Checking the *evidence.*

Why this helps: slowing a stuck thought down to look at the clues can loosen its grip. Your worries aren't "irrational" — many grew from real experiences, and those count as evidence too.

EXAMPLE *A friend left my message on read. "They're annoyed with me" (80). For: it happened once before. Against: work is hectic for them. Balanced: "They might be swamped — I can check in tomorrow" (35).*

CASE # _____

Follow the path one box at a time. Skip any box and come back.

1 The situation
Where, when, who. Just the facts.

2 The thought
What my brain told me.

HOW STRONG? 0–100

Before _____ After _____

3 Evidence for
Facts and real past experiences. They count.

keep digging

4 Evidence against / what I might be missing
What doesn't fit? What else could explain it? What would someone who knows me say?

5 A more balanced thought
Holds all the clues. Then re-rate it above.

CLUE CHECKLIST Tick any thinking traps you spot.

- ☐ **All-or-nothing** — Only perfect or a total fail
- ☐ **Mind reading** — Sure of what others think
- ☐ **Fortune telling** — Sure of how it will go
- ☐ **Catastrophizing** — Jumping to the worst case
- ☐ **"Should" statements** — Strict rules for how I must be
- ☐ **Discounting the good** — The good stuff "doesn't count"

REFLECT

What would I tell a friend with this thought?