

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Observing Self Worksheet

Getting Present in the Moment by focusing on the Senses: Take a deep breath, filling your belly, and keep breathing comfortably. Notice three sounds, three things you see, something you taste and smell, three things you feel on your body. Notice your body sensations, your heartrate. Notice your emotions. Notice your thoughts.

*** Keep in mind, any time you “notice” your thoughts, emotions, actions, etc, you are stepping into the observing-self role. In many instances you may be able to defuse (disempower) a thought or emotion by just noticing it.*

What did you notice?

Below, complete the table to begin to notice some of the stories that may be associated with your ego or conceptualized self. The last two columns offer the opportunity to begin to change your response to your ego or conceptualized self.

[illegible]

Example:

Emotion (Peaceful, calm, angry, frustrated, sad, melancholy, nostalgic, happy, excited)	Story or thought associated with the emotion (I'm still not doing what I want to be doing right now, I am so blessed- I had the best morning, I can't believe that happened again)	Values based thinking or Ego/Conceptualized self based thinking? (using should, comparing current self with a previous or future self, devaluing the moment) How come?	Defusion or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Challenging the Thought	Values based action or thought (Right now, I am honoring my values by. . .)
Calm	I don't have any stress. I can only be calm because I don't have stress.	Ego/conceptualized self. Stress is a status, therefore I'm uncomfortable feeling calm.	ACT: I'm noticing that I feel calm right now and that feels good in my body.	I value my health and well being and giving myself permission to feel calm is important to fulfilling my value of health and well being.
Guilty	I should be doing something other than what I'm doing.	Ego/conceptualized self. Using should, devaluing the current moment as not good enough.	ACT: I'm noticing this re-occurring story wherein I discredit what I'm doing.	I'm going to do this for 10 more minutes because it feels relaxing, then I'm going to spend 10 minutes washing dishes. Then, I will return to reading my book.
Sad	I wish I was more successful at work, I feel like a failure.	Ego. Desire to be popular, comparing self to others.	CBT: It's not a popularity contest, my hard work will pay off.	I value my work ethic, not being the workplace entertainer. I can make an effort to connect more with my colleagues, but what's most important to me is the good work that I do.
Relieved	I'm glad we were able to talk out the conversation earlier in the day.	Values		I did well connecting to my partner earlier today even though it was hard and I'm glad we talked because I feel better now.