



THE
TUESDAY CHAPTER
FIND CLARITY | BUILD CONFIDENCE | LIVE WITH PURPOSE

FREE GUIDE

An introduction to CBT

Understanding the five-part model, with an everyday example and a worksheet you can use straight away.

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Welcome

Sometimes everyday situations can feel overwhelming, or we notice ourselves reacting in ways that bring short-term relief but leave us struggling afterwards. This short guide introduces one of the simplest and most useful ideas in cognitive behavioural therapy: that what we think, feel, notice in our body and do are all connected.

You don't need any background knowledge, and there's no right or wrong way to use it. Take what's useful and leave the rest.

THE BASICS

What is CBT?

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a practical, structured form of talking therapy. It focuses on what is happening **now**, and on the patterns that keep a difficulty going, rather than only on where it started.

In CBT, you and your therapist work things out together. You look at specific, recent situations, notice what tends to happen, and try small, manageable changes between sessions. CBT is widely used for anxiety, low mood and depression, stress and burnout, and the sense of feeling stuck.

CBT isn't about forcing yourself to think positively. Your past experiences and the real circumstances you're facing matter too, and they're part of the picture you look at together.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1

Read

Learn the five parts and how they connect (page 3).

2

See it in action

Follow a worked, everyday example (page 4).

3

Try it yourself

Use the blank worksheet on a recent situation (page 5).

Please note: this guide is general information to help you reflect. It isn't therapy, a diagnosis or a substitute for professional support. If you're struggling, please speak to your GP or a qualified therapist. Urgent support details are on the last page.

The five-part model

CBT often breaks an experience down into five parts. Seeing them laid out side by side makes it easier to spot how they feed each other, and where a small change might help.

THE SITUATION

What happened, where and when? Who was there? Stick to the facts, as if describing a photo.

Thoughts

What went through your mind? What did you predict, or assume about yourself or others?

Emotions

How did you feel? For example anxious, low, frustrated or ashamed. Rate each from 0 (not present) to 100 (the strongest you can imagine).

Physical sensations

What did you notice in your body? For example a racing heart, tension, tiredness, a knot in your stomach.

Behaviour

What did you do, or avoid doing? What did you do to cope or to feel better in the moment?

WHY IT MATTERS

Each part affects the others. An anxious thought can speed up your heart, a racing heart can make you want to leave, and leaving can make the thought feel even more true next time. The good news is that this works both ways: a change in **one** part can start to shift the rest.

Sam and the Monday meeting

Sam is a fictional example. He gives a short update at a team meeting every Monday and has started to dread it. He spent Sunday evening worrying about it and slept badly.

THE SITUATION

Monday, 9.55am. Sam is sitting in the meeting room. His update is next on the agenda.

Thoughts

"I'll lose my words and everyone will think I can't do my job." "I always mess these up."

Emotions

Anxious (80/100), embarrassed in advance (60/100), a bit low (40/100).

Physical sensations

Racing heart, tight chest, churning stomach, hot face, tired after a poor night's sleep.

Behaviour

Reads his notes over and over and avoids eye contact. Plans to keep his update as short as possible and avoid questions.

What keeps it going

Rushing through and avoiding questions brings relief. But Sam never finds out whether his prediction is right, so the fear stays just as convincing and next Monday feels just as hard.

Trying something different

Sam picks one small, manageable step: he gives his usual update, adds one extra sentence and stays open to questions. Beforehand he writes down his prediction: *"I'll freeze and people will think I'm useless."*

What happened

Sam felt anxious and stumbled over a word, but he finished his update. A colleague asked a routine question, which he answered. Nobody reacted the way he had feared. Afterwards he wrote: *"Feeling nervous doesn't mean I can't contribute."* The anxiety didn't disappear, but it gave him evidence to set against his prediction next time.

"Tuesday is evidence." Looking back at what actually happened, rather than what we feared, gives us real information to learn from.

Five-part worksheet

Date: _____

Think of a recent situation that bothered you. Fill in what you can; there's no need to complete every box. Print this page, or type into the boxes on a computer. **On a phone?** The phone worksheet is easier to use. Download it free at thetuesdaychapter.com.

The situation

What happened, where and when?

Thoughts

What went through your mind?

Emotions

Name each feeling. 0 = not present, 100 = strongest

Physical sensations

What did you notice in your body?

Behaviour

What did you do, or avoid doing?

Looking back

What did I expect would happen? What actually happened?

What might I say to a friend who was in this situation?

One small step I could try next time:

NEXT STEPS

Getting the most from this

- **Start small.** Pick a situation that was uncomfortable rather than the hardest thing you're facing.
- **Be specific.** "Tuesday's meeting" is easier to work with than "work always stresses me out".
- **Get curious, not critical.** The aim is to notice patterns, not to judge yourself for having them.
- **Repeat it.** Filling in a few worksheets over a week or two often shows patterns you wouldn't spot from one.

When to look for more support

Self-help can be a good start, but it isn't always enough on its own. Consider talking to your GP or a therapist if things have been difficult for more than a couple of weeks, are affecting your work, relationships or sleep, or feel hard to manage on your own.

If you need help urgently

999

NHS 24 • 111

Samaritans • 116 123

Breathing Space • 0800 83 85 87

If you or someone else is in immediate danger

Urgent help, including mental health, day or night

Free, any time, day or night

Free. Mon–Thu 6pm–2am; Fri 6pm to Mon 6am

WORKING WITH THE TUESDAY CHAPTER

The Tuesday Chapter offers individual CBT for adults at Covault, 1 Redwood Crescent, East Kilbride, in Glasgow by arrangement, and online across Scotland, including evenings. Sessions are £50 for 50 minutes. Stephen Knox is a member of BACP and works in a trauma-informed way.

Start with a free 15-minute call

hello@thetuesdaychapter.com

07726 923364 (call, text or WhatsApp)

Book your free call online

