

## Re-Integration Worksheet:

### Negative Thoughts about Returning to Work – Self-Sabotage

List the negative thoughts or negative self-talk you had about your job *prior* to the COVID lockdown.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

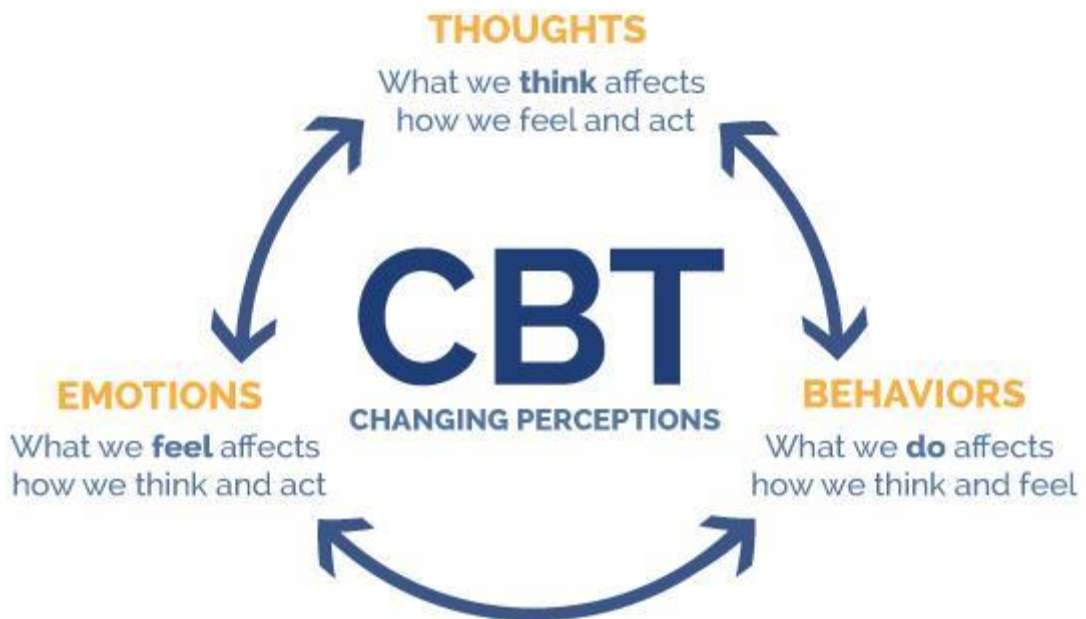
Determine which of the thoughts or self-talk above were realistic at that time (pre-COVID) and if the thought changed during COVID lockdown.

1. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)
2. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)
3. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)
4. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)
5. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)
6. Realistic? **Yes** **No** Changed during Lockdown? **No** **Yes** (If **yes**, write down new thought: \_\_\_\_\_)

Write down any new negative thoughts or negative self-talk about returning to work post-COVID.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Realistic? **Yes** **No**
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Realistic? **Yes** **No**
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Realistic? **Yes** **No**
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Realistic? **Yes** **No**
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Realistic? **Yes** **No**

Relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors



## What is negative self-talk?

From: <https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-self-talk-and-how-it-affects-us-4161304?>

Negative self-talk is often referred to as your “inner critic.” Sometimes this can be helpful to keep you motivated toward your goals. However, it can also be harmful resulting in excessive negativity. It can cause increased stress and impact your mind and body.

“Basically, it is any inner dialogue you have with yourself that may be limiting your ability to believe in yourself and your own abilities, and reach your potential. It is any thought that diminishes you and your ability to make positive changes in your life or your confidence in your ability to do so. Because of this, negative self-talk can not only be stressful, but it can really stunt your success.”

## Consequences of negative self-talk

From: <https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-self-talk-and-how-it-affects-us-4161304?>

1. Decreased motivation
2. Increased feeling of helplessness
3. Increased stress
4. Limited thinking
5. Perfectionism
6. Feeling of depression
7. Relationship changes

## The health benefits of positive thinking and positive self-talk

From: <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/mayo-mindfulness-overcoming-negative-self-talk/>

Researchers continue to explore the effects of positive thinking and optimism on health. Health benefits that positive thinking may provide include:

- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Better cardiovascular health and reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

## How to minimize negative self-talk

From: <https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-self-talk-and-how-it-affects-us-4161304?>

### 1. Catch Your Critic

Learn to notice when you're being self-critical so you can begin to stop.

### 2. Remember That Thoughts and Feelings Aren't Always Reality

Your thoughts can be skewed like everyone else's, subject to biases and the influence of your moods.

### 3. Give Your Inner Critic a Nickname

When you think of your inner critic as a force outside of yourself and even give it a goofy nickname, it's not only easier to realize that you don't have to agree, but it becomes less threatening and easier to see how ridiculous some of your critical thoughts can be.

### 4. Contain Your Negativity

If you find yourself engaging in negative self-talk, it helps to contain the damage that a critical inner voice can cause by only allowing it to criticize certain things in your life, or be negative for only an hour in your day. This puts a limit on how much negativity can come from the situation.

### 5. Change Negativity to Neutrality

It's often far easier to change the intensity of your language. "I can't stand this" becomes, "This is challenging." "I hate..." becomes, "I don't like..." and even, "I don't prefer..." When your self-talk uses more gentle language, much of its negative power is muted as well.

### 6. Cross-Examine Your Inner Critic

It's far better to catch your negative self-talk and ask yourself how true it is. The vast majority of negative self-talk is an exaggeration, and calling yourself on this can help to take away the damaging influence of negative self-talk.

### 7. Think Like a Friend

If you know you wouldn't say it this way, think of how you'd share your thoughts with a good friend or what you'd like a good friend to say to you. This is a great way to shift your self-talk in general.

### 8. Shift Your Perspective

Think of the world as a globe and of yourself as a tiny, tiny person on this globe. This can often minimize the negativity, fear, and urgency in negative self-talk.

### 9. Say It Aloud

Sometimes when you catch yourself thinking negative thoughts in your mind, simply saying them aloud or telling a trusted friend can help.

### 10. Stop That Thought

Simply stopping negative thoughts in their tracks can be helpful. This is known as "thought-stopping" and can take the form of snapping a rubber band on your wrist, visualizing a stop sign, or simply changing to another thought when a negative train of thought enters your mind.

### 11. Replace the Bad With Some Good

Take a negative thought and change it to something encouraging that's also accurate.

## How to challenge negative self-talk

From: <https://psychcentral.com/lib/challenging-negative-self-talk>

### 1. Reality testing

- What is my evidence for and against my thinking?
- Are my thoughts factual, or are they just my interpretations?
- Am I jumping to negative conclusions?
- How can I find out if my thoughts are actually true?

### 2. Look for alternative explanations

- Are there any other ways that I could look at this situation?
- What else could this mean?
- If I were being positive, how would I perceive this situation?

### 3. Putting it in perspective

- Is this situation as bad as I am making out to be?
- What is the worst thing that could happen? How likely is it?
- What is the best thing that could happen?
- What is most likely to happen?
- Is there anything good about this situation?
- Will this matter in five years?

### 4. Using goal-directed thinking











- Is thinking this way helping me to feel good or to achieve my goals?
- What can I do that will help me solve the problem?
- Is there something I can learn from this situation, to help me do it better next time?

"A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks, he becomes."

– Mahatma Gandhi

## Creating a Healthy Mindset When Returning to Work

From: <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/mayo-mindfulness-overcoming-negative-self-talk/>  
and <https://www.careercontessa.com/advice/negative-self-talk/>

NEGATIVE		HEALTHY
I've never done it before.		It's an opportunity to learn something new.
It's too complicated.		I'll tackle it from a different angle.
I don't have the resources.		Necessity is the mother of invention.
I'm too lazy to get this done.		I wasn't able to fit it into my schedule, but I can re-examine some priorities.
There's no way it will work.		I can try to make it work.
It's too radical a change.		Let's take a chance.
No one bothers to communicate with me.		I'll see if I can open the channels of communication.
I'm not going to get any better at this.		I'll give it another try.
I don't deserve that.		This is how I've earned (or can earn) this opportunity.
I'm not good enough.		These are my unique attributes and here's how I utilize them.
I messed up too much to start over.		Mistakes happen. I'm going to establish a plan to work through this.

## What kind of thinker are you?

From: [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS\\_89.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_89.htm)

### Instructions:

For each statement, click the button in the column that best describes you. Please answer questions as you actually are (rather than how you think you should be), and don't worry if some questions seem to score in the "wrong direction." When you are finished, please click the "Calculate My Total" button at the bottom of the test.

Statements	Not at All	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very Often
When my boss asks to speak with me, I instinctively assume that he or she wants to discuss a problem or give me negative feedback.	5	4	3	2	1
When I experience real difficulty at work/home, I also feel negative about other parts of my life.	5	4	3	2	1
When I experience a setback, I tend to believe the obstacle will endure for the long-term, e.g. "The funding didn't come through, so I guess that means they hate the project. All that work for nothing."	5	4	3	2	1
When a team I am on is functioning poorly, I never think that the cause is short-term and has a straightforward solution. For example, "We're not working well at the moment, but if we can fix this problem, then we'll do much better!"	5	4	3	2	1
When I'm not chosen for an assignment I really want, I think "I'm a loser!" instead of thinking that maybe I didn't have the specific skills for it.	5	4	3	2	1
When something happens that I don't like or appreciate, I can tend to conclude that the cause is widespread in nature and will continue to plague me. For example, "My assistant didn't 'cc' me on that email she sent to my boss. Administrative assistants are all out to prove how much smarter they are than their supervisors."	5	4	3	2	1
When I perform very well on an assignment, I believe that I am good in that one very specific area as opposed to thinking I'm generally talented and smart.	5	4	3	2	1
When I receive a reward or recognition, I can tend to figure that luck or fate played more of a role than my actual work or skill. For example, "They asked me to be the key note speaker at the conference next year. I guess the other guys were all busy."	5	4	3	2	1

Statements	Not at All	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
When I come up with a really good idea, I am surprised by my creativity. I figure it is my lucky day, and caution myself not to get used to the feeling.	5	4	3	2	1
When something bad happens at work, I tend to thinking that I am incompetent and to blame as opposed to seeing the contributions that everyone made to the mistake.	5	4	3	2	1
After winning an award/recognition/contract, I believe it's because I am better than the competition. For example, "We won that large contract against two strong competitors. We're simply better than they are."	5	4	3	2	1
As the leader, when my team completes a project, I tend to attribute the success to my skilled leadership as opposed to the hard work and dedication of the team members.	5	4	3	2	1
When I make a decision that proves to be successful, it's because I have expertise on the subject and analyzed that particular problem really well, as opposed to being generally a strong decision maker.	5	4	3	2	1
When I achieve a long-term and personally challenging goal, I never congratulate myself or think about all the skills that I used in order to be successful.	5	4	3	2	1
Column Sums:					

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## Score Interpretation

Score	Comment
14-31	Yikes! It must feel like there is a rain cloud that hangs overhead all day. You have gotten yourself into the habit of seeing things as your fault and you've learned to give up your control in many situations.
32-50	You try to be optimistic and positive however some situations get the better of you. Identify your triggers for negative thinking and use rational thinking exercises to become naturally more optimistic.
51-70	Great job! You have a generally positive and optimistic outlook on life. You don't take things personally and you are able to see that setbacks won't ruin the rest of your life.



## Description of CBT Thought Diary App (FREE!!)



Thought Diary is a smartphone app where you can document your negative emotions, analyze flaws in your thinking, and re-evaluate your negative thoughts into more balanced ones. It can help you recognize helpful ways to deal with your negative behaviors and emotions for future situations. You can gradually change your approach to how you interpret the ups and downs of life, making long-lasting changes in your mental well-being.

The key features of Thought Diary include:

- Keep a daily mood tracker
- Practice gratitude by creating positive entries using the flexible diary entry format
- Keep track of positive experiences so that you can refer back to them and appreciate the good moments
- Learn to identify emotions, analyze how and why you're feeling this way
- Challenge your thoughts with a list of common cognitive distortions and change your thinking patterns
- Save your entries so you can reflect on them in the future and export your entries to share with others
- Passcode protect the application to keep your thoughts private

