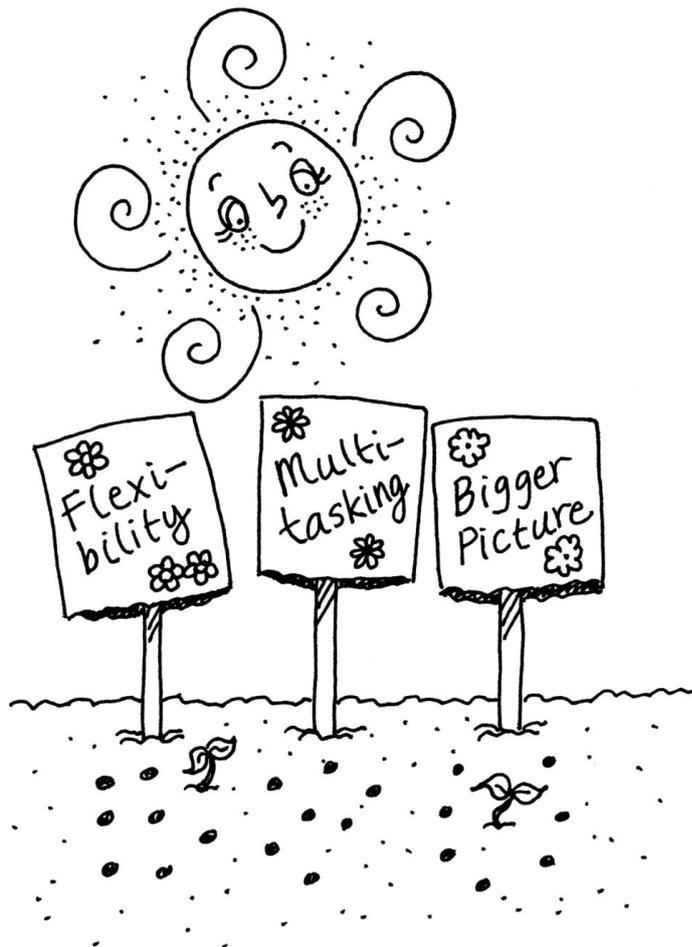


Cognitive Remediation Therapy for Anorexia Nervosa

A self-help guide for use with
carers

Adapted by
Kate Tchanturia and Katie Lang



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About this Self Help Manual

This self help manual was developed after receiving a number of requests from patients, carers and professionals from all over the world telling us they wanted to learn more about Cognitive Remediation Therapy (or *CRT*) for Anorexia.

We have developed this user friendly manual for CRT for anorexia and we hope it is helpful for people suffering from anorexia nervosa, carers and professionals.

After reading this manual if you would like more support or advice about eating disorders please contact Beat <http://www.b-eat.co.uk>

What is Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT) for Anorexia Nervosa?

Until recently scientists believed that the adult brain was incapable of change; however recent research findings have challenged this. The brain and thinking styles are capable of change over the lifespan and the idea of CRT is introduce a 'brain gym' as a starting point.

Some individuals with anorexia nervosa can find psychological treatments very difficult to engage in. This could be due to certain unhelpful thinking styles that have been observed in individuals with AN. Therefore rather than targeting eating symptoms, CRT for anorexia aims to target thinking processing by using mental exercises.

CRT for anorexia is a brief, low-intensity therapy that involves practicing a number of simple "brain gym" style exercises, which encourage 'thinking about thinking' and reflection on individual thinking styles. Such exercises may provide a useful stepping stone for engagement in further psychological work.

How do mental exercises change the brain?

Researchers now know that the brain is very capable of change, what we call 'plasticity'. Because of its plasticity it is capable of reorganisation in response to what its environment demands of it. This means that there is a possible relationship between new growth in the brain, stimulation from the environment and changes in how the brain functions.

In other words, our brains are shaped to how we use it. For example research has shown that the area in the brain responsible for memory, the hippocampus, is larger in taxi drivers.

What are the aims of CRT?

The main aim of CRT is to help exercise different connections in the brain in the hope that it will improve the function.

A second aim is to encourage individuals to reflect on the different exercises as a way of raising awareness of their own thinking style.

CRT also has a third and very important aim. This work is not only about seeing changes in thinking styles. The underlying basis of this manual is to encourage the family to spend some quality time together away from the eating disorder. As well as practicing the tasks provided in the manual, we encourage families to be creative and create their own relevant behavioural exercises.

Cognitive remediation therapy is an intervention that:

- Consists of mental exercises aimed at improving cognitive strategies, thinking styles and information processing through practice
- Promotes reflection on thinking styles
- Encourages thinking about thinking

- Helps to explore new thinking strategies in everyday life

Thinking styles associated with anorexia nervosa

For the past decade our team, based at the Institute of Psychiatry and the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, has conducted a number of studies in order to help us understand the ways that people with eating disorders think. We know that every individual has their own unique way of organizing information around them and processing thoughts, but we as humans, do share some features.

The results of our ongoing research seem to suggest that many people with eating disorders (but not all) have a tendency to follow strict rules and find it difficult to switch from one rule to another, even if a situation or the rules of a game change and require different responses. Generally, people develop habits and follow them but sometimes it can also be useful to change these habits and be able to introduce **flexibility**.

Our research has also shown that many people with eating disorders are very good at being detailed, in that they often have a tendency to **focus on details** as opposed to more global information around them, that is 'detail over the whole'. Although this can be a strength, it can also become a problem in some situations, making it difficult to see 'the wood for the trees'.

An example of this detailed type of thinking in everyday life would be giving map directions to somebody over the phone. If you get caught up in every single detail, such as all the landmarks you pass or all the shops along the route, not only will the recipient start to feel confused, but it is also easy to lose the overall aim of what you were trying to do.

CRT for anorexia aims to help people learn to identify whether they experience these two thinking styles (difficulties in being flexible and a tendency to be detail-focused), and subsequently try to challenge these thinking styles by engaging in fun, stimulating tasks and games. These games and tasks provide a chance for people to practice being more flexible and less detail-focused in their thinking, and apply this to their everyday life.

We believe that it is important to try and challenge inflexible and detail-focused thinking because these ways of processing information and guiding behaviour may actually play a role in maintaining eating disorders once they have developed.

Could CRT be helpful for me?

Try answering the following questions:

- Do you get angry if people do not do things your way?
- Do you get upset or unsettled when others suggest a new way of doing things?

- Do you like doing things in a particular order or routine?
- Do you find it difficult to do several things at once?
- Do you get distressed if plans get changed at the last minute?
- When reading, do you get hung up on details rather than understanding the gist?
- Do you often get lost in details and forget the real purpose of a task?
- Do you find it difficult to remember the story line in films, plays or books, but can remember specific scenes in great detail?

If you answered 'yes' to four or more of the above questions, then it is possible that you have a difficulty thinking and behaving flexibly and detail-focused thinking style. If this is the case, you may find CRT helpful as it would encourage you to learn more about these thinking styles and how they apply to you, as well as challenge any unhelpful thinking styles by engaging in brief, enjoyable activities.

Challenging Unhelpful Thinking Styles

SWITCHING/MULTI-TASKING

Everyone has different ways of thinking. Some people find it very easy to switch between different ideas and concepts – they therefore find it easy to switch between things around them and tend to be good at multi-tasking. However, some people prefer to focus on one thing at a time and not to be interrupted until they complete a task. These people also tend to do things meticulously.

Which do you identify with?

If you prefer to stick to one task at a time and see it through in great detail you may find it difficult to think in a flexible way.

We are all creatures of habit, to some extent. Habits, routines and rules, such as always doing things in a particular order, at a particular time and keeping things in a particular place in your home or at work, can be extremely helpful. Habits and routines allow us to make life manageable, predictable and reduce time and mental energy spent searching for things (or choosing between options) and can therefore reduce anxiety, uncertainty or chaos.

However, people with less flexible thinking styles are usually more dependent on habits than others, and so there can be downsides. Rigid rules or habits can get in the way of new opportunities and experiences; they can monopolise time that could be used for other useful things; and when habits and routines are disrupted (for example through illness, injury, loss etc) the individual may end up feeling very upset.

Try out the following tasks and use the reflection points to help you think about your thinking style and to see if you can try out some new ways of thinking and/or behaving that might be helpful.

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Please note: It is important to remember that none of the exercises in this manual are meant to be a 'performance test'. Some of the CRT tasks are simple in nature, whereas others have been designed to be tricky and more complex.

The aim of CRT is not to look at performance or how successfully a task has been completed – these exercises are not tests of ability and skills. The tasks have been specifically designed for you to **think about your thinking styles** and to **reflect** on how you approach tasks, rather than the outcome of your efforts. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.

Work at your own pace through the manual. But as a guide, we suggest spending 20-30 minutes twice a week.

Remember

When completing these tasks, ask yourself:

- How did I go about completing this task?
- What does this task tell me about how I think?
- What have I learned about myself and the way I approach tasks?
- What have I learned about myself and the way I interact with other people?
- How could I have approached this task differently?

The 'Stroop' task

Aim of the task

The aim of the Stroop task is to read the following words horizontally, from top to bottom. As you read, try to switch approximately every 5 seconds between saying what the word actually says and the colour the word is written in.

Task instructions

Colours: The aim is to switch between saying what the word actually says and the colour the word is written in.

Pictures: Switch between saying what the picture is and the word that is overlaid on the picture.

Number boxes: Switch between saying the word written in the box and the number of words written in the box

Tips for reflections

Did you use any tricks/techniques for keeping your mind focussed on the right task in hand?

Are these techniques you are familiar with

How can you use this experience in everyday activities?

When can it be useful to switch attention quickly?

green red yellow blue black green pink red yellow purple

blue blue yellow green red yellow green blue red red red

blue yellow black black green pink pink red yellow yellow

black red blue blue blue green green green yellow yellow

blue yellow blue yellow blue green blue green blue yellow

black yellow blue green yellow blue green yellow red red

red red blue red blue red blue yellow blue black blue yellow

black blue yellow green yellow green black pink pink pink

green purple purple yellow green black blue green yellow red

blue black green blue red blue red blue yellow pink black



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three three	one one one one	four	two two two	four four	two two two	three
two two two	three	four four	one one one	three three	two two two two	four
one one	two	three three	one one one one	four four	two two two	one one one

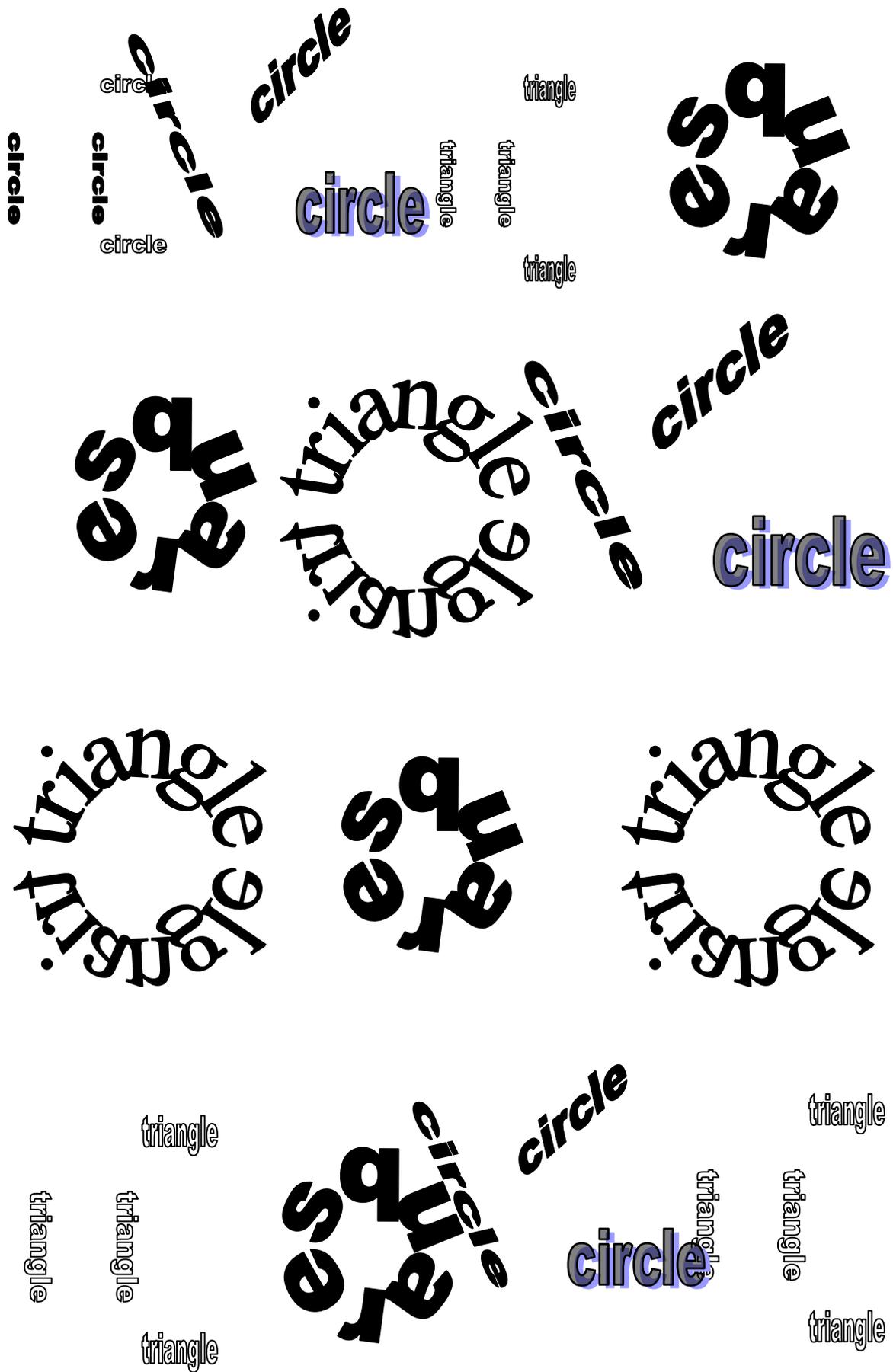
Circle Square Triangle

How to do the task

The aim of the 'circle square triangle' task is similar to the one above, but this time switch between saying the name of the shape and the word in which the shape is written in. For example, the first shape on the left hand side of the top row is a square but the words are circle. Again, try switching between the two different rules approximately every 5 seconds.

Tips for reflecting

- Did you use any tricks/techniques for keeping your mind focused on the right task in hand?
- Are you familiar with the techniques you may have used?
- Have you learned anything new about your thinking style?
- How can you use this experience in everyday activities?
- When can it be useful to switch attention quickly?
- Is it hard for you to multi-task? When you try to multi-task, does one task or thought make it hard to hold other information in your mind?



Embedded Words task

Aim of the task

The aim of this task is to practise identifying particular categories of information amongst irrelevant information. This task practices flexible thinking by encouraging switching between different sets of information swiftly and accurately.

How to do the task

The idea is to go through the paragraph below starting from the top left hand corner and with a pen **underline** words describing clothing and at the same time **circle** words related to cold temperature. The aim is to do it as swiftly as possible.

Reflection tips

- How did you find this task?
- How did you decide what words to cross out depending on the rule? For example, how did you decide if a word was a place name or a hot word? Ask yourself what you were using to guide these choices.
- Was there a time you noticed you were stuck and the old rule got in the way of the task in hand? How did you move past it?
- When might it be useful to do two things at the same time or use two rules at the same time?

drawing sitting underpants icicle revolve
pyjamas chilly sweatshirt t-shirt shout
tonight ice cooker even costume happen
nippy sleet assumption gate gloves
temperature freeze point camera attire
dress flower notification past slippers coat
leave shudder garden pants swim blue
danger socks pathway insert hat jacket suit
trainers retainer glacier jeans hover shelves
swing shorts sweater game raincoat slacks
week permafrost December pushchair
fridge winter sell shirt wonder frostiness
outfit glasses type Antarctic giving cool
bus box roof underclothes hustle iceberg
ivy scarf chill gown regent avalanche
undershirt stockings tie envelope stitch
Melbourne red premises stove charge
talent telephone hammer icy shelter icecap
frost icebox mouse hail face bitter cabinet
party boil boots medal money cap shiver
belt cassette remote cable quiver

Example 2:

In the paragraph below **underline** words describing 'buildings or places' and at the same time **circle** words that describe sports

airport light swimming plug arrival handball bulb
police station hang gliding polo arrangement scuba
diving fire station church blackboard volleyball tray
challenge pencil balloon chair finger meeting change
mountain understanding traffic celebration envelope
bus stop river duck softball plastic hockey squash
smooth supermarket number jacket train station sofa
post office horse racing group jogging cupboard
motorcycle racing insurance typing paragliding
participant skiing rubbish book cancellation
allowance argument athletics curtain nursery road
bowling alley convenience store time language keep
department store hospital table tennis diving car
racing stapler football carpet golf mirror gymnastics
video shoes folder friend zebra alternative lesson
switch house track and field boat snow-boarding
access signpost
fellow baseball cup equipment soccer description
shopping centre newsagents
bag cinema paper background town hall envelope
telephone pottery cycling rugby repetition barber
shop library efficient museum restaurant school
bowling bank book store apartment building office
building gas station tennis computer basketball desk
pot

Example 3

1. In the text below **Circle** 'hot' words while at the same time **underline** 'animal' words. Go all the way through to the end.
2. You can then go through again but this time **Underline** 'musical' words, while at the same time **putting a cross through** 'place-name' words.

fire violin Rome sticky tape rock bear zebra sun
tissue one cat glue brimstone super mouse
American flag diamond York switch mole witch
dance velcro three kitchen burn computer holiday
ice-cream note barcode pen grass blue four granite
rabbit pillow ruler hen scald Roman road swerve
tennis wolf flame glass Canada toffee lamb
mountain barber's pole sun Africa sea drum
paperclip treacle lava cola month triangle five
blanket bed molten metal cloud paper France pie
maths subway
pomp music fur piano keyboard pills cow wallet
glue wrist tiger clown jam milk watch sand lake
chilli pepper stone kitten map quaver baboon stick
phone French flag
guitar goat wallpaper paste square bag carrot flipper
horizon swimming Brazil
deer brick hot tarmac hamster antelope balloon
conductor kangaroo nice radio Cuba underwear
honey alphabet car keys clipboard

Word Search task

Aim of the task

The purpose of the task is to practise focusing on relevant information amongst an irrelevant stimulus. Word search puzzles are common place and can be found in newspapers and magazines. They are actually a good way of practicing flexible thinking. In the word search puzzles below, find the relevant words in the word search. If you are unable to find a particular word, move on. The aim is to move swiftly through the word search.

Reflections

- How did you find this task?
- Did you employ a particular technique to find the words?
- Would you improve your technique if you did it again?
- How could you relate this task to daily life? For example:
- How do you find it when you need to proofread something at college or work?
- Do you get stuck on a particular item?
- Do you go shopping with a particular item in mind, e.g. a certain pair of shoes? What happens if you're unable to find the ones you were looking for – are you able to find something else?

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Find the authors names in the word search below. You can find words horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards, and backwards.

Austen Dickens Shakespeare

Eliot Arnold Hughes

James Amis Atwood

Morrison Weldon Hardy

Bronte

e d s i e a a s a t
r t o s b a d m o m
a b r o n t e w i i
e m e e w n o e e s
p e l i o t n l s o
s e h g u h a d e h
e n o s i r r o m a
k a s o r s n n a r
a u s t e n o e j d
h e m j s n l n a y
s n e k c i d m s e

Find the words relating to the universe

s s e p n u e e
t e u a l o p u
e u n n r u o n
n r i u e t t m
a n v n t v h o
l r e t i p u j
p y r u c r e m
e e s a t u r n
s h e a r t h s

mercury venus moon

Universe Saturn Earth

Neptune Jupiter Earth

Planets Pluto

Find the words relating to gardens

e n i m s a j i e f
l r v p s i e s r u
k e y d w s o e r s
c s q u i r r e l c
u e b r l i d b e i
s p e t u n i a e a
y l f r e t t u b d
e d w v t u e a o e
n i a i r e t s i w
o l e m b f i y c b
h o l l y e s e e p

butterfly	Ivy	fuchsia
petunia	rose	dew
jasmine	lavender	wisteria
holly	squirrel	bee
honeysuckle		

Up and Down task

Aim of the task

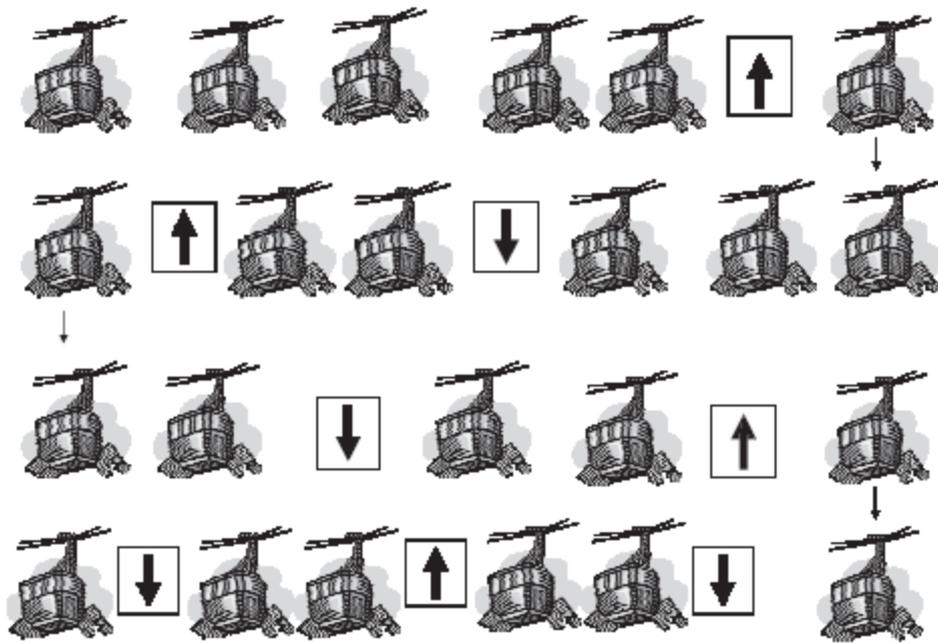
The purpose of this task is to practise switching skills based on changes in the rule. For example, counting forwards and then when the rule changes counting backwards. Therefore, you are practising changing your response to something quickly and effectively.

Task instructions

Ski lift task

The ski lift is going up and down a mountain (see figure below). The aim is to move through the sequence of pictures using the big arrows in the boxes as indicators as to whether the ski lift is moving up or down. When the arrow appears, say either 'up' or 'down' depending on the direction the arrow is pointing. Then count on in the direction in which the arrow is pointing. If the arrow points up, count upwards; if the arrow points down, count backwards.

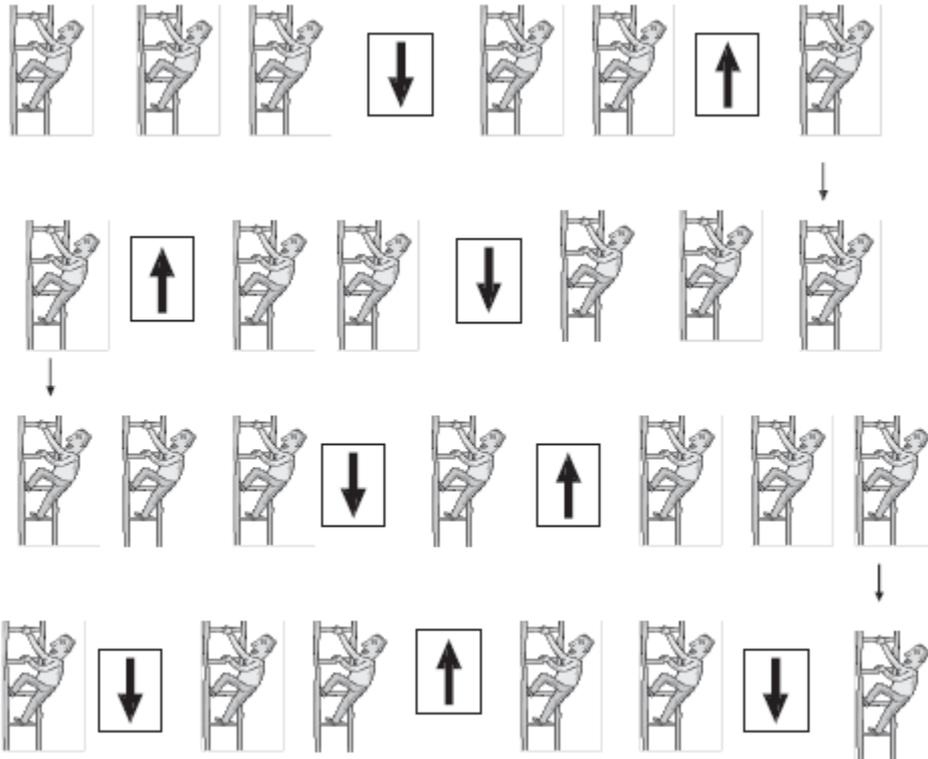
So, for example, start counting from the top left hand corner starting with 1, count on, 2, 3, 4, 5 until you come to the first arrow which points up, and then instead of saying '6' say 'up' (which means you continue counting upwards), so the next picture will be 6 and so on until you come to the next arrow and counting will change in the direction according to where the arrow is pointing.



Ladders task

The window cleaner is going up and down the ladder (see figure overleaf). The aim is to move through the sequence of pictures using the big arrows in the boxes as indicators as to whether the window cleaner is moving up or down. When the arrow appears, your patient says either 'up' or 'down' depending on the direction the arrow is pointing; they then count on. If the arrow points up, they count upwards; if the arrow points down, they count backwards.

So, for example, your patient should start counting from the top left hand corner counting from 1, count on, 2, 3 until they come to the first arrow which points down and then instead of saying '4' say 'down' (which means they then continue counting backwards), so the next picture will be 2 and so on.

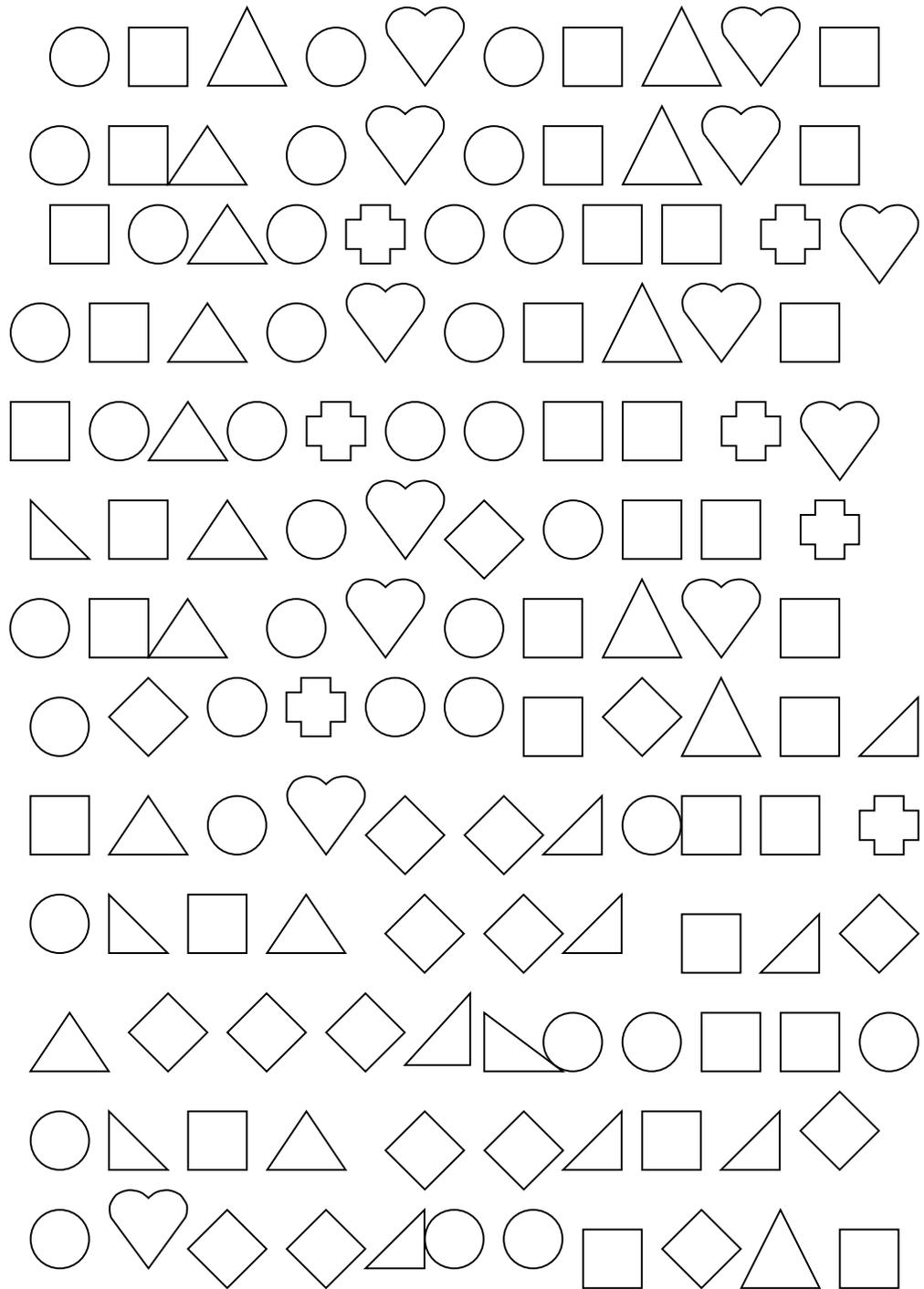


Search and Count task

The following task encourages switching between different aspects of stimuli or between different rules for the task, quickly and accurately. The aim is to increase mental control over what you focus on and to increase how fluidly you can move between ideas and tasks.

Task Instructions

Go through the different shapes and point to the circles (see task overleaf). After doing this for a couple of lines, start counting up to 20 at the same time. Then switch and point to the triangles (instead of the circles) whilst counting up to 20. Then point to the circles and then the triangles whilst counting up to 20. This task can be made increasingly difficult depending on how easy/hard you find it. For example, switch between pointing from triangles to squares whilst counting in odd numbers or alternate letters of the alphabet.



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The Illusions task

The aim of this task is to practice looking at pictures, and the various images hidden within the picture. Looking at visual illusions allows you to practice switching between the different images, and also to look at the details of the image as well as the 'bigger picture' of the whole image. One famous illusion depicts two images, that of a face and a vase...you may have seen it before.

For the Illusions task, you may like to use resources from websites such as <http://brainden.com/optical-illusions.htm>.

There are many different visual illusions that you can find and practice with.

Questions for reflections:

- Did you see more than one image almost immediately?
- Did you push yourself to find the image as quickly as possible?
- Did you use any particular techniques to find the other image e.g. moving the paper around?
- Were you able to interchange between the images easily?

- How can you use this experience in everyday activities?
e.g. - Have you disagreed about something with somebody and been unable to see their perspective? Were you eventually able to see their point of view?
- Is it sometimes hard to change your mind about things?
- Is it sometimes useful to step back from a situation to see the whole situation, rather than just parts?

Imagine a view of something; it could be the high street near you, a view of a holiday resort or the view from your bedroom window. Think of different ways of looking at this view. Imagine you are taking a picture. Think of all the different positions you could get into to get as many different shots of the same thing.

Bigger Picture Thinking

Several research studies have shown that many people with eating disorders have a tendency to focus on details as opposed to more global information around them, that is 'detail over the whole'. Although this can be a strength, it can also become a problem in some cases, and it can be difficult to see "the wood for the trees".

An example of this detailed type of thinking in everyday life could be giving map directions to somebody over the phone. If you get caught up in every single detail such as all the landmarks you pass, all the shops which are on route, not only will the recipient start to feel confused but it is also easy to lose the overall aim of what you were trying to do.

Do you identify with this?

If we focus too much on details, we can miss the broader context or the 'bigger picture'. No matter how important the details are, we also have to remember the bigger picture.

As you have already done for the SWITCHING/MULTI-TASKING, try out the following tasks and use the reflection points to help you think about your thinking style and to see if you can try out some new ways of thinking and/or behaving that might be helpful. Again, it's important to remember that none of the exercises on this website are meant to be a 'performance test'. **There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to the tasks.**

When completing the following tasks, ask yourself:

- How did I go about completing this task?
- What does this task tell me about how I think?
- What have I learned about myself and the way I approach tasks?
- How could I have approached this task differently?

Maps task

The purpose of the task is to help you to think in different ways when navigating and giving directions. It requires thinking in terms of the bigger picture because the end destination needs to be held in mind, but it also requires thinking flexibly because different routes are required, as is paying attention to different features on the map. Each map is different but all the maps require patients to navigate using different cues, e.g. compass, location, street names, or supermarket aisle names.

Task instructions

Choose one of the maps from those overleaf. Once you have chosen, look at the map and acquaint yourself with the different characteristics of the map. When you are accustomed to the main points you can then use other techniques to explore the map.

Reflections

Why did you choose the route that you did?

Did you devise a route and then navigate it, or did you do it as you went along?

If you were able to change directions easily, in what areas of your life can you apply this to?

How can you relate the thinking processes involved in this task to daily life?

Do you think ahead of the bigger picture when planning something or focus on the details?

Have you ever had to give directions to somebody over the phone? Was the person able to understand the directions you gave?

Are there areas in your life where you have had to think of alternatives – e.g. making alternative plans at the last minute?

Map task 1

- Go from Victoria Station to the Tate Britain
- Go from Buckingham Palace to New Scotland Yard
- Go from The Gordon Hospital to St James Park

Map task 2

- Describing what colour tube lines:
- Go from Piccadilly Circus to Paddington
- Go from London Bridge to Knightsbridge

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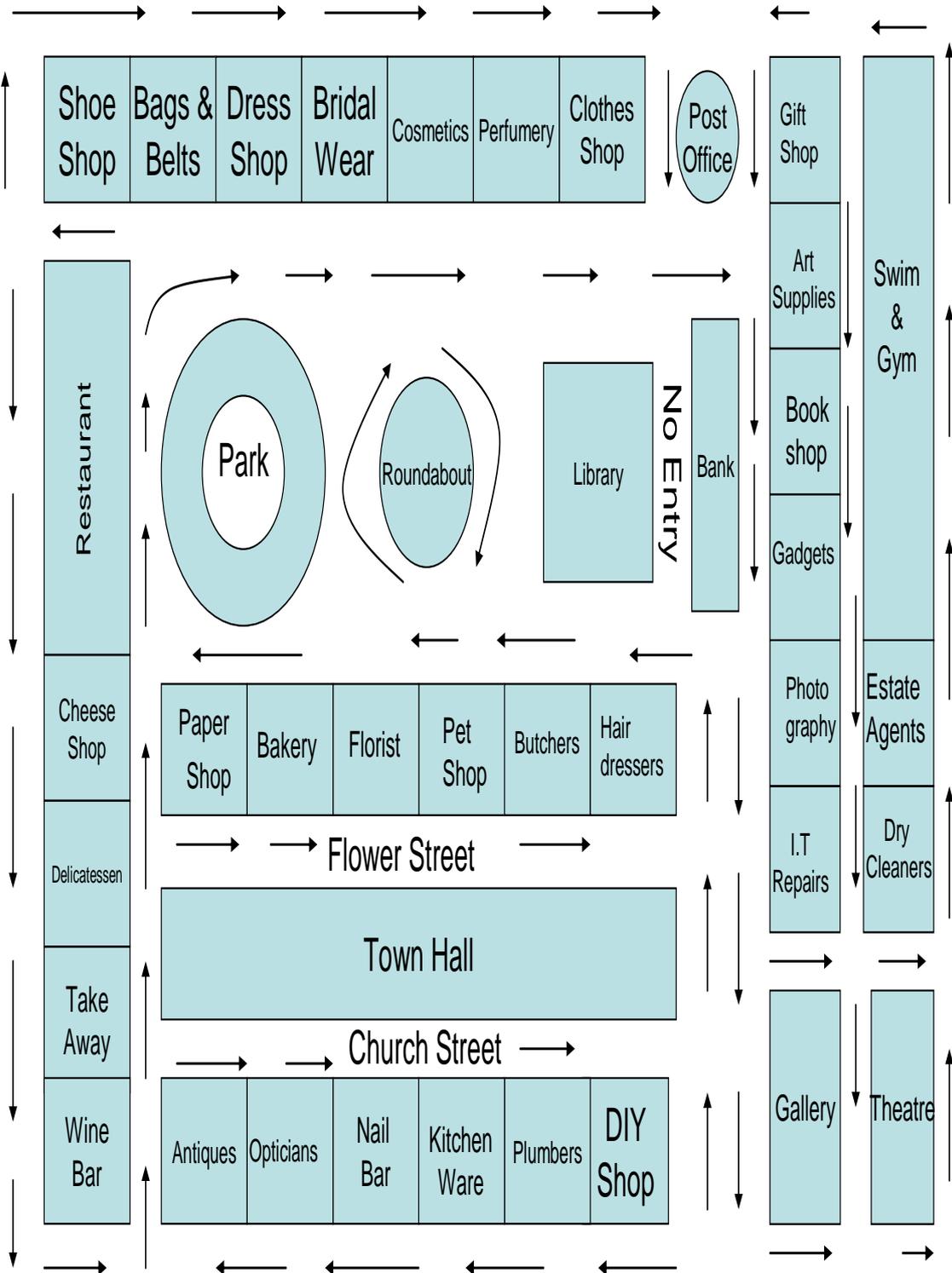
Go from Heathrow Terminal 5 to Kings Cross St Pancras

Map task 3

Pick up dry cleaning, pick up photographs; buy the following items: food for dog, face cream, memory stick for computer; return DVDs to the library; buy new shoes – relax over lunch

Do the same journey but using compass directions (North, South, East, West) Do the same journey using left, right, up, down

Map 3



Prioritizing task

The aim of this task is to practice thinking in terms of the 'bigger picture'.

Instructions

Below is a list of different events. Choose one and think about how you would go about planning it. To help you think in terms of the bigger picture, you can write down the following points: Think about the most important task down to the least important task which would assist most in getting the project or event done. What would be the first thing you would do and the last thing you would do?

Planning a train journey to another part of the country
Buying a present for a friend
Booking a holiday
Organizing your birthday party
Having friends over for the weekend
Looking for a new job
Decorating a room in your home

Reflections

How did you find this task?

Did you find it easy to prioritize?

Did you keep hold of the event you were planning or did you lose sight of it at any point?

Can you remember the last time you did something similar to planning one of these events? How did you find it?

What strategies do you learn from doing this task?

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How to... plant a sunflower task

The aim of this task is to practice expressing oneself in a succinct way. A good deal of our interactions involves getting messages across so that people can understand what we are thinking. Depending on what the message being conveyed will mean, this can sometimes be trickier than at other times. This task can help to think about the bigger picture of what is trying to be conveyed and to think about the main points.

Below are some exercises which are designed to help you convey information in a succinct fashion. As well as using some of the exercises below you can also think about something that you know how to do really well and write down the main points of how you would describe it to someone. You can also think about examples of times when you have found it difficult to convey information or have lost sight of the bigger picture (e.g. describing a film or book to someone or writing an essay for school/college/writing a report for work).

Here are some tips which may help in thinking and explaining in succinct ways. We have used an example of how you would describe planting a sunflower to someone:

Think about the main message you are trying to convey, i.e., you explaining to someone the best way to plant a sunflower.

- What are the materials or equipment required?
- What are the chronological steps?
- Think about the time connectives (first, then, after this, during this time etc) which can be used to link your steps.
- Short sentences can be helpful.

How to...Plant a Sunflower

You will need...

A pot

Soil

Sunflower seeds

A watering can

These are the steps you need to follow to plant a sunflower.

First, fill the pot nearly to the top with some soil.

Dampen the soil with a little water from the watering can.

Place the sunflower seeds onto the soil.

Next, cover the seeds with some more soil.

Finally, pour a little more water onto the soil.

Remember to water your sunflower once a day to help it grow! You will start to see the sunflower growing within two or three weeks.

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How to...play snakes and ladders:

First, understand the goal of the game. The aim of the game is to be the first player to reach the end by moving across the board from square 1 to square 100. You will travel the board from base to top, right, then left and so on.

Commence playing. The first player to roll 6 can go first.

Each subsequent player must also throw a 6 to start the game.

The dice is then rolled again to show the number of squares that the player may move initially. Place the marker on the appropriate square.

Each player takes a go.

Snake: if a player lands at the tip of the snake's head, his or her marker slides down to the square at the snake's tail.

Ladder: if a player lands on a square that is at the base of a ladder, his or her marker moves to the square at the top of the ladder and continues from there.

The first player to the last square on the board is the winner but you must have the correct number on the dice to land on the 100 mark.

Other ideas...

- How to download a song from i Tunes
- How to upload a photo on Facebook
- How to Tweet on Twitter

The complex pictures task

Aim of the task

The aim of the task is to practice thinking in terms of the bigger picture rather than focussing on the components of the picture as separate entities.

Task instructions

One person describes the picture for the other person (who cannot see the picture) to draw. Once you have completed the picture, look at the drawing and reflect on the picture and the description of it.

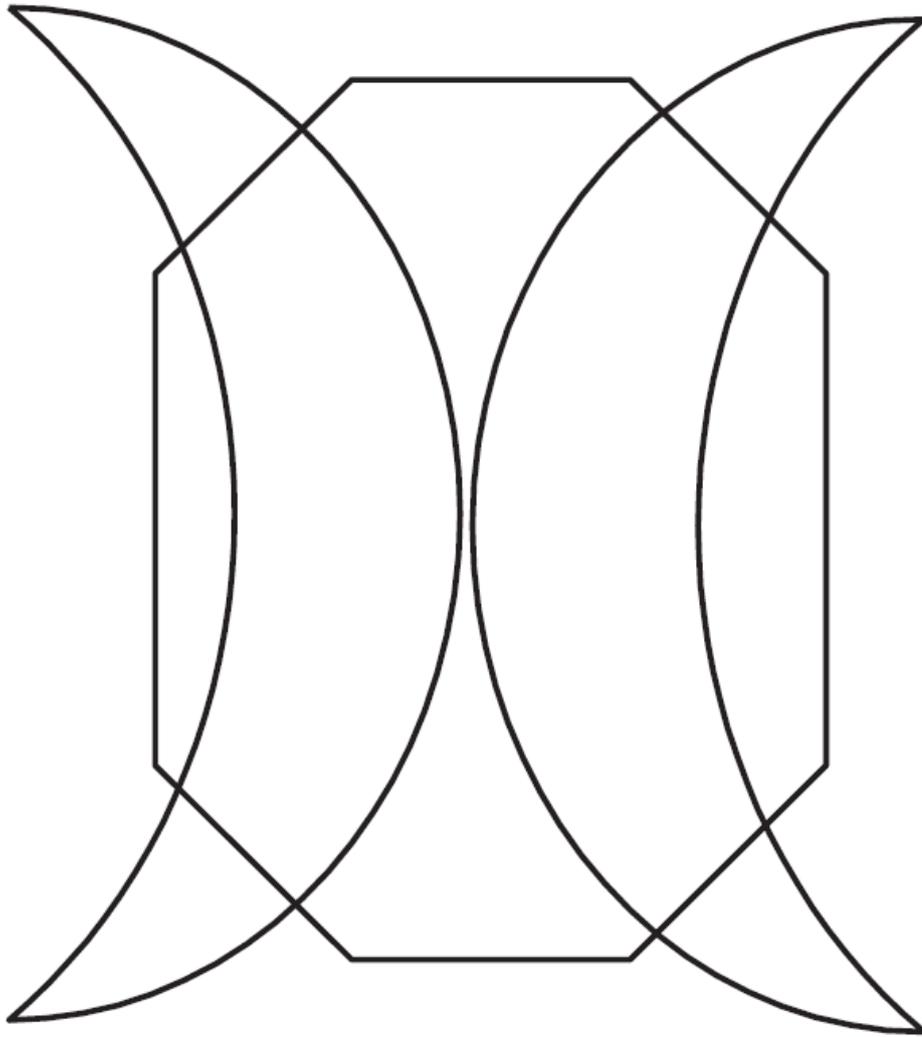
Tips for reflecting

What did you think of this task?

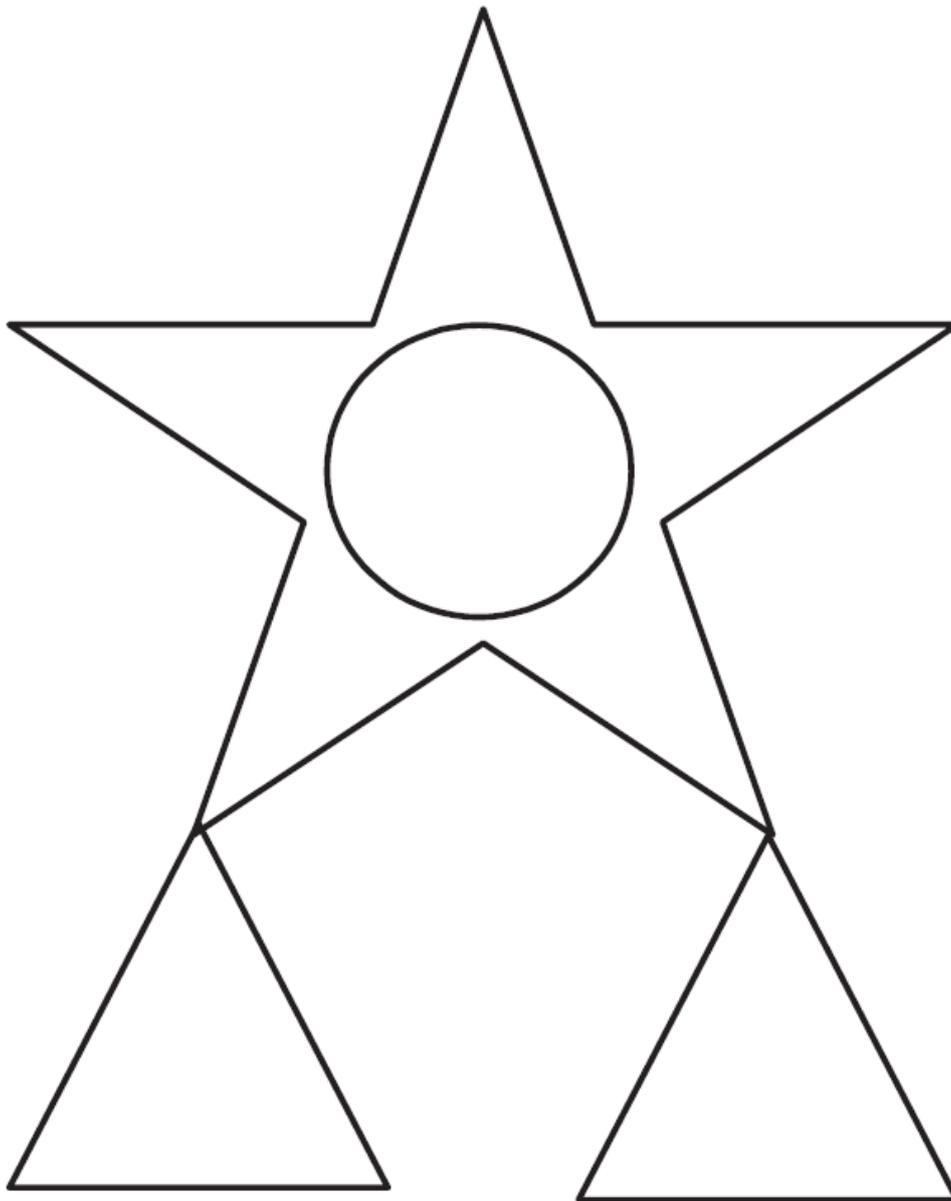
Were you aware of your thinking style whilst doing the task?

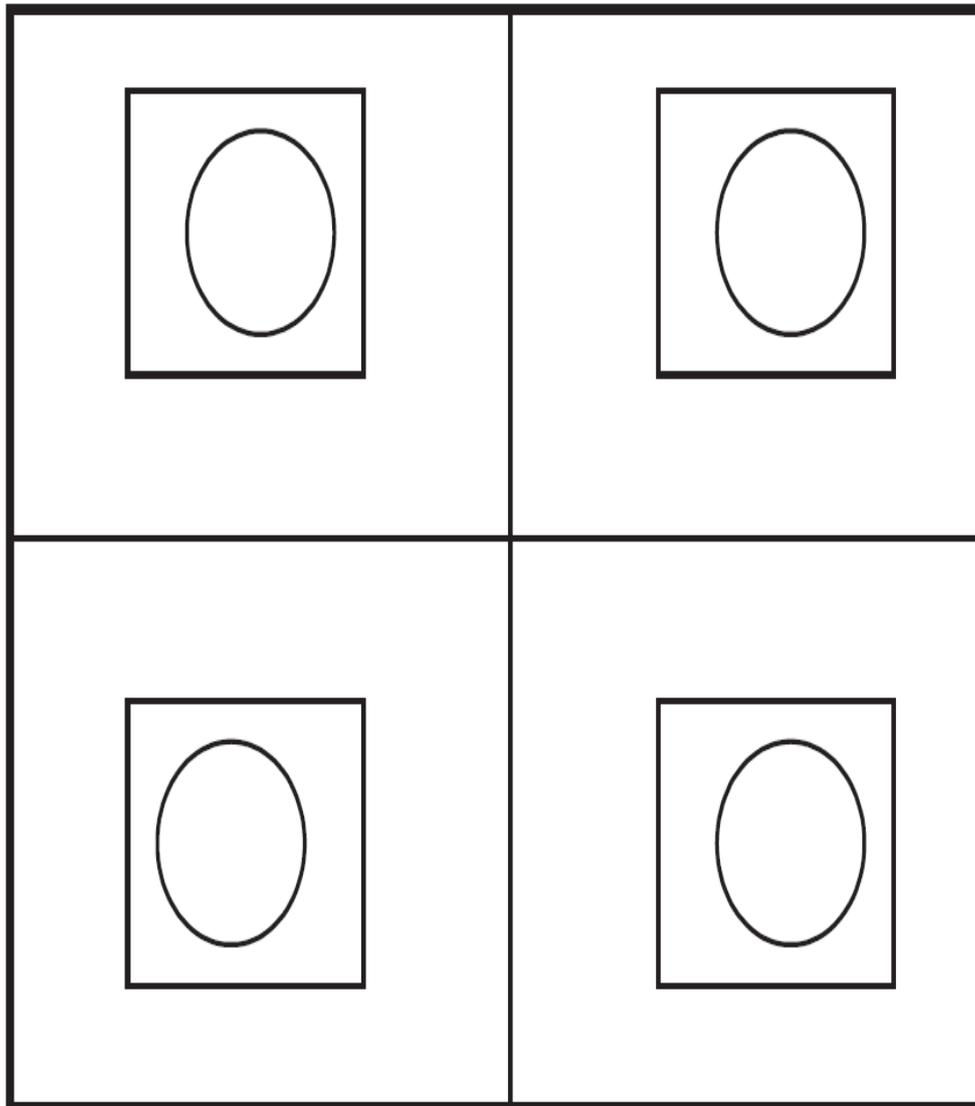
Does it differ from your usual thinking style?

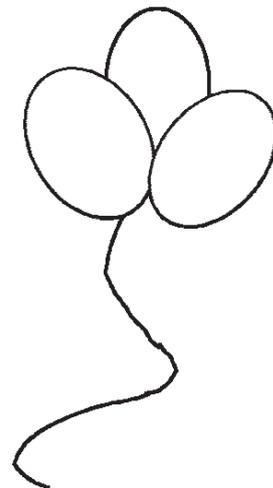
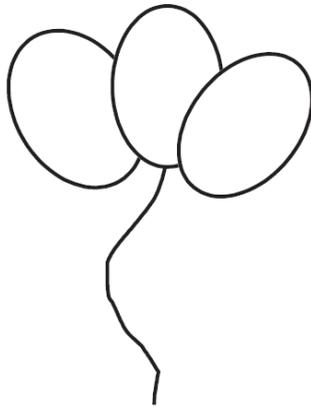
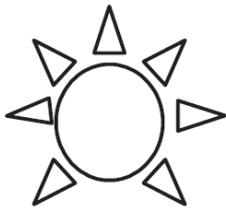
Can you relate this thinking style to some other areas of your life?

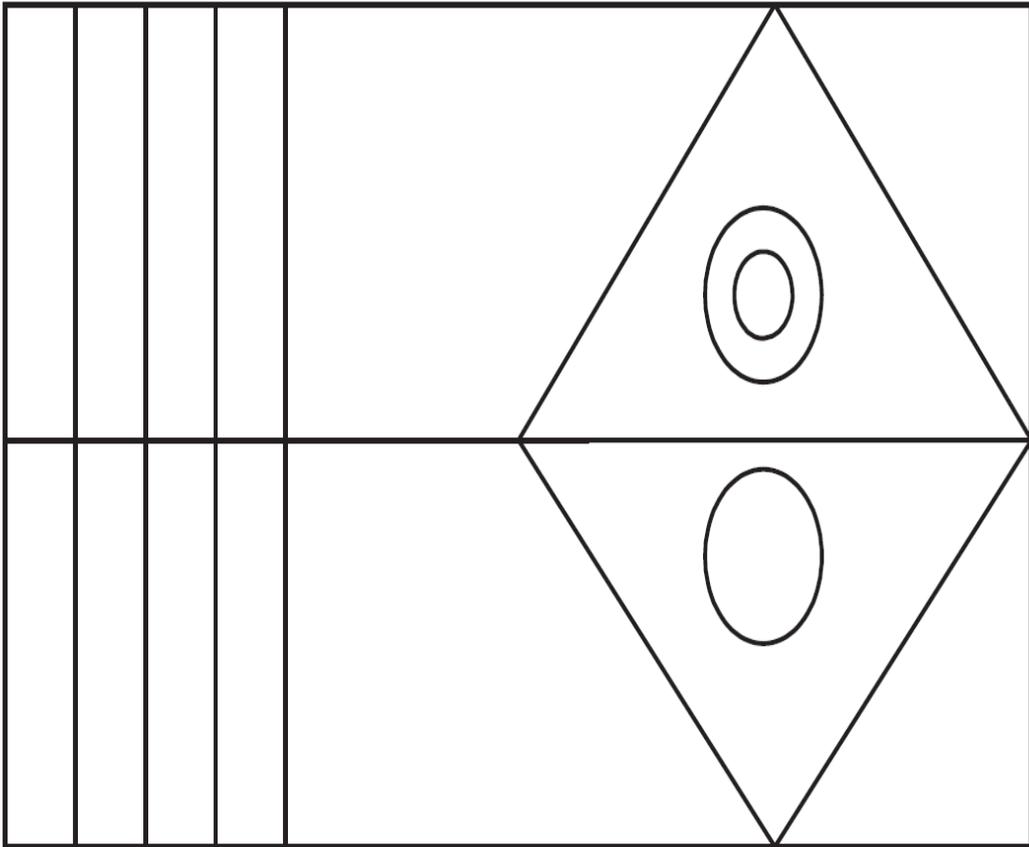


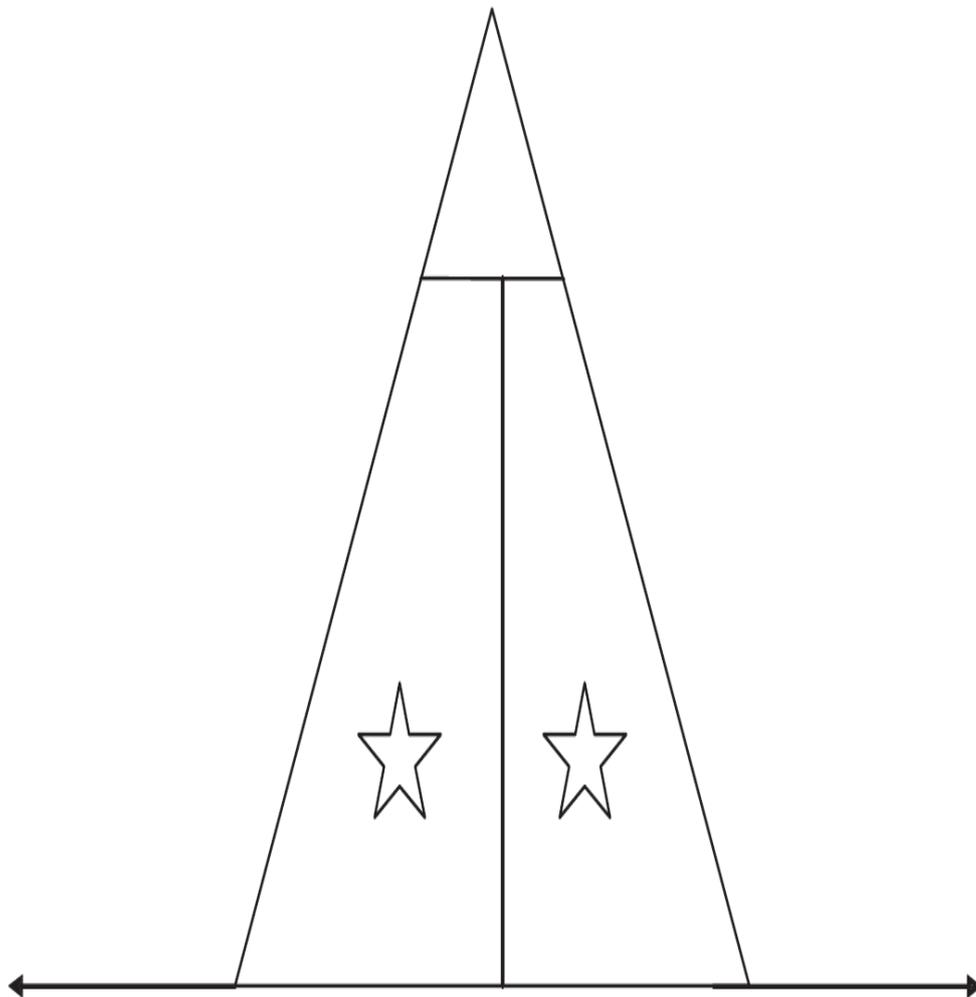
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The Main Idea task

The aim of this task is to try to pick up the 'main idea' in a particular context, for example a letter.

Have a go at reading Letter 1 below. Once you have read through it, summarise it in a couple of sentences. If you are comfortable with doing this, you can then go on to write the letter in a format of a text message and finally make up a title for the text. If you find it difficult to leave out information at first, try to summarise a paragraph at a time and then go on to summarise the entire letter.

Helpful hints:

- Start by making a few bullet points
- Try to identify the main points and the details – what is important and what is not important; maybe underline the main points in the text.
- Imagine you are above the information – try to get 'helicopter vision'
- Talk to yourself by starting and finishing the sentence, 'The main idea is...'
- Try to give a headline to each paragraph (or summarise the paragraph in one word)
- Imagine a lens that helps you zoom in on information and zoom out from information – where could this technique be useful?

Once you have completed this task, think about the following:

- How did you find this task?
- What drew you to the information you chose to summarise the piece?
- Were you able to hold the whole letter/email in mind or did you get stuck on certain aspects of it?
- How did you summarise the information as you read through?
- How can you relate this task to day to day life? For example:
- Are you able to follow what a person is talking to you about or do you get side tracked on one piece of information?
- Are you able to follow the plot of a film or book or do you get side-tracked on certain parts?

Here we have provided a few examples of letters, however you can practice this task by using other resources, for example summarising a newspaper or magazine article or a paragraph in a book. Practice 'bigger picture' thinking when you are talking to other people by summarising/describing something (for example a film you saw, a soap opera you watched, a story you like, your biography).

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Letter 1

Dear Mr Knight

I would like to apply for the job of reception clerk/telephonist which was advertised in today's Journal.

For the past four years, I have worked as a clerk/telephonist with Browns. Due to their move to another part of the country, I will be made redundant in two weeks time. My present job involves general reception duties in person and by phone. I also operate the switchboard, deal with telephone enquiries, deal with the post, send fax messages, and type and word process 10 - 12 items daily.

Before this job, I was a YT trainee with Brightsons (Solicitors) in North Street, Invertown and completed RSA I and II in Business Administration with RSA II in Word Processing.

I have always enjoyed working with people and my previous experience will enable me to work as part of the team and to be an effective representative of your company. I am prepared to work Saturdays on a rota basis. I have my own transport. I am available for interview at any time and could start work immediately. References are available from my present and previous employers.

Please find enclosed a copy of my CV for your further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

J Smith

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Letter 2

14 February 2010

Dear Mr Temple,

I am writing with regards to the sofa I purchased from you on Thursday 2nd of March. I was told that it would take 3 days to deliver, so a delivery date of Monday 6th of March was arranged. Your sales people were most unhelpful and said that they couldn't give me a delivery time, so I had to take a whole day off work.

As if this was not bad enough, by late afternoon the sofa had still not been delivered. Upon calling the delivery centre to check where my sofa was, I was told that the sofa hadn't arrived at the depot for delivery. When I rang your sales team they said they would get back to me. I had no response and I had to call again the next day. I was told that a new delivery date had been arranged for Monday 13th of March, 11 days after ordering it. This does not fulfil your 3-day delivery guarantee. On 13th of March and another day off work, my sofa, much to my delight, arrived. Unfortunately it was the wrong colour, so it was taken straight back.

I now have spent over 3 weeks without a sofa. I would like a full refund immediately so I can go elsewhere to buy a sofa. I expect to hear from you on receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely,
Miss Patricia Day

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Letter 3

15 March 2010

Dear Ms Day,

I am very sorry for all of the trouble you have had with your sofa delivery.

I have spoken to my sales team and asked them to explain why there have been so many problems. There have been several errors at the warehouse, and I am truly sorry for this. I have reprimanded those involved.

We can now deliver your sofa to you anytime that is convenient to you, during the daytime or the evening. I am also happy to refund you 20% of your payment, that is the sum of £210, as compensation for all of the problems that you have experienced. I have tried to call you but couldn't reach you.

Once again I apologize for the inconvenience caused. Please feel free to call me if you are still unhappy with the situation.

Yours sincerely,
Michael Temple

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Letter 4

6 June 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

The OfficeShredder X220 that I purchased from you on 15 May 2007 turned out to be quite a disappointment. While it looked the same as the one I saw featured on your website, it did not perform in the same way.

Following the instructions, I placed a wodge of no more than 10 A4 letters into the shredder and, to my utter dismay, the product began to smoke and produce a terrible burning smell. I experienced the same problem when

I attempted to shred just one piece of plain A4 paper. Now, when I turn the shredders power on all that happens is a low buzzing sound. The machine will not work at all now.

I have contacted the local branch of Office World where I originally bought the shredder and I was told that I could not receive a refund because I could not prove that I did not cause the shredder to break. The shop clerk suggested that I write to you directly and claim a refund under the terms of the 1 year money back warranty that came with the product. Therefore, I am returning the OfficeShredder X220 to you, along with a copy of the receipt I received when purchasing the item, and ask that you issue me a full refund. I am not interested in receiving a replacement.

Yours sincerely,
Mr T Weatherby

The Professor's lesson

The aim here is to read the following text and to look at the questions at the end to reflect on the text and your everyday life.

The Professor's Lesson

A professor stood before his class with some items in front of him. When the class began he picked up a large empty jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar and shook it lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They again agreed it was.

The professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students laughed and all agreed that it was.

The professor then produced two cups of coffee and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling all the empty space between the sand.

“Now,” the professor said, “I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - your family, your partner, your health and your children, your passions - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else - the small stuff.”

“If you put the sand into the jar first, there would be no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for your life.” He continued, “If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.”

“Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness: play with your children, talk to your family, keep that doctor's appointment, take your partner out dancing, go shopping - treat yourself”

“There will always be time to go to work, clean the house and fix the car. Take care of the golf balls first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.”

One of the students raised her hand and asked what the coffee represented. The professor smiled, “I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show that no matter how full your life may seem, there is always room for a couple of cups of coffee with friends”.

- 1) What do you think is the main message the professor is trying to teach his students?
- 2) Can you think what the 'golf balls' are in your life? The things that are most important?
- 3) What are the 'grains of sand' in your life? The small details that aren't so important?
- 4) Do you think that you currently fill your time with the 'golf balls' in life, or the 'grains of sand'?

Putting what you have learned into practice

Patients that we have worked with before have reported that they have found it helpful to try out making small changes in their day-to-day behaviours in order to help them become more flexible and less rigid in their thinking. Below are some examples of small changes you might like to make to your routines. If the thought of changing something too big is overwhelming or scary, try making very small changes to begin with:

- Choose different brands whilst shopping (e.g., a different brand of washing up liquid, moisturiser, breakfast cereal)
- Change cleaning routines (e.g., have breakfast before cleaning the house, clean rooms in a different order, etc.)
- Change routines in the morning (e.g. clean teeth before/after shower – same for bedtime)
- Change your favourite plate/mug
- Sort out your wardrobe and take items that you will never wear to the local charity shop
- Instead of keeping old newspapers and magazines, cut out your favourite sections and throw away the rest
- Leave the house untidy when going to work and tidy up in the evening. Do the same with laundry/ironing
- Sit in a different place at mealtimes
- Add one extra ingredient to your shopping list (not bulk food but a herb, spice, garlic, for example)
- Change around a small item of furniture or lamp in your room
- Estimate the amount of washing powder to use rather than using a measuring cup
- Shuffle the songs on your I pod player rather than listening to them in the same order everyday.

You may also find it helpful to try changing routines at work. For example you could:

- Change your routine for the journey from your home to work/college/hospital (e.g. use different buses, walk a different route)
- If working with text on the computer, use a different font for the day
- Sit in a different position to usual around the lunch table
- When reading an email or piece of work, switch between checking for grammatical errors and content errors
- Use a different internet browser to the one that you usually would use
- Try choosing a different ring tone on your phone
- Change the clock on your phone to 12 hour/24 hour setting
- Estimate the time rather than wearing a watch

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Don't be too hard on yourself if you struggle to make these changes the first time you try. Remember the old saying, 'if at first you don't succeed, try, try, again'. Every new skill takes time to learn and practice, and this is true of being flexible and less detail-focused.

'ADVICE AND TIPS' SECTION

This manual aims to provide a safe, judgement-free and positive environment for you to explore your thinking styles. When doing these tasks don't think about how well you completed each task, but rather how you went about completing it. In other words, think about how you think.

When you try out the tasks, the aim is to practice trying things differently, so use this space to do things in a way you normally wouldn't, and see what happens. Have fun with the tasks and experiment!

Remember: It is never too late to learn something new!

When you complete the tasks, ask yourself:

- How did I find the task? Easy? Difficult?
- Did I like or dislike the task? Why?
- How did I go about completing this task?
- What strategies did I use?
- Could I have used a different strategy?
- What are the pros and cons of the different strategies?
- If I were to complete the task again, how would I approach it?
- What have I learned about my thinking style?
- In everyday life, which strategies do I tend to use?
- Could I try a different strategy? Think of examples of things you do that you could do differently.

Text box after every task:

1. What did you think of this task?

- How did I find the task? Easy? Difficult?
- In what way was it easy/difficult?
- Did you like it/dislike it?

2. How did you go about completing this task?

- What strategies did you use?
- Did that strategy work?
- Could you have used a different strategy?
- What are the pros and cons of the different strategies?
- If you were to complete the task again, how would you approach it?

3. What have you learnt about your thinking style while doing this task?

4. Is this thinking style one that you use often in your everyday life?

Think of an example of an event/situation where you might use this thinking style, or the strategy you used.

- What usually happens when you use that thinking style or strategy?
- Could you try a different strategy?

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- If yes, think of when you could put this into practice to try out the new strategy.

Frequently asked questions

1. How many exercises are expected to be done in each session?

Three-four exercises are recommended per session, however, be flexible as you may have a different pace when you start using the manual

2. What can I do if:

a) S/he is bored with (some of) the exercises

Explore why this is before you exclude the exercise. Is it because it is too easy or too difficult? If so you can change the pace at which you do them.

b) S/he finds some exercises too easy

Acknowledge how well they are doing and mention that not everyone finds them easy and it is impressive to find them easy, however, many exercises allow creativity and allow difficulty to be increased

c) S/he finds some exercises too frustrating?

It is worth exploring what part of the task is frustrating: is it because it is too easy or too difficult?

3. What can I do if s/he does not understand the purpose of cognitive remediation therapy and how it is related to their illness?

As the sessions progress the styles of thinking that the tasks evoke will hopefully be linked to real life scenarios and behaviours

4. How long should a session last?

We recommend 20-30 minutes twice a week working through the tasks. However, you can be flexible with this.

Further Reading and Resources Section

CRT in Anorexia:

Genders R, Tchanturia K. Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT) for Anorexia in Group Format: A Pilot study (in press) **Weight and Eating Disorders**

Tchanturia K, Davies H, Lopez C, Schmidt, U, Treasure J, Wykes T; (2008) Neuropsychological task performance before and after cognitive remediation in anorexia nervosa: A pilot case series **Psychological Medicine** 38(9):1371-3

Whitney J. Easter, A. Tchanturia K (2008) Service users' feedback on cognitive training in the treatment of anorexia nervosa: a qualitative study. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 41(6), 542-50.

Link to: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/eat.20536/pdf>

Case studies:

Davies H, Tchanturia K. (2005) Cognitive Remediation Therapy as an intervention for acute Anorexia Nervosa: A Case Report. *European Review of Eating Disorders*. 13, 311-316

Link to: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/erv.655/pdf>

Pretorius N, Tchanturia K (2007) Anorexia nervosa: how people think and how we address it in psychological treatment. *Therapy*, Vol 4, No 4, 423-433.

Link to: <http://www.futuremedicine.com/doi/pdf/10.2217/14750708.4.4.423>

Tchanturia K, Davies H, Campbell I (2007) Cognitive Remediation for patients with Anorexia Nervosa: preliminary findings *Annals of General Psychiatry* 14, 1-6

Link to: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1892017/pdf/1744-859X-6-14.pdf>

Tchanturia K, Whitney J, Treasure J. (2006) Can cognitive exercises help treat anorexia nervosa? A case report. *Weight and Eating Disorders*, Vol 11; N4, 112-117.

CRT related:

Lopez C, Tchanturia K, Stahl D, Treasure, J. (2008) Central coherence in eating disorders: a systematic review. *Psychol Med*. 2008 38(10):1393-404

Link to: [pdf](#)

Lopez C, Tchanturia K, Stahl D, Treasure, J (2008) Weak Central Coherence in Eating Disorder: A Step towards looking for an Endophenotype of Eating Disorders. *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology*
DOI:10.1080/1380339082036092 Link to:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/ftinterface~content=a793771637~fulltext=713240930~frm=content>

Roberts M, Tchanturia K, Stahl D, Southgate L, Treasure J. (2007) A systematic review and meta-analysis of set shifting ability in eating disorders *Psychological Medicine*, 37(8):1075-84.

Link to: [pdf](#)

Tchanturia K, Campbell I, Morris R, Treasure J. (2005) Neuropsychological Studies in AN. *International Journal of Eating Disorders, Special Issue Anorexia Nervosa* 37:572-576

Link to: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/eat.20119/pdf>

Southgate L, Tchanturia K, Treasure J. (2005) Building a model of the aetiology of eating disorders by translating experimental neuroscience into clinical practice. *Journal of Mental Health* 14 (6) 553-566.

Link to: <http://informahealthcare.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09638230500347541>

Treasure J, Tchanturia K, Schmidt U. (2005) Developing a model of the treatment for eating disorder: using neuroscience research to examine the how rather than the what of change. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* 5(3) 1-12

Tchanturia K, Morris R, Brecelj M, Nikolau V, Treasure J. (2004) Set Shifting in Anorexia Nervosa: An examination before and after weight gain, in full recovery and the relationship to childhood and adult OCDP traits, *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, Vol 38, 545-552 Link to: [pdf](#)

Tchanturia K, Brecelj M, Sanchez P, Morris R, Rabe-Hesketh S, Treasure J. (2004) An examination of cognitive flexibility in eating disorders *Journal of International Neuropsychological Society* 10, 513-520 Link to: [pdf](#)

Recommended further reading to help you challenge your eating disorder:

Self-help books and materials for eating disorders

- *Getting better bit(e) by bit(e): A survival kit for sufferers of bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorders.* U. Schmidt and J. Treasure (2003) Brunner-Routledge, NY.
- *Anorexia Nervosa: a survival guide for families, friends and sufferers.* J Treasure (2003) Brunner-Routledge, NY.
- *Skills-based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder. The New Maudsley Method.* J. Treasure, G. Smith and A. Crane (2007) Routledge, UK.

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- *Beating your Eating Disorder: A cognitive-behavioural self-help guide for adult sufferers and their carers.* Waller et al. (2010) Cambridge University Press.
- *The Invisible Man: A Self-help Guide for Men with Eating Disorders, Compulsive Exercise and Bigorexia.* J.F. Morgan (2008) Routledge, UK.
- Centre for clinical interventions <http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/>
- www.eatingresearch.com
- BEAT website <http://www.b-eat.co.uk>

Obsessions and Compulsions

Hyman, B. & Pedrick, C. (1999). *The OCD Workbook – Your Guide to Breaking Free from OCD.* Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications. Recommended by many sufferers. A very practical workbook-style approach to overcoming obsessional problems. User-friendly, lots of photocopyable worksheets, etc.

Veale, D. & Willson, R. (2005). *Overcoming Obsessive Compulsive Disorder – A Self-Help Guide Using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques.* London: Robinson. Useful for those who suffer from OCD and those who care for them.

Perfectionism

Adderholdt, M. & Goldberg, J. (1999). *Perfectionism: What's Bad About Being Too Good?* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit (www.freespirit.com).

Anthony, M. M. & Swinson, R. P. (1998). *When Perfect Isn't Good Enough: Strategies for Coping with Perfectionism.* Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications. This book is clearly written and contains many ideas. It has a specific chapter on dieting and body image.

Basco, M. R. (1999). . New York: Free Press. This book takes you through the thoughts and experiences of four archetypical perfectionists. The style is warm and easy reading.

Smith, A. W. (1990). *Overcoming Perfectionism.* Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.

Self Esteem

Fennell, M. (1999). *Overcoming Low Self-Esteem: A Self-Help Guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques.* London: Robinson Publishing (www.constablerobinson.com).