

Automatic Thoughts

In Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), automatic thoughts are the words or images that first pop into our minds when something happens. They can be negative or positive, true or untrue, realistic or unrealistic, and helpful or unhelpful. They are also strongly related to our moods and emotions, and can be related to our core beliefs about ourselves.

This worksheet is designed to help you get familiar with your automatic thoughts. Imagine you are facing each situation, first while in a great mood, then while in a poor mood. Write the first words or images that pop into your head. We've provided an example in row one.

Situation	Thoughts if I were in a great mood	Thoughts if I were in a poor mood
You text someone something important and they take a strangely long time to respond	<i>"They must be busy today!"</i>	<i>"Did I do something wrong?"</i>
You walk past two coworkers who stop talking when you get close		
Your boss says, "We need to talk later," and walks away		
After you get home from work, your coworker texts you, "We've got a problem"		

*This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.



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Situation	Thoughts if I were in a great mood	Thoughts if I were in a poor mood
Your friend is praised for their hard work planning a party, but no one mentions your hard work		
During a tough week at work, you see on social media that your friend just got promoted		
Your partner seems oddly quiet during dinner		
When doing a chore at home, your roommate tells you they know a better way to do it		
Your friend cancels plans at the last minute, saying that they're busy		



Scan or [click here](#) to learn more about CBT:

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Situation	Thoughts if I were in a great mood	Thoughts if I were in a poor mood
You share an idea in a meeting and someone immediately changes the topic		
Someone tells you, "You really made an impression at that party last night..."		
When waiting to hear back from an interview, you receive an email titled, "Position Decision"		

Do your thoughts tend to differ based on your mood?

Read your "good mood" thoughts. What do they say about your impression of yourself, other people, or the world?

Read your "bad mood" thoughts. What do they say about your impression of yourself, other people, or the world?

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Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



325+
Companies Reviewed



3,625+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,545+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.





Tools for Self-Assessment and Psychoeducation

Figuring out the next step in your mental health journey can be overwhelming. Developed by psychologists, the tools at [ChoosingTherapy.com](https://www.ChoosingTherapy.com) can help. Our mental health self-assessment quizzes can help you explore common symptoms of mental health concerns, as well as find the best therapy style for you. Our mental health worksheets can guide you through therapy concepts and how to use them in your life.

[Learn More with Mental Health Quizzes](#)

Our collection of psychologist-developed mental health quizzes can help you learn if you are experiencing mild, moderate, or concerning levels of anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, and more. Each quiz also provides targeted resources based on your answers. These self-assessments are designed to offer insight, not diagnoses, and can be a helpful first step in recognizing symptoms and deciding whether to seek further support. If you have concerns about your mental health or your quiz results, we recommend you reach out to a licensed mental health professional.



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