

Emotions/Cognitions Journal

This is a metacognition teaching tool designed as a method of teaching students the connections between emotions, thoughts and behavior through a cognitions diary. This presentation will demonstrate how students can use their cell phones to monitor, examine, and draw conclusions about how their emotions affect their capacity to learn. As a result of the process, students will develop ways to transform cognitions in such a way as to enhance learning. This presentation will include: 1. A guideline for developing a baseline scale of emotions; 2. A table for using a cell phone to log emotions and thoughts; 3. A rubric for reflections and analysis of the journal.

An additional goal of this tool is to provide an experiential basis for students to build understanding for the connection between affect and cognitions.

Objective:

Enhances understanding of the relationship between thoughts and feelings by engaging students in a thoughts/emotions journal.

1. Guideline for developing a baseline scale of emotions

Monitor affect

Week 1: students keep a journal of their emotions. Each day, students take note of their feelings and the intensity of the feelings. When did they experience the greatest range of emotions (a weekend day or a week day)? Why? What provoked emotional reactions? What thoughts were associated with the emotions (i.e. when I couldn't retrieve my computer files, I became very angry and had the following thoughts: "I'm an idiot. I can't do anything right. Why can't I do what everybody else does without any problem?")? At the end of week one, students will establish a baseline for their emotional reactions (i.e. on a scale from 1 to 10, my level of anger when I lost my files was a 10; my level of anger when I was reading an enjoyable book was a 0). Students choose one day of the week to keep their cognitions/emotions journal. It is most meaningful if they choose a day when they are most likely to experience a range of emotions.

2. Monitor emotions and thoughts

Week 2: Students pick one day to monitor emotions and thoughts based on findings from component one (the activity is more meaningful when students exhibit a range of emotions). On that day, students will set phone alarms to sound 10 times during that 24 hour period. Each time the alarm sounds, students record their emotions and thoughts. At the end of the day, students examine their entries. At the end of the week students write a reflection analyzing their emotions, thoughts, and any connection or lack thereof between the two (i.e. in the example above, I might see the connection between my level of anger and the subsequent thoughts of inadequacy).

programs address this association.

Monitor affect (guideline for developing a baseline scale of emotions)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Range of affect 1 – 10							
Thoughts/Emotions							

Affect:

Calm Intense emotion

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Cognitions Journal

Time Feeling? Intensity of feeling (1-10) Your thoughts?

3. Cognitions Journal Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (3)	Acceptable (2)	Developing (1)
A minimum of 10 entries included	10 or more entries were included	Between 5 and 10 entries	Less than 5 entries
Entries	Entries are coherent and relevant	Relevance of entries is in question	Entries are unclear or incoherent
Summary	Summary paragraph is coherent with clear connections between actions and thoughts	Summary demonstrates some insight, but is lacking clarity or relevance	Summary paragraph is weak