

**Religious Cognitive Behavioral Therapy  
for Depression In Clients with Chronic Physical Illness**

**Therapist Workbook**

(Jewish Version)

Joseph W. Ciarrocchi, Ph.D.,  
Debbie Schechter  
Michelle J. Pearce, Ph.D.  
Harold G. Koenig, M.D.  
Jonathan Schwartz, Psy.D.  
David H. Rosmarin, Ph.D.

With contributions from Rebecca Propst, Ph.D.

Jewish version by Jonathan Schwartz, Psy.D., and David Rosmarin, Ph.D.

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This workbook is a variant of the treatment protocol  
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\*Please cite appropriately\*

Contact Information:

Jonathan Schwartz, Psy.D.  
Center for Anxiety Relief  
2204 Morris Ave.  
Suite 208  
Union, NJ 07205  
(908) 400-3245  
Schwartz.ccbp@gmail.com

## Session 1: Assessment and Introduction to RCBT

### Home Practice Activities

#### 1. Memory Verse

**“Think good and it will be good.”** (*Tzedmach Tzedek*)

Write the verse down and post it somewhere you will see it often, perhaps on a sticky note placed on your mirror or fridge. You may want to make several copies and post them in places you will see it throughout the day.

#### 2. Activity and Mood Monitor

The goal of the first session's homework assignment is to begin developing skills in self-monitoring of daily mood and daily activities. The goal at this stage is not to change any regular habits. The self-monitoring logs have a place for recording your activities and mood every two hours. Please complete this log daily. It may be easiest to fill out the activity log twice during the day. For example, you could record all of your morning activities when you eat lunch and all of your afternoon and evening activities just before you go to bed. This record will give us some information as to which activities may lead to better moods and which activities may lead to worsened moods.

Here are few guidelines about self-monitoring:

- a. Keep the self-monitoring log with you throughout the day and record your activities as close as possible to the end of the time periods.
  - b. Record the activity in a very few words. For example, you could record "went out to dinner" or "washed my clothes" or "read a book" or even "watched TV."
  - c. Immediately after recording your activities, record your mood.
  - d. Purchase a notebook to put the logs in, so that you will have a record of your activities. We will make use of them later.
  - e. Make sure you have your logs with you during each session. They are necessary for the rest of the program
  - f. Be sure to include even trivial events on your chart such as “missed the bus” or “read the newspaper.”
3. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

## Thinking and Depression

### Signs of Depression

"I don't have a purpose in life anymore now that my chronic pain makes it too difficult to work."

"I am not a good Jew because I am depressed. A Jew should not be depressed."

"I just can't motivate myself to do any of the things which I need to do. I'm a lazy person."

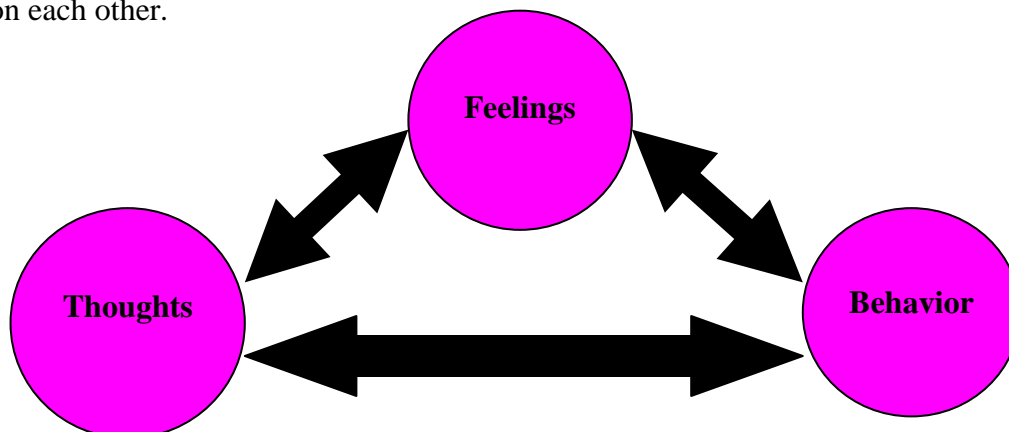
All of the above are statements that a depressed individual might make. While some of these statements and notions may seem to be correct on the surface, they actually reflect a change in the way an individual thinks about him or herself. When people become depressed, they think about themselves and their environments in different and more negative ways.

Recent research has shown that depressed individuals are more likely to interpret an event more negatively than non-depressed individuals are. Thus, depressive symptoms are related to the ways in which individuals interpret and think about their situations in life. These thoughts and interpretations are also a reflection of one's past experiences. Not only are depressed individuals' interpretations more negative, but research also shows that their perceptions and interpretations are less accurate than the perceptions of those who are not depressed.

The interpretations that an individual makes of a situation influence his or her behavior, as illustrated in the following example. Imagine that you have a flat tire on a deserted highway and do not have anything to change the tire with, including a car jack. As you are standing there stranded, your next-door neighbor drives by and looks up briefly but keeps going. How would you feel about the fact that your neighbor kept driving? What would you most likely be telling yourself about the situation?

Now let's imagine further that you see your neighbor the next day and he comes over to you and apologizes for driving by you, and says: "I'm so sorry I couldn't stop; my son fell and was bleeding from his head and I was rushing him to the emergency room." How might you be feeling now? What changed? What are you now telling yourself about the situation that is different from when you were standing on the road?

The following diagram represents the relative relationship that thoughts, feelings, and behavior have on each other.



The idea that our thoughts and assumptions play an important role in influencing our emotions is a very common idea in both the Torah and in the Talmudic literature. Indeed, for Jews, the cognitive behavior model is over 5000 years old! King Solomon teaches us in Proverbs 23:7 that “As a man thinks, so is he.”

**Activity and Mood Monitor**

<b>Day:</b>	<b>Activity Engaged In</b>	<b>Mood</b>
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		
<b>Day:</b>	<b>Activity Engaged In</b>	<b>Mood</b>
6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
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10 pm-12 am		
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6-8 am		
8-10 am		
10 am-12 pm		
12 pm-2 pm		
2 pm-4 pm		
4 pm-6 pm		
6 pm-8 pm		
8 pm-10 pm		
10 pm-12 am		

## Session 2: Behavioral Activation and Walking by Faith

### Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

**“Know that a man is influenced in accordance with his actions.”**  
(*Sefer HaChinuch*)

As you did last week, write the verse down and put it in a place (or ideally more than one place) where you will see it many times a day. The more you meditate on these verses, the more your mind is renewed and the greater improvement you will begin to see in your mood.

2. Plan and Complete Pleasant Events

Complete the two pleasant events you selected with your therapist between now and our next session. When you are finished the activity, complete the Planning Pleasant Activities Worksheet. Remember to complete the worksheets for both activities.

3. Identify and Contact Member of Faith Community

Identify several possible faith companions and make contact with at least one of them. This is important over the long-term and relates directly to depression. Both the receiving and especially *the giving of support to others* (as will be addressed in the session on altruism) are key in this regard. Identifying people worse off than you are helps to get your mind off your problems, helps you realize that things could be worse, helps you to feel grateful for what you do have, and gives a sense of purpose and meaning that will result in eternal rewards as a service to God by caring for another. In approaching another person, you might say something like:

“I’m having a pretty difficult time now and I’m wondering if you would agree to pray for and with me during this period, and perhaps we could talk on the phone or go out for coffee once a week or every other week.”

4. Reading

Please read the pages in your workbook titled, “The Categories of Unhelpful Thinking” to prepare for next week’s session. This is somewhat lengthy and to make the most of the limited time in session it very important that you have already reviewed this material.

5. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.



*As a Jew, you have the comfort of knowing that God is aware that you are in pain and knows how depression makes you feel; He knows how hard it is to deal with your physical illness. In the Bible it says: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord. . . ." (Jeremiah 29:11-14). If you find yourself struggling to complete these activities, ask God for His help. He understands your struggle and He will give you the strength and encouragement you need.*

## Pleasant Activities List

Put a plus sign (+) next to any activity likely to generate some positive reaction in you.  
Put two (++) next to those that are positive and you are almost certain to do so.

1. Call a friend
2. Attend a movie
3. Clean the kitchen
4. Daydream
5. Rearrange furniture
6. Prepare a meal
7. Wash the car
8. Outdoor yard work or gardening
9. Buy a plant
10. Watch television
11. Take a mini-vacation
12. Go to an amusement park
13. Dinner with friends
14. Attend a play
15. Attend a concert
16. Visit a museum
17. Play a sport
18. Watch a sporting event in person
19. Watch sports with friends
20. Dance
21. Go to synagogue or another religious service
22. Speak to a friend(s) on the Internet
23. Play video games
24. Text messaging
25. Twitter
26. Visit family members
27. Provide childcare for family or friends
28. Exercise alone
29. Exercise with others
30. Get a massage
31. Read a book or magazine
32. Write in a journal
33. Write a poem or short story
34. Play a musical instrument
35. Listen to music
36. Engage in a hobby, such as photography, scrapbooking, stamp/coin collecting, genealogy, knitting, crocheting, etc.
37. Take a bath or shower
38. Take a nap
39. Go shopping
40. Sailing, boating, fishing, or other water-related activity
41. Attend an educational class

### **Planning Pleasant Activities Instructions**

Implicit in the idea that mood is related to activity is the concept that mood can be improved by increasing specific activities. From the records you kept last week, you may be able to identify particular classes of activity that are associated with better mood. The purpose of this exercise is to schedule more of these activities in order to improve your mood.

You can look at your Self-Monitoring Logs and the Pleasant Activity List for ideas. Choose activities that you have some control over, that bring a sense of mastery or accomplishment, and that you enjoy. Choose activities that take more than 10 or 15 minutes to perform, yet which can be accomplished in one day. Schedule activities that are additions to what you would ordinarily do. The following are some examples of pleasant activities:

- Have your hair done
- Browse in a bookstore
- Prepare a Chinese dinner
- Play tennis
- Visit an art museum
- Buy a new plant

Next, using the following worksheet, schedule and complete at least two activities between now and the next session. Be sure to complete the worksheet once you have engaged in the activity.

## Planning Pleasant Activity #1 Worksheet

### 1. Identify Activity #1 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.

Activity planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Who has to be contacted or notified? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. When will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Prediction

On scale of 0 – 10 how positive will the event be to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
(where 0 is not positive and 10 is very positive)

### 4. Reflect

Date activity was accomplished: \_\_\_\_\_

*Outcome:* On scale of 0 – 10 how positive was the event for you? \_\_\_\_\_

*Conclusion:* What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Ideas for Future Activities:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Planning Pleasant Activity #2 Worksheet

### 1. Identify Activity #2 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.

Activity planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Who has to be contacted or notified? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. When will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Prediction

On scale of 0 – 10 how positive will the event be to you? \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Reflect

Date activity was accomplished: \_\_\_\_\_

*Outcome:* On scale of 0 – 10 how positive was the event for you? \_\_\_\_\_

*Conclusion:* What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Ideas for Future Activities:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Unhelpful Thinking Styles and Theological Reflections

### **1. All-or-Nothing Thinking (AN):**

You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.

Example: An example would be a straight-A student who received a B on an exam and concluded, "Now I'm a total failure."

#### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

This type of thinking causes one to fear any mistake or imperfection because any mistake is taken by the person as an indication of his or her worthlessness. This way of evaluating things is unrealistic because life is rarely extreme in one direction or the other. For example, no one is totally brilliant or totally stupid. Nothing on earth is absolutely one way or the other. Rarely, does everyone always like us, or rarely do we always find the perfect solution.

#### *B. Theological reflection*

The idea that nothing on earth will ever be perfect, including people and their actions is certainly a common theme in the Torah. King Solomon noted that there is no man alive today who can always act positively in the world without ever making an error (Ecclesiastes, 7:20). Even the greatest Jewish leaders struggled from time to time. Despite these set-backs, God does not give up on us. He continues to bestow Mercy upon us and waits for us to eventually succeed in the end. After all, what is the point of life if there is no room for improvement?

In fact, one of the fundamental ideas of the Torah is that we were purposely given challenges to face that are meant to make us stronger and bring us closer to God. Making mistakes are at times, part of a bigger picture plan.

### **2. Overgeneralization (OG):**

You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

Example: An example of this type of thinking would occur when a shy young man, who is self-conscious of his artificial leg, mustered up his courage to ask a woman for a date. When she politely declined because of a previous engagement, he said to himself, "I'm never going to get a date. No one wants to date a guy with only one leg." He believed that all women will turn him down just because one declined his offer. And, he erroneously assumed it was because of his artificial leg. The pain of rejection is generated almost entirely from overgeneralization.

#### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

It is logically incorrect to conclude that one thing that happened to you once will occur

over and over again. It is also incorrect to assume that all situations are similar, or that all individuals are similar.

#### *B. Theological reflection*

There are also several stories in the Torah that suggest that a single failure does not mean that one will ALWAYS be a failure. For example, Jonah and Samson were both given opportunities to retry their missions after failing the first time. Perhaps the most vivid comment though is from King Solomon who said “A righteous man falters seven times and rises again” (Proverbs 24:16). In other words: Righteousness is defined not by failure, but by continuously getting up after having failed.

Suffice it to say that, in the Torah worldview, it’s important not to overgeneralize from a single negative event. Even if one has a major catastrophe or makes a grave mistake, they can recover.

### **3. Mental Filter (MF):**

You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like a drop of ink that discolors an entire beaker of water.

Example: A woman with severe arthritis failed to complete one task that she had hoped to complete. She became more depressed and angry at herself for not completing that task. She overlooked the fact that there had been many tasks that she had, in fact, completed.

#### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

It is more sensible to clearly view one's environment and be aware of the positive things one has done in addition to negative occurrences. It is not adaptive to filter out anything positive. It is irrational to say, “I should preoccupy myself with dangerous or negative ideas.” Nothing is gained by dwelling on them.

#### *B. Theological reflections:*

The Torah emphasizes that one should reflect on the positive rather than on the negative. A quote often attributed to the Talmud notes that “We see things not as they are, but rather as we are.” Indeed, the Rabbis tell us that regardless of where a person actually is physically, he really is where his thoughts are. Clearly how one relates to events and acts is strongly influenced by how one thinks.

### **4. Disqualifying the Positive (DP):**

You disqualify positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. In this way you can maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences. You don't just ignore positive experiences as in the Mental Filter, but you clearly and swiftly turn them into their very opposite.

Example: An example would occur when someone praises your appearance or your work and you automatically tell yourself, "They're just being nice.”

*A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

Again, it is maladaptive not to pay attention to feedback you get from your environment. We should take that feedback at face value and incorporate it into our understanding of ourselves. If we disbelieved everything everyone told us, we might still believe the world was flat. An adjusted person is one who pays attention to everything in their environment.

*B. Theological Reflections*

Do you know the Biblical story about the spies? It is recorded in Chapter 13 of the Book of Numbers (Bamidbar). When the Israelites were on the cusp of entering Israel, they sent spies to check out the land and the people who lived there. According to the Talmud, everywhere the spies went there was a funeral. While the spies interpreted this to mean that “the land devours its inhabitants,” in truth, God was actually helping them by distracting the local population so they would leave the spies alone. The spies disqualified this positive information though, and brought back a scathing report to the Israelites. This resulted in panic, rebellion and disastrous consequences for all.

**5. Jumping to Conclusions (JC):**

You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusions. There are two areas in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions.

Mind Reading (MR):

This is one area in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions. You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, and you do not bother to check this out.

Example: Suppose a friend says she does not have time to have a conversation with you on the telephone at a certain point. The depressed individual may conclude, “She is ignoring me and does not want to talk with me, because she does not like me anymore.”

*A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

One should never make an assumption about what someone else is thinking without asking him/her because it is usually impossible to know what another person is thinking, no matter how sure we are that we know. Jumping to conclusions about what someone is thinking is also maladaptive because our negative reactions to what we imagine to be that person’s thoughts may set up a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, we may react negatively to them when we suspect they do not like us, when in fact they do. However, our negative reactions will soon turn them off this can create a vicious cycle.

*B. Theological reflections*

The notion of giving others the “benefit of the doubt” has a prominent place in Torah thought. In the Talmud (Shabbos 127b), the story is told of a man who worked for



someone else for three years. After the three years he wanted to get paid. The employer told him that he couldn't pay immediately. Without missing a beat, the worker didn't put up a fight or get upset – he simply proceeded on his way. Later, the employer came to pay him off and he asked: "How is it that you stayed so calm when I couldn't pay you after three years of your hard work?!" The worker proceeded to explain: "You said you couldn't pay, and I trusted that you would eventually come through on what you promised." The employer concluded: "in the same way you did not jump to conclusions about me, God shouldn't come to negative conclusions about you."

### The Fortune Telling Error (FT):

The second way in which depressed individuals jump to conclusions is they anticipate that things will turn out badly. They feel convinced that their predictions are an already established fact.

Example: Depressed individuals will tell themselves that they are never going to recover, and think: "I will feel miserable forever."

#### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

No one has ever successfully predicted the future; there are so many factors that could have an impact upon the future. Furthermore, our predictions are likely to be even more off base if we predict only negative events because probability suggests that both positive and negative events will occur.

#### *B. Theological Reflections*

We must not be like the Israelites in the wilderness who made a negative interpretation of God's actions towards them. When God took them into the wilderness, they distorted the situation and said, "God has brought us here to slay us." In reality though, God was just giving them an opportunity to strengthen their faith and trust. Often our jumping to conclusions regarding the future implies a fear about the future.

### **6. Magnification (Catastrophizing) or Minimization (MM):**

You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things in your mind until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or the other fellow's imperfections). This is also called the "binocular trick."

Example: A depressed individual accidentally misfiled some papers while working at his job. He concluded, "I made a mistake. How horrible! Everyone will think I am incompetent." An example of minimization would occur when the same employee was told by one of his or her colleagues that he had done a good job on a report. His reaction was to think, "Oh well, doing the report was very simple and anyone could do a good job on it."

*A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

It is important to have an accurate perception of ourselves and our performance. It is also important to realize that everyone makes mistakes and that they are to be expected. It is impossible for anyone to be perfect.

*B. Theological reflections*

About 500 years ago, the unknown author of the classic book "The Path of Righteousness" wrote: "Every man's thinking is pulled after his character traits ... According to one's character, so will they perceive the world." When you are feeling depressed, you cannot trust your thinking. You might focus excessively on your misdeeds or not focus enough on what you do right. It is important to recognize when your thoughts are being pulled by your depression, and learn to correct this before it gets out of control.

**7. Emotional Reasoning (ER):**

You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: "I feel it, therefore, it must be true."

Example: A depressed individual may tell himself: "I feel overwhelmed and hopeless, therefore, my problems must be impossible to solve, or I'll feel inadequate, therefore, I must be a worthless person."

*A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

One cannot assume that one's emotions are a reflection of the true state of things. Our emotions are a reflection of our thoughts and beliefs, which as we have seen are a product of our past and may be distorted. Emotions may also be a reflection of our physiology and how tired we are, but they are not necessarily a reflection of the true state of affairs.

*B. Theological Reflections*

Like all great systems of thought, the Torah tends to value intellect and a Higher Will more than emotion. The great Jewish leader Rabbi Avrohom Yeshiah Karelitz (also known as the Chazon Ish) wrote that instead of allowing our emotions to control us, one's emotions should be under the guidance of the intellect. Similarly, Rabbi Isaac Blazer of Petersburg used to note that negative emotions confuse one's ability to think, and therefore we have an obligation to master our emotions. This means that even when one's emotions are negative, we must strive to remain connected and not allow them to rule over us. As King David stated in Psalms (116:3-4), "even though I find sorrow and grief, I still call out in the name of God."

This idea is also found in Numbers (16:39) where it writes "Do not stray after your heart."

## **8. Should Statements (SS):**

You try to motivate yourself with “should” and “shouldn’t’s”, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could be expected to do anything. “Musts” and “oughts” are also offenders. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct “should” statements towards others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.

Example: One example is the depressed housewife who says to herself, “I should keep my house cleaner, and I shouldn’t complain,” or, “I should be able to get my work done during the day.”

### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

“Should” statements generate a lot of unnecessary emotional turmoil in your daily life, and, paradoxically, usually do not motivate you to change your behavior. Usually, you resent the source of the “shoulds.” Saying, “I should do this,” or “I must do this,” usually causes one to feel pressured and resentful.

### *B. Theological Reflection*

One of the central themes of Judaism is the concept of free choice and free will. Saying, “I shouldn’t do that,” leads to a spirit of condemnation. The Talmud (Berachos 5a) reminds us that even if we cannot pray or study or do not do any “shoulds,” God still loves us and wants to relate to us.

## **9. Labeling and Mislabeled (L or ML):**

This is an extreme form of overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself such as, “I’m a loser.” When someone else’s behavior rubs you the wrong way, you attach a negative label to him or her, such as “You are an idiot.” Mislabeled involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

Example: An individual fails to get a job which they applied for and they call themselves a “failure.”

### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

We are not our behavior. Labeling yourself is not only self-defeating, it is irrational. You cannot be equated with any one thing you do. Your life is made up of many events, thoughts, actions, and emotions. For example, you do not call yourself a “breather” just because you breathe. Likewise, you do not call yourself a “failure” because you made a mistake.

### *B. Theological Reflection*

The words “loser,” “idiot,” and “failure” have no place in Torah thought. Torah literature is replete with the idea that every individual has some valuable and important talents. As the Torah teaches us in Genesis: “Man was created in the image of God.” This applies to even the individual who may think they were sitting in the back row when talents were

handed out. According to the Talmud (Sanhedrin 37a) every human being must declare: “The world was created for me” Rashi, the early commentator, interprets this to mean that every person must recognize that s/he is so important to the world, that it is as if the entire world was created just for him/her!

#### **10. Personalization (P):**

You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event for which you were not primarily responsible.

Example: One example is the child who misbehaves or is rude. The depressed mother says, “I am a failure or a bad mother” (as if she could control everything her child did).

##### *A. Why is this thinking incorrect?*

Essentially, the person with this problem has confused the ideas of influence and control. While we obviously have some influence over people (especially our children), we cannot control everything they do. What another individual does is ultimately his or her responsibility and decision, not yours. We are not omnipotent.

##### *B. Theological Reflection*

As much as we would like to think that we are in charge, at the end of the day only God has control over the events that happen in the world. While we have to do our part and not presume that God will just take care of everything without our effort, we must also recognize that no matter how hard we try, God’s will prevails over what we strive for. The time of our birth, death, and most things in between are ultimately controlled by God. Therefore, while we are responsible to do our best, our ultimate responsibility only goes so far.

## Session 3: Identifying Unhelpful Thoughts: The Battlefield of the Mind

### Home Practice Activities

#### 1. Memory Verse

**"Search me, oh God, and know my thoughts."** (*Psalms 139*)

#### 2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have. Turn to the next page in this workbook for instructions.

#### 3. Thought Log

Please write down your thoughts once a day using the ABC method. Be sure to fill out all of the sections and categorize each thought into one of the unhelpful thought categories. If you have more than one stream of ideas in one time period, you can indicate several categories. There are seven thought logs included in the manual this week so that you can fill one out each day.

Remember that this is a learning experience; you should not worry about completing the logs perfectly.

#### 4. Positive Activity

Add another positive activity to your week. Follow the same procedure for scheduling this activity as we used in Session 2.

#### 5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

#### 6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

## Contemplative Prayer: Praying God's Word

Contemplative prayer or *Kavana* is a way to meditate on ideas of the Torah and leads to a more intimate relationship with God. King David understood that a personal relationship with God brought him comfort and peace when he said "As for me, closeness to the Eternal is my good" (Psalms 73:28). One of the most common metaphors for contemplative prayer is of the lover or friend. God desires our simple presence more than any action or service we might give. Indeed, prayer has been described as a gift to God. Prayer is also a discipline, undertaken as one would undertake to learn to play the piano. Practice is the key.

One way to engage in contemplative prayer is to take a verse from the Torah or Rabbinic thought and meditate on it. In other words, you spend some quiet time thinking about the verse, repeating it to yourself, and saying it as a prayer to God. It's like letting yourself be saturated in God's words. Some forms of meditation have you focus your attention on your breath. When you notice yourself thinking about something else, you are to bring your attention back to your breath. Contemplative prayer is different in that instead of focusing on your breath you focus on God's words. This leads to a contemplative, prayerful state.

It's normal to find that your mind has wandered to thinking about something else. When you notice that this has happened, don't get upset with yourself. Simply bring your attention back to the verse. It might be helpful to have the verse written on a piece of paper or underlined in a Bible (Chumash) in front of you so that you can more easily keep your attention on the words. It is also normal to find yourself wanting to pray to God as you are in this state. If that happens just go with it and pray whatever comes up in your heart.

### The Method

1. Choose a scripture or a Torah teaching. Begin with your memory verse for the week.
2. Sit comfortably (but not too comfortably), back straight, chest open so the breath is free and open.
3. Read the passage slowly. Savor each phrase. What word phrase or idea speaks to you?
4. Read the passage again. Where does this passage touch your life? What do you see, hear, touch, or remember?
5. Read the passage a third time. Listen quietly.
6. Note insights, reflections, and personal response to the reading in your journal.
7. Follow the steps in order or go back and forth between them as you feel moved.
8. Finish by waiting for a few moments in silence.

### Instructions

Practice this for 20 minutes once or twice daily, and then discuss with your therapist any problems you encountered in doing this, or share how praying in this way made you feel.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 1

(\*To be Completed During Session 3\*)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 2

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.



## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 3

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 4

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 5

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 6

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

## ABC Method for Challenging Beliefs Leading to Negative Emotions

### Session 3: Worksheet 7

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Unhelpful Thought Category:** Specify the unhelpful thought category(s). (See Unhelpful Thinking Styles Worksheet) that best describes the error(s) in the belief.

**Planning Pleasant Activity #3 Worksheet**

**1. Identify Activity #3 from the Pleasant Activity List or your imagination.**

Activity planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Who has to be contacted or notified? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. When** will each be accomplished?

Date of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Prediction**

On scale of 0 – 100 how positive will the event be to you? \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Reflect**

Date activity was accomplished: \_\_\_\_\_

*Outcome:* On scale of 0 – 100 how positive was the event for you? \_\_\_\_\_

*Conclusion:* What seems to make events pleasant at this point? What did you learn?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Ideas for Future Activities:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Session 4: Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts: Bringing All Thoughts Captive

### Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

**“There are many thoughts in the hearts of man, but it those in accord with God’s plan that will endure.”** (*Proverbs 19:21*)

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Thought Log Monitor

Complete the ABCDE thought monitor at least once a day.

Be on the outlook for automatic negative thoughts that trigger emotional upset and negative behaviors such as avoidance. The goal is to improve on the ability to spot these negative patterns at the time they occur, and to attempt to develop alternative ways of responding through the use of more effective beliefs and expectations.

Remember to use your religious beliefs and practices, as well as scriptures, to help challenge your unhelpful and negative beliefs.

4. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

5. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.

## Disputing Questions

Use these questions to challenge your automatic thoughts. Be sure to answer each question you pose to yourself. You will find each question helpful for many different thoughts. Several examples are also presented to help you get started.

1. Do I know for certain that \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Example:** *Do I know for certain that I won't have anything to say?*
  
2. Am I 100% sure that \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Example:** *Am I 100% sure that my anxiety will show?*
  
3. What evidence do I have that \_\_\_\_\_?  
What evidence do I have that the opposite is true?  
**Example:** *What evidence do I have that they did not understand my speech?*  
*What evidence do I have that they did understand my speech?*
  
4. What is this worst that could happen? How bad is that? How can I cope with that?
  
5. Do I have a crystal ball?
  
6. Is there another explanation for \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Example:** *Is there another explanation for his refusal to have coffee with me?*
  
7. Does \_\_\_\_\_ have to lead to or equal \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Example:** *Does "being nervous" have to lead to or equal "looking stupid"?*
  
8. Is there another point of view?
  
9. What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean? Does \_\_\_\_\_ really mean that I am a(n) \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Example:** *What does "looking like an idiot" mean? Does the fact that I stumbled over my words really mean that I look like an idiot?*



**ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 1)**  
**(\*To Complete During Session 4\*)**

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 2)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

### ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 3)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 4)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 5)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 6)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 4, Worksheet 7)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## Session 5: Dealing with Loss Home Practice Activities

### 1. Memory Verse

**“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5)**

### 2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

### 3. Thought Log

Use the ABCDE thought log and/or behavioral experiment to actively address one or two losses you have experienced as a result of your illness. You and your therapist should have come up with a concrete plan to do so in session. Two ABCDE thought log worksheets have been included in this section of the workbook for this exercise. Remember that integrating your religious beliefs and practices into the use of each of these tools makes them even more effective.

### 4. Active Surrender

Reflect on the things in your life that you want to surrender to God. Use the worksheet provided to make a list. Then, set aside a block of time to surrender these things to God in prayer. This is another effective tool to address the losses you have experienced as a result of your illness.

### 5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

### 6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.



## Words of Encouragement

*The stories we read about in the Torah are there to encourage us, to provide a model for us to interpret the events in our own lives, and to create in us hope. It may be comforting to know that a number of individuals in the Torah suffered great losses. In fact, one could argue that there isn't a single individual mentioned in the Bible who didn't lose something important to him/ her or who didn't suffer in some significant way! Think of King David. He was described as a "man after God's own heart." He and God had a very special relationship. Yet, over and over again in the Psalms, David cries out to God about his suffering and pain. Just because he had a special relationship with God didn't mean that David didn't suffer losses or experience pain.*

*Thankfully, God offers us many, many words of comfort and encouragement in the Bible.*

*For example:*

*-Moses reminds the people "And you should know in the same way that a father distresses his child, God distresses you" (Deuteronomy 8:5). Indeed, problems and suffering are inevitable while we are on earth, but God promised to see us through each one of them*

*-King David understood this well, noting "Praiseworthy is the man whom You, God, distress and from Your Torah You teach him to grant him peace from days of evil" (Psalms 94:12-13). Perhaps the reason David calls us "Praiseworthy" when we are distressed is because we get to be comforted by God and his Torah, and His comfort and compassion are so great that we are then able to comfort others that are facing troubles.*

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 5, Worksheet 1)

**Activating Event:** Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**Beliefs:** What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**Consequent Feelings and Behavior:** What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation:** Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**Religious Beliefs and Resources:** How can your view of God, your **Jewish** worldview, the **Torah** and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**Effective New Belief and Consequence:** What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 5, Worksheet 2)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your **Jewish** worldview, the **Torah** and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.



## Session 6: Coping with Spiritual Struggles and Negative Emotions

### Home Practice Activities

#### 1. Memory Verse

**“The righteous cry out and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all.”** (*Psalms 34:17-19*)

#### 2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer.

#### 3. Spiritual Struggles and Spiritual Resources

It is important to remember the following points:

- It is normal to question God in the face of illness.
- It is normal to feel negative emotions toward God.
- God created us to experience a range of emotions and He can accept all of them.
- God wants us to be honest with Him and to bring all of our concerns to Him.

If you and your therapist identified spiritual resources that would be helpful in addressing any spiritual struggles you have, make a plan to use these resources this week to address that issue. Spiritual resources include, but are not limited to: prayer, journaling, social support from friends, conversations/counseling with your rabbi, Torah studies, repentance and forgiveness, attending religious or spiritual services, attending support groups, attending activities sponsored by spiritual or religious groups (such as pot-lucks, bingo, and discussion groups), or engaging in charity. Several ABCDE thought logs have also been included in the workbook for this session; this may also be a helpful tool in addressing spiritual struggles this week.

#### 4. Repentance and Forgiveness

Forgiveness can be a powerful antidote for some spiritual struggles (e.g., resentment, anger, bitterness) and an integral part of the process of healing. Indeed, research has shown strong relationships between emotions such as anger and resentment and physical health problems and compromised immune functioning.

In the Torah, forgiveness and repentance are regularly recurring themes, so we know from sheer numbers that these are important topics to God. We know that the ability to receive forgiveness from God and to forgive others is the main theme of the holiday of Yom Kippur – the Jewish day of atonement. Despite being guilty of sin, sometimes even the most serious of sins, God promises us that when we repent, we can be considered righteous, or in right-standing, with God. As the Talmud says, when we confess our sins, He promises to forgive us. That doesn't mean that we won't suffer any consequences, as we may have gotten ourselves into a mess because of our action, but we will not lose our right-standing with God. The Talmud also tells us that a person who forgives others will be forgiven for his own sins.

God instructs us to forgive others as He has forgiven us. That doesn't mean He wants you to change your mind and decide that what happened to you was right or justified. God never changes His mind about our sin—He always sees it as evil. What forgiving someone does mean is that we give up the right to hold this action against the person. We give up our right to feel resentful, bitter, and angry. When we make a decision with our will to forgive someone, even when we don't feel like it, God can then begin to change our feelings. Usually our feelings are the last part to change. That doesn't mean you haven't forgiven, it just means your feelings having yet come into alignment with the decision you made with your will to forgive.

Is there anyone you would like to forgive? That could include others, yourself, and even God (although He never actually sins, we can perceive a wrong against us in our minds). Is there anything you would like to ask forgiveness for (i.e., repent for), either from God or from others? If yes, and if you did not address these in session, make a list of the people you want to forgive or of the things for which you need forgiveness.

Take some time to pray about each item on your list. It is important that your prayers be specific and that you do not just offer one blanket prayer for all the items listed. You can use a prayer such as the following:

*“Heavenly Father, I purpose and choose to forgive \_\_\_ (the person) for \_\_\_ (the action). I release him/her and cancel his/her debt to me completely. I will no longer hold any accusation against him/her. Even now I release him/her from this sin. I ask that you would forgive him/her for this sin and separate the sin from him/her forever. Please forgive me for the unforgiveness/bitterness (or other feelings against this person) that I have stored in my heart. I give you all my feelings of \_\_\_ and ask that You would cause my feelings to line up with my decision to forgive \_\_\_ (the person). I also purpose and choose to forgive myself. Thank you for forgiving me and making me righteous in your sight. God, please heal my heart and tell me your truth about the situation.”*

After you have finished praying, you might try closing your eyes and imagining yourself standing before the Heavenly throne with a list of wrongs that others have done to you. Then imagine yourself tearing up the list up in front of the Heavenly Court. Listen as a Heavenly voice says, “As you forgive, so you are forgiven. Go in peace.” Continue to listen to hear what else the heavenly voice might have to say as you stay in this image. Then imagining yourself thanking God for what He has just done for you.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally some time this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.



## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 1)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.



## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 2)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 6, Worksheet 3)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

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**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## Session 7: Gratitude Home Practice Activities

### 1. Memory Verse

**“God’s name is ‘The Good’ and it is good to offer thanks to Him.”** (*Daily Prayers*)

### 2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

### 3. Grateful Feelings Exercise: Counting our Blessings

Use your gratitude list, particularly your gratitude toward God for all that He is and all that He has done, as well as gratitude for those in your faith community to help challenge negative thoughts and to replace negative emotions. Continue to add to your gratitude list this week as you think of more things for which you are grateful.

### 4. Gratitude Expression Exercise: Celebrating our Blessings

Express your feelings of gratitude toward the individual you identified in session. This ordinarily takes place in person, by phone, or letter. Complete at the specific time and place you chose in session. Remember to include the following:

- Precisely and specifically what it was that the other person did for you. Thus, "you were a nice person to me," is not as suitable as: "when I was in the hospital you came to visit me and you prayed for me every day."
- Include as many of these concrete activities for which you feel grateful as possible.
- Be sure to note what the meaning of the person's activities was for you. That is, how the activity or way of being made you feel, influenced your life, caused you to grow, taught you things you needed to know, etc.

### 5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

### 6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.





## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 7, Worksheet 1)

**A**ctivating Event: Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**B**eliefs: What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**C**onsequent Feelings and Behavior: What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**D**ispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation: Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**R**eligious Beliefs and Resources: How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**E**ffective New Belief and Consequence: What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 7, Worksheet 2)

**Activating Event:** Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**Beliefs:** What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**Consequent Feelings and Behavior:** What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation:** Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**Religious Beliefs and Resources:** How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**Effective New Belief and Consequence:** What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

## Session 8: Altruism and Generosity Home Practice Activities

1. Memory Verse

**“It is fitting for the followers of the king to imitate the king.’ How is this done? - by acting in the moral manner of God, by imitating His ethical ways in relation to the world.”** (*Midrash to Lev. 19:2*)

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Altruistic Acts

Carry out the specific altruistic acts to be done for the particular persons at a particular time you and your therapist chose in session. Be sure to have more than one option in case other people are unavailable.

4. Pray for Someone Daily

Pick one person for whom you will pray for daily this week. This might be the person you have made contact with from your faith community, another friend, or relative. Pray for this person each day. Praying for someone other than ourselves helps to get our minds off of our own problems and is a great way to be generous with our time and energy. It also helps to put our own problems in perspective.

5. Contact Member of Faith Community

If you have not already done so, please make contact with a person(s) in your faith community and plan a time to get together with them, ideally sometime this week.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.



### Altruistic Acts

Make a list of the ways you have been helpful in the past and ways that you could be helpful now. Then rank each item on your list from easiest to most difficult (0-100 with 100 being the most difficult of all).

Helpful/Generous Act	Degree of Difficulty (0-100)	Activity Chosen

Next, select several of the easier acts you would like to initiate. Answer the following questions for each act you choose:

*Helpful/Generous Act #1:* \_\_\_\_\_

1. **For Whom?**
  
2. **When will you do it?**
  
3. **Why will you do it?**
  
4. **How will you do it?**
  
5. **How frequently will you do it?**

*Helpful/Generous Act #2:* \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. For Whom?**
- 2. When will you do it?**
- 3. Why will you do it?**
- 4. How will you do it?**
- 5. How frequently will you do it?**

*Helpful/Generous Act #3:* \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. For Whom?**
- 2. When will you do it?**
- 3. Why will you do it?**
- 4. How will you do it?**
- 5. How frequently will you do it?**

Remember to connect your goal of helping others with the famous passage from the Talmud , in which the Talmud describes that anyone who does something for another person (such as giving them a cup of cold water or visiting them when they were sick) is imitating God and creates an environment of holiness.

## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs (Session 8: Optional)

**Activating Event:** Describe the situation around the time the negative emotion(s) began.

**Beliefs:** What negative thoughts or expectations automatically went through your mind when you were in that situation?

**Consequent Feelings and Behavior:** What painful feelings did these thoughts or expectations lead to? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very intense. What behavior did these beliefs and feelings lead to?

**Dispute the Beliefs and Deal with the Situation:** Is there any evidence that those beliefs or expectations are not totally accurate or true? Describe the contrary evidence. Specify the unhelpful thought category that best describes the error in the belief. Even if the situation can't change, what evidence do you have that you could manage it (based on your talents, past experience, support persons, and/or resources)?

**Religious Beliefs and Resources:** How can your view of God, your Jewish worldview, the Torah and religious writings, spiritual wisdom, and other sources provide evidence that challenge your automatic negative beliefs and beliefs that you can't cope?

**Effective New Belief and Consequence:** What is a different way to now look at the situation? How did your feelings change after you looked at the situation differently? Rate each feeling using a scale of 1-10, where 10 is very painful.

**Session 9: Stress-Related and Spiritual Growth**  
**Home Practice Activities**

1. Memory Verse

**“Rejoice in the challenges that come to you for these save you from the restitution of the future.”** (*Derech Eretz 7:23*)

2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks' memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have.

3. Complete the Spiritual Reflections Worksheet

4. Positive Changes

Add to your list of the changes in your life that you could view as positive or that have caused growth, including spiritual growth. It will be helpful to look to your faith and God's promises in the Bible to help you view some of the changes that have occurred as positive.

Reflect on the meaning of these changes in terms of your character and the predictions you make regarding negative beliefs. In particular, what power do these changes give you to stop avoiding unpleasant experiences and to face them courageously?

5. Daily Prayer for Someone

Continue to pray daily for someone other than yourself this week. It could be the same person you prayed for last week or someone different.

6. Be sure to have your completed homework sheets readily available to you during your next session so that you can review them with your therapist.



## **Spiritual Reflections**

1. What does it say or what could it mean spiritually if you find some benefit from your tragedy or loss?
2. If there was any positive change in you, your perspective, or relationships, how do you make sense of that from a spiritual point of view? How does it make faith real for you?
3. What does having this faith or spiritual view mean in terms of coping with day-to-day struggles?
4. How can this view help you when you start to feel discouraged?
5. Any spiritual or faith perspective fades in and out. What concrete steps can you take on a regular basis to remind yourself of these helpful perspectives?

## Session 10: Hope and Relapse Prevention

### Home Practice Activities

#### 1. Memory Verse

**“He gives power to the faint and weary, and to him who has no might He increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall stumble and fall exhausted; But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.” (Isaiah 40:29-31)**

#### 2. Contemplative Prayer

Spend 20 minutes a day in contemplative prayer. Begin by using the memory verse for this week, and then try with previous weeks’ memory verses or other favorite scriptures you may have. This is an important practice that we encourage you to continue to do daily.

#### 3. Continue to Use the Tools Daily

In order to maintain the gains you have achieved in treatment you need to keep using the tools you have learned. These tools include the following:

- Challenging and changing your negative interpretations (Additional ABCDE sheets are included at the end of this workbook. Feel free to make extra copies for yourself)
- Gratitude
- Altruism (choose a specific activity for a specific person)
- Finding the positives in your life
- Praying for someone else
- Maintaining communication with God
- Look for examples in the Bible for encouragement
- Spending time with others
- Connecting with your faith community, specifically the person(s) identified earlier in treatment
- Filling your mind and heart with the Wisdom of the Torah

One way to remind yourself to continue to put into practice the things you have learned is to incorporate them into a daily devotional period. Each day during this time you can review your thoughts and behaviors with God to make sure they line up with the truth of His Torah. You might find it helpful to use a journal during this time.

#### 4. Make Use of Your Spiritual Resources

Spiritual resources include, but are not limited to: prayer, journaling, social support from friends, conversations/counseling with your rabbi, Torah studies, repentance and forgiveness, attending religious or spiritual services, attending support groups, attending activities sponsored by spiritual or religious groups (such as pot-lucks, bingo, and discussion groups), or engaging in charity.

#### 5. Anticipate Set Backs

Remember that there will be set backs and times that are more challenging and difficult than others. It is at these times that it is even more important to engage in the activities and resources you learned, especially if you don't feel like it.

#### 6. Continue Contact Member of Faith Community

Continue to be in regular contact with the member of your faith community. Remember to pray for him or her daily, too.

**Congratulations on a job well done!**

*“Faith simply means to live a life guided by the understanding that God has complete control over everything in the world.’ In other words, Faith is perceiving as real fact that which is not yet revealed to the senses.”*

Rabbi Avraham Karelitz



## ABCDE Method for Challenging Beliefs

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