

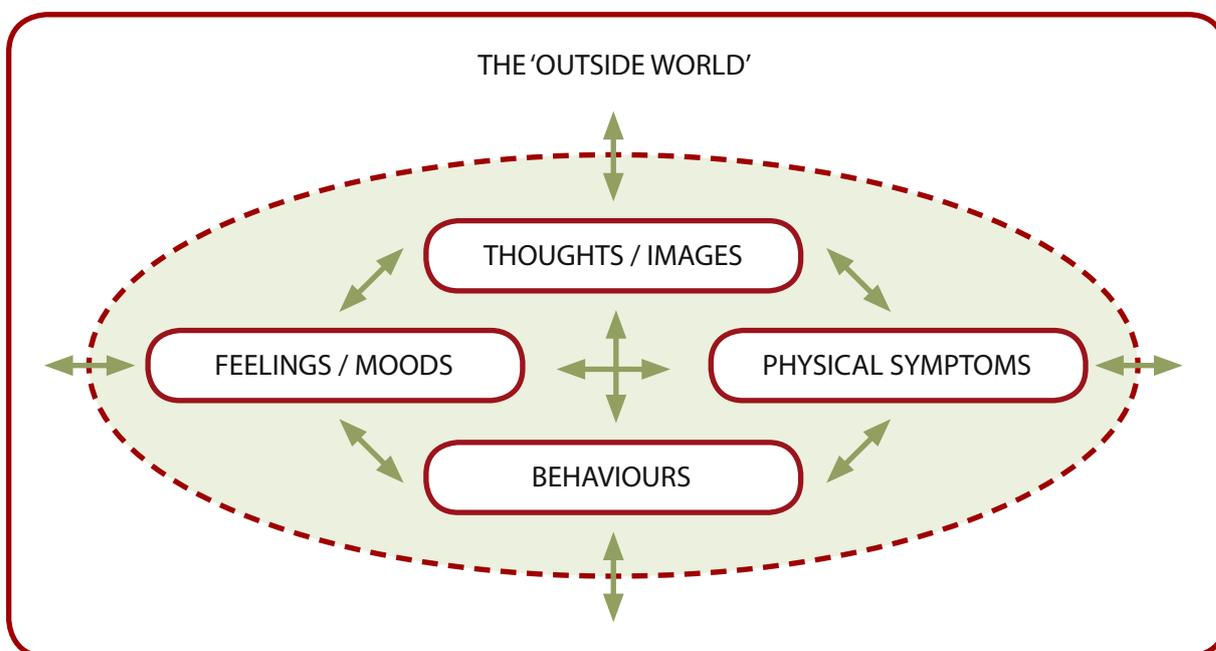
How to Complete Your Own 'Five Areas' Review

Using the 'Five Areas' model...

The 'Five Areas' model shows how your thoughts, physical and mental feelings and actions affect each other and the outside world.

Ask your guide for a blank 'Five Areas' form and sit down together to work on it...

You can use this diagram to help you and your guide understand your problems, and also the things that you have going for you or that help you feel good about yourself, even just a little bit. It isn't easy to do this, so ask your guide to help you and be patient with yourself. You don't have to put something in every box and you can come back to it as often as you want.



There are 5 boxes (one for each of the 'Five Areas'):

'THE OUTSIDE WORLD' – The big box that surrounds the other four boxes, just as we are all surrounded by the outside world in which we live.

The 'Outside World' is everything and everybody outside of ourselves and we cannot control or change the world or anybody else in it, we can only make choices for ourselves – choices about what we think, what we do, and how we feel in our mind and in our body. These are the other 4 areas or boxes shown inside the broken circle. The broken circle is there to show that we are separate from the outside world, but constantly affected by it, and able sometimes to affect the outside world ourselves – if you ask your partner to drink less alcohol and (s)he listens to you and cuts down their drinking, then that is you affecting the 'outside world', and in a way that might help both you, your partner and your children.

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Continued...

The 'outside world' can also affect you, but YOU CAN CHOOSE HOW YOU REACT TO WHAT THE OUTSIDE WORLD DOES TO YOU. If your next door neighbour throws a noisy late night party then you could react in several ways – you might go and ask them to turn the noise down, you might stay indoors feeling angry, you might ring the police or you might turn up your own music to drown out the noise or you might just put in a pair of earplugs – it is up to you to choose what to do. Remember: NOBODY CAN MAKE YOU THINK, DO OR FEEL ANYTHING WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT.

Using this model with your guide will hopefully help you both to break things down into these 'Five Areas' and work out how all the areas affect each other – the double headed arrows show that every area affects, and is affected by, every other area. It might look confusing at first, but try it out for yourself.

To start, try to remember a time in the last few days when you noticed a strong feeling or emotion – it doesn't have to be a bad feeling, like anger or panic, it could be a good feeling like happiness or feeling calm and peaceful. Try not to pick a time when you were really upset, you may find it too hard to write about. Take some time to remember what happened, then work with your guide on putting something in some or all of the boxes. There are some questions in each of the boxes that might help you to write something.

Now, try to work out if what you thought, or did, or felt, was helpful or unhelpful – to you, and to the 'outside world'. Sometimes, we might do things that make us feel better – like shouting at the neighbour to turn the noise down – but the outside world reacts unhelpfully – the neighbour might just turn the noise up even louder because he doesn't like being shouted at. See if you and your guide can work out if what you chose to do or think was helpful or unhelpful, either to you or to the situation that you were in. You can look at the examples in some of the other leaflets depending on your main symptoms – there are leaflets on anxiety, depression and stress that may help.

Then, you can talk to your guide about which of the 'Five Areas' you could try to make a different choice in, to see if you can improve things for yourself without getting into too much trouble in the 'outside world'. It is often difficult to change the outside world and sometimes you can end up banging your head against a brick wall, and end up feeling worse yourself, so it is worth trying first to change things in the areas that you have most influence over—your own thoughts, actions and feelings—before you try to make changes in the 'outside world'.

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