Compassion Formulation Worksheet

Compassion-focused Therapy (CFT) is a form of psychotherapy commonly used to help individuals who are dealing with high levels of shame and self-criticism.

It aims to encourage psychological and emotional well-being by helping individuals cultivate higher levels of self-compassion, as well as more compassion towards others.

This Compassion Formulation Worksheet may guide you through the process of developing self-compassion by:

- Exploring the source of your self-blame, shame, or self-criticism (Past Influences)
- Reflecting on your key fears (*Primary Fears*)
- Considering your self-protective or safety coping mechanisms (Protective/Defensive Behaviors), and
- Examining their impact on your future behavior (*Unintentional Outcomes*), as well as on your self-relationship (*Relationship With Self*).

Utilizing this approach can frequently unveil self-perpetuating cycles of maladaptive coping strategies. When used regularly and with time to reflect, it is also designed to help you nurture more compassionate ways of self-motivating and tolerating distress.

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Past Influences

Painful Thoughts/ Shame Memories

What past experiences might be underpinning your self-critical or self-blaming behaviors?

Primary Fears

Protective/Defensive

defensive behaviors that are not

desirable, or not anticipated.

Unintentional Outcomes
Consequences of protective/

Internal Fears

Feelings, thoughts, and internal processes that cause you distress. E.g. panic, fear, anxiety.



External Fears

Of myself... Of others...

"Outside" sources of fear, attributable to events and circumstances. E.g. Others' behavior.



External Behaviors

Actions, thoughts, and other behaviors to protect oneself from external fears. E.g. Avoidance, aggression.



Relationship With Self

How one feels about, acts toward, or relates to oneself.





