A PAUSE, A PRACTICE, A NEXT STEP

How Therapy and Medication Help

How your brain learns, how medicines work, and what change can look like.

Use a few words, draw, or talk this through. Skip anything that does not fit. This is an educational worksheet, not a diagnostic test or a substitute for care.

How therapy helps you learn a new response

In cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), you and a therapist can test a prediction in a safe situation. Say you expect a friend to be angry if you reply late. Before you answer, write down what you expect. Send one short reply and notice what actually happens. Even if you still feel nervous, you can learn, “I can reply while I...

01 / Notice and reflect

What cue starts a habit I would like to change?

02 / Notice and reflect

What small action could I try when that cue comes up?

03 / One next step

What will I try next, and what support would make it easier?

When to seek help: Ask your clinician which change to look for first, when to check in, and whom to call if you feel worse or have side effects. Contact your care team promptly about new or worsening suicidal thoughts. If you may act on them or cannot stay safe, get emergency help now. Talk with your prescriber before stopping or changing a medicine.

Read more: NIMH · What happens in psychotherapy

More tools and immediate support: Our Healing Room / Crisis Support.

U.S. crisis support: call or text 988. In immediate danger, call 911.