WORKSHEET 84 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Checking the facts

Does my emotion fit the situation?

AIM

Help the person check whether the emotion and its intensity fit the facts of the situation, distinguishing facts from interpretations, so as to adjust their response.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense emotions triggered by interpretations (rejection, threat, injustice).

DURATION

15 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Describe the event, keeping only the observable facts.
2. Identify the interpretations and assumptions added.
3. Ask: is there a real threat? How likely is it? What would be the worst consequence, and could I cope with it?
4. Conclude: does the emotion fit the facts? If so, solve the problem; if not, try opposite action (worksheet 21).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t invalidate: an emotion can fit the facts. In that case, the priority is solving the problem or protecting oneself.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 84 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Checking the facts

Sometimes an emotion fits perfectly with what is happening. At other times it reacts mainly to our interpretation. Checking the facts helps you know whether the emotion is a real alarm or a false alarm.

1. What happened, just the facts (what a camera would have recorded).
2. What I interpreted or assumed.
3. Is there a real threat? Is it likely? Could I cope with it?
4. Does my emotion fit the facts? If so: I solve the problem. If not: I try opposite action (worksheet 21).

Facts	Interpretation	Does the emotion fit? (yes/no/partly)	What I do

Which interpretations come up most often for me?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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