3-Column Thought Record

The first step: catch the thought. No challenging yet. Write down what happened, what went through your mind, and what you felt. When this feels easy, move on to the 5- or 7-column record.

1. Situation What happened? Where, when, who. Facts a camera would see.	2. Automatic thought(s) The exact sentence or image that went through your mind. Belief 0–100%. Circle the "hot" one.	3. Emotion(s) One word each. Intensity 0–100%.

How to use it, with one worked example

Fill this in as soon after the mood shift as you can. Start with the emotion if that is what you notice first, then work back to the situation and the thought. The aim is only to notice the link between what happened, what you told yourself, and how you felt.

Worked example (an illustration, not a real client)

1. Situation What happened? Where, when, who. Facts a camera would see.	2. Automatic thought(s) The exact sentence or image that went through your mind. Belief 0–100%. Circle the "hot" one.	3. Emotion(s) One word each. Intensity 0–100%.
Tuesday, 7:40am. Getting ready for work. Presentation to the team at 10.	“I’m going to freeze and everyone will see I don’t know what I’m doing.” Belief 80%	Anxious 75% Dread 60%

When you are ready for the next step

- Look at the hot thought and ask: what is the evidence that it is true, and what is the evidence that it is not?
- Is there another way to explain what happened? What would I tell a friend who had this thought?
- Then use the 5-column record (adds a balanced response and an outcome) or the 7-column record (separates evidence for and against).
- Free at tryconviction.com/blog/resources/thought-record

Prefer your phone? The same columns, guided, in Conviction for iPhone.

The free Thought Record walks you through each column and keeps your records encrypted on your iPhone, so you can see when the same hot thought comes back. Needs an iPhone 15 Pro or later (Apple Intelligence).
Scan the code with your iPhone camera, or visit **tryconviction.com/thought-record-app**
Fill this worksheet in online: **tryconviction.com/blog/resources/thought-record**