Session 11: The Thought Record: Putting a Thought on Trial

PHASE 2 — HEALING: MIND, HEART, AND PAST (WEEKS 2–4) · WEEK 3 — A RENEWED MIND

Date: _____ My craving today (0–10): _____ One word for my week: _____

Handout for this session: the Session 11 handout (Thought Record) — in the Handouts Packet.

What we're learning

The Thought Record is a worksheet that puts a thought on trial — on paper, where it cannot keep changing shape. We write the situation, the exact thought, and how much we believe it (0–100). We list the feelings. Then we write the evidence for the thought and the evidence against it, fairly, like a judge. Last, we write a balanced thought: a truer sentence that keeps what is true and drops the false verdict. Then we rate the thought and feelings again and watch the numbers move.

- Rate it, don't debate it Numbers expose movement. A thought that drops from 90 to 55 has not vanished — and the feeling usually follows it down. That is progress worth seeing.
- Evidence is specific 'I'm a terrible parent' meets evidence like a kept visit, a child-support payment, a call returned — concrete entries, not vibes, on both sides of the ledger.
- Keep the true piece Many painful thoughts guard something real (a harm done, a consequence unfolding). The balanced thought owns the true piece and refuses the false verdict built on top of it.
- Written for the next storm Records go in the workbook where a craving or a 3 a.m. spiral can find them. We are writing letters to our future selves.

Goals for this session

- ☐ I can complete a full Thought Record (Appendix B) on a real, moderate thought
- ☐ I can use evidence for and against a thought rather than arguing from feeling
- ☐ I can write a balanced replacement thought I actually believe

Check-in

What is the harshest sentence your mind regularly pronounces on you — stated as plainly as you hear it?

Discussion — write your answers

Write what you would say out loud — and more, if it comes. There is no right-length answer; there is only an honest one.

1. Which column was hardest — evidence for, or evidence against? What does that tell you?

2. Did your feeling move when the number moved? By how much?

3. What is the difference between a balanced thought and just 'being positive'?

4. Whose voice does your harshest automatic thought sound like — and does knowing that change its authority?

Session 11 — Skill Practice

Guided completion: facilitator picks a common, moderate example ('I blew that meeting, everyone saw I'm not serious') and the whole group builds one record together on the whiteboard. Then each participant completes Appendix B on their own thought from this week's sequences, with facilitator circulating. Volunteers share only their balanced thought aloud.

Complete the full Thought Record in the table below. Go one column at a time, and rate honestly — numbers show movement.

Column	Write here
1. Situation	What happened? Where, when, who? (facts only)
2. Automatic thought	The exact sentence in my head — and how much I believe it (0–100%): _____%
3. Feelings	Name them and rate intensity (0–100):
4. Evidence FOR the thought	Specific facts that support part of it:
5. Evidence AGAINST it	Specific facts, history, and what a fair witness would say:
6. Balanced thought	A truer sentence that keeps the true piece and drops the false verdict — belief rating: _____%
7. Re-rate	Original thought now: _____% Feelings now: Next right action:

My takeaway

The one thing from this session I most need to remember — in my own words:

Homework — this week's application

☐ Complete two more Thought Records this week on real thoughts as they occur. Bring the one that surprised you most to Session 12.

Space to do the homework and note how it went:

An optional Scripture handout for this session is available from your facilitator on request.