

Behavioral Experiment Tracker

Purpose: This worksheet helps you challenge negative thoughts and beliefs by testing them in real-life situations. Behavioral experiments are a core CBT strategy shown to reduce cognitive distortions and anxiety.

Instructions:

1. Identify a negative thought or belief you want to test.
2. Predict what you think will happen.
3. Plan a small experiment to test this thought.
4. Record what actually happened.
5. Reflect on what you learned and how your belief has changed.

Step 1: Identify the Thought or Belief

Write down the negative thought or belief you want to test.

Step 2: Predict the Outcome

What do you expect will happen?

Step 3: Design the Experiment

Choose a small action to test your thought.

Step 4: Observe the Actual Outcome

What actually happened?

Step 5: Reflect and Reframe

What did you learn? Did the results support or challenge your belief?

Final Reflection

How has this experiment changed your thinking? Would you like to try another experiment?

Research supports the idea that behavioral experiments effectively challenge maladaptive beliefs and improve emotional regulation.

References:

Beck, J. S. (2011). *Cognitive behavior therapy: Basics and beyond (2nd ed.)*. Guilford Press.

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Hofmann, S. G., et al. (2012). The efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy: A review of meta-analyses. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 36(5), 427-440.