Monitoring Self-Criticism

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Monitoring your self-criticism would allow you to gain a deeper understanding of its inner workings and of your self-perceptions. Cognitive-behavioral therapy approaches have been effective in reducing self-criticism and consequently lead to an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence. However, before initiating therapy, one needs to assess and monitor the self-criticism via a log.

What to Do

Complete a daily charting with the headings of situation, self-critical thoughts, consequent feelings and behaviors, and rational responses. This would enable you to provide your therapist with essential information. If you have decided to use self-help only, having a log is even more important, because it is a crucial partner in your self-improvement.

What to Include

The situation would include what happened to bring out your self-criticism. Self-critical thoughts would include the thoughts these situations elicited. Consequent feelings and behaviors include what came later in the form of your feelings and behaviors, after the self-criticism. The rational response is what would come later, when you eventually begin to work on dealing with the self-criticism.

Example

Here’s an example of what the log would look like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Self-Critical Thought</th>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The project I was working on was not approved.</td>
<td>I am good for nothing. I couldn’t get a project right.</td>
<td>Angry at myself, withdrawn, demotivated, sad</td>
<td>Couldn’t concentrate on further work, left work early to have a drink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maintaining this log would provide you with a broader picture of what leads to your critical thoughts and what comes after. It would help when you finally get to working on self-criticism.

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