WORKSHEET 26 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Thank you, mind

Thanking your mind and naming its stories (defusion)

AIM

Help the person step back from repetitive thoughts by recognising them as “products” of the mind, with some humour, instead of fighting or obeying them.

WHO IT IS FOR

Self-critical thoughts, recurring worries, catastrophic scenarios known by heart. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

10 min in session, then in daily life

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain that the mind is a thought-producing machine, often trying to protect us: there is no need to silence it.
2. When a familiar thought comes, suggest answering inwardly “Thank you, mind”, in a neutral or amused tone, not an ironic one.
3. Identify together the “stories” that repeat (“the useless story”, “the I’ll never make it story”) and give them a short title.
4. When the story comes back: “Ah, here’s the story of…”. Notice it and go back to what you were doing.
5. Ask them to fill in page 2 for a week.

POINTS TO WATCH

> This is not a way of mocking oneself or downplaying real suffering. If the person experiences it as invalidating, go back to validating the emotion before suggesting defusion.

REFERENCES

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 26 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Thank you, mind

Your mind produces thoughts all day long, often to protect you. Some come back like an old song. Instead of arguing with them, you can recognise them and thank your mind.

1. When a familiar thought comes, say to yourself inwardly: “Thank you, mind.”
2. If it is a story that comes back often, give it a title: “the story of…”.
3. When it comes back: “Ah, the story of… again”. And go back to what you were doing.
4. Note what you notice.

Day	Thought or story	Its title	What I did next

Which story does my mind tell me most often?

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WORKSHEET 27 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Passengers on the bus

Staying at the wheel even when thoughts shout (ACT metaphor)

AIM

Show, with a metaphor, that you can move in the chosen direction even when difficult thoughts and emotions "shout" in your head, without having to obey them or throw them off the bus.

WHO IT IS FOR

Avoidance, feeling driven by fear or self-criticism. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

15 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Tell the metaphor: you are driving the bus of your life; passengers get on (fears, memories, criticisms). Some shout, threaten, demand that you take another route.
2. Explore what the person usually does: negotiating, stopping to fight with them, taking the route they impose. With what result?
3. Suggest the alternative: the passengers can stay and shout; you are the one at the wheel choosing the direction (your values).
4. List the person's passengers and what they say, and the direction they want to take.
5. Choose a small, concrete journey for the week, "with the passengers on board".

POINTS TO WATCH

> The passengers are not enemies: they represent experiences that have a history. Avoid letting the metaphor become another form of struggle ("making them shut up").

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 27 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

The passengers on my bus

Imagine you are driving the bus of your life. Along the way, passengers get on: your fears, your doubts, your old criticisms. Some shout “Turn round!”. You don’t need to throw them off: you are the one at the wheel.

1. Who are my loudest passengers and what do they shout?
2. What do I usually do when they shout (stop, negotiate, change route)?
3. Where do I want to go (what matters to me)?
4. A small journey this week, with my passengers on board: _____

Passenger	What it shouts	What it pushes me to do	My direction

What happened when I stayed at the wheel?

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WORKSHEET 28 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

What I have already tried

Taking stock of control strategies (creative hopelessness)

AIM

Help the person take an honest look at everything they have tried in order to get rid of anxiety or difficult thoughts, in the short and long term, to open up the possibility of a different approach.

WHO IT IS FOR

People exhausted from fighting their emotions, who have "tried everything". Start of ACT work.

DURATION

20-30 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Ask: "What have you tried to stop feeling this?" Make the complete list, without judging (avoiding, distracting yourself, drinking, reasoning, forcing yourself…).
2. For each strategy: did it work in the short term? And in the long term? What has it cost you?
3. Make the pattern visible: quick relief, but the problem comes back and life narrows. It is not a lack of effort.
4. Introduce the idea that perhaps the struggle itself is the problem, and suggest trying something else (acceptance, values).
5. Close kindly: the person has done what they could with what they knew.

POINTS TO WATCH

> "Creative hopelessness" must be done with a lot of validation: the person should not feel they have failed. Avoid it if there is an unassessed suicide risk; some strategies (sleep, social support, treatment) are helpful and should be kept.

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 28 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

What I have already tried

Best done with your psychologist

You have probably already tried many things to stop feeling what makes you suffer. It is not a lack of willpower. Let's take stock, honestly and without judging yourself.

1. List everything you have done to get rid of these thoughts or emotions.
2. For each one: did it help in the moment?
3. And in the long run: did the problem go away?
4. What has it cost you (time, energy, relationships, plans)?

What I have tried	Did it help in the moment? (yes/no)	Did it help in the long run? (yes/no)	What it has cost me

What do I notice when I look at this list?

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WORKSHEET 29 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Dropping the rope

Stopping the tug-of-war with the anxiety monster (acceptance)

AIM

Show with a metaphor that you can give up the exhausting struggle against anxiety without needing to "beat" it, freeing up energy for what matters.

WHO IT IS FOR

Struggling with emotions, exhaustion, people who believe they must eliminate anxiety before they can live. After worksheet 28.

DURATION

10-15 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Tell the metaphor: you are in a tug-of-war with a monster, over a cliff edge. The harder you pull, the harder it pulls. You feel you have to win.
2. Ask: what other solution is there? Let the person find it: drop the rope.
3. Clarify: the monster is still there and may keep growling; but your hands are free to do something else.
4. If possible, do it physically with a scarf or a belt: pull and then let go. What changes in the body?
5. Identify the moments in the week when the person "pulls on the rope" and what they could do with their hands free.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Dropping the rope is not giving up or resigning oneself: it is leaving a struggle that doesn't work. First validate how hard it is to let go.

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 29 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Dropping the rope

Imagine you are in a tug-of-war with a monster (your anxiety), at the edge of a cliff. The harder you pull, the harder it pulls. What if you dropped the rope? The monster is still there, but your hands are free.

1. Identify the moments when you "pull on the rope": fighting, ruminating, controlling everything.
2. Notice how much energy it costs you.
3. Try letting go: let the anxiety be there, without fighting.
4. With your hands free, what can you do that matters to you?

Situation	How I was pulling on the rope	What I did when I let go	Energy afterwards /10

What would I do with my hands free?

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WORKSHEET 30 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The willingness dial

Choosing to open up to discomfort for what matters (openness)

AIM

Introduce the notion of “willingness”: not the level of anxiety, which cannot be controlled, but the degree of openness to discomfort that one chooses in order to do something important.

WHO IT IS FOR

Avoidance, anxious procrastination, preparing an exposure or a committed action.

DURATION

10 min in session; before each difficult action

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Distinguish two dials: anxiety (it can’t be adjusted at will) and willingness to feel it (that one can be chosen).
2. Show that with low willingness, anxiety becomes an obstacle to flee from; with high willingness, it becomes a passenger.
3. Before an important action, ask: “To move towards what matters to you, how willing are you to feel whatever comes, from 0 to 10?”
4. If willingness is low, reduce the size of the action rather than forcing.
5. Take stock afterwards: what did willingness make possible?

POINTS TO WATCH

> Willingness is not imposed under pressure: it must be linked to one of the person’s values. Don’t confuse it with “gritting your teeth”.

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

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WORKSHEET 30 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

The willingness dial

You can't adjust your anxiety like a thermostat. But you can choose how willing you are to feel it in order to do something that matters to you. That is the willingness dial.

1. The action that matters to me: _____
2. What I might feel (thoughts, emotions, sensations): _____
3. My willingness to feel it for this action, from 0 to 10: ___
4. If it is low, I make the action smaller. Then I do it.

Action	Anxiety /10	Willingness /10	What I did

What did my willingness make possible?

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WORKSHEET 31 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The sky and the weather

Discovering you are bigger than your thoughts and emotions (observing self)

AIM

Help the person get in touch with the part of themselves that observes their experiences without being reduced to them: just as the sky holds every kind of weather without being harmed by it.

WHO IT IS FOR

People who identify strongly with their emotions ("I'm an anxious person", "I'm hopeless"), rumination, shame.

DURATION

10 min in session; a few minutes a day

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the image: thoughts and emotions are like the weather (storms, clouds, sunny spells); a part of you is like the sky, which holds every kind of weather.
2. Guide a short exercise: notice a thought, then notice "who" is noticing it. An emotion, and "who" is noticing it.
3. Emphasise that the observing part was already there in childhood and stays stable even when the weather changes.
4. Offer a supporting sentence: "I am the sky; this is the weather right now."
5. Ask them to fill in page 2 for a few days.

POINTS TO WATCH

> The exercise can seem abstract: keep it concrete and brief. If there are dissociative experiences, prioritise sensory grounding (worksheet 04) over work on the "self".

REFERENCES

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 31 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

The sky and the weather

Your thoughts and emotions change like the weather: storms, clouds, sunny spells. But a part of you is like the sky: it holds every kind of weather, and no storm can harm it.

1. Notice the “weather” right now: what thoughts, what emotions?
2. Now notice that you are noticing them. Who is observing?
3. Say to yourself: “I am the sky; this is the weather right now.”
4. Note the day’s weather and what changes when you look at it from the sky.

Day	The weather (thoughts, emotions)	Intensity /10	What changes when I observe it

What doesn’t change in me, even when the weather changes?

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WORKSHEET 32 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The chessboard

Not being one of the pieces, but the board (observing self)

AIM

Show, with the chessboard metaphor, that you can hold “white” and “black” thoughts at war without taking sides in the battle, and that the fight between pieces never ends.

WHO IT IS FOR

Inner struggle (positive versus negative thoughts), people trying to “beat” their doubts. Adults.

DURATION

15 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Describe the board: the black pieces (doubts, fears, criticisms) and the white ones (positive thoughts, encouragement) fight each other.
2. Explore: has the person spent time backing the white pieces to defeat the black ones? Has the battle ever been won?
3. Offer another point of view: you are not a piece, you are the board. The board holds all the pieces and stays steady.
4. Ask what the board can do that the pieces can’t: move somewhere, carrying them all.
5. Connect with values: where does the board want to go?

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t present positive thinking as useless in itself: the problem is the endless war between thoughts. Keep it concrete, with the person’s own examples.

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

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WORKSHEET 32 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

I am the board

In your head, the black pieces (doubts, fears) and the white ones (encouragement) fight endlessly. What if you weren't one of the pieces, but the board that holds them all?

1. What are my black pieces (the harsh things I tell myself)?
2. What are my white pieces (what I tell myself to counter them)?
3. Has the battle ever been won for good?
4. As the board, where do I want to go, with all my pieces?

Black piece	White piece that answers	Time I spend fighting	Where I want to go

What changes when I see myself as the board?

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WORKSHEET 33 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My 80th birthday party

Clarifying values by projecting far ahead (values)

AIM

Help the person get in touch with what really matters to them by imagining what their loved ones might say about them at their 80th birthday, if they had lived according to their values.

WHO IT IS FOR

Loss of meaning, life organised around avoidance, difficult decisions. Adults.

DURATION

20 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Guide a short visualisation: the person's 80th birthday party, surrounded by loved ones (family, friends, colleagues).
2. Three or four people speak. What would they like to hear, deep down, about how they have lived?
3. Identify the qualities that repeat (present, brave, curious, kind…): they are values.
4. Compare with current life: where is the gap biggest?
5. Choose a small step, this week, towards one of these values (link with worksheet 05).

POINTS TO WATCH

> This exercise can bring up sadness or regret: welcome them, they often point to what matters. Adapt it (or avoid it) in the case of a recent bereavement or a serious illness; in that case use another way into values (worksheet 34).

REFERENCES

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Wilson, K. G. & Murrell, A. R. (2004). Values work in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: Setting a course for behavioral treatment. In S. C. Hayes, V. M. Follette & M. M. Linehan (Eds.), Mindfulness and Acceptance: Expanding the Cognitive-Behavioral Tradition (pp. 120-151). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 33 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My 80th birthday party

Imagine your 80th birthday party. The people who matter to you are there. Some of them speak about you and how you have lived. What would you like them, deep down, to say?

1. Who is there? Choose three or four people who speak.
2. Write what you would like each of them to say about you.
3. Circle the qualities that repeat: they are your values.
4. A small step this week towards one of them: _____

Who is speaking	What I would like them to say	The value behind it

Where is the biggest gap between my current life and these values?

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WORKSHEET 34 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The values target

Measuring the gap between values and life, area by area

AIM

Help the person put their values into words in four major areas of life and place on a target how much they are currently living in line with them.

WHO IT IS FOR

Start of work on values, tracking progress, loss of meaning. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

20 min in session; repeat every 1-2 months

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the four areas: work and studies, relationships, leisure and personal growth, health and self-care.
2. For each area, help the person put a value into words (a direction, not a goal): “being…”, “looking after…”.
3. On a scale of 0 to 10, how much have they lived in line with that value recently? (10 = the bullseye).
4. Identify what gets in the way (thoughts, emotions, circumstances).
5. Choose one area and a small action to move closer to the centre.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Help the person tell their values apart from other people’s expectations (“I should”). A low score is not a failure: it is information.

REFERENCES

Lundgren, T., Luoma, J. B., Dahl, J., Strosahl, K. & Melin, L. (2012). The Bull's-Eye Values Survey: A psychometric evaluation. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 19(4), 518-526.

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WORKSHEET 34 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My values target

A value is a direction, like north on a compass: you never reach it, you move towards it. Look, area by area, at how far you are from the centre of your target.

1. For each area, write in a few words the person you want to be.
2. Rate from 0 to 10 how much you live that way right now (10 = the bullseye).
3. Note what holds you back.
4. Choose one area and a small action to move closer to the centre.

Area	My value (the person I want to be)	My life now /10	What holds me back

The area I choose and my small action:

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WORKSHEET 35 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The choice point

Noticing whether I am moving towards or away from what matters to me

AIM

Offer a simple tool for analysing a difficult situation: what "hooks" you (thoughts, emotions), the behaviours that move you away from your values and those that move you towards them.

WHO IT IS FOR

Any emotional difficulty; a summary tool linking defusion, acceptance and values.

DURATION

15 min in session; then on your own with real situations

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Draw a "Y": at the bottom, the situation; at the fork, the choice point; two branches: "away" and "towards".
2. First fill in what hooks you: thoughts, emotions, sensations, urges.
3. Then the actions that move you away (avoiding, ruminating, withdrawing…) and what they cost.
4. Then the actions that move you towards what matters, and the tools that help you choose them (defusion, anchoring, acceptance).
5. Apply it to a situation expected during the week.

POINTS TO WATCH

> The same behaviour can move you towards or away depending on its function (resting can be self-care or avoidance): the person decides, according to their values.

REFERENCES

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.

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WORKSHEET 35 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My choice point

In a difficult situation, some thoughts and emotions hook us. Then we have a choice: do what moves us away from what matters, or what moves us towards it, even a little.

1. The situation: _____
2. What hooks me (thoughts, emotions, sensations): _____
3. What I do when I move away from what matters to me: _____
4. What I could do to move towards it: _____

Situation	What hooks me	I move away when…	I move towards when…

What helps me choose the branch that moves me towards it?

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WORKSHEET 36 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The ACT matrix

A four-box map to find your bearings (matrix)

AIM

Help the person organise their experience into four boxes: what matters to them, what gets in the way inside, what they do to move away from discomfort and what they do to move towards what matters.

WHO IT IS FOR

Adults and adolescents in general; useful for case formulation and follow-up.

DURATION

15-20 min in session; can be revisited at each session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Draw a cross: horizontal axis “away / towards”, vertical axis “inner experience / visible actions”.
2. Start at the bottom right: who and what is important to you?
3. Bottom left: what shows up inside and gets in the way (thoughts, emotions, memories)?
4. Top left: what do you do to move away from those experiences? Top right: what do you do, or could you do, to move towards what matters?
5. Ask: “Who notices all this?” (the observing point in the centre) and choose an action from the top right for the week.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t judge the actions on the left: they often bring relief in the short term. The question is their long-term effect on what matters to the person.

REFERENCES

Polk, K. L. & Schoendorff, B. (Eds.) (2014). The ACT Matrix: A New Approach to Building Psychological Flexibility Across Settings and Populations. New Harbinger.

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WORKSHEET 36 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My matrix

This four-box map helps you see clearly: what matters to you, what gets in the way inside, and what you do to move away from or towards what matters.

1. Bottom right: who and what is important to me?
2. Bottom left: what thoughts, emotions or memories get in my way?
3. Top left: what do I do to move away from what gets in my way?
4. Top right: what can I do to move towards what matters?

What I do to move away (top left)	What I do to move towards (top right)

What gets in my way inside (bottom left) and what matters to me (bottom right):

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WORKSHEET 37 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My committed action plan

Turning a value into concrete actions, obstacles included

AIM

Translate a value into concrete short-term goals, anticipate internal and external obstacles and plan how to respond.

WHO IT IS FOR

After work on values (worksheets 05, 33, 34), to move into action.

DURATION

20 min in session; follow-up over 2-4 weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Choose a value with the person.
2. Define a concrete, realistic, dated action (what, when, where, with whom), preferably small.
3. Anticipate internal obstacles (thoughts, emotions) and external ones (time, money, other people).
4. For each obstacle, plan a response: defusion, acceptance, adapting the action, help from someone close.
5. Review at the next session, without judging: what helped? What needs adjusting?

POINTS TO WATCH

> A very small action that gets done is better than a big one that gets postponed. If it doesn't work out, explore what happened with curiosity: it is information, not a failing.

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WORKSHEET 37 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My committed action plan

A value comes to life when you act. Choose a small, concrete action, plan for what might hold you back and how you will respond.

1. My value: _____
2. My action (what, when, where, with whom): _____
3. What might hold me back, inside and outside: _____
4. What I will do if that obstacle comes up: _____

Planned action	Date	Done? (yes/no)	What I learnt

What do I keep and what do I adjust to carry on?

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WORKSHEET 38 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The raisin

Discovering mindfulness by eating a food very slowly

AIM

Directly experience the difference between “autopilot” and mindful attention, by observing a simple food with all the senses, as if for the first time.

WHO IT IS FOR

First contact with mindfulness; rumination, autopilot. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

5-10 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Hand out a raisin (or another small food). Suggest observing it as an unknown object.
2. Guide slowly: looking, touching, smelling, listening while rolling it near the ear, and placing it on the tongue without biting.
3. Then biting slowly, noticing the flavours, the urge to swallow and the moment of swallowing.
4. Discuss: what was noticed? How is it different from eating normally? Where did the mind go?
5. Suggest eating part of a meal in this way during the week.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Check for allergies and adapt if there is an eating disorder (use another object, such as a stone or a shell). No “right” experience is expected.

REFERENCES

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.

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WORKSHEET 38 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Eating mindfully

We almost always eat while thinking about something else. This exercise invites you to do the opposite: discover a very simple food with all your senses, as if for the first time.

1. Take a raisin (or a small food). Look at it as if you had never seen one before.
2. Touch it, smell it, bring it close to your ear.
3. Put it on your tongue without biting, then bite very slowly. Notice the flavours.
4. Notice the urge to swallow, and swallow. When your mind wanders, come back to the food.

Day	Food or meal	What I noticed	Where my mind went

What changes when I eat while paying attention?

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WORKSHEET 39 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Mindful walking

Paying attention to the walking body

AIM

Offer a mindfulness practice in movement, often more accessible than sitting meditation for restless or anxious people.

WHO IT IS FOR

Anxiety, restlessness, rumination, difficulty sitting still. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

5-15 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Present walking as a meditation: you are not going anywhere, you walk for the sake of walking.
2. Guide attention to the feet: contact with the ground, how the step unrolls, the shift of weight.
3. Then widen to the whole walking body, and then to sounds and surroundings.
4. When the mind wanders, notice it and come back to the feet, without judging yourself.
5. Suggest a 5 to 10-minute practice each day, at home or outside (for example on a regular journey).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Adapt the pace to the person's physical abilities. Outside, keep enough attention on the surroundings (traffic).

REFERENCES

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.
Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G. & Teasdale, J. D. (2013). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 39 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Mindful walking

You don’t need to be sitting down to practise mindfulness. You can walk while paying attention to your body, without trying to get anywhere.

1. Walk a little more slowly than usual.
2. Feel your feet: the heel touching down, the foot unrolling, the weight shifting from one leg to the other.
3. Widen your attention to your whole body, then to the sounds and what is around you.
4. When your mind wanders, notice it and come back to your feet.

Day	Where and how long	What I noticed	Tension afterwards /10

What do I notice that is different when I walk like this?

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WORKSHEET 40 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

A mindful everyday activity

Stepping out of autopilot during an ordinary task

AIM

Bring mindfulness into daily life by choosing a routine activity (brushing your teeth, showering, washing up) and giving it full attention.

WHO IT IS FOR

People who “don’t have time” to meditate, rumination during automatic tasks.

DURATION

A few minutes a day for 1-2 weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain autopilot: during repetitive tasks, the mind often drifts into rumination.
2. Choose a specific daily activity together.
3. During that activity, pay attention to the sensations: temperatures, smells, sounds, movements, as if for the first time.
4. When the mind wanders, notice it and come back to the sensations.
5. Review: what was noticed for the first time? Any effect on mood or rumination?

POINTS TO WATCH

> Keep the same activity for several days before changing. The aim is not to do the task perfectly, but to be present.

REFERENCES

Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G. & Teasdale, J. D. (2013). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.

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WORKSHEET 40 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My mindful activity

You don't need to find extra time: you can practise during an activity you already do every day. It is simply about really being there while you do it.

1. My daily activity: _____ (brushing my teeth, showering, washing up…)
2. During the activity, notice the sensations: temperature, smells, sounds, movements.
3. Do it as if for the first time.
4. When your mind wanders, notice it and come back to the sensations.

Day	Done? (yes/no)	What I noticed for the first time	Where my mind went

What changes when I am really there during this activity?

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WORKSHEET 41 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Listening to sounds, then thoughts

Observing what comes and goes (mindfulness)

AIM

Train open attention: listening to sounds that appear and disappear, then observing thoughts in the same way, as events that pass.

WHO IT IS FOR

Rumination, intrusive thoughts. After some initial practice with the breath or the body scan.

DURATION

10 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Ask the person to sit with their eyes closed or their gaze lowered.
2. For a few minutes, listen to sounds: near, far, loud, soft, without trying to name or judge them.
3. Notice that they appear, last and disappear.
4. Then observe thoughts in the same way: they appear, stay a while, go, like sounds.
5. Discuss the experience and what was difficult.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Moving from sounds to thoughts can be destabilising at first: keep it brief and suggest going back to sounds if it becomes overwhelming.

REFERENCES

Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G. & Teasdale, J. D. (2013). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.

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WORKSHEET 41 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Listening to sounds, then thoughts

Sounds arrive, stay a while and leave. So do thoughts. This exercise trains you to watch them pass instead of following them.

1. Sit down, close your eyes or lower your gaze.
2. For 5 minutes, listen to the sounds: near, far, loud, soft. Notice when they start and stop.
3. Then observe your thoughts in the same way: they arrive, stay, leave.
4. If it is too much, go back to the sounds.

Day	Duration	Sounds I noticed	Thoughts that passed

What changes when I observe my thoughts like sounds?

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WORKSHEET 42 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Breath meditation

Coming back to the breath, again and again (mindfulness)

AIM

Offer the basic mindfulness practice: observing the breath without changing it and kindly coming back each time the mind gets distracted.

WHO IT IS FOR

Anyone starting out with mindfulness; rumination, anxiety. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

5-15 min a day

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Distinguish this exercise from slow breathing (worksheet 15): here the breath is not changed, it is observed.
2. Guide attention to where the breath is most noticeable (nostrils, chest or abdomen).
3. Explain that the mind will wander dozens of times: each return to the breath is the practice itself.
4. Start with 5 minutes and lengthen gradually.
5. At follow-up, explore how the person treats themselves when they get lost (criticism or kindness).

POINTS TO WATCH

> For some people, attending to the breath increases anxiety (panic, trauma): offer sounds, feet on the floor or the hands as an anchor instead.

REFERENCES

Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G. & Teasdale, J. D. (2013). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.

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WORKSHEET 42 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Breath meditation

Here you are not trying to breathe differently: you observe your breath as it is. Your mind will often wander; coming back to the breath is the exercise.

1. Sit comfortably, with your back straight but not rigid.
2. Find where you notice your breath best: nostrils, chest or abdomen.
3. Observe the in-breath, the out-breath, the small pauses.
4. When you notice your mind has wandered, say “thinking” and gently come back to the breath.

Day	Duration	How many times I drifted off (roughly)	How I treated myself

What do I discover about my mind by watching it work?

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WORKSHEET 43 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The calming sigh

A short breathing pattern with a long out-breath (cyclic sighing)

AIM

Offer a short breathing technique that can be used several times a day: a double in-breath through the nose followed by a long out-breath through the mouth, studied for reducing activation and improving mood.

WHO IT IS FOR

Stress, tension, moderate rises in anxiety. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

5 min a day, or 1-2 min when needed

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Demonstrate the cycle: an in-breath through the nose, then a small extra in-breath to fill the lungs, then a slow, long out-breath through the mouth.
2. Do a few cycles together, without forcing, with the out-breath clearly longer than the in-breath.
3. Suggest a 5-minute practice each day for 2 weeks, noting mood before and after.
4. A few cycles can also be used when stress rises.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t force the in-breath: stop if there is dizziness or tingling. As with any breathing technique, avoid it becoming a safety behaviour in panic disorder. The evidence is recent (one randomised trial): present it as one practice among others.

REFERENCES

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Zaccaro, A., Piarulli, A., Laurino, M. et al. (2018). How breath-control can change your life: A systematic review on psycho-physiological correlates of slow breathing. Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 12, 353.

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WORKSHEET 43 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

The calming sigh

Sighing is a natural way of releasing tension. You can practise it on purpose: two in-breaths through the nose and a long out-breath through the mouth.

1. Breathe in through your nose.
2. Add a small in-breath through your nose to fill your lungs a little more.
3. Breathe out slowly through your mouth, long, all the way.
4. Repeat for 1-5 minutes, without forcing. If you feel dizzy, stop.

Day	Duration	Mood before /10	Mood after /10

At what moments does this sigh help me most?

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WORKSHEET 44 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Releasing the muscles

A brief progressive muscle relaxation

AIM

Learn to detect and release muscle tension by successively tensing and relaxing several muscle groups.

WHO IT IS FOR

Physical tension, anxiety, difficulty falling asleep. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

10-15 min a day for 2 weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain the principle: tense a muscle group for about 5 seconds, then release and observe the relaxation for about 15-20 seconds.
2. Guide the order: hands and forearms, arms, face, neck and shoulders, back, abdomen, legs, feet.
3. Emphasise the contrast between tension and relaxation: it is what teaches you to spot tension in daily life.
4. Suggest daily practice, with a recording if possible.
5. Gradually move on to a shorter version (releasing without tensing).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Tense without pain. Adapt or skip a group if there is an injury, cramps, chronic pain or a medical problem. Some people feel more anxious at first when relaxing: reassure them, it is common.

REFERENCES

Bernstein, D. A. & Borkovec, T. D. (1973). Progressive Relaxation Training: A Manual for the Helping Professions. Research Press.

Manzoni, G. M., Pagnini, F., Castelnuovo, G. & Molinari, E. (2008). Relaxation training for anxiety: A ten-years systematic review with meta-analysis. BMC Psychiatry, 8, 41.

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WORKSHEET 44 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Releasing the muscles

Anxiety often hides in the muscles without us noticing. By tensing and releasing them, you learn to feel the difference and to relax more easily.

1. Get comfortable. For each part of the body: tense for about 5 seconds, without pain.
2. Let go all at once and observe the relaxation for 15-20 seconds.
3. In this order: hands, arms, face, neck and shoulders, back, abdomen, legs, feet.
4. At the end, stay a moment feeling your relaxed body.

Day	Duration	Tension before /10	Tension after /10

Where does my tension most often hide?

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WORKSHEET 45 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My calm place

Building an inner resource of calm (stabilisation)

AIM

Help the person build, with imagination and the senses, an inner place associated with calm and safety, which they can use to soothe themselves, especially in preparation for EMDR work.

WHO IT IS FOR

Stabilisation phase, anxiety, difficulty calming down. Best built in session.

DURATION

15-20 min in session; a few minutes a day afterwards

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Ask them to choose a place, real or imaginary, associated with calm (not a place linked to a person or to an ambivalent memory).
2. Enrich the image with all the senses: what can be seen, heard, smelt, the temperature, the sensations in the body.
3. Choose a cue word with the person that evokes this place.
4. Check the effect (pleasant sensations, relaxation); in an EMDR framework, reinforcement with slow bilateral stimulation follows the usual protocol.
5. Suggest practising it every day, first when everything is going well, noting what helps.

POINTS TO WATCH

> If the place becomes “contaminated” (negative images or emotions creeping in), stop and choose another place or another resource. With traumatised people, it is built with the psychologist. This worksheet does not replace the EMDR protocol.

REFERENCES

Shapiro, F. (2018). Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy: Basic Principles, Protocols, and Procedures (3rd ed.). Guilford.

Korn, D. L. & Leeds, A. M. (2002). Preliminary evidence of efficacy for EMDR resource development and installation in the stabilization phase of treatment of complex posttraumatic stress disorder. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 58(12), 1465-1487.

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WORKSHEET 45 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My calm place

Best done with your psychologist

You can build a place inside you where you feel safe and calm, real or imaginary. The more you visit it, the easier it is to go back when you need it.

1. My calm place (real or imaginary): _____
2. What I see, what I hear, what I smell, the temperature: _____
3. What I feel in my body when I am there: _____
4. My cue word to go back: _____

Day	Moment	Calm before /10	Calm after /10

What makes my calm place more vivid and more soothing?

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WORKSHEET 157 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My list of values

What matters to me, and how much I live it

AIM

Help the person identify, from a list of defined values, the ones that matter most to them, and estimate how much they are living them now, to make visible the gaps to work on.

WHO IT IS FOR

Start of work on values in ACT, feeling of living “on autopilot”, loss of meaning, difficult decisions, before a committed action worksheet.

DURATION

20-30 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the idea of a value: a chosen direction for how to act, not a goal to achieve or a rule to follow.
2. The person rates each value from 0 to 10 according to its importance, without comparing themselves with anyone or looking for the “right” answer.
3. Then they rate from 0 to 10 how much they have lived each value in recent weeks.
4. Identify 2 or 3 values that are very important but little lived, and choose one for a small concrete step (worksheet 37).

POINTS TO WATCH

This is not a test: there is no total score or profile. The double rating takes up the idea of the Valued Living Questionnaire (importance and consistency), which applies to life areas. A low rating in “I live it” is information, not a failure; also watch out for “shoulds” (rules disguised as values) and values chosen to please others. The list is inspired by the Personal Values Card Sort (public domain); the definitions were written for these worksheets.

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Wilson, K. G., Sandoz, E. K., Kitchens, J. & Roberts, M. (2010). The Valued Living Questionnaire: Defining and measuring valued action within a behavioral framework. The Psychological Record, 60(2), 249-272.

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WORKSHEET 157 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My list of values

A value is the way you want to act in your life, what really matters to you. It is not a goal to achieve or an obligation. There are no right answers: nobody can live every value at 10.

1. For each value, rate from 0 to 10 how much it matters to you (“Importance” column).
2. Rate from 0 to 10 how much you have lived it in recent weeks (“I live it” column).
3. Circle 2 or 3 values that matter a lot to you (7 or more) but that you live little: that is where there is room to move forward.

Value	Importance (0-10)	I live it (0-10)
Acceptance: welcoming others and myself as we are		
Adventure: seeking new and stimulating experiences		
Authenticity: being true to who I am		
Autonomy: deciding for myself		
Beauty: appreciating and creating beauty		
Compassion: responding to suffering, my own and others’, with kindness		
Commitment: sticking to what I have decided		
Connection: being present and close to others		
Contribution: giving something to others or to the world		
Cooperation: moving towards a shared goal with others		
Creativity: imagining, creating, inventing		
Self-care: looking after my body, my health and my rest		
Curiosity: exploring, learning, discovering		
Family: looking after the bonds with my loved ones		
Generosity: giving and sharing		
Gratitude: recognising what I have and what I am given		
Honesty: speaking and acting sincerely		
Humour: seeing the funny side of things, sharing laughter		
Justice: treating everyone fairly, standing up for what is right		
Freedom: living according to my own choices		
Patience: giving things and people time		
Respect: treating others with consideration		
Responsibility: owning my actions and what is mine to do		
Courage: acting even when I am afraid		

The values with the biggest gap, and a small step for one of them this week:

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