



## Automatic Negative Thoughts Worksheet #4: Recording ANTs

Recording your automatic negative thoughts is essential because it can help individuals become aware of how their thoughts may contribute to negative emotions or behaviors. By writing down their automatic negative thoughts, individuals can better understand the types of thoughts they have, the frequency with which they have them, and the situations or triggers that tend to elicit these thoughts. This can provide valuable insights into the patterns and characteristics of their automatic negative thoughts and can ultimately help them to identify and change these thoughts in a more helpful way.

Additionally, recording your automatic negative thoughts can provide a starting point for working with a therapist or counselor to develop strategies for managing and reframing these thoughts in a more helpful way. By sharing their automatic negative thoughts with a therapist, individuals can receive feedback and support in identifying and challenging these thoughts and can learn more effective ways of managing and coping with them. This can ultimately lead to a decrease in negative emotions and an increase in positive ones.

In this worksheet, we will provide you with some steps to help you record your ANTs more accurately. This will, in return, help you solve them quickly.

Here is a step-by-step guide for recording automatic negative thoughts:

1. Choose a method for recording your thoughts. You can use a notebook, a journal, a smartphone app, or any other method that works for you.
2. Pay attention to your internal monologue. As you go about your day, pay attention to your thoughts and notice when you have a negative thought.
3. Write down the thought as you experience it. When you have a negative thought, write it down exactly as you experience it, without filtering or editing it. This can help to capture the thought in its original form without any distortions or biases.
4. Include the date and time of the thought. This can help you to track the frequency and patterns of your automatic negative thoughts over time.
5. Include any relevant details or context. If there are any specific details or circumstances that are relevant to the thought, include them in your recording. This can help you to understand the triggers or situations that tend to elicit your automatic negative thoughts.

6. Review your thoughts periodically. After you have been recording your automatic negative thoughts for a few days or weeks, review your entries and look for any patterns or trends. This can help you better understand your thought patterns and how they may contribute to negative emotions or behaviors.

By following these steps, individuals can learn to identify and track their automatic negative thoughts systematically and helpfully. This can provide valuable insights into the patterns and characteristics of these thoughts and can ultimately help individuals to manage and change them in a more constructive and positive way. As you record and challenge your automatic negative thoughts, it is important to be kind and compassionate to yourself. Remember that everyone has negative thoughts from time to time, and that it is normal and healthy to challenge and change these thoughts. Be patient and gentle with yourself, and remind yourself that you are doing your best.