10 MINUTE CBT THOUGHT DISTORTIONS

Worksheets & Handouts

What are thought distortions?

Negative thoughts distort reality, and contribute to feelings of anxiety, stress, depression, anger, helplessness, distrust, hopelessness, and/or fear.

Thought distortions are very quick automatic patterns of thinking that you have about yourself, others, or life in general. They are negative, they are judgmental, they are exaggerated, they are inflexible and rigid, and they can be convincing when our emotions are heightened.

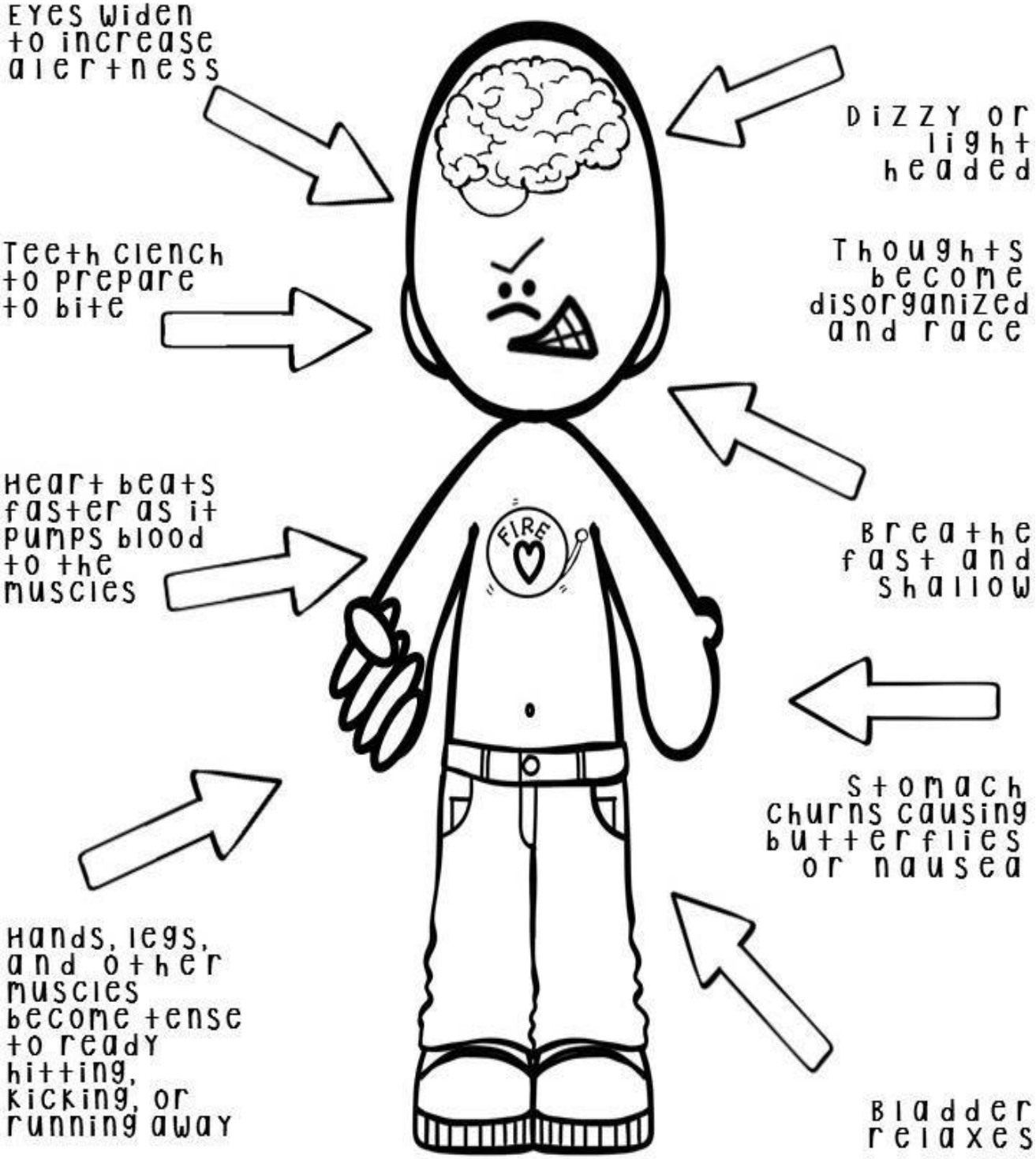
The goal of this resource is to introduce thought distortions and strategies to challenge them in an effort to decrease uncomfortable emotions and unhelpful urges and behaviors.

Use the handouts as teaching guides (at your own pace), and take ten minutes at a time to use the worksheets for further discussion, practice and/or homework.

Tip: For questions about probability or likelihood, you may use the following choices:

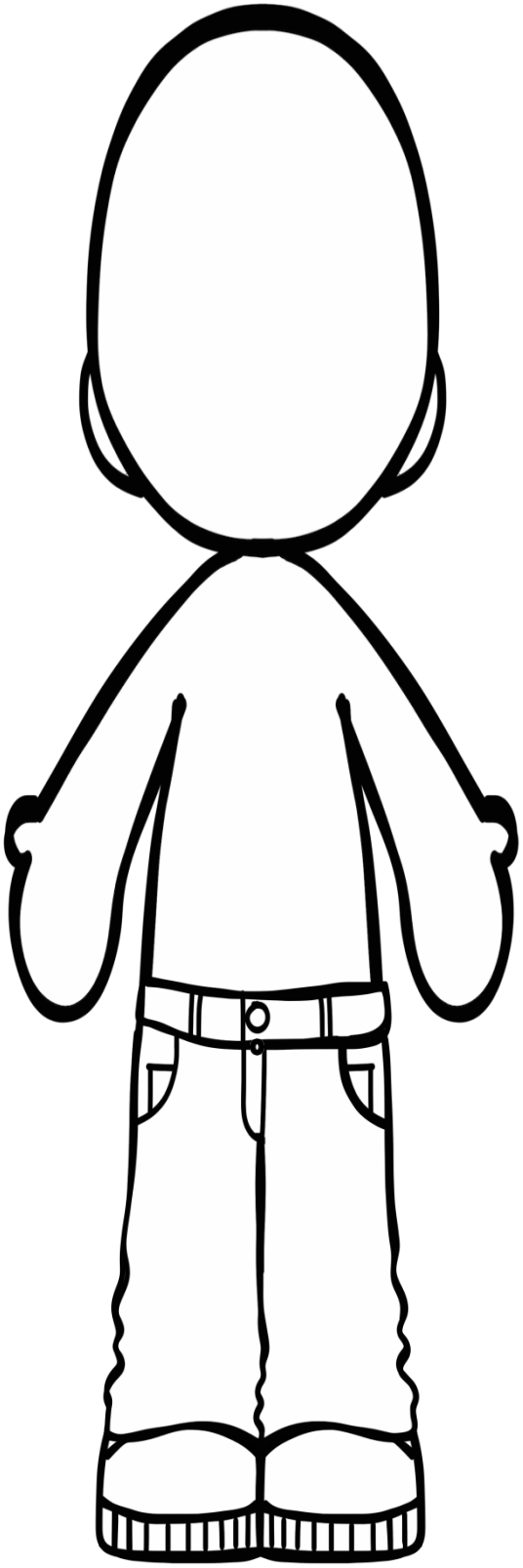
- LOW likelihood,
- MODERATE likelihood,
- HIGH likelihood,

Once alarmed, anger and anxiety function like a body guard by protecting you from danger. Adrenalin is pushed to your major muscles to prepare you for fight (anger) or flight (anxiety).



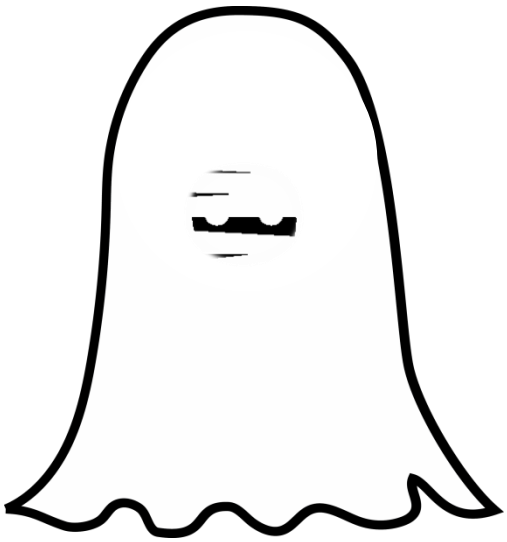
Feelings:

Draw what you notice happening in your body.



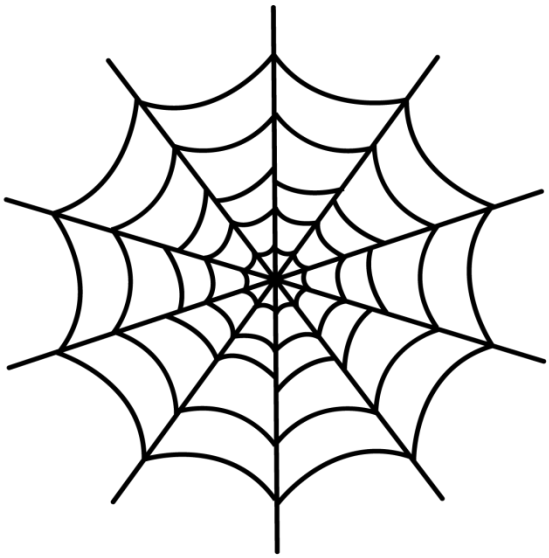
Anxious Thoughts

Misperceived threat of danger combined with belief you will have no control.



Perceived Threat

Assume something or someone is going to hurt you.

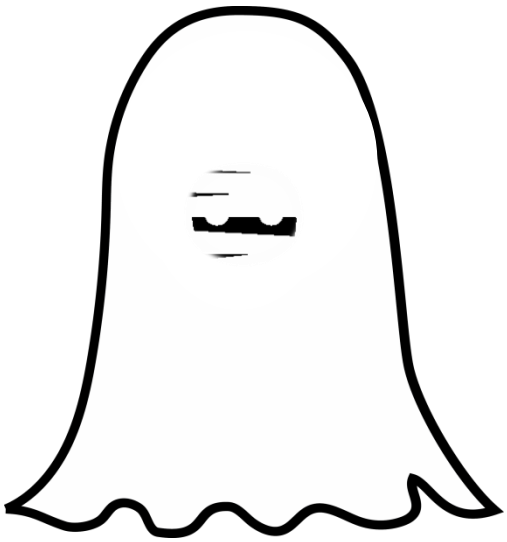


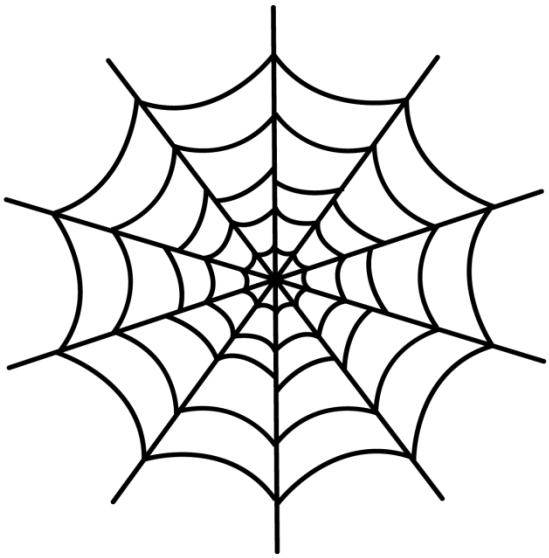
Helplessness

Assume you will have no way to protect yourself.

Anxious Thoughts

Misperceived threat of danger combined with belief you will have no control.





Assumed Threat

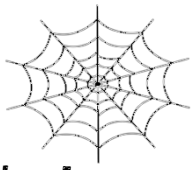
No Control Assumption

CHALLENGE ANXIOUS THOUGHTS

Question the thought and prepare with a back up plan.

Assumed Threat

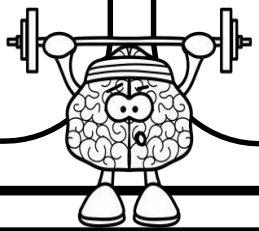
What do I think will hurt me?



No Control Assumption

Why I can protect myself.

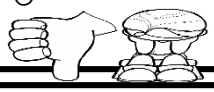
Why am I not really in danger?



How I can really protect myself?

CHALLENGE ANGER THOUGHTS

Use flexible thinking and normalize your feelings.



EXAMPLE

1 What happened that was wrong, and what is my negative thought?

"My mom keeps nagging me, and makes me feel stupid."

2 What is my uncomfortable feeling?

"I feel hurt she keeps telling me what to do because I do not need her reminders."

3 What is a more flexible thought?

"I know how to take care of myself even though my mom is trying to help."

4 Why is my vulnerable feeling normal?

"Feeling hurt is a normal reaction when I am not being heard."

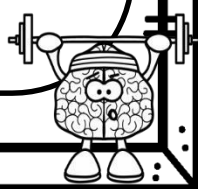
5 What is a more helpful thought now?

Even though my mom keeps nagging me,

(number 1 and 2)

and it makes me feel hurt she is not listening to me,

The truth is just because she reminds me doesn't mean I am stupid. She is trying to help. My feeling hurt is a normal reaction to not being heard.



Challenge Anxious Thoughts

Question the thought and prepare with a back up plan.

1

What I am scared will happen?

2

Why I believe I can't protect myself.

3

Why I am not in real danger.

4

What I can do to protect myself?

5

What is a more helpful thought now?

Even though _____

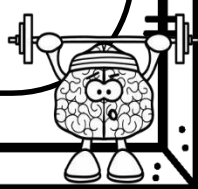
(number 1 and 2)

_____

The truth is _____

(number 3 and 4)

_____



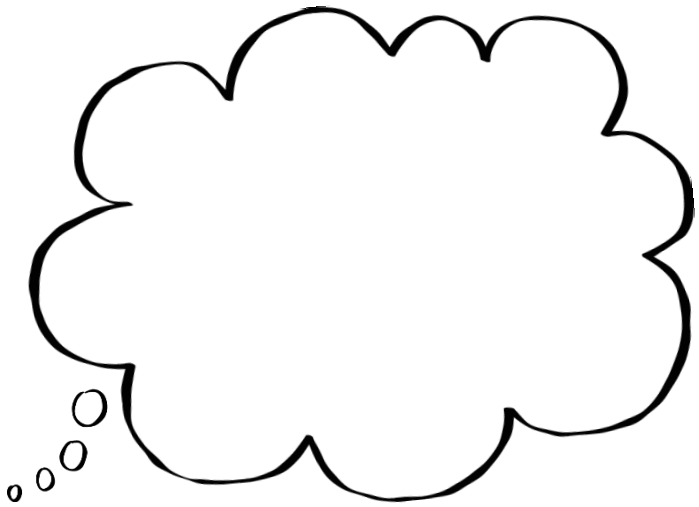
ANXIETY
SELF-CARE PLAN

My relaxation tools:

- ❑ Deep breathing
- ❑ Yoga
- ❑ Guided imagery
- ❑ Progressive muscle relaxation
- ❑ Exercise
- ❑ Mindfulness
- ❑

How I will refocus my attention:

Helpful Self-Talk:



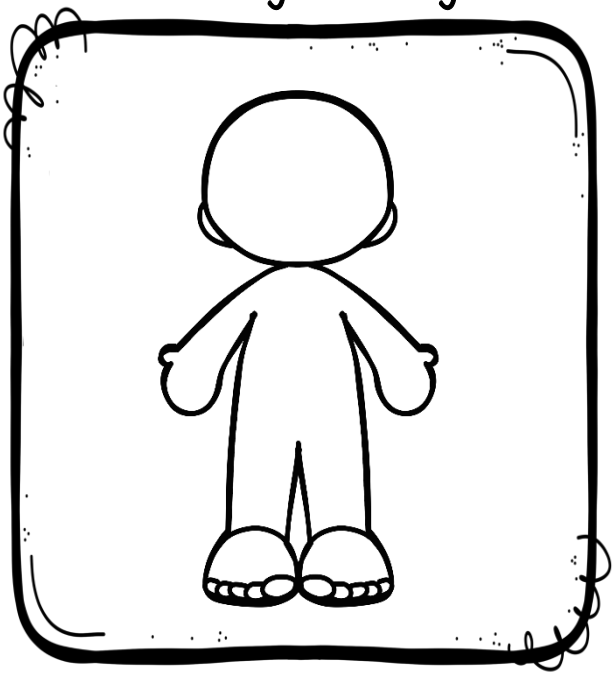
Benefits of Self-Care:

My Self-Care Plan:

ANXIETY

What Causes My Anxiety:

What Happens In My Body:



My Anxious Thoughts:

What I Do When Anxious:

The Consequences:

Questions that help dispute Negative thinking

- What is the evidence this is true?
- What would my best friend say to me?
- What percentage is this true?
- What is a true statement?
- What are the odds this will happen?
- What is the evidence this is not true?
- What is the likelihood this will happen?
- What are the facts?
- What positives have I left out?
- What have I not considered?
- What unhelpful words or labels do I need to replace with helpful words?
- What advice would I give my friend if they had this thought?

Change The Thought Distortion Sentences W O R K S H E E T S

Write a negative thought that includes the word, "can't." Then, answer the following questions.

_____

1. What is the evidence you can do it?

_____

_____

2. What steps can you take to help yourself?

_____

_____

3. Why will it help you to try this?

_____

4. Re-write the sentence with positives.

_____

_____

Write a negative thought that includes, **"what if?"**
Then, answer the following questions.

_____

1. What is the evidence this will not happen?

_____

_____

2. What is the worst-case scenario?

_____

3. How would you cope if it happens?

_____

_____

4. Re-write the sentence with a positive.

_____

_____

Write a negative thought that includes, "always."
Then, answer the following questions.

_____

1. What is the evidence this is not true?

_____

_____

2. What good experiences am I leaving out?

_____

_____

3. What would my best friend say?

_____

_____

4. Re-write the sentence with positives.

_____

_____

Write a negative thought that includes, "never."
Then, answer the following questions.

_____

1. What is the evidence this is not true?

_____

_____

2. What good experiences am I leaving out?

_____

_____

3. What would my best friend say?

_____

_____

4. Re-write the sentence with positives.

_____

_____

Write a negative thought that includes, "failed."
Then, answer the following questions.

_____

1. What is the evidence this is not true?

_____

_____

2. What have I learned from this experience?

_____

_____

3. How am I a better person now?

_____

_____

4. Re-write the sentence with positives.

_____

_____

Think
W O R K S H E E T

Teach participants to treat themselves as they would others starting with how they talk to themselves.

T H I N K

Answer the following questions to help dispute your **negative self-talk**.

Write your upsetting thought here.

_____

_____

	Yes	No
1. Is this thought **T**rue?	☐	☐
2. Is this thought **H**elpful?	☐	☐
3. Is this thought **I**nspiring?	☐	☐
4. Is this thought **N**ecessary?	☐	☐
5. Is this thought **K**ind?	☐	☐

If you answered No to any of the above, re-write your thought using the **THINK** concept.

_____

_____

TRUE
W O R K S H E E T

An easy way to challenge beliefs and dispute negative thinking. Teach participants to use the TRUE acronym to help improve their thinking and feelings.

Challenging Thought Distortions

EXAMPLE

Negative thought I am *dumb* in math.

T hink of the facts: What is the truth?

I do not have a good memory for math concepts, but with help I am able to problem solve.

R edirect your thoughts to your strengths & the positives. What are they?

I can solve problems when I have examples and the option to use a calculator.

U ncover your control: What control do you have?

I can spend more time studying. I can meet with my teacher for tutoring. I can ask my friends for tips..

E xit from negative assumptions & judgements. What helpful thoughts will you choose instead?

Math may not come easy for me, but I am trying my best. .

Challenging *Thought Distortions*

Negative thought _____

Think of the facts: What is the truth?

Redirect your thoughts to your strengths & the positives. What are they?

Uncover your control: What control do you have?

Exit from negative assumptions & judgements. What helpful thoughts will you choose instead?

Positive Thinking
W O R K S H E E T

Answer the following questions to help build your **positive self-talk** and thinking reframes.

1. What are you most proud of?

2. What makes you unique?

3. How do you show kindness?

4. List positive words to describe yourself.

Make a list of what makes you **proud** of yourself.

1. _____

2. _____

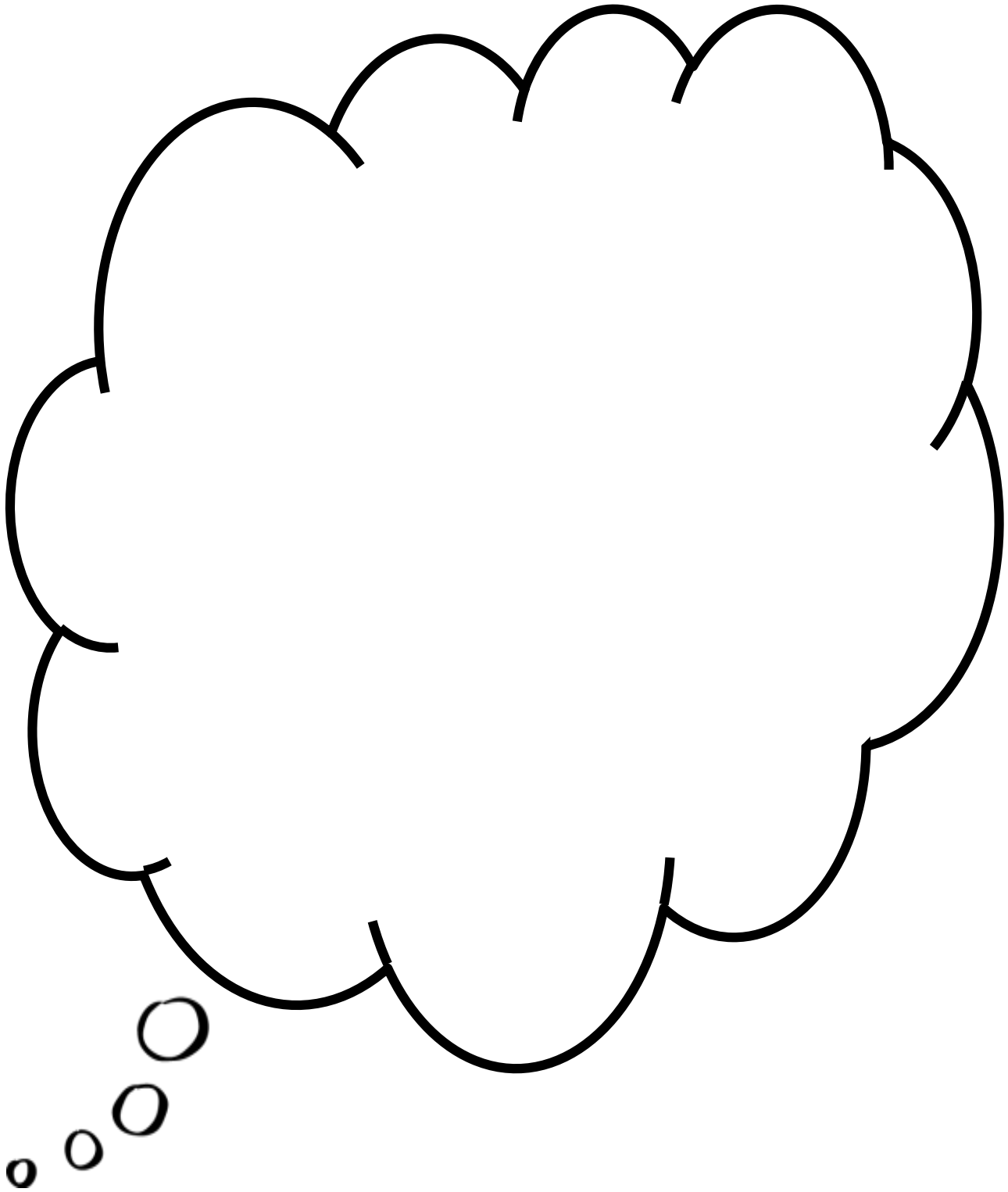
3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Draw yourself celebrating:

Write your positive self-talk messages.



Make a list of **pleasurable** activities
that you commit to participating in this week.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Draw It:

Make a list of the **positive facts** about yourself.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

write a motivational statement.

Make a list of the things you are grateful for.

1. _____

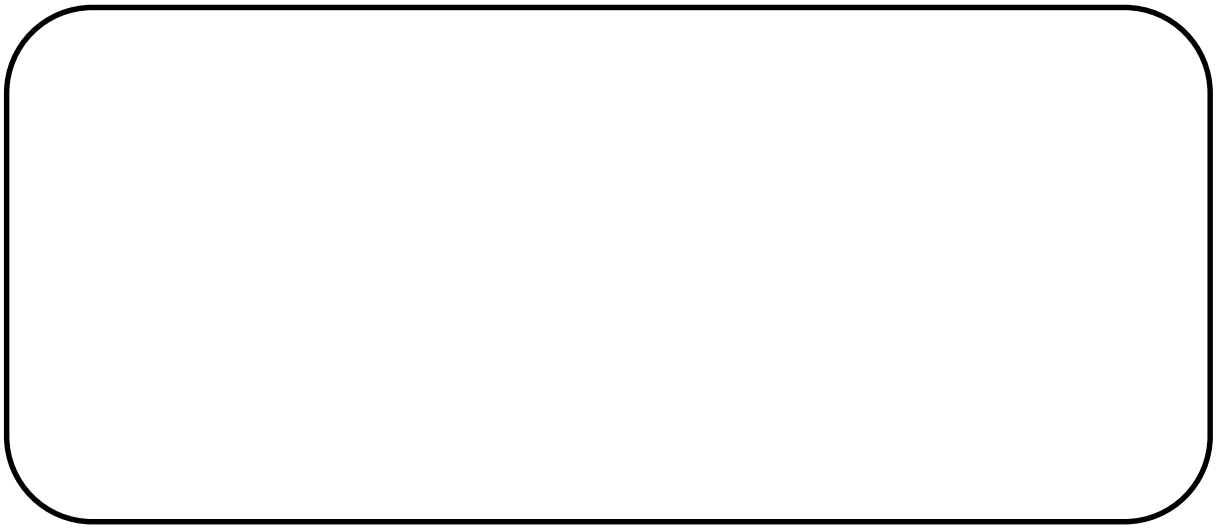
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

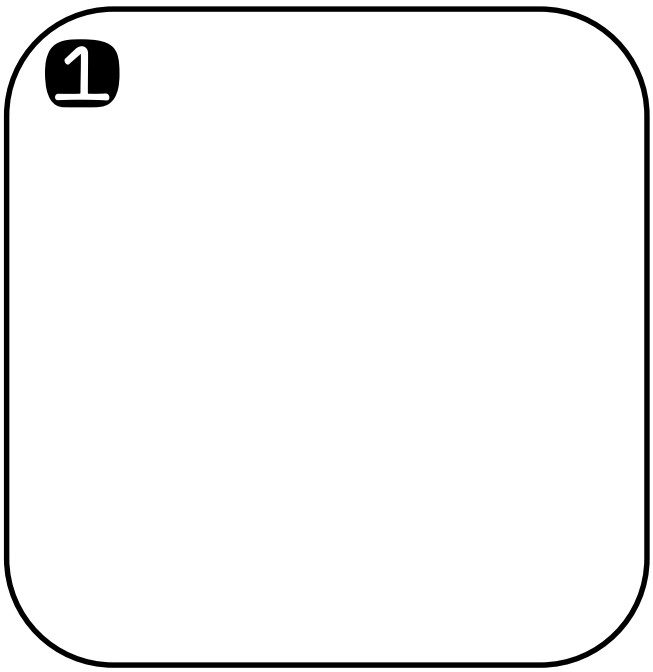
5. _____

Draw what gives you gratitude:



Mindfully, draw a picture of 4 things in front of you that brings you gratitude.

1



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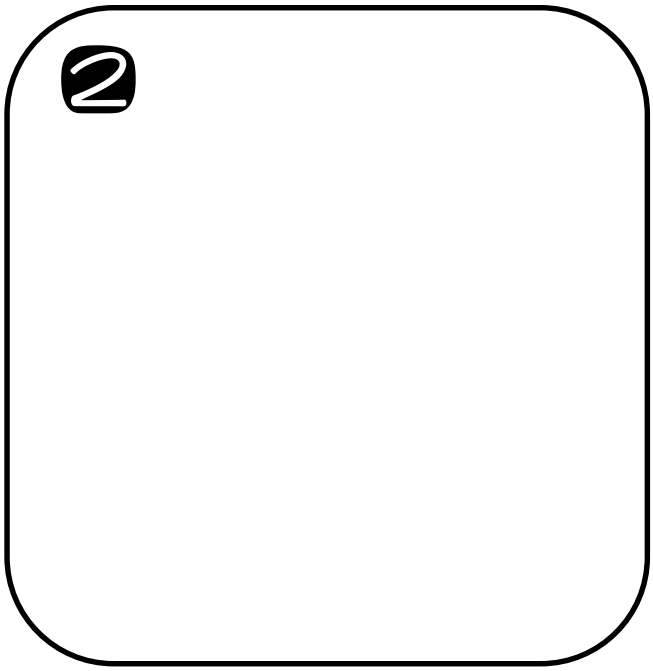

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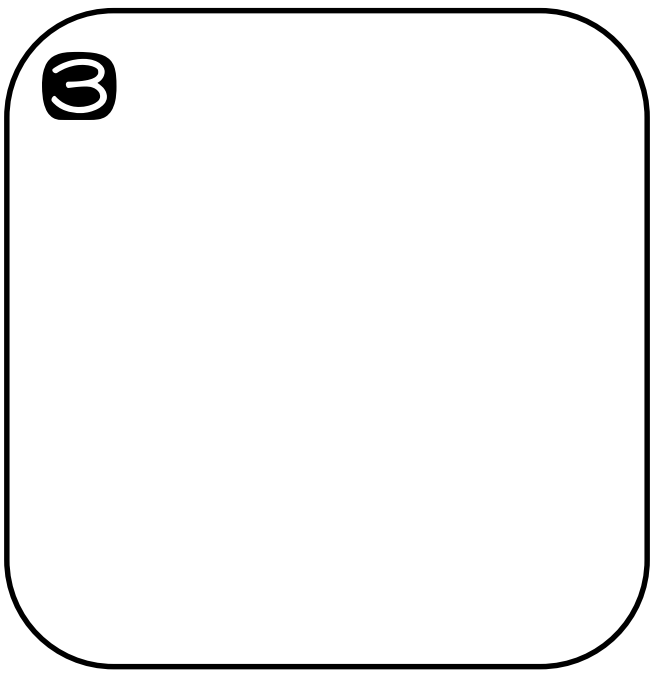

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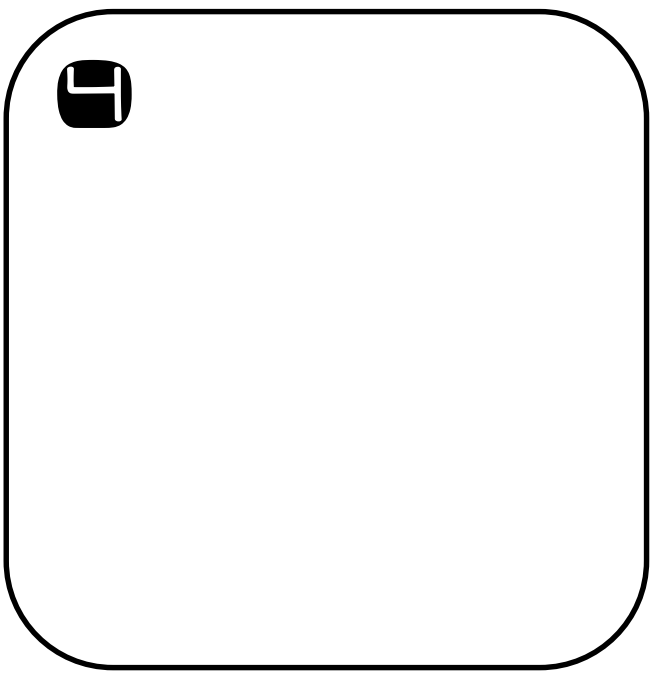

Bonus GRAPES Handout

A GRAPE a day. This page includes coping strategies to practice daily to help increase self-esteem.

Strategies to improve Self-esteem

GRATITUDE: Be mindful of what you are grateful for each day.

RELAXATION: Practice relaxation strategies 20 minutes a day.

a) progressive muscle relaxation
b) deep breathing
c) yoga
d) meditation
e) mindful walking

AFFIRMATIONS: Use helpful self talk that emphasizes your strengths. Question negative thoughts.

PLEASURE: Engage in activities that bring a sense of accomplishment & joy.

EXERCISE: Get your body moving to cause sweat, between 30-60 minutes a day.

SOCIAL: Include yourself in face to face social activities 5 minutes a day.