LIFE BALANCE COUNSELING, LLC

Chain Analysis

A step-by-step way to understand what led up to a difficult moment, what happened during it, and what followed.

What Is It?

A structured way to look at the "chain of events" around a problem behavior or increase in symptoms. It helps you see how different factors linked together to lead to what you did—and what you might do differently next time.

The Chain: How It Works

Think of it as a chain, where each link builds on the one before it.



BEFORE
Vulnerabilities & built-up stress

What might have made me more vulnerable?



EVENT
The trigger or key moment

What happened, or what did I notice?



INSIDE
My thoughts, emotions, and body sensations

What was I thinking, feeling, and noticing in my body?



URGE
The pull to do something

What did I feel urged to do?



ACTION
What I actually did

What did I do (or not do)?



AFTER
The immediate and longer-term effects

How did it feel right away? What happened later? What helped, even a little?

What Is It For?

Chain analysis can be used whenever you want to better understand a difficult experience, such as:

- A sudden increase in anxiety, panic, or distress
- A behavior you are working to change (e.g., avoidance, **compulsions**, checking, reassurance)
- A challenging interaction (e.g., conflict or confrontation)
- Acting on a strong urge (e.g., fighting, aggression, self-harm)
- Any situation that felt overwhelming or "spiraled"



Why It's Helpful

- Increases insight into your patterns and triggers
- Shows how multiple factors can add up, not just one "cause"
- Helps you notice early warning signs
- Builds flexibility and more choices for next time
- Supports problem-solving and skill-building
- Encourages curiosity and self-compassion—not blame

In Short

Chain analysis turns a confusing or overwhelming experience into a clearer picture—so you can learn from it and choose what might be helpful next time.