



DIY Guide for Kids

How to

Learn and Practice CBT Skills for
Treatment of Depression



MindWeal

DIY Guide for Kids:

How to Learn and Practice CBT Skills for Treatment of Depression



Hey there! Depression can be really tough, but Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a great way to help you manage it. This guide will show you some fun and easy ways to learn and practice CBT skills at home. Let's get started!

Disclaimer: This guide is intended to complement, not replace, your psychotherapy with a licensed therapist. It should be used under the supervision of a licensed professional.

What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that helps you change the way you think and behave to feel better. It's like training your brain to think differently and handle situations more positively.

Why It's Important:

- **Reduces Depression:** Helps you feel less sad and more in control.
- **Improves Mood:** Makes you feel happier and more relaxed.
- **Builds Coping Skills:** Teaches you ways to handle difficult situations better.

Step 1: Identify Negative Thoughts

Negative thoughts are unhelpful thoughts that make you feel sad or down. The first step in CBT is to identify these thoughts.

What to do:

- **Notice Your Thoughts:** Pay attention to what you're thinking when you feel sad or down. Example "I can't do anything right." Example
- **Write It Down:** Keep a journal of your negative thoughts. Example "I'm not good enough."
- **Trigger:** Identify any triggers to the thought. Example "Making a mistake in class."

Why It Helps:

- **Increases Awareness:** Helps you become more aware of your negative thoughts.
- **Provides Insight:** Helps you understand what triggers your feelings of sadness.

Step 2: Challenge Negative Thoughts

Challenging your negative thoughts means questioning whether they are true or helpful.

What to do:

- **Ask Questions to challenge it:** When you have a negative thought, ask yourself questions to challenge it. Example "Is it really true that I can't do anything right? Have I done anything well before?"
- **Look for Evidence:** Find evidence that supports or disproves your negative thought. Example "I did well on my last art project and my teacher praised me."

Why It Helps:

- **Changes Perspective:** Helps you see things in a more balanced way.
- **Reduces Sadness:** Decreases the power of negative thoughts.

Step 3: Replace Negative Thoughts

Replacing negative thoughts with more positive or realistic thoughts can help you feel better.

What to do:

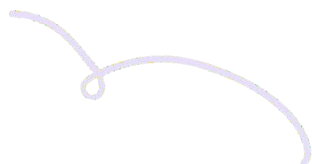
- **Create Positive Thoughts:** Think of positive or realistic alternatives to your negative thoughts. Example “I’m capable of doing well if I try.”
- **Repeat Positive Thoughts:** Practice saying these positive thoughts to yourself.
Ex: “I am good enough and I can succeed.”

Why It Helps:

- **Boosts Confidence:** Helps you feel more confident and less sad.
- **Improves Mood:** Promotes a more positive outlook.

Step 4: Practice Relaxation Techniques

Relaxation techniques help calm your body and mind when you’re feeling down.



What to do:

- **Deep Breathing:** Practice deep breathing exercises to calm yourself. [Click here](#) to learn in detail how to do it.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and then relax different muscle groups in your body. [Click here](#) to learn in detail how to do it.

Why It Helps:

- **Reduces Physical Symptoms:** Helps reduce the physical symptoms of sadness.
- **Promotes Calmness:** Helps you feel more relaxed and in control.

Step 5: Behavioral Activation (Activity Scheduling)

Behavioral activation involves doing activities that you enjoy or find rewarding, even when you don't feel like it.

What to do:

- **List Enjoyable Activities:** Write down a list of activities that you enjoy or used to enjoy. ~~Exmp~~ Playing outside, drawing, or listening to music.
- **Plan Activities:** Schedule time each day to do one of these activities, even if you don't feel like it at first. ~~Exmp~~ "I will play outside for 15 minutes after school."

Why It Helps:

- **Increases Enjoyment:** Helps you start enjoying activities again.
- **Improves Mood:** Lifts your spirits by engaging in positive activities.

Step 6: Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills help you find solutions to the things that make you feel sad.

What to do:

- **Identify the Problem:** Clearly define what's making you feel sad. *Exmp* "I'm worried about making friends at school."
- **Brainstorm Solutions:** Think of different ways to solve the problem. *Exmp* "I can join a club, talk to a classmate, or ask a teacher for help."
- **Choose a Solution:** Pick the best solution and try it out. *Exmp* "I'll join the art club to meet new friends."

Why It Helps:

- **Promotes Action:** Encourages you to take action rather than feeling stuck.
- **Reduces Sadness:** Helps you feel more in control and less sad.

Step 7: Reward Yourself

Rewarding yourself for practicing CBT skills can motivate you to keep going.

What to do:

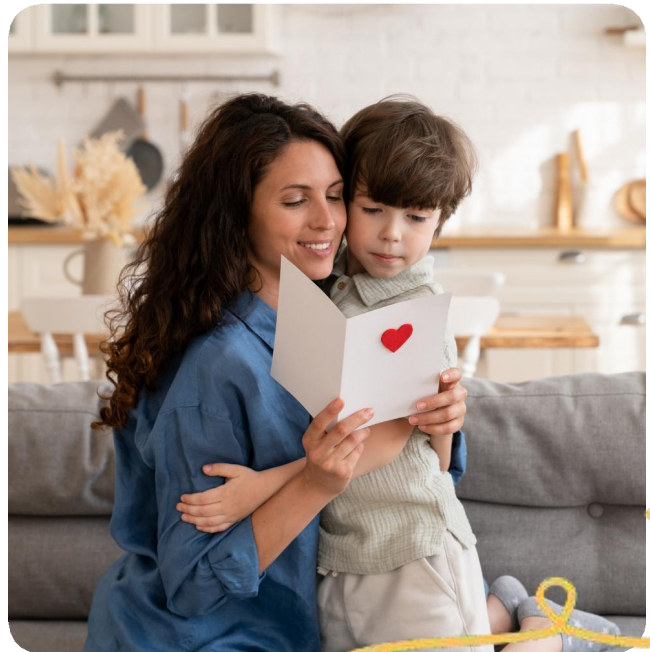
- **Set Small Goals:** Set small, achievable goals for practicing CBT skills. *Exmp* "I will practice deep breathing for 5 minutes every day."
- **Choose Rewards:** Pick rewards that you enjoy for reaching your goals. *Exmp* "If I practice deep breathing every day this week, I'll treat myself to a favorite snack."

Why It Helps:

- **Increases Motivation:** Encourages you to keep practicing CBT skills.
- **Boosts Confidence:** Helps you feel proud of your progress.

Conclusion

Practicing CBT skills can help you manage your depression and feel better. By learning to identify, challenge, and replace negative thoughts, practicing relaxation techniques, engaging in enjoyable activities, solving problems, and rewarding yourself, you can take control of your feelings of sadness. Remember, it's important to practice regularly and be patient with yourself. Always work with a professional therapist who can guide you through this process safely and effectively. Keep practicing, and you'll see great progress in managing your depression!



To further develop and practice the skills you've learned in this guide, please use our CBT workbook for Depression. Access the workbook [HERE](#)