something most humans do at some point?”
- 4. Separate standards from worth:** “If someone you respected did the same thing, would it say everything about who they are—or about a moment they’re not proud of?”
- 5. Explore the paradox:** “Imagine a little flower growing in the garden. It starts to wilt. What good does it do the flower to condemn itself, I should have drank more water. Bad flower. Yet paradoxically if the flower accepts it is wilted and that it needs water now it is open to getting the water and no longer being wilted. How might this apply to your situation?”
- 6. Identify healthy vs unhealthy acceptance:** “What do you think the difference is between accepting a flaw and giving up on change or improvement?”
- 7. Create a Counter Thought:** “What could you tell yourself instead of or along side of _____ (Negative Thought)” “How much do you believe that thought?” “How upsetting is your negative thought from 0-100?”

Faith-Sensitive Prompt, do after #6 and before #7 above. “How is being human, weakness, or making mistakes viewed in scripture?” If needed, share scriptures below with your client.

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”
(2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV) “Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my
infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV*

Sometimes self-acceptance alone isn't enough. What if you truly did something wrong—something hurtful, unwise, or out of alignment with your values or faith? In those moments, simply accepting imperfection may still leave a sense of guilt or moral discomfort. This is where the work naturally shifts from acceptance to **forgiveness**.

Note: Acceptance Paradox Exploration, along with all the following faith based tools in Part 4 were created by Angela Poch for coaches, some based on ideas from David Burns, all of them from years of Bible study and experience.

Forgiveness (Self)

Letting go of self-punishment after responsibility has been clearly acknowledged. Forgiveness is not denial or excuse; it is the decision to stop sentencing oneself once accountability has been taken. Ongoing self-attack prolongs emotional distress, fuels shame, and interferes with learning and growth. Punishment does not produce change; clarity and compassion do.

What needs to happen

- Acknowledge responsibility **clearly and specifically**, without exaggeration or global labels.
- Identify what was learned and how behavior will change going forward.
- Consciously release self-punishment; it no longer serves a corrective purpose.
- Shift to compassionate, future-focused language rather than mentally replaying the offense.

How to do it

1. Explore the function of suffering: “Why might it feel important for you to hold yourself accountable by continuing to suffer?”

2. Clarify responsibility (narrow and precise): “What exactly do you believe you did wrong—stated as specifically and factually as possible?”

3. Assess whether punishment is occurring: “In what ways are you still punishing yourself for this and what do you hope the punishment will accomplish?”

4. Test learning vs punishment: “What have you already learned from this experience? How, if at all, do you want to respond differently if a similar situation comes up again?”

5. Shift to Helpful Counter Thought: “What could you say to yourself instead of _____ (read NT)?” Complete the follow up.... How much do you believe that? Rate NT, write Mood Log.

Optional, Faith Exploration (Do this before #5 above): “Within your faith framework, what do you believe is meant to happen after confession—continued condemnation, or release?” “How do you personally understand the difference between accountability and condemnation?” Can share these Bible verses.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, NKJV) “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1, NKJV)

Faith Specific Tools

Why don't prayer and Bible study fix all our emotional problems? Sometimes we need insight and direction from others because that's God's plan! God created us to work, live, and commune together.

For these tools and some of the ones we already covered, free book, "The Truth will Set You Free" please feel free to share with your clients.

Introduction

Two types of Christian specific tools:

- Broad Strokes
- Finer Points

Broad Strokes aim at Self-Defeating Beliefs and an overall conducive environment to change.

Finer Points act very much like regular TEAM-CBT tools and help crush specific Negative Thoughts.

Prayer as a Mental Health Tool

Prayer can help us on our mental health journey. It connects us with the power source! In addition it uplifts our mind. Of course how we pray will affect how effective it is. Prayer is not to make God willing, but us willing. We don't need to beg God to DO something FOR us, but rather prayer is the avenue for us to surrender something IN us. We always have the power of choice! Prayer enables that's choice to do God's will in us.

Matthew 6:6-13, KJV. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

Of course prayer is often the topic of entire books, but Jesus kept it simple so I will too! I want to break it down so you can use this as a template for powerful prayer! I like to pray in this format (not all the time) since this was Jesus answer to the disciples question, how should we pray? See Luke 11:1.

13 Principles Found in the Lord's Prayer:

PREAMBLE: Pray in secret doesn't mean we can't ask for the prayers of those we love. The context was to contrast the bold arrogance of the Pharisees and the idea the prayer had value in itself. We don't gain merit by praying.

Shut thy door, put away distractions, including NTs! You don't have to be in a closet to do this. In fact you can do it driving down the road. This is about focus. Training your mind to put full attention on God.

Not vain repetitions/much speaking. God is ready to answer our prayer, begging is not required to move His hand. We don't need to divulge details because God is ignorant but rather the expression of our deep fears and sins changes us.

PRAYER: Our Father which art in heaven. Abba or daddy would be a more accurate translation according to many Bible scholars. God is personal, relational, and tender. He can be all that your worldly father isn't.

Hallowed be Thy name. We reverence and honour God by putting Him first. This gives us access to unlimited power! "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33 NASB.

Thy Kingdom come (both God living in our heart and looking to God's ultimate cleansing of the sin in this world.) We can "fortune tell" this!!!

Thy will be done. Live out thy life within me! Surrendering our heart to God's will builds our faith and pushes away darkness.

On earth as it is in heaven. We can have a little piece of heaven here on earth. When God's will, the law of love, is fulfilled there is peace, joy, and love abounding.

Give us daily bread. God can sustain us physically and spiritually. Bread is often symbolic of the word and the word is Jesus!

Forgive us our debts. We all have need of a Saviour, a redeemer.

As we forgive others. Asking God for empathy helps to crush Other-Blame thoughts. Let's face it all the distortions we can have for our own NTs can be applied to others too. "He ALWAYS leave the trash by the door." "She is so petty."

Lead us not...Deliver us from evil. We don't need to ask God to not tempt us, this is an acknowledgement that it's so easy for us to fall into old patterns. Faith comes by asking and then remembering how God has led.

For thine is the kingdom, power, glory forever. Acknowledging our God is the Creator, Re-Creator, Redeemer, and LORD. His kingdom is one of the heart. See the Sermon on the Mount to unpack this further. Jesus had just given the sermon on the mount before giving this prayer template.

Gratitude

Science reports gratitude does help with several aspects of mental health and even physical pain caused by inflammation. While it's not a cure all any more than any other technique or tool it can be very helpful. [https:// www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you- happier](https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier)

This technique works especially well for those with many thoughts that have the distortions Negative Mental Filter or Discounting the Positive. It helps you to focus on what you are thankful for. Gratitude must be **real and genuine**, but it does not need to be profound or permanent. Small, ordinary, or temporary positives still count (e.g., a hot shower, a kind interaction, noticing beauty in nature). "And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:20, NLT.

Some may ask, "Do we give thanks for sin, pain, or evil?" Of course not, ...an enemy has done this!..." Matthew 13:28, NASB.

The context of this Ephesians, "All Things", is that we don't need some grand event to be thankful for AND we can trust God can turn horrible things into some kind of blessing, not that God allows horrible things to create a blessing. See the experience of Job.

WARNING: Gratitude is NOT positive thinking. It should not be used to invalidate our emotions or the experiences of others. It is making sure we are not overlooking a blessing or benefit.

Ways to Practice Gratitude - Ideas for the Client to explore for Homework:

1. Gratitude Record / Journal

- Keep a daily written list of things you are thankful for.
- Can be done in the morning or evening.
- Focus on what actually occurred that day, however small.

2. Blessings Jar

- Write blessings down as they occur.
- Place them in a jar or container.
- Periodically read through past entries.

3. Gratitude in Prayer

- Intentionally include specific expressions of thanks during prayer.
- Can be done before requests or at the end.

Coach-Guided Questions (Exploratory)

- "When you look at today as a whole, what did your mind automatically focus on?"
- "What positive or neutral experiences might your mind be filtering out?"
- "What is something small, ordinary, or fleeting that you appreciated recently?"
- "What Counter Thought would include some gratitude?" Rate NT, Mood Log, etc.

Resist the Devil

Use the CAT Technique specifically to resist the Devil. We are told in James 4:7, "...Resist the Devil and he will flee from you." In Steps to Christ, "When Satan comes to tell you that you are a great sinner, look up to your Redeemer and talk of His merits. That which will help you is to look to His light. Acknowledge your sin, but tell the enemy that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" and that you may be saved by His matchless love. 1 Timothy 1:15." SC 36.

When to Use:

Distortions like SB, OG, AON, MAG, ER, LB, etc. but as related to a thought relating to inferiority, worthlessness, defectiveness, incompetence, etc.

How to do it:

Use the framework on EOv. Hit the client with their NT and they respond with the Counter Attack specially talking back to the enemy and acknowledging God, Jesus, in some way and will give me light. I highly recommend a role reversal to demonstrate what this looks like. Including something along the lines of "my real problem is YOU (the devil)" Make sure to reverse roles again so the client can experience this for themselves and voice it in their own words and style of being.

Example:

NT: "I'm worthless/defective/broken"

"Christ came to save worthless broken people. My problem is NOT that I'm broken but that you accuse me of being so powerful that God can't save me. That's a lie and I don't believe you!"

Service / Volunteer Work

Description

- Works well for Negative Mental Filter or Discounting the Positive, but also for Labeling, Over Generalization, Self blame and even Other Blame. Depending on the NT's around those distortions.
- Matt 25:35-36 "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." There is something very therapeutic when we reach out to service others in compassion. This is not about duty but about connection.

Explore with the client some options they could do.

- Volunteer work. Many organizations facilitate this. Anything from cleaning streets to soup kitchen to crisis line intervention.
- What is excess in your life to make time for. Don't just add more to your life if you are already swamped. That said, keep our minds busy on healthy things can have a positive influence on those with too much free time.

Bible Promises

Bible Promises are used to directly counter a **specific Negative Thought (NT)** by introducing truth that clearly offsets or dismantles it. This is not general encouragement; it is targeted cognitive and spiritual reframing.

Making Bible Promises work as a TEAM-CBT tool:

- Match the promise to the thought, not the emotion. Emotions (e.g., inadequacy, fear, shame) are driven by underlying thoughts. The coach's job is to help the client identify the exact NT before searching for a promise.
- The promise must actively counter the NT. If a verse does not weaken the thought, discard it and move on. The mindset is "fail fast"—do not force a promise to fit.

Coach-Guided Process (In Session)

- Ask what the NT is **predicting, declaring, or condemning**. This guides what kind of promise or story is needed.
- Search Scripture for a **directly relevant promise or biblical account** that contradicts or reframes the NT.
- Use the promise as a **Counter Thought**, not a platitude.

Example

- **Client NT:** "I'm never going to amount to anything."
- Coach: "What does the Bible teach about this?"
- If client is stuck, introduce a **relevant biblical passage/story/promise**:
 - Example: Moses believed his speech limitations disqualified him from God's call, yet God worked through him powerfully despite—not because of—his confidence.
- Ask, "What are your thoughts about this?"
- "What counter thought would include what God has to say about this?"

Reminder

- Bible Promises are **not positive thinking**.
- They are not meant to suppress pain or bypass struggle.
- They function as **truth-based counters** that challenge distorted conclusions about God, self, or the future.

If a promise does not reduce belief in the NT—even slightly—it is not the right one. Keep searching.

When taught correctly, Bible Promises function like any other TEAM-CBT method: they are **specific, targeted, and measured by impact**. The authority lies not in quoting Scripture, but in whether the truth meaningfully weakens the negative thought driving emotional distress.

Nature

This tool helps reduce emotional distress by engaging the nervous system directly. Time in nature often brings relief without deliberate cognitive work, making it especially helpful when clients feel depleted, overwhelmed, or stuck in rumination.

“...nothing so tends to restore health and happiness as living amid attractive country surroundings. Here the most helpless ones can sit or lie in the sunshine or in the shade of the trees. They have only to lift their eyes to see above them the beautiful foliage... ...A sweet sense of restfulness and refreshing comes over them as they listen to the murmuring of the breezes. The drooping spirits revive. The waning strength is recruited. Unconsciously the mind becomes peaceful, the fevered pulse more calm and regular.” The Ministry of Healing p264

It's very simple, explore ways for the client to get outside in God's creation. It can be as simple as a walk in the park, or more rejuvenating like a vacation in the mountains

This tool is not meant to replace emotional processing or problem-solving. Instead, it helps **restore capacity** so clients can engage other tools more effectively. For many, nature provides a gentle reset—calming the body first so the mind can follow.

Stress Management

Two Prong Approach

- External Changes:
 - Reduce stressors
 - Increase calming behaviours/choices
- Internal Changes:
 - Reduce thoughts that exacerbate stressors
 - Increase peaceful mindset

The later of these two approaches, internal changes, you have all the tools for in this program. Create a Mood Log around ONE stressful moment and unpack the thoughts around that moment. Client's Counter Thoughts can include Bible Promises, faith reminders of God's presence, etc. These will increase peaceful mindset and reduce thoughts that exacerbate stressors. Be sure to include Acceptance Paradox Exploration.

For the External Changes I'd fully use "Habit Tools" which are part of the follow up program to this one, TEAM CBT Basics, but there are many tools you've learnt in this program that can facilitate a client making better choices to reduce stress. Start with exploration using Reattribution, what are the things the client can control. Then Be Specific, what specific things can they change. Free Habit tools and information: www.feelinggood.com (see bottom of the page, email me if you have any trouble getting this free chapter of David's latest book)

Faith Tool Resource to Share

See the separate book I wrote, "The Truth Will Set You Free" – share it free with clients.

<https://angelapoch.com/course/truthbook/>

50+ More Tools

More tools see TEAM BASICS course, FREE as a follow up to this program.

www.teamcbt.ca/basics Use coupon code: **CKE4GW622**

I also recommend you join my FREE Monday Practice Group to practice these tools in live training and breakout groups. www.teamcbt.ca/monday

Other resources including 2 demos of coaching here: <https://angelapoch.com/nad/>

Part 5: Business of Coaching

How Long will coaching take

Factors in how long coaching takes

- How long each session is — longer sessions are exponentially faster
- How invested the client is in their recovery
- How much homework the client does between sessions
- How many goals the client has
- How severe the client's emotions are

Session length, client investment, and follow-through between sessions act like accelerators or brakes. A highly engaged client in longer sessions who actually does the work will often make rapid progress, while a well-intentioned but passive client may move slowly despite months of appointments.

Emotional intensity does **not** determine how believable a thought feels. Negative thoughts are usually believed at or near 100% whether the emotion is a 2/10 or a 9/10 — and that belief can fluctuate independently of distress. What *does* change with higher emotional intensity is visibility and motivation. An 8/10 anxiety is often easier to work with than a 2/10 low-level nervousness because when a tool works, the relief is obvious. The contrast is felt. Hope rises faster because change is unmistakable and reinforcing.

High numbers also increase motivation. People are more willing to engage when emotional pain is loud. A client at 8/10 wants relief *now*. A client at 2/10 often feels “functional enough,” which blunts urgency. Coaching still works at low levels, but it usually requires more precision and patience because progress is subtle and reinforcement comes slowly.

It's like stepping outside and realizing it's -10 °C / 14 °F — you'll sprint back for your coat. At 16 °C / 60 °F, you might shrug and keep going.

How many sessions per client?

- **Intensives** — one to four 3-hour sessions
- **Weekly sessions** — 50 minutes vs 105 minutes
- **Expect longer timelines for:**
 - New coaches (it took me about one year of practice and client work to learn the basics well)
 - Clients with low-emotion symptoms (change is harder to notice and reinforce)
 - Clients who dabble with homework (less than ~20 minutes a day)

There is no “correct” number of sessions, but there *are* reliable patterns. Longer sessions dramatically increase efficiency because they allow empathy, agenda setting, and methods to unfold without repeatedly stopping and restarting. Intensives work not because they are intense, but because they preserve emotional continuity and momentum.

Coach experience matters as well. New coaches often need more time, not because the tools are weak, but because fluency takes practice. Likewise, clients who partially engage — doing

homework occasionally or half-heartedly — usually require more sessions, not more insight. Coaching doesn't fail in these cases; it simply moves at walking speed instead of highway speed.

When coaching *is* time-limited

- Coaching can be offered in fixed formats (e.g., 6-week or 12-week packages)
- Fixed timelines require clearer expectations on *what success means*
- The structure of the package shapes the coaching focus:
 - Go with the flow
 - Structured plan

Fixed-length coaching is not a problem. A defined timeline can work well *if* both coach and client are aligned on the goal. Problems arise when the client, or even the coach, assumes a guaranteed emotional outcome while working on a fixed time schedule.

There are two approaches. One is to **go with the flow**: work intensively on whatever emerges, see how far change goes within the allotted time, and then offer follow-up or continuation if needed. The other is to offer a **structured, step-by-step plan** focused on learning tools, building thinking skills, and increasing emotional literacy — without promising a specific reduction in symptoms by the end date.

Both approaches work. What matters is clarity. Are you selling *symptom relief, skill acquisition, or focused exploration with options afterward*? When expectations are explicit, fixed coaching becomes ethical, effective, and confidence-building for both coach and client.

Before any of this matters, however, the intake and consultation process largely determines whether coaching time will be efficient or wasted — which is where we go next.

What will Coaching Look Like for You

Business, Ministry, or Both? Decide how you will offer coaching

- Ministry / Outreach
- Start a business

Before thinking about techniques or clients, you need to decide what kind of container your coaching will live in. Coaching can be a ministry, used as outreach, or a business. Each carries different expectations, pressures, and boundaries. Problems arise when a coach mixes models unconsciously, such as charging business-level fees while operating with ministry-level structure, or offering volunteer coaching while expecting business-level commitment.

Clarity protects you from poor execution and emotional exhaustion trying to do everything at the same time. IE: If you are doing this as a ministry / outreach, you'll want to be sure to guard your schedule wisely. It can be very hard to say no, especially when you want to lovingly serve others. But you have to manage your time based on all your needs and all the principles of scripture. Your health, family, work, are all important.

You can start as a ministry until you get experience, that's a great way to take pressure off "how good" a session "should" go!

Decide the structure of your coaching

- Online, phone, in person, or a combination
- Open-ended coaching vs a defined program
- Minimum number of sessions vs “as needed”
- Session length (45, 60 minutes, 105min, or longer)
 - Remember to block time between sessions for notes, transitions, etc.
 - Longer sessions = faster recovery (usually)
- Overall capacity (how many clients you can realistically take on)

Sketch a rough outline of how coaching will function week to week in your setup. Will you offer phone, in person, or online? I don't recommend phone sessions as worksheets, screensharing, are very important. You could do follow up calls or in between sessions calls for homework clarification.

Will sessions be flexible and open-ended, or will clients move through a defined sequence that builds skills over time? Neither approach is better, but they create very different experiences. Open-ended coaching allows responsiveness; program-based coaching provides structure and predictability.

Session length and capacity are not minor details. They directly affect your energy, effectiveness, and sustainability. It is far better to coach fewer people well than many people poorly. Deciding this ahead of time prevents overcommitment and quiet resentment.

Clarify practical and financial details

- Where you will practice:
 - In your home
 - Renting an office
 - Sharing space with another professional
- Fees and financial boundaries:
 - Set fees in advance
 - Offering free sessions to those in need
 - Discounted rates
- Define what “success” means: What does a successful coaching practice look like to you?

These decisions do not need to be perfect, but they do need to be intentional. Consider the real costs—financial, emotional, and time-related—of each option. Offering free or reduced-fee sessions can be a meaningful expression of compassion, but only if you decide in advance how much you can give without resentment or exhaustion.

It is wise to decide ahead of time how many reduced-fee or free clients you can take, and how you will determine eligibility. Compassion without limits often leads to collapse rather than service.

Consultations, Intake & Termination

Consultations

Key purposes of the consultation

- Clarify what information you need
- Clarify what information the client needs
- Set expectations (yours and the clients)
- Determine whether you can offer what the client want
- Decide if coaching is a good fit

Before the consultation

- Create your own consultation outline (see Appendix)
- Have referral sources ready

The consultation is not a sales call or a mini session. The main purpose of the consultation is clarity. You are helping both yourself and the client decide whether working together makes sense. A good consultation prevents months of frustration later by aligning expectations, goals, scope, and readiness from the start.

Part of seeing if you are a good fit is rapport and connection. The consultation is an opportunity to connect with the client and see if you can develop rapport. Basic rapport can be established in minutes (on the Crisis Line we only had 30 seconds to 2 mins max to create a base line rapport) with the 5 Secrets of Effective Communication.

During the consultation, you are gathering essential information while also educating the client about what coaching is and is not. Clients often arrive with vague hopes (“I just want to feel better”) or misplaced expectations (“Can you fix this relationship for me?”). Your role is to gently translate those hopes into something coaching can realistically offer — or to say clearly when it cannot.

A successful consultation sets the client up for success whether or not they work with you. Sometimes the best outcome is a referral. Having referral options prepared ahead of time allows you to say no with confidence and care rather than hesitation or guilt.

See Appendix for a sample Consultation Form. Feel free to adapt and use however you like. *A 1.5-hour video workshop on how to conduct consultations is available as supplemental training.*

The First Session & Intake Form

- Confirm the coaching agreement and informed consent
- Review and clarify expectations
- Establish initial coaching goals
- Identify any red flags that need further exploration or referral
- Begin the coaching relationship using the 5 Secrets of Effective Communication

Coaches do **not** need to conduct a full clinical intake, and in most cases should not. Coaching is not therapy, and coaches are not acting as mental health experts. A lengthy diagnostic intake is unnecessary and can shift the tone from collaborative coaching to clinical assessment.

Instead, the first coaching session builds on a **pre-session intake form** completed by the client. This form gathers relevant background information, clarifies expectations, includes informed consent to coaching, and asks basic screening questions related to safety and scope. The coach reviews this form before the session and notes any areas that may require clarification or follow-up.

During the first session, the coach briefly confirms the information provided, explores coaching goals, and addresses any flagged concerns. This approach keeps the session focused, relational, and forward-moving while still maintaining ethical responsibility. The goal is not to interrogate the client, but to ensure that coaching is appropriate and that both parties understand what they are agreeing to.

The intake form itself should include enough information to identify patterns, goals, and risks without attempting diagnosis. It supports informed consent and protects both the client and the coach, while allowing the session to remain centered on coaching rather than assessment.

Establishing informed consent is essential. Clients need to understand what coaching is, what it is not, what outcomes are realistic, and when referral may be necessary. When consent and expectations are clear, the coaching relationship begins on solid ground rather than hopeful assumptions.

A sample Intake Form is provided in the Appendix feel free to use and adapt however you like. There is one screening section you do need the Toolkit from Dr. David Burns to use. It is marked.

Termination of Coaching

Core principles of termination

- Relapse preparation recap
- Coaching is meant to end
- Termination supports client ownership and independence

The goal of coaching is not dependence, but confidence. Once clients learn how to identify and correct unhelpful thinking, they need space to practice those skills on their own. Coaches need a positive view of termination. When coaches believe clients can move forward independently, clients often rise to that expectation. Ending well reinforces progress and helps clients internalize their gains.

When to plan a termination session

- The client has met their primary coaching goals
- The client is consistently using tools independently
- Financial or practical constraints arise
- The coach and client are not a good fit
- Another modality or provider would be more appropriate
- The coach is taking a leave or changing availability

Whenever coaching ends for any reason, a termination session is recommended. Ending without reflection often leaves growth unclaimed and confidence underdeveloped.

Assessing readiness

- Review progress and original goals
- Explore how the client is using tools independently
- Identify any unresolved or emerging issues
- Invite the client's perspective on readiness
- Normalize mixed emotions about ending

Some clients prefer a brief “testing the waters” phase with occasional check-ins before final termination. This can be a helpful bridge rather than an avoidance of ending.

Termination session essentials

- Prepare the client in advance
- Use a termination survey or reflection tool
- Review progress and skills learned
- Discuss relapse prevention and future challenges
- Create a simple post-coaching plan
- Reinforce that tune-ups are always an option

Termination should leave clients feeling capable, not cut off. Knowing they can return if needed provides security without fostering dependence. There are termination forms available in the Toolkit. Let me know if you are interested in that package.

Ending coaching well matters as much as beginning well — and both are shaped by the same core principle: clarity.

Next, we turn to **Scope of Practice & Safety**, where ethical limits protect both the client and the coach.

Scope of Practice & Safety

When Coaching Is Not Appropriate For:

- Active psychosis, delusions, or loss of contact with reality
- Any client with conditions requiring specialized clinical treatment (these will usually be identified by a lack of function in everyday life, you don't need to be a diagnostician)
- Treating addictions or substance dependence
- Advising on abusive situations, whether involving the perpetrator or the victim
- Dealing with current suicidal ideation.

Coaching has limits, and those limits are protective, not restrictive. Coaches are not mental health experts, diagnosticians, or crisis responders. When a client's needs fall outside the scope of coaching, the most ethical action is referral, not perseverance.

Saying “I’m not the right fit for you” is putting the client’s needs first. Clients are best served when they receive the *right* level of care rather than more of the *wrong* one.

When a client is outside your scope, it is important to respond calmly, clearly, and without apology. Having referral options ready ahead of time allows you to act decisively rather than hesitantly.

Referral Ideas When a client is out of your scope:

- Abide Network – trauma informed & trained SDA www.abide.network
- Feeling Good Institute – excellent track record with therapists/coaches all over the world www.feelinggoodinstitute.com
- Psychology Today

Suicide Risk: Assessment (Overview Only)

Core assessment areas

- Thoughts: “Have you recently had thoughts about wanting to die or not wanting to be here?”
- Plan: “Have you thought about how, when, or where?”
- Means: “Do you have access to the means to carry this out?”
- Hopelessness: “How hopeless do things feel right now on a scale from 0 to 10?”

Additional risk factors

- Previous suicide attempt
- History of depression, mental illness, or chronic pain
- Legal, job, or financial crises
- Current substance use
- History of violence or abuse

This overview is not a substitute for formal training. Its purpose is to help coaches recognize when **coaching must stop and intervention must begin**. The more specific the plan and the greater the access to means, the higher the risk. Rising hopelessness is one of the strongest predictors of danger. Risk factors change over time and across populations. When in doubt, do not rely on formulas. If your concern is rising, that concern itself is a signal to act.

General decision guidelines

- Multiple “yes” responses plus high hopelessness → get immediate help
- Any combination that leaves you uneasy → escalate
- When in doubt, err on the side of safety

Regardless of checklists or scores, if you are concerned, call for help. Discernment matters. Sometimes the Spirit prompts action before certainty arrives.

Suicide Prevention & Immediate Response

- Hope: Explore what has helped the person stay safe before

- Support: Identify who can be involved right now
- Time: Invite the client to delay action and stay present

You are not trying to solve everything in this moment. Your role is to slow things down, widen the field of support, and reduce isolation. Many people who survive suicide attempts report regret afterward. Creating even a small pause can save a life.

If a client refuses to contact a crisis line and you are concerned, call emergency services and request a wellness check. This is not a betrayal of trust; it is an act of care.

Coaches who work with people must receive **specific training** in suicide assessment and intervention. This section is an orientation, not qualification. Seek local, accredited programs and do not rely on intuition alone.

Clear scope, decisive safety actions, and humility about limits protect both the client and the coach. Next, we briefly cover **Ethics, Privacy, and Legal Basics**, which support these same principles from a practical standpoint.

Get training on suicidal intervention! Look for local programs in your area.

Ethics, Privacy & Legal Basics

This section is an orientation, not a legal training. The goal is to help you think responsibly, protect your clients and yourself. Ethical coaching is rarely about doing something dramatic; it's about doing many small things consistently and conservatively, especially when no one is watching.

Legal Disclaimer for this Mental Health Coaching Program

- This material is for general education only
- This is not legal advice
- Coaches should consult a lawyer familiar with local laws
- When uncertain, choose the more conservative, client-protective option

Ethical coaching consistently chooses protection over convenience. When laws, roles, or expectations feel unclear, err on the side of caution. Being conservative with boundaries, documentation, and referrals is not fear-based—it is responsible stewardship of the trust clients place in you.

Being proactive here builds trust, credibility, and peace of mind. When systems are in place ahead of time, you are less likely to panic or make poor decisions under pressure.

Client Data Protection Principles

- Protect all client information, digital and physical
- Secure phones, computers, and accounts with passwords and basic security
- Do not leave notes, files, or screens unattended
- Store client files and worksheets securely (for example, paid Google Workspace with appropriate security settings)

- Use secure platforms for online coaching (such as Zoom, Calendly, or similar reputable services)
- Be discreet about client information outside of sessions
- Have a secure person to speak to (consultation, therapy, coaching for yourself)

Client data protection is about respect, not paranoia. The truth is nothing you do is 100% fool proof. Do what you can without being complacent. Assume that anything you write down, store, or transmit is something you are responsible for safeguarding. This includes intake forms, worksheets, emails, and even casual notes you jot down to remember details between sessions.

Practically, this means using password-protected devices, logging out when you step away, and never access client data when on shared or public computers. Paid platforms are generally more secure than free ones. For example, Google Workspace has a paid version that lets you connect your domain and your email becomes a secure gmail. All the folders, contacts, and emails become much more secure. They even have a HIPAA form (no extra cost) for therapists, not that you need that, but it shows just how secure this system is.

Discretion also matters socially. Even anonymized stories can become identifiable in small communities. Ask yourself, “Would my client be able to identify themselves from the details?” then don’t.

Having said that you may need to express what’s going on for you because of working with a particular client. You can have couple options, one, talk to another coach as a peer supervisor, or a therapist. Or two, so discuss the details it would be impossible for anyone to figure out who this is. The best way to do this is to combine a couple clients and change as many details as possible: ages, occupations, locations, how many kids, etc. Paraphrase the negative thoughts, add new emotions and leave some out.

Notes and Record Keeping (Why, Not How)

- Track progress, goals, and tools used to support continuity
- Protect both the client and the coach
- Record relevant written communication (emails, agreements, forms)
- Store and back up notes securely

Notes are not about documenting everything a client says. They exist to help you coach well (key words for the 5 Secrets, track where you are in the model, etc.) and to protect both parties if questions arise later. Brief, factual notes about goals, tools used, and progress are usually sufficient.

Good notes reduce mental load. Instead of trying to remember every detail, you can focus on empathy and process during the session, knowing you have a reliable record to return to. Many coaches use simple systems such as Google Drive folders with forms and documents.

Backing up your records matters. Computers fail, accounts get locked, and accidents happen. A basic backup system—whether cloud-based or on an external hard drive—can save you from unnecessary stress.

Coaching Agreements & Informed Consent

- Signed coaching agreement before coaching begins
- Clear distinction between coaching, therapy, and consulting

- Explicit informed consent to coaching (what it is and what it is not)
- Clear roles, rights, responsibilities, and expectations
- Client's right to terminate coaching at any time
- Written permission required for testimonials or references

A coaching agreement ensures that both you and the client understand what kind of relationship you are entering into and what outcomes are realistic. This protects clients from false expectations and protects coaches from being asked to operate outside their role.

Informed consent should be explicit and plain. Clients should understand that coaching is not therapy, does not diagnose or treat mental illness, and may require referral if certain issues arise. This conversation should happen before coaching begins, not after problems appear.

Testimonials require special care. They should never be requested in a way that pressures clients. If testimonials are used at all, written permission must be obtained, and clients should feel completely free to decline without consequence.

See Appendix for a sample form, mine is part of the Intake Form, adapt and use as you like.

Jurisdictional Awareness

- Coaching laws and expectations vary by location
- Business registration or licensing may be required
- Insurance considerations (such as professional liability)
- Avoid practicing in regulated professional domains
- Seek supervision or case consultation when unsure

There is no universal set of coaching laws, in fact currently there are no explicit laws around coaching at all. What laws do exist that may apply to a coach are to do with therapy, mental health, medical practice, business, privacy, etc. What is acceptable in one region may not be in another. Coaches are responsible for knowing the basic expectations where they live and practice, especially if working across borders online.

Supervision and case consultation are not signs of weakness; they are markers of professionalism. Consulting with experienced peers or supervisors helps you think clearly, avoid blind spots, and demonstrate ethical diligence if your decisions are ever questioned.

When you are unsure whether something falls within your scope, that uncertainty itself is a signal to slow down and seek input.

Common Coaching Stuck Points

Briefly here are some common stuck points when working with a client, especially when you are new to coaching. Beside each stuck point I list the tool or technique to use (it may mean going back ward on the Coaching TEAM Flowchart, see that chart as well).

- Client has trouble figuring out NTs – Individual Downward Arrow
- Client is stuck crushing a thought (you've used several tools and nothing seems to be working) – Do a CBA, what are all the good reasons to hold onto this thought?

- Coach feels anxious, worried, or overwhelmed – Personal work
- Coach gets stuck - go back to the previous step. Empathy and CBA always a good choice. Acid Test. Get a case consultation!
- Client dwells on the past or “the why,” or believes a certain circumstance (relationship, trauma, stress) is the issue – Empathy, address scope of practice, Fallback Position
- Client breaks down emotionally – Fall back to empathy, then re-invite.
- Coach feels the urge to help – Do a Mood Log after the session

You are just starting out, give yourself room to make mistakes. Something coaches I've trained do when starting out is offering free services for practice and making it clear this is practice and the client is doing the coach a favour. Another option is offering services at a very low rate. Takes the pressure off performance. I did this early on, and even therapists do this. Interns charge far less and clients are aware they are new.

Don't be afraid to let the client know you are new. Don't be afraid to let the client know you are stuck and that you'll reach out for support so you can be better prepared when you meet again.

Summary & Key Concepts You MUST know!

TEAM for Coaching!

- Testing: Regularly check whether the client feels heard and whether the session is on track.
- Empathy: Understand the client fully and connect with them to build a relationship.
- Agenda Setting: We clarify the client's goal while honoring and understanding their resistance.
- Methods: We use a variety of simple, structured tools to achieve healthy, realistic thinking.

Empathy: 5 Secrets

- Disarming Technique (agree and affirm)
- Thought & Feeling Empathy (use their key words)
- I Feel Statements (connect deeper)
- Stroking (encouragement, showing respect)
- Inquiry (favor open ended questions)

You may use 1, 3, or all 5. They sound easy but hard to practice. Not just tools but transformative.

Agenda Setting:

1. Invitation - ask the client if they are ready!
2. Mood Log - get specific about what they want to work on.
3. Positive Reframing - talk about challenges to change.
4. Pivot Question - how ready are they to move forward?
5. Process Resistance - are they ready to do the hard work?

Coaching Session by Session Outline

These are only loose guidelines unless you do a 6 week or 12 week program. You might want to do 105min sessions like I do, which means sessions 1 to 4 can done in one or two sessions.

First Session Outline:

- Go over BMS (lots of Empathy) - 5 to 10min
- Empathy, Empathy, Empathy - 10 to 45min
- Miracle Cure Question - 5 to 10min
- Empathy till the client feels 100% heard (10 to 60min, might take a couple sessions)
- Assign Homework (reading, podcast, etc.) - 5 min

The first session is all about building rapport and connection with the client while understanding what they are in coaching for.

Second or Third Session Outline (depending on client's need of empathy):

- Go over BMS / ETS – 5 to 10min
- Homework Check in (what did they liked/didn't like, questions about, etc.) – 5 min
- Empathy - 5 to 10 min
- Empathy Check in (What's my Grade if not 20/20 on ETS) and more Empathy if need
- Invitation - 2 min
- If no to getting to work do More Empathy (5 min to 45min)
- If yes Mood Log part 1 – 20 to 30 mins
- Assign Homework / Book next session – 2 to 5 minutes

Second and/or third sessions are for continuing the coaching relationship connection and understanding and checking if now is a good time to get to work and what that work will be specifically through the Mood Log part 1. If you need a fourth session, no problem. I've had this take up to 5 sessions, 45-50mins long, when I started doing coaching. Just book end all empathy sessions with the Survey at the beginning and Assigning Homework at the end of the session. Sometimes the readings help the client move forward in addition to feeling heard and understood. I can't stress enough how important using a book to supplement coaching is! (TEAM therapists do this as well, it's vital for educating the client.)

Third or Fourth Session:

- Go over BMS / ETS – 5 mins
- Homework Check in (what did they like/didn't like, questions, etc.) – 5 min
- Positive Reframing (use Mood Log for the base) – 20 to 40 mins
- Pivot Question – 2 minutes
- Process Resistance – 5 to 10 minutes
- Assign Homework / Book next session – 2 to 5 minutes

The third or fourth session is about moving through Agenda Setting from Positive Reframing to addressing process resistance with the Carrot, Ultimatum, and Sitting with Open Hands.

Fourth session and beyond:

- Go over BMS / ETS – 5 mins
- Homework Check in (what did they like/didn't like, questions, etc.) – 5 min
- Mood Log Part 2 - ONE thought at a time, start working through methods, start with Identify and Explain the distortions – as time allows
- Assign Homework / Book next session – 2 to 5 minutes

Continue with each of the thoughts over the next few sessions. Note: first NT on the first Mood Log can take an entire session.

Last session (first Mood Log completed):

- Go over BMS / ETS – 5 mins
- Homework Check in (what did they like/didn't like, questions, etc.) – 5 min
- Mood Log Part 3 – AFTER all the thoughts are crushed, rerate the emotions – 5 min
- Do Relapse Preparation & Externalization of Voices – 20 to 35mins
- Decide if doing a second Mood Log (usually) or if next week will be termination session.
- Assign Homework / Book next session – 2 to 5 minutes

Once you've completed the first Daily Mood log, it's good to reenforce the client's new way of being by doing one or two more Mood Logs. The client may also wish to do another goal or explore Self-Defeating Beliefs.

Last Comments

Coaching is not about fixing people. It is about walking with them while they learn to see more clearly, think more truthfully, and choose more freely. You are not responsible for outcomes that only God can produce. You are responsible for showing up with integrity, humility, and skill.

If you remember nothing else from this section, remember this: clarity protects. Clear expectations, clear scope, clear structure, and clear endings do more to help clients than good intentions ever could. When you stay within your role, you create space for real change to happen.

You will not do this perfectly. You will miss things. You will second-guess yourself. That does not disqualify you—it simply means you are human and still learning. Use testing. Lean into empathy. Slow down when you feel stuck. Seek consultation when unsure. Wisdom grows in community.

Finally, trust that growth continues after coaching ends. When clients leave with tools, hope, and ownership, the work has not stopped—it has taken root. Your role is to plant, water, and step back. God brings the increase.

Resources

We can't do this alone!

- The Bible, Holy Spirit, & The Ministry of Healing by Ellen White
- Follow up course, TEAM Basics, and other resources from Angela:
www.angelapoch.com/nad
 - TEAM-CBT basics course www.teamcbt.ca/basics FREE with this coupon: CKE4GW622
 - Monday Practice Group with Angela, FREE live training and practice
www.teamcbt.ca/monday
 - Case Consultations or get help learning a particular method. www.angelapoch.com
- Dr. David Burns: Feeling Good Handbook, When Panic Attacks and/or Feeling Great (I get my clients to follow along with one of these)
- Referral sources when client needs more:
 - Abide Network – trauma informed & trained SDA <https://www.abide.network/>
 - Feeling Good Institute – excellent track record with therapists/coaches all over the world www.feelinggoodinstitute.com
 - Psychology Today – www.psychologytoday.com
 - Adventist Recovery Ministries www.adventistrecovery.org
- AAHWC – NAD Coaching resources & association: <https://nadhealth.org/coaching/>

“Let all cultivate their physical and mental powers to the utmost of their ability, that they may work for God where His providence shall call them.” MH 149

- My YouTube Channel about TEAM www.YouTube.com/@teamcbt
- Contact Angela Poch feelinggreat@angelapoch.com

Appendix:

TEAM Flow Sheet

BMS & ETS Surveys

Mood Log

Positive Reframing Prompts

Positive Reframing 4 Coaching Worksheet

Tool List

Explain the Distortions Worksheet

Sample Consultation Form

Sample Coaching Screening Form & Contract

Sample Session Notes

TEAM CBT Outline

- **Miracle Cure Question:** “If we did work together that was successful, and you got the change you’re looking for, how would your life be different? What would change?”
- **Empathy:** Empathy continues all stages, but focus on lots of 5 Secrets until getting an A in Empathy, see What’s My Grade or the Empathy score on the ETS.
- **Invitation:** “Would now be a good time get to work or do you need more time to share? Would you like to work on x, y, or z?”
- **Moment in Time & the Mood Log:** Since we are who we are every moment of every day let’s pick just one moment. This prevents us from running around in circles or getting bogged down in the past. “Can you tell me a specific time you felt this way/had this problem?” Create a Mood Log with the client, just fill in the Triggering Event, Upsetting Emotions, and Negative Thoughts along with their ratings. Important, do NOT leave the ratings off!
- **Positive Reframing:** “Before we try to work on this, let’s explore all the good reasons you feel the way you do right now, would that be ok with you?” Do positive reframe worksheet.
- **Pivot Question:** “With all these great things about you/good reasons not to change, why would you want my help?” “Go through a few of the Positive Reframing examples, write out the responses, this is the motivational script.
- **Process Resistance:** What would it mean to feel less ___ more ___, what would you be willing to do? (dangling the carrot, stroking, gentle ultimatum, and fallback position if need)
- **Specificity:** “Let’s choose one Negative Thought from your Mood Log. It can be the first one, or if one jumps out to you we can start there. Which thought would you like to work on first?”
- **Identify and Explain the Distortions:** “Can you tell me if you see any distortions in this thought. You can look at the list of 10 distortions on the Mood Log.” See worksheet.
- **More Methods:** If explain the distortions didn’t crush the negative thought (only works 50% of the time for me) work through other tools with client involvement. When find success, LIST what works for this client:
 - Effective method that worked well for this client 1
 - Effective method that worked well for this client 2
- **Finish the Mood Log:** Repeat for all the thoughts on the Mood Log. Often once the client can do 2 or 3 thoughts you can jump into “Externalization of Voices”.

TEAM SIMPLIFIED FLOWCHART

– NEXT PAGE

TEAMCBT SIMPLIFIED FLOW CHART

Quick Reference Guide for Mental Health Coaches

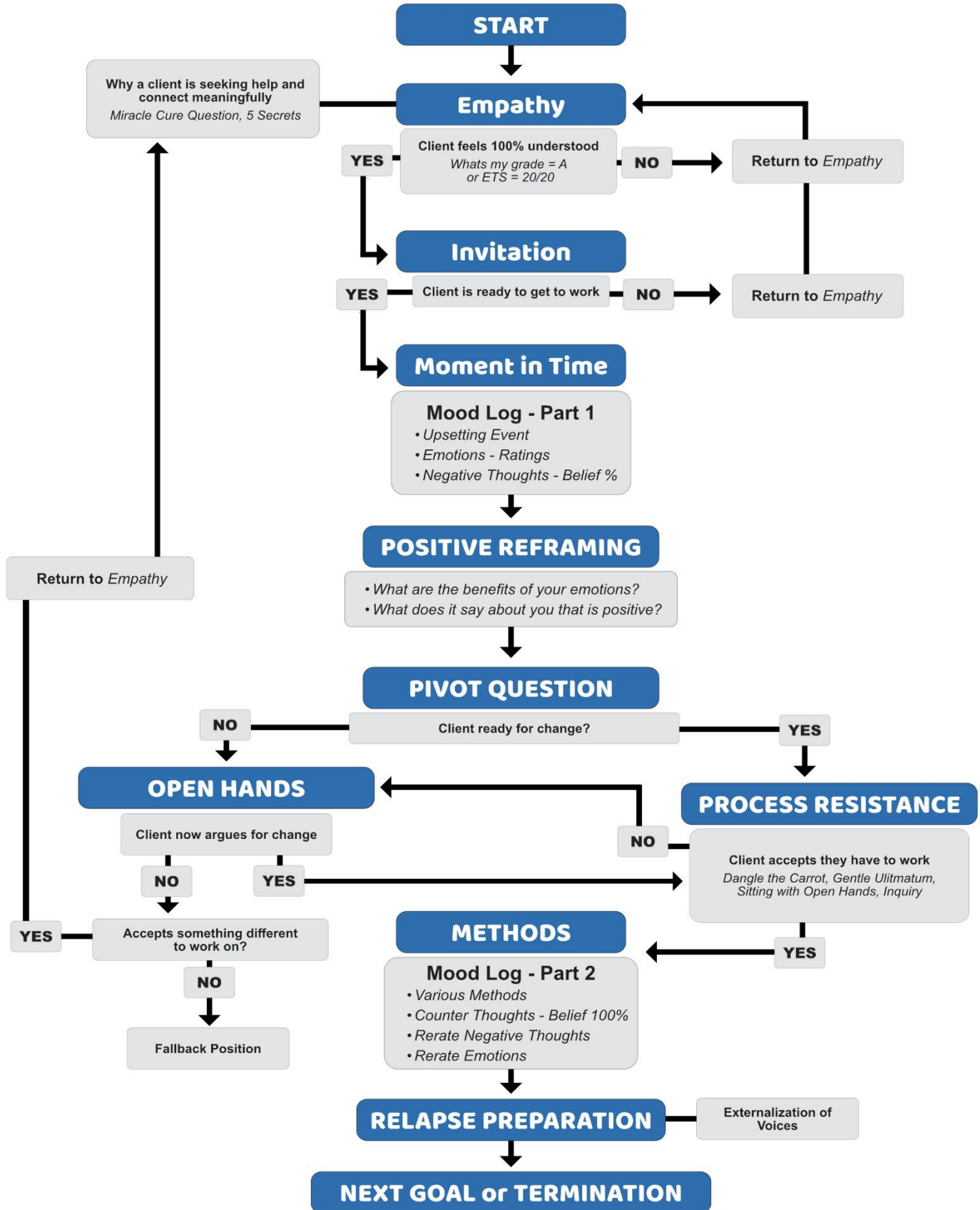


Chart created by Angela Poch, Copyright 2026 www.teamcbt.ca Based on the work of Dr. David Burns, all rights reserved.

BMS & ETS Surveys

SAMPLE – Need Dr. David Burns “Toolkit” for license to use. Google Form available. See www.angelapoch.com/nad

Name or Initials:

Please complete the following surveys BEFORE and AFTER the session. Please complete the survey on the back AFTER the session. Thank you!

Brief Mood Survey*	Before Session					After Session				
	0—Not at all	1—Somewhat	2—Moderately	3—A lot	4—Extremely	0—Not at all	1—Somewhat	2—Moderately	3—A lot	4—Extremely
Instructions. Use checks (✓) to indicate how you're feeling <i>right now</i> . Please answer all the items.										
How down do you feel right now?										
1. Sad or down in the dumps										
2. Discouraged or hopeless										
3. Low self-esteem, inferiority, worthlessness										
4. Loss of motivation to do things										
5. Loss of pleasure or satisfaction in life										
Total →						Total →				

Check in: Do you sometimes										
Please reach out to crisis services if you feel you may be depressed or suicidal.										
How anxious do you feel right now?										
1. Feel like you'd be better off dead?										
2. Have urges or plans to end your life?										
Total →						Total →				

How anxious do you feel right now?										
1. Anxious										
2. Frightened										
3. Worrying about things										
4. Tense or on edge										
5. Nervous										
Total →						Total →				

How angry do you feel right now?										
1. Frustrated										
2. Annoyed										
3. Resentful										
4. Angry										
5. Irritated										
Total →						Total →				

Happiness*	Before Session					After Session				
	0—Not at all	1—Somewhat	2—Moderately	3—A lot	4—Extremely	0—Not at all	1—Somewhat	2—Moderately	3—A lot	4—Extremely
Instructions. Use checks (✓) to indicate how you're feeling <i>right now</i> . Please answer all the items.										
1. Happy and joyful										
2. Hopeful and optimistic										
3. Worthwhile, high self-esteem										
4. Motivated, productive										
5. Pleasure and satisfaction in life										
Total →						Total →				

Relationship Satisfaction*	Before Session						After Session							
	0—Very Dissatisfied	1—Moderately Dissatisfied	2—Somewhat Dissatisfied	3—Neutral	4—Somewhat Satisfied	5—Moderately Satisfied	6—Very Satisfied	0—Very Dissatisfied	1—Moderately Dissatisfied	2—Somewhat Dissatisfied	3—Neutral	4—Somewhat Satisfied	5—Moderately Satisfied	6—Very Satisfied
Put the name of an important relationship in your life: _____														
Use checks (✓) to indicate how you feel about this relationship.														
Please answer all 5 items.														
1. Communication and openness														
2. Resolving conflicts														
3. Degree of affection and caring														
4. Intimacy and closeness														
5. Overall satisfaction														
Total →							Total →							

How much homework have you done since your last session? (✓)			
None	A little	A moderate amount	A lot

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Please fill this out AFTER the session. Thank you!

Evaluation of Session *

Instructions. Use checks (✓) to indicate how you felt about your most recent coaching session.

Please answer all the items.

0-Not at all true	1-Somewhat true	2-Moderately true	3-Very true	4-Completely true
-------------------	-----------------	-------------------	-------------	-------------------

Connection & Empathy

1. My coach seemed warm, supportive, and concerned.					
2. My coach seemed trustworthy.					
3. My coach treated me with respect.					
4. My coach did a good job of listening.					
5. My coach understood how I felt inside.					
Total →					

Helpfulness of the Session

6. I was able to express my feelings during the session.					
7. I talked about the problems that are bothering me.					
8. The techniques we used were helpful.					
9. The approach my coach used made sense.					
10. I learned some new ways to deal with my problems.					
Total →					

Satisfaction with Today's Session

11. I believe the session was helpful to me.					
12. Overall, I was satisfied with today's session.					
Total →					

Your Commitment

13. I plan to do homework before the next session.					
14. I intend to use what I learned in today's session.					
Total →					

Negative Feelings During the Session

15. At times, my coach didn't seem to understand how I felt.					
16. At times, I felt uncomfortable during the session.					
17. I didn't always agree with my coach.					
Total →					

Difficulties with the Questions

18. It was hard to answer some of these survey questions honestly.					
19. Sometimes my survey answers didn't show how I really felt inside.					
20. It would be too upsetting for me to criticize my coach.					
Total →					

What did you like **the least** about the session? _____

What did you like **the best** about the session? _____

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Mood Log

Triggering Event - When, where, and who was I with:

Upsetting Emotions (rate 0-100%):

Anxious		Worried		Nervous		Afraid	
Sad		Down		Discouraged		Hopeless	
Inadequate		Inferior		Worthless		Defective	
Lonely		Alone		Abandoned		Rejected	
Embarrassed		Foolish		Humiliated		Self-conscious	
Guilty		Remorseful		Bad		Ashamed	
Frustrated		Stuck		Upset		Overwhelmed	
Angry		Annoyed		Irritated		Resentful	
Other:							

Negative Thoughts (rate how much you believe the thought 0-100%):

Be very brief! Do not put facts, feelings, or questions.

	Believe 0-100	After p2, Re-rate!
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

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Mood Log

5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Steps to crushing a negative thought:

1. Write out your thoughts and feelings about ONE moment in time.
2. Choose just ONE thought to start with.
3. Look for the thinking errors in that thought using various tools, start with finding the distortions*.
4. Restate your thought 100% truthfully.
5. Weigh the new thought against old negative thought!
6. Try more methods and tools till you crush it! (usually 20% or less)
7. Practice using the new thought and repeat steps 3 to 7 with OTHER Negative Thoughts.

*10 Cognitive Distortions by Dr. David Burns	
1. All or nothing (Black & White)	6. Magnification or Minimization (Catastrophizing)
2. Over-generalization	7. Emotional Reasoning
3. Negative Mental Filter	8. Shoulds & Musts
4. Discounting the Positive	9. Labeling (Personalization)
5. Jumping to conclusions (Fortune Telling & Mind Reading)	10. Blame – Self or Other

*For more tools see, "The Truth Will Set You Free" by Angela Poch or one of Dr. David Burns books such as "Feeling Great" or "When Panic Attacks" or check out his free podcasts with over 50 tools explained, www.feelinggood.com.

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Mood Log

Restate EACH of my negative thoughts to be more truthful, helpful, and less painful:

Using the 7 Step's to crush a negative thought, rewrite the NEW thought below. You must believe the new thought 100% and it needs to reduce the corresponding Negative Thought from page 1 to 30% or lower.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

If you are experiencing severe depression, suicidal thoughts, or other mental health issue, please seek professional help. Coaching is not a substitute for therapy!

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Coaches Mood Log Cheat Sheet

Part 1 – Get Specific**After Invitation is accepted... Explain Specificity to the Client (Script)**

“Instead of trying to look at everything at once, let’s pick one short moment when this problem showed up. It should be something that still makes you upset to think about. When we work through one real moment carefully, we start to see the same thoughts and patterns that show up in other situations too. Once you learn how to handle it here, you’ll know how to handle it next time. We’re not ignoring the bigger picture—this is the fastest way to get unstuck and once we change one moment, we change the pattern of thinking that is the problem.”

1. Upsetting or Triggering Event - Ask:

- “Tell me when and where was it, what was happening and who were you with?”

2. Emotions - Ask

- “Did you feel (read through each emotion grouped by theme, pause at each line) Circle or underline all the emotions that apply and ask how much they felt it.
- Rate the emotions they check off as you go. “How worried and nervous do you feel?”

3. Negative Thoughts - Ask:

- “What went through your mind in that moment?” Write down each thought as they say it. I often ask for each emotion, “What comes up when you think about feeling X (emotion)?”
- Rate each thought as you write it down. “How much do you believe that thought?”

NT Reminders & Prompts IF needed:

- Not facts or description of events – “What story are you telling yourself about X (fact, event)”
- Not feelings – “What comes up for you when you think about feeling X?”
- Not questions – “Can you reframe that question into a statement?” OR “What does that question imply?”
- Short, specific statements (break up long ones with multiple ideas) “Let’s break this down into two NTs because it’s hard to do battle with multiple foes at once.”

After part 1 is complete go to → **Positive Reframing (for the first / second Mood Logs).**

Part 2 - Work through all the Negative Thoughts:

- 1) Pick ONE thought to start!
- 2) Use a method (See Tool List).
- 3) Ask client to create a new more helpful, truthful Counter Thought.
- 4) Ask them to rate their new thought, “How much do you believe that?”
 - a) If not 100%, explore with the client, “Why not?” “What would make it 100%?” If can’t get to 100% go back to Step 2
 - b) If 100% go to step 5 (they must believe the new thought 100%!)

- 5) Re-Rate the Negative Thought, “How much do you believe __ (read their NT)?”
- a) If not crushed (0 to 30% depending on the thought) try another method, Step 2.
 - b) If crushed, move onto another thought, Step 1
- (repeat with all the Negative Thoughts)*

Part 3 - Test the Results - Did it Work?

- Once all negative thoughts are addressed, re-rate the emotions. Were they reduced to acceptable levels?
 - In practice, this occurs the vast majority of the time (I’ve only had it fail once or twice).
 - BUT in the RARE case it doesn’t lower the emotions enough:
 - Go back and check the Negative Thought scores. They may need to be lower!
 - Do Downward Arrow on a particularly troubling or loaded thought or one with lots of “truth” in it. Add any new thoughts to the Mood Log and work through them.
 - Do another Mood Log
 - Check for Self-Defeating Beliefs
- When complete, have the client read the successful Mood Log daily for one week, weekly for one month, and then as needed. This reinforces the new thinking pattern.
- Do a couple more Mood Log’s on different upsetting events to build more neuropathways of truth!

The Mood Log becomes both a treatment tool and a rehearsal mechanism, strengthening the new neural and cognitive pathways over time.

Positive Reframing Prompts & Examples*
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This list is for brainstorming only. The ideas are taken from various clients/coachs and relevant in particular circumstances. The benefits can get repetitive. Make yours as specific as possible to the upsetting event and thoughts you are having.

Emotion	Advantages & Benefits <i>What are some benefits of feeling this way? How will this help you? What's its function? What is the implication of the opposite?</i>	Positive Values <i>What do these kinds of feelings show about you that is awesome and beautiful? Why would it be hard to give up?</i>
sadness feeling down depressed unhappy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honest with myself. • Makes me more compassionate • Helps me to be more capable of embracing the pain of others. • I can share in humanity's/Christ's suffering. • Keeps me from being in denial. • An awareness of ___happening and being important to me. (Life event/loss.) • It marks a precious/important moment in my life (life transition). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I am realistically looking at the problem/loss which has been difficult. • May be appropriate. • Reflects your intense love of ___ • Brave/courageous. Shows you are willing to wrestle with the pain rather than being in denial. • Willing to look at my roll in ____, and take responsibility for my part. • Shows I'm not willing to dismiss beautiful things in my life that have passed.
anxiety nervousness worry panic fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects from danger. • Keeps me vigilant. • Motivates me to get help, seek therapy. • Motivates me to do that best job I can. • Prevents me from being complacent. • Prepares me for _____(the future.) • Gives me greater understanding. Helps me be more compassionate for others. • Provides energy to combat depression. • Helps me see and identify potential risks. • It's a red flag to take stock of what I am thinking. Helps me with being aware of my negative thoughts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I value ___and would be sad if something happened to them/it. • Shows I care deeply about ___(doing a good job, protecting myself/those I love, being ready for unexpected things, etc.) • Shows I am unwilling to just let things happen but would rather get involved to ensure the best possible outcome. • Shows other opinions matter to me. • Shows I listen/hear others concerns/criticisms. • Shows I'm not ignorant of risk or arbitrarily jumping into danger.
Guilt, shame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's feedback something might be wrong. • Reminds I am not living up to my values • Motivates me change, do better next time. Helps me work on and toward new goals to better myself. • Keeps me from repeating past mistakes • Helps me examine where I am at now. • It's points me to Higher Source/ God. • Helps me to focus on what's important. • Empowers me to ask for forgiveness and make amends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I care about my standards. • Shows I'm unwilling to settle for less than my standards. • It's appropriate. • Shows I'm willing to look at my own flaws. • I care about how my behaviour affects others. • I don't want to let others down, they matter to me. • I have strong spiritual values/moral code.

Emotion	Advantages & Benefits <i>What are some benefits of feeling this way? How will this help you? What's its function? What is the implication of the opposite?</i>	Positive Values <i>What do these kinds of feelings show about you that is awesome and beautiful? Why would it be hard to give up?</i>
inferiority defectiveness worthlessness inadequacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivates me to work hard and not settle for mediocrity. • Motivates me to seek help, therapy, education, self-improvement courses, life coaching, religion/God, etc. • Helps me examine where I am at now vs where I want to be. • Prevents me from denial and avoiding what I need to do to improve. • Prevents me from overconfidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I have high standards. • Shows I am realistic, since everyone has flaws and shortcomings. • Shows courage – willing to see my flaws • Shows I'm accountable, since I'm not blaming everyone else. • Shows I'm humble, not arrogant. • My spirituality is important to me. • I value being a positive contributor to others/world.
loneliness feeling: alone rejected abandoned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It motivates me to reach out to people. • Protects from disappointment. • Gives me a break from social pressure. • Helps prevent me from giving up on people, I haven't lost hope in_. • May help prevent me from becoming bitter because I embrace the sadness. • Can motivate me to make personal changes (lose weight, join a club, improve communication skills, get 'out there', etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I care about ____. • Shows I value relationships. • Shows I want meaningful relationships • Shows I'm not satisfied with superficial talk and pointless chatter. • I am holding ___accountable for their part in being hurtful. • Shows I am not willing to completely give up on_(love, person, situation). • Shows I want a connection with _.
humiliated self-conscious embarrassed foolish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompts me to examine myself. • Motivates me change, do better next time, modify my behaviour. • Reminds me I am human • Keeps me humble. • Protects or prevents me from being foolish, stupid, ignorant, hurtful, ____etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I am humble • Shows I am honest and realistic. • I am willing to look at myself and my part. • I care what others think. • I value ___'s opinion, they matter to me. • I value responsibility, admit my part.
hopelessness discouraged pessimistic defeated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects me from getting angry or disappointed if things don't work out. • Prepares me for inevitable challenges. • Gives me a break! No expectations. • Justified in not to do anything • Surrender without giving up – profound acceptance "I surrendered to __but never gave up and I would still__". • Reveals something else I need to do. • Eliminates or reduces fear because there is no future to fear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I care very much even though I can't see how to achieve it. • I value realism. Sometimes things are bad • Shows I'm willing to surrender, move on to a new facet in life. • Shows I know what hope is,.. if I feel I've lost it I must have had it before. • I am intelligent and skeptical. I question, challenge things rather than just accepting. • I value truth. Things aren't always rosy. • I value hope and a brighter future. • I take things seriously.

Emotion	Advantages & Benefits <i>What are some benefits of feeling this way? How will this help you? What's its function? What is the implication of the opposite?</i>	Positive Values <i>What do these kinds of feelings show about you that is awesome and beautiful? Why would it be hard to give up?</i>
frustrated stuck thwarted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivates me to find solutions elsewhere since I can't figure them out. • Keeps me from giving up completely. • Motivates me to keep trying. • Helps me re-evaluate what I think is important. • Helps me give up something that is not rewarding or fulfilling (or even harmful). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic, I can see what is and what I'd like things to be. • Shows I have goals I've not given up on. • Shows high standards • Shows I value ___(what client is stuck about/between). • Show I care about making the right decision. • Show I want something more.
angry resentful upset hurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation to change. • Pushes people I don't want to ___away. • Alerts me when something is unjust. • Let's me stand up for what's right. • Puts me in control. • It's energizing. Or It's empowering. • It protects me or my beliefs and values. • It helps me get my way. • It's better than feeling hurt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's Shows I'm optimistic. (I expect good things) • It shows what I hope for. • It shows I have high standards. • Shows I value fairness and justice. • Shows I value kindness, integrity, or _ (what has been violated). • Shows I care about _____rather than being apathetic/indifferent.
Urge to give into habits IE: overeating procrastination alcohol, meds I don't need, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's one of my only sources of pleasure. • The reward is immediate. • It numbs the pain/anxiety/guilt/fear, etc. • It's comforting. • Helps me connect with others. • It's easy. I want to! • It help me to _____(think straight, be more social, creative, etc.) • Helps me avoid negative feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows I have a free spirit and unwilling to conform. • Shows I value connecting with others. • Shows I value self-care (willing to put myself first in that moment). • Shows I desire peace and happiness.

Positive Reframing Worksheet*

Instructions. Review the negative thoughts and feelings on your Mood Log one by one and fill in the right-hand column. Most upsetting emotions will have both advantages *and* core values.

Emotion <i>(Delete ones that don't apply)</i>	Advantages and Core Values 1. What are some advantages, benefits, or functions of this feeling or negative thought? 2. What does this feeling or negative thought show about me and my core values that is beautiful, positive, and/or awesome? 3. Why might this be hard to give up?
Anxious, worried, nervous, afraid.	
Sad, down, discouraged, hopeless	
Inadequate, inferior, worthless, defective	
Lonely, rejected, abandoned, alone.	
Embarrassed, foolish, humiliated, self-conscious	
Guilty, remorseful, bad, ashamed.	
Frustrated, stuck, upset, overwhelmed	
Angry, annoyed, irritated, resentful.	
Other	

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Coaching Tool List

This list has brief overviews designed to remind you how the tool is done, NOT teach you step by step how to use it. See one of Dr David Burns books or visit his website www.feelinggood.com or my website www.feelinggreat.ca for more information on using these tools.

When crushing NT's remember each tool has a set up, the delivery, and wrap up.

The set up includes the purpose of the tool. It may also include some preliminary instructions depending on how complicated the tool is, IE: role play description, exposure information, etc.

The delivery is the *HOW* part. Each of the following tools starts with the purpose of the tool followed by the *HOW (to do it)*.

Wrap is something like, "With all this in mind what would be a more helpful Counter Thought (CT)?" "How much do you believe that?" If 100% write that on the Mood Log and re-rate the NT. The CT must be 100% before rating the NT. The NT is usually "crushed" when it is 0-30% depending on the thought and how much "truth" is in that thought.

How to Use this Tool List

- Work with one clearly stated Negative Thought at a time.
- Pick a tool based on the distortions in the Negative Thought
- Read over the summary to remind yourself how to do the tool.

Tips & Tricks

- Thoughts have several distortions so many tools work. No "perfect" tool for "that" distortion.
- Most tools work by weakening or removing distortions, select tools based on distortions first.
- Some tools emphasize behavioural activation—mood and motivation follow movement—while still crushing Negative Thoughts. For example, the *Pleasure Predicting Sheet* helps clients act even when they believe "I'm never happy anymore." The action often shifts mood, and shows the thought inaccurate, i.e. experienced some enjoyment.
- A smaller number of tools focus more on facing fear or accepting difficult emotions (e.g., "this feeling is uncomfortable, but I can handle it").
- Not all tools work for all thoughts, try the same tool with different thoughts.
- Some tools work better than others for particular individuals, often once you know which ones these can be the go-to. E.g. I'm a heavy All or Nothing thinker and while Shades of Grey is excellent for AON, Examine the Evidence usually works for me.
- Expect uneven progress. A thought may weaken gradually or collapse all at once.

How to Choose a Tool

First 2-4 Mood Logs: start with Identify and Explain the Distortions, then pick other tools based on the distortions found in that thought until it is crushed. After crushed a few negative thoughts try Externalization of Voices*.

Subsequent Mood Logs: Identify the Distortions and then Straightforward Technique. Use the tools that worked best, try new ones as needed. Eventually, with practice, most Negative Thoughts can be crushed with the Straightforward Technique without a Mood Log. Then go to a Mood Log when thoughts get sticky.

Tools

If a tool is particularly helpful for a specific cognitive distortion, that will be in bold.

Key:

CT or PT = Counter or Positive Thought

NT = Negative Thought

BMS = Brief Mood Survey

DML = Mood Log

SDB = Self Defeating Beliefs

AON = All or Nothing

OG = Overgeneralization

MT = Mental Filter

DP = Discounting the Positive

MR = Mind Reading

FT = Fortune Telling

MM = Magnification/Minimization (Catastrophizing)

ER = Emotional Reasoning

SS = Should Statements

LB = Labeling

SB = Self-Blame & Personalization

OB = Other-Blame

Identify the Distortions

Use for: ALL Distortions

Our NTs have some or even a lot of truth in them but they are also full of distortions. The distortions are what make our thoughts so painful. When we can see the distortions often we can crush them by looking at the truth and removing the distortions from the thought.

HOW: Go through the list of 10 and see which apply. You will likely find 3, 5, or even all 10.

Straightforward Technique

Use for: ALL Distortions (may not be as useful for OB)

We don't have to just accept anything that pops into our head as true or realistic. We can choose to re-start our negative thought into a more positive or truthful one. We use this tool more after we've really learn to crush NT's in various ways, it can become more intuitive to notice the thought is not truth and restate it.

HOW: Try to substitute a more positive, realistic, counter thought in place of your negative one. Ask yourself, "Is this NT really true?" "Do I really believe it?" "Is there another way to look at it?"

Explain the Distortions

Use for: ALL Distortions

We can unpack our thinking around distortions by looking at exactly how our thoughts relate to specific distortions and figure out what the error of thinking really is.

HOW: Choose one of the distortions for your NT and ask the following 3 questions: Why is this NT an example of this distortion? Why is that a thinking error or why is this not true? Why will that be self-defeating or problematic? See worksheet (I use this for client to take as homework after doing the tool together in session at least once).

Examine the Evidence

Use for: ALL Distortions

We often treat feelings or distortions in our thinking like facts. This tool helps us decipher what is fact from opinion or fiction.

HOW: Imagine this NT is on trial. Draw two columns on a page and write down the evidence for and against the NT. Only use good evidence to support or refute the NT. What are the facts? What do they show? Can you counter argue the “for” statements? Can you come up with new arguments on the ‘against’ side? If you were the judge who would you say won? What conclusions would you draw from all this evidence? What arguments were the most compelling?

Semantic Technique

Use for: AON, MF, MM, ER, SS, LB, SB,

We often speak to ourselves in a critical manner and even demand from ourselves impossible standards or create unrealistic rules for ourselves.

HOW: We can substitute kinder and gentler language that is less emotionally charged. I.e. I shouldn't have _ vs, It would be preferable if _. What could you say instead of (NT)?

Thinking in Shades of Gray

Use for: AON, MF, DP, MM, SS, LB, SB

Many of our life experiences are not so black and white as we might initially think. Instead of thinking about your problems as only black or white categories, Either/or, you can evaluate them in shades of gray or on a gradient.

HOW: Perhaps there is something in-between in terms of this NT? Is there a less extreme way to think about this situation? When things don't work out as well as you'd hoped, you can think of the experience as a partial success or a learning opportunity. Pinpoint your specific errors instead of writing yourself off as a total failure.

Individual Downward Arrow

Use for: Uncovering NT's & SDBs.

Draw a downward arrow under a NT and ask, “If this were true why would it be upsetting to me? What would it mean to me or about me?” Write the answer down under the arrow and repeat several times. Review against SDB list, or put NT's on DML, or do a CBA on the last one.

CBA – Cost Benefit Analysis

Use for: Sticky (hard to crush) NTs, SDBs, or feelings.

On the left write all the advantages of believing this thought is true (having this SDB, feeling, habit). How will believing this thought help me? Next on the left side write out the disadvantages and costs of believing that thought. How will it hurt me? Balance them against each other on a 100-point scale. Which is higher, the costs or the benefits? What do you think of that?

Draw a vertical line down the page and write the specific Negative Thought at the top. On one side, list the advantages of believing the thought is true (e.g., how it helps, protects, or motivates). On

the other side, list the disadvantages and costs of believing it (e.g., how it hurts you). Then rate the total benefits and total costs on a 100-point scale and compare them. Use this perspective to develop a more accurate and helpful Counter Thought.

Externalization of Voices

Use for: all distortions, relapse preparation

One of the most powerful cognitive techniques, this role play tool goes from an intellectual perspective to a transformation experience at the gut level.

HOW: You take turns playing the role of NTs and PTs. The person playing the NT attacks and the person playing the PT works to defeat the NT using: self-acceptance, self-defense, CAT, or a combo of any of these. Use role-reversals when you get stuck. At the end of each round ask who won? If the PT won ask small or big, big or huge? If huge write down the PT on the DML. If big or small try again or do a role reversal and so on.

Reattribution

Instead of blaming yourself entirely for the problem you can think of the many factors that contributed to it. What did I contribute, what did others contribute? What can I learn from the situation?

HOW: On the top of a page write down the NT and draw a vertical line underneath in the center of the page. On the left put 'what I have control over/responsible for' and on the right put down what don't I have control over, what other factors are at play, what did others contribute? Fill in the sheet.

*Use for: MF, SS, LB, **SB**, OB*

Experimental Technique

We can do an experiment to test the validity of our NT like a scientist would test a theory.

HOW: Brainstorm with the client, "How could you test this NT to find out if it's really valid?"

*Use for: FT, MR, **ER***

Survey Method

Researchers often use surveys to see if something is valid or not. We can do a survey to find out if your thoughts are realistic.

HOW: We ask question from other such to see how they think and feel about your NT. We will ask friends/family/colleagues/strangers about your NT for feedback. Do they believe this NT to be true?

*Use for: OG, FT, **MR**, ER*

Be Specific

*Use for: AON, **OG**, MF, DP, MR/FT, ER, LB, SB*

Stick with reality and avoid judgments about it. Focus on specific strengths and weaknesses.

1. All human beings have flaws, imperfect.

2. Specific failures don't cause suffering. It's our insistence that we shouldn't have failed.
3. When you accept your shortcomings with inner peace and humor, your suffering will disappear.

HOW: Looking at your NT, what specifically is the reality of what is going on here? What are your strengths? Your weaknesses? Shortcomings? What part of this can you accept right now as being human? What part can you accept but perhaps work toward changing?

Double Standard Technique

We often have a double standard where we treat ourselves far more harshly than we would anyone else. In this tool we find a way to tap into that compassion for ourselves.

HOW: We can talk to ourselves in the same compassionate way we might talk to a dear friend. We usually do this in a role play (no role reversals).

1. "Imagine I am a dear friend exactly like you in every way, same problem, age, circumstances, NTs, etc." "Give me a name."
2. Coach describes the event and emotions in first person then adds "What do you think about ___ (NT) is that true?"
3. If they give an effective response, affirm it, then cross examine. IE: yes but, sounds good but what if, I like what you are saying but are you just being nice or is that really true, etc.
4. If patient hits it out of the park, "If that is true for me that must be true for you too since I'm just like you, right?"

Wrap Up: Let's step out of the role play. What part of that exercise can you draw on to form a PT? Let's write that down on the DML.

Use for: ALL Distortions

Negative Practice

Use for: MF, MR, FT, LB, SB

This tool helps you take back control of when and where you deal with your inner critic. It also gives you permission to stay on a task rather than ruminating all day.

If you constantly beat up on yourself because of your shortcomings you can schedule several five-minute periods each day to berate yourself and feel miserable. At those times, you can be as self-critical as you want and rip yourself to shreds with gusto. You can use the rest of the time for joyous, productive living. You'll likely find it when you control the narrative it feels silly and loses its power.

HOW: Schedule several minutes each day to beat up on yourself mentally.

Worry Breaks

Use for: MR, FT, LB, SB

Similar to Negative Practice, this tool helps you take back control of when and where you deal with your fears and worries. It also gives you permission to stay on a task rather than ruminating all day.

If you constantly worry about things, you can schedule several five-minute periods each day to worry about what comes up and everything that matters to you. At those times, you can be as

anxious as you want and let yourself imagine the worst. The rest of the day, postpone worry and remain focused on what you're doing. You'll likely find, after a while, the anxiety and worry monster has no teeth.

HOW: Schedule several minutes each day to worry.

Acceptance Paradox Exploration

Use for: All Distortions

Reduces shame and emotional intensity by replacing harsh self-attack with honest, humble, and/or humorous acceptance, which paradoxically puts a lie to the NT itself.

Instead of fighting the Negative Thought, lean into it by accepting any flaws about yourself without defense or self-condemnation. Explore questions such as: *Is there part of this thought that is true/accurate? Is being flawed human? Is it ok to be human?* Use humility and, when appropriate, humour to stay with acceptance rather than correction. From this stance, create a Counter Thought that reflects acceptance of imperfection rather than an attempt to fix, argue, or justify it. Faith add on: "How is being human, weakness, or making mistakes viewed in scripture?"

Forgiveness (Self)

Use for: All Distortions, especially SB, WHEN there is something that was done wrong.

Reduces shame and prolonged distress by ending self-punishment once responsibility has been clearly acknowledged. When accountability is taken and learning is complete, continued self-attack no longer serves a corrective purpose and instead interferes with growth.

Begin by exploring the role of continued suffering: *What feels important about punishing yourself? What do you hope it accomplishes?* Next, state plainly what you did wrong using specific, factual language, avoiding global labels or exaggeration. Next, write what you learned from the situation and how you would respond differently if it happened again. Then identify how you are still punishing yourself (e.g., replaying it, self-attacking, withholding relief) and choose to stop, recognizing that punishment is no longer producing learning. Create a Counter Thought that reflects accountability without sentencing. When the self-attack returns, use the CT.

Faith Tools

See the book, "The Truth will Set You Free"

www.teamcbt.ca/truth

10 Cognitive Distortions* Handout

- 1) All-or-Nothing (Black-and-White)** — Seeing things in extremes, with no middle ground or nuance. IE: total success or total failure, with no middle. “If I don’t do this perfectly, it’s a complete disaster.”
- 2) Over-Generalization** — Drawing a sweeping conclusion from a specific mistake or flaw. IE: treat one setback as a never-ending pattern. “This didn’t work, nothing I try ever works.”
- 3) Negative Mental Filter** — Like wearing dark tinted glasses. You focus on what’s wrong/bad/negative and ignore or can’t see anything neutral, beneficial, or positive. “I rushed the presentation; the whole thing was terrible.”
- 4) Discounting the Positive** — Dismissing positive outcomes as unimportant or accidental. IE: You dismiss good things as luck, ‘not counting,’ or ‘not enough.’ “The first exercise was easy, I suck overall.”
- 5) Jumping to Conclusions** — You make a conclusion without strong and sufficient evidence. **Mind Reading:** assuming what others think. **Fortune Telling:** predicting a bad outcome as if it’s certain. Assuming things will always be the same, never change. **Mind reading:** “She didn’t reply—she thinks I’m annoying.” **Fortune telling:** “This meeting will go badly.”
- 6) Magnification / Minimization (Catastrophizing)** — Exaggerating problems or downplaying successes. IE: You blow problems up bigger than they are, or shrink your strengths/efforts. “This mistake is a disaster.”
- 7) Emotional Reasoning** — You treat a feeling as proof of truth. Believing something is true because it feels true. “I feel like a failure, so I must be a failure.”
- 8) Shoulds & Musts** — Rigid rules you’ve created or buy into that create pressure, guilt, or resentment. Using rigid rules about how you or others *ought* to behave. “I should always be productive.”
- NOTE:** There are 2 Legitimate shoulds: Moral shoulds (the 10 commandments) and Natural Shoulds (IE: Gravity – the apple should fall if I drop it.) IF you have done something wrong that’s what confession, repentance, and forgiveness is for!
- 9) Labeling (Personalization)** — Defining yourself or others by a single behaviour or outcome. You turn a mistake into a global identity tag. “I forgot—I’m an idiot.”
- 10) Blame (Self-Blame / Other-Blame)** — You assign fault as the main explanation, instead of looking at causes and next steps. Assigning responsibility without considering all contributing factors. **Self:** “This is all my fault—everything goes wrong because of me.” **Other:** “It’s their fault—I can’t do anything unless they change.”

* The 10 Cognitive Distortions are by Dr. David Burns. See www.feelinggood.com for more

Explain the Distortions Handout

Explain the Distortions* / David Burns, MD

Step 1. Pick ONE Negative Thought from your Mood Log and write it here:

Step 2. Identify the Distortions in this thought then Step 3. Select one distortion to work and write it here:

Step 4. Answer these three questions about the distortion:

1. Why is your thought a classic example of this distortion?
2. Why is this distortion considered a thinking error?
3. Why is this distortion self-defeating, misleading and unfair?

Step 5. Now see if you can generate a Counter Thought that satisfies the Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for emotional change:

1. The Necessary Condition: The Positive Thought must be 100% true.
2. The Sufficient Condition: The Positive Thought must reduce your belief in the Negative Thought.

Step 6. Write your Positive Thought on DML and indicate how strongly you believe it (0 to 100) ____.

Step 7. Re-rate your belief in the Negative Thought _____. Add that to your Mood Log.

Step 8. If your belief in the Negative Thought is still high, repeat this procedure as many times as you like, starting with a different distortion each time. This can often be helpful, since different distortions will lead to different strategies for challenging the Negative Thought.

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Sample Consultation Form

Potential Client Name, Email, Location:

“Hello, good to meet you. In this short 20min consult, I want to learn a bit about you, you’ll hear about my approach, and we can see if we are a good fit. “Can you tell me briefly what brings you here today?”

“What are you hoping to achieve in working together?” “What are your needs or goals?”

Coaching Clarification:

Coaching is a more relaxed, peer-like relationship where we focus on your healthy thinking / mental health goals, such as feeling more hope and joy, or feeling less down or anxious. We work through the challenges that get in the way of those goals, namely unhelpful thinking processes. The tools and approach us in my coaching style is TEAM-CBT which is used by both coaches and counsellors, but you should know coaching is very different from counselling. There are certain circumstances not appropriate to coaching such as dealing with an abusive relationship, PTSD & OCD treatment, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, or severe addictions. It is always recommended you see a therapist if you are in any doubt as to if you need treatment for a mental health issue. Any questions about this?

“Have you been mostly functioning in daily life?” (If client is struggling with daily function, they may need to see a therapist)

“Do you have any current drugs/alcohol issues?” (If client is dealing with an addiction, they may need more support and this may derail coaching efforts.)

“Do you have any suicidal thoughts or doing any self-harm?”

NOTE: If not a good candidate: “As I listen to your situation it seems I may not be the best fit. I’d like to refer you to someone that might better meet your needs. Can I give this some thought and get back to you?”

Explain YOUR approach:

- TEAM: focused on building skills for specific** problems/goals, based on thoughts = feelings & **one** moment in time informs the underlying issue (blood test analogy), thus gets to the root of the problem without spending years talking about your past.
- TEAM fits best with clients who really want to get to work to crush their negative thinking which is often the root of upsetting, painful emotions that get in the way of feeling peace and joy.
- I focus on short term, fast results.
- I require commitment to continue working together until we are both comfortable with your progress, which is about 3-6 months on average for ONE goal/issue.
- We are looking to build lifelong coping skills.
- Address Process Resistance: Change is hard work.**
 - I need my clients to be **willing to share** what's working and not. **Surveys before and after every** session. Survey must be filled in 5-15 min before we meet.
 - Homework is required such as reading a book and working on other tools between sessions to make the changes last long term, this could include: reading, doing worksheets, doing things you don't feel like, and skill building exercises. We will negotiate the homework together.
- Disadvantages: Limits of video meetings** IE: certain techniques, lack of crisis services, tech problems. Other disadvantages to working with me: **IE: (Angela = style is fast paced and at times humorous. not gentle support.) AJUST FOR YOURSELF. Important to share your limitations to have a good fit.** Happy to refer you to someone else if you are looking for that.

We'll talk about fees and how this all works next, but first do you have any question about my approach?

FEE's and if you offer any discounts / sliding scale: \$\$\$ USD or CAD, etc.

Any questions about my fees?

Scheduling & Payment:

- Book sessions** through _____
- Rescheduling:** you can reschedule from your confirmation email or any of the notification emails. You can reschedule up to 24 hours BEFORE our session.
- I am very strict with no shows.** No shows or missed appointments will not be refunded. Let me repeat that. Let me repeat that: I do NOT offer any refunds for missed or cancelled sessions. You can reschedule ahead of time at no charge.
- Payment:** pay when you book by credit card.

Surveys: You will be sent a reminder email with survey links. Please fill in the before survey 5-15 min before we meet, not too early as it will skew the results. If you fill in the survey right before we meet, no problem, just expect I'll take a couple minutes to read it over before joining the video call.

Do you have any other questions?

Would you like to book your first session or do you need more time to think about it? Forms take about 30 min, complete 48hrs before we meet. Would you like to block a specific day/time each week for your sessions or wait till after the intake session?

Homework assigned: IE: book to purchase, start a Mood Log, etc.

Sample Coaching Contract / Screening Form

Download one here: www.angelapoch.com/nad

If you use Google Workspace get a free Google Form version download a copy here (make sure you are signed into the Drive you want the form copied to):

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yK5anni50JthI7s5NVypuyPEkjUTMSOYKBqjHQN4Hho/copy>

Sample Session Notes Form

Client Name & Contact Info:

BOOKS client has:

- **Book titles here.**
- Note the book working on.

Goal Check Points – HIGHLIGHT where we ended last session:

- **Empathy:** Empathy continues all stages + open hands.
- **Invitation:** get to work or more time to share, work on x, y, or z.
- **DML/habit log/relationship journal:** specific time you felt this way/had this problem
- **Miracle Cure Question:** “If we did work together that was successful, and you got the change you’re looking for, how would your life be different? What would change?”
- **Magic Button:** omit for relationships and habits
- **Acid Test:** “...ready to feel better/do the work without circumstances/other person changing?”
- **Assessment of resistance:** positive reframe/triple paradox 4 habits/relationship CBA
- **Pivot Question:** “With all these great things about you/good reasons not to change, why would you want my help?” List the disadvantages of the client’s goal. Optional, **Externalizing the Resistance.**
- **Magic Dial:** Goal column on DML. **Willingness scale** for habits/relationships.
- **Process Resistance:** What would it mean to feel less ___ more ___, what would you be willing to do? (dangling the carrot, stroking, gentle ultimatum, and fallback position if need)
- **Specificity:** Choose one NT from DML.
- **Circle of Hope & Methods:** Create circle of hope with client involvement. When find success, LIST what works for this client:
 - Effective method that worked well for this client 1
 - Effective method that worked well for this client 2
- **Relapse Preparation:** Record session. Use Externalization of Voices (and other helpful tools from list above). Using client DML (or create a new one) add some common relapse NT’s:
 - This never really worked.
 - Coaching was a waste of time/money.
 - I’m stupid for thinking this could help.
 - I was stupid to believe anything else is possible.
 - It will never get better.
 - I knew I was too damaged to be fixed.

OTHER NOTES such as fee if not regular price, culture or religion, etc.:

BMS Record For date use month and day	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
	Date																	
Low Mood																		
Sad, down...																		
Discouraged...																		
Low esteem...																		
Loss motivat...																		
Loss pleasu...																		
Total																		
Suicidal																		
Better off...																		
Urge/plan...																		
Total																		
Anxiety																		
Anxious																		
Frightened																		
Worried																		
Tense...																		
Nervous																		
Total																		
Anger																		
Frustrated																		
Annoyed																		
Resentful																		
Angry																		
Irritated																		
Total																		
Happiness																		
Happy...																		
Hopeful...																		
Worthwhile...																		
Motivated...																		
Pleasure...																		
Total																		
ETS																		
Empathy /20																		
Helpful /20																		
Satisfaction /8																		
Commitment /8																		
Neg Feeling /12																		
Difficulties /12																		

Session Date

Check in, go over BMS/ETS:

- Empathy from last session =
- Liked least =
- Liked best =

Go over homework from last week:

- (copy from last week and paste here for next session)

TODAY'S Session Notes:

Current Goal client is working on:

What did you cover in working toward that goal?

Where did you leave off?

Homework:

Reading:

Finish / Worksheets:

Book next session: