CBT session note

Client | Date | Session no.

1. Brief context

What the client came with, key events.

2. Key themes and affect

Themes, feelings and body reactions named in the session.

3. Automatic thoughts and distortions

The thought in the client's words and the distortion, if named.

4. Core and intermediate beliefs

A belief about the self and an "if..., then..." rule.

5. Maintaining cycle and safety behaviors

Situation → thought → feeling → behavior → consequence.

6. Agreements and homework

Tasks and observations until the next session.

7. Risks

Only signals that came up. Empty if none.

8. Speech and thinking features

Anything notable in the form of speech. Usually empty.

9. Plan for the next session

What to return to.

CBT session note: filled example

Client Anna, 34 (fictional) | Date 11/12 | Session no. 4

1. Brief context

Came in after a conflict with her manager, has slept badly for a week.

2. Key themes and affect

Anxiety → "my chest tightens before planning meetings".

3. Automatic thoughts and distortions

"They'll fire me for a single mistake" → catastrophizing.

4. Core and intermediate beliefs

"I'm not good enough" → "if I make a mistake, I'll be rejected".

5. Maintaining cycle and safety behaviors

Checks the report 5 times → anxiety drops for an hour, confidence does not grow.

6. Agreements and homework

Thought record → 3 entries by Tuesday.

7. Risks

None mentioned.

8. Speech and thinking features

None noted.

9. Plan for the next session

Test the "fired" thought: a behavioral experiment.