



WAYS TO DECREASE OR TALK BACK TO HARMFUL THOUGHTS THAT MAKE US FEEL BAD

Option 1: Examine the Evidence

The next time you have a thought that brings your mood down or causes a strong negative feeling, try following these 3 steps.

STEP 1: Mostly True, Mostly False or Neither?

- What is the evidence that my thought is 100% true?
- What is the evidence that my thought is 100% false?
- How much of it do I think is true (percentagewise) and how much of it do I think is false (percentagewise)?

STEP 2: Talk with another person, someone whose opinion you trust

- Often we think differently when we say our thoughts out loud to others.
- Different people have different points of view, what is this person's point of view?
- If your friend has this thought or problem, what would you tell him or her? Should you maybe use your own advice?

STEP 3: So what?

- What if my thought is 100% true, or mostly true, what can I do about it?

Note: This exercise was adapted from the manual "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy of Depression by Kaiser Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry, San Francisco, January 1999.



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OPTION 2: Do an Experiment

When you're unsure as to whether your thought is accurate, could you do an experiment where you could gather more evidence to see if it is true?

For example, if your thought is, "If I go to the party, I will not have a good time" (negative fortune telling), It might be useful to actually go with an open mind and see how it really is.

What are some experiments you might try?

Notes:



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OPTION 3: Find the Antidote to My Pattern of Thinking

Follow these 3 steps.

STEP 1: Identify my thought pattern

- Does my harmful thought fit a pattern?
- Which pattern? (See page 29-31)

STEP 2: Identify the antidote to the pattern

- What is the antidote to the pattern? (see pages 29-31)
- What does it mean to me?
- How can I apply it to my specific thought or my specific situation?

STEP 3: Apply the antidote

- When I apply the antidote how does my thinking change?
- When my thinking changes does my feeling change?

Notes:

My thought:

Category of harmful thinking that my thought fits:

The antidote:

How I feel after using the antidote:
