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Write down your thoughts: CBT Techniques for Anxiety

Previously I have discussed the importance of documenting your thoughts but another incentive for doing so occurred to me the other day and I think it will be useful to share with you.

I was going through some of my old filing and came across some notebooks where I was keeping track of all of various things I did throughout the day. It turned out that when I had done certain things that involved making decision I not only documented the actions taken, I would also document my rationale.

This was process very helpful (although I'm not sure that I contemplated this at the time) because I could quickly look at what I was doing and also why I did a particular thing because the reasoning was all written down. I must confess that there have been other instances where I have looked back on why I did something or what my conclusion was and in looking back was not been clear on my rationale – because I had not recorded my rationale / thought processes. Although I knew that I would have had a rationale at the time, I could no longer remember what it was.

You might be asking: What the heck does this have to do with anxiety and panic attacks?

Well, one thing you will likely notice if you keep track of your thoughts when you become very anxious is that you often have the same recurring thoughts. What's more: if they're documented properly - if you have been carrying out CBT like I've discussed in this newsletter – then you'll also see the thinking at the time / rationale that provided resolution.

What I'm suggesting is that by having done CBT in the past you'll have already identified the Cognitive Distortions and have generated alternative thoughts that were more realistic and helped make you feel better – this process would have already been done on the same thoughts. You'll be able to recover this rationale and this will help to reinforce your new ways of looking at things that makes you feel better.

This way you don't have to go back and keep spinning your wheels (so to speak) over the same thoughts. I hope you'll give this some thought over the weekend and this will

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provide more reason to keep up the good work by keeping track of your thoughts and also doing CBT to work on those new thoughts that arise.

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