



Intrusive Thoughts Worksheet

Intrusive thoughts occur spontaneously and contain highly emotional content. Often we would never consider behaving in such a way or acting on these thoughts, but the thought itself is enough to instill worry, distress and interfere with daily life.



Use this worksheet to help you manage intrusive thoughts. Everyone experiences intrusive thoughts differently, so you may find some tips more helpful than others. A thought diary has been created at the end of this worksheet, which can help manage intrusive thoughts in the future.



Acceptance and Mindfulness Strategies

When you avoid intrusive thoughts, or examine their meaning, their occurrence becomes more frequent and distressing. These strategies are useful to promote mindfulness and acceptance of intrusive thoughts to reduce their frequency and associated distress.

Remind yourself that thoughts are simply just thoughts, and there is no need to fear them or act on them

Continue with your daily task or activity

Recognise your thought as an intrusive thought and acknowledge it

Acknowledge how the thought makes you feel

Practice allowing your thought to float by and remind yourself that it will pass

Engage in meditation or guided mindfulness

Consider questioning whether it is a helpful or unhelpful thought rather than ruminating on distressing details

Write down your intrusive thoughts

Find an activity that you enjoy to engage your mind (eg. walking, art, music)

Remind yourself that your thoughts can be illogical and don't necessarily have a hidden meaning

Acknowledge the emotions that are present and when you are comfortable, allow the unhelpful ones to pass





Other Strategies that Work for You

(Write them below)

Date: _____

Time: _____

My Thought Diary



How did you experience the thought? (eg. verbal thought, image, other sensory experience)

What were you doing at the time that the thought occurred?

What was the thought about?

How were you feeling before and after the thought occurred?



**How many times has this thought occurred?
(add a dot every time this thought occurs)**

A horizontal rectangular box with an orange border. A black dot is placed inside the box on the left side. A blue arrow points from the text above to the dot.

**How distressing was the thought?
(0=not at all distressing, 10=extremely distressing)**

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A horizontal line with square markers at each end, representing a scale from 0 to 10.

How did you manage the thought?



A large empty rectangular box with a green border, intended for writing the response to the question 'How did you manage the thought?'.

This program is funded by the Adelaide Primary Health Network - an Australian Government Initiative

Lived Experience Telephone Support Service

1800 013 755

Webchat: letss.org.au