

# NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

// Reframing Thoughts //  
3. Removing the distortion  
1/2

Elvia  
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Everyone  
hates me

Over  
generalising

The best way to challenge this illusion is to ask yourself: "What is the evidence that supports your belief 'this will always happen'?".

You could test this by thinking of situations when the feared behavior, outcome or emotion did not happen. Try re-phrasing your thought about the situation in a more 'here and now' mode rather than predicting the future.

I am a loser if  
I am not at  
the top!

Black  
and white  
thinking

Just because it isn't good doesn't mean it's bad. Ask yourself 'Is it really that bad?' 'How else can I think about this situation?'.

Collect evidence for and against your thought and try reframing your statement without using 'either/or'. Remember, everything is not just black or white.

What if  
I die?

Catastrophy  
thinking

Ask yourself:

What would I tell someone who was having this kind of thought?

Practice saying these statements: 'It's not happening now.' 'This is very unlikely' 'Whatever happens, I can cope'.

She made  
me do  
that...

Illusion of  
external

Ask yourself if feeling victimised has solved the problem in help.

Try and collect evidences for and against your belief. Also try to see what you could have pro-actively done to deal with the situation. Now, rephrase your thought.

He is mad at  
me...

Mind  
reading

The best way to challenge this thought distortion is to ask: 'What is the evidence? How do I know what other people are thinking?'

So stick to what you know. And if you don't know, see if you can find out. It often helps to get someone else's perspective on such issues.

I should  
be doing  
this...

'Should'  
thinking

Ask yourself: 'How would my thinking, behavior and feelings change if I would be less 'should' oriented? Replace your 'should' rule with the statement that you might prefer something to be true.

Like: 'I wish to do this', instead of 'I should do this.'

Is it  
something  
I said?

Persona  
lization

Ask yourself: 'Am I really to blame?', 'What is the evidence I have for and against my thought?'

Imagine what thoughts, feelings and behaviors would change for you if you indulged less in personalisation. Try thinking of other reasons why someone may be feeling or acting the way they do, rather than blaming yourself.

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It's not  
fair...

Fairness  
Fallacy

Accept what's already happened, or else it will only make you more resentful. State what you want or prefer, but without using the word fair or unfair. Then, look (and move) forward. Talk to others to find a realistic way to get the outcome or behavior you want.

I never make  
the right  
decisions!

Filtering the  
positive

In this case, try to actively find positive events in the past. Replace 'always' or 'never' with 'this time' or 'today'. You'll see the difference.

It was his  
fault.

Attribution  
Fallacy

Try to be less extreme in your statement. Accept what has happened. Look at the evidence, for and against negative intent. Regain control by focusing on what either of you can do to prevent this from happening again.

I did this...  
Now I  
deserve  
this...

Heaven's  
reward

The best way to challenge this thought is to focus on the 'reward' we want. De-link it from past actions, and think of the best way to get it in the future.

I did this...  
Now I  
deserve  
this...

Emotional  
reasoning

Ask yourself: 'Am I thinking this way just because I am feeling low right now?' Try and consider if the thought is making you feel better or worse. Focus on feeling better before you allow any thoughts that make it worse.

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