



Check the Facts

FACTS

Many emotions and actions are set off by our thoughts and interpretations of events, not by the events themselves.

Event → Thoughts → Emotions

Our emotions can also have a big effect on our thoughts about events.

Event → Emotion → Thoughts

Examining our thoughts and *checking the facts* can help us change our emotions.

HOW TO CHECK THE FACTS

1. Ask: What is the emotion I want to change?

(See *Emotion Regulation Handout 6: Ways of Describing Emotions.*)

2. Ask: What is the event prompting my emotion?

Describe the facts that you observed through your senses.

Challenge judgments, absolutes, and black-and-white descriptions.

(See *Mindfulness Handout 4: Taking Hold of Your Mind: "What" Skills.*)

3. Ask: What are my interpretations, thoughts, and assumptions about the event?

Think of other possible interpretations.

Practice looking at all sides of a situation and all points of view.

Test your interpretations and assumptions to see if they fit the facts.

4. Ask: Am I assuming a threat?

Label the threat.

Assess the probability that the threatening event will really occur.

Think of as many other possible outcomes as you can.

5. Ask: What's the catastrophe?

Imagine the catastrophe really occurring.

Imagine coping well with a catastrophe (through problem solving, coping ahead, or radical acceptance).

6. Ask: Does my emotion and/or its intensity fit the actual facts?

Check out facts that fit each emotion.

Ask Wise Mind.

(See *Emotion Regulation Handout 11: Figuring Out Opposite Actions*, and *Emotion Regulation Handout 13: Reviewing Problem Solving and Opposite Action.*)

EMOTION REGULATION WORKSHEET 5 (p. 1 of 2)

(Emotion Regulation Handouts 8, 8a)

Check the Facts

Due Date: _____ Name: _____ Week Starting: _____

It is hard to problem-solve an emotional situation if you don't have your facts straight. You must know what the problem is before you can solve it. This worksheet helps you figure out whether it is the event that is causing your emotion, your interpretation of the event, or both. Use your mindfulness skills of observing and describing. Observe the facts, and then describe the facts you have observed.

Step 1 { **Ask: What emotion do I want to change?**
EMOTION NAME: _____ **INTENSITY (0–100) Before:** ____ **After:** ____

Step 2 { **Ask: What is the PROMPTING EVENT for my emotional reaction?**
DESCRIBE THE PROMPTING EVENT: What happened that led you to have this emotion? Who did what to whom? What led up to what? What is it about this event that is a problem for you? Be very specific in your answers.

CHECK THE FACTS!

Look for extremes and judgments in the way you are describing the prompting event.

REWRITE the facts, if necessary, to be more accurate.

Facts
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Step 3 { **Ask: What are my INTERPRETATIONS (thoughts, beliefs, etc.) about the facts?**
What am I assuming? Am I adding my own interpretations to the description of the prompting event?

CHECK THE FACTS!

List as many *other* possible interpretations of the facts as you can.

REWRITE the facts, if necessary. Try to check the accuracy of your interpretations. If you can't check the facts, write out a likely or a useful (i.e., effective) interpretation.

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EMOTION REGULATION WORKSHEET 5 (p. 2 of 2)

**Step
4**

Ask: Am I assuming a THREAT? What is the THREAT? What about this event or situation is threatening to me? What worrisome consequences or outcomes am I expecting?

CHECK THE FACTS!

List as many *other* possible outcomes as you can, given the facts.

REWRITE the facts if needed. Try to check the accuracy of your expectations. If you can't check out probable outcomes, write out a likely noncatastrophic outcome to expect.

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**Step
5**

Ask: What's the CATASTROPHE, even if the outcome I am worrying about does occur? Describe in detail the worst outcome I can reasonably expect.

DESCRIBE WAYS TO COPE if the worst does happen.

**Step
6**

ASK: Does my emotion (or its intensity or duration) FIT THE FACTS?
(0 = not at all to 5 = I am certain): _____

If you are unsure whether your emotion or your emotional intensity fits the facts (for example, you give a score of 2, 3, or 4), keep checking the facts. Be as creative as you can be; ask others for their opinions; or do an experiment to see if your predictions or interpretations are correct.

Describe what you did to check the facts:
