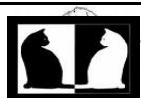


Finding Alternative Thoughts

UNHELPFUL THINKING HABITS	ALTERNATIVE MORE BALANCED THOUGHT
MENTAL FILTER 	<i>Am I only noticing the bad stuff? Am I filtering out the positives? Am I wearing those gloomy specs? What would be more realistic?</i>
MIND-READING 	<i>Am I assuming I know what others are thinking? What's the evidence? Those are my own thoughts, not theirs. Is there another, more balanced way of looking at it?</i>
PREDICTION 	<i>Am I thinking that I can predict the future? How likely is it that that might really happen?</i>
COMPARE & DESPAIR 	<i>Am I doing that 'compare and despair' thing? What would be a more balanced and helpful way of looking at it?</i>
CRITICAL SELF 	<i>There I go, that internal bully is at it again. Would most people who really know me say that about me? Is this something that I am totally responsible for?</i>
SHOULDS AND MUSTS 	<i>Am I putting more pressure on myself, setting up expectations of myself that are almost impossible? What would be more realistic?</i>
JUDGEMENTS 	<i>I'm making an evaluation about the situation or person. It's how I make sense of the world, but that doesn't mean my judgements are always right or helpful. Is there another perspective?</i>
EMOTIONAL REASONING 	<i>Just because it feels bad, doesn't necessarily mean it is bad. My feelings are just a reaction to my thoughts – and thoughts are just automatic brain reflexes</i>
MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS 	<i>Am I exaggerating the good aspects of others, and putting myself down? Or am I exaggerating the negative and minimising the positives? How would someone else see it? What's the bigger picture?</i>
CATASTROPHISING 	<i>OK, thinking that the worst possible thing will definitely happen isn't really helpful right now. What's most likely to happen?</i>
BLACK AND WHITE THINKING 	<i>Things aren't either totally white or totally black – there are shades of grey. Where is this on the spectrum?</i>
MEMORIES 	<i>This is just a reminder of the past. That was then, and this is now. Even though this memory makes me <u>feel</u> upset, it's not <u>actually</u> happening again right now.</i>



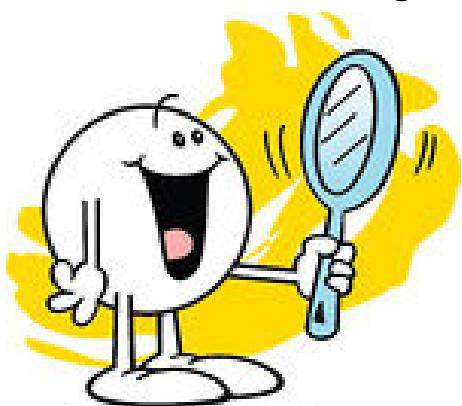
Affirmations and Coping Statements

Affirmations and coping statements can be a powerful tool to balance, counter or replace negative or fearful thoughts with positive statements that promote self-worth and self-efficacy

- ★ I accept myself as I am.
- ★ I am a capable person.
- ★ I am a good and caring person.
- ★ I am doing the best that I can.
- ★ I am good enough.
- ★ I am valuable because I am human, alive and unique.
- ★ I can be anxious and still deal with this situation.
- ★ I can do my coping strategies and allow this to pass.
- ★ I can handle my feelings and sensations.
- ★ I can handle these symptoms or sensations.
- ★ I can make a difference in the world.
- ★ I can relax and let go of tension.
- ★ I can take all the time I need in order to let go and relax.
- ★ I deserve to feel O.K. right now.
- ★ I don't need these thoughts – I can choose to think differently.
- ★ I have confidence in myself.
- ★ I've survived this before and I'll survive this time, too.
- ★ There's no need to push myself. I can take as small a step forward as I choose.
- ★ These are just thoughts – not reality.
- ★ This anxiety won't hurt me – even if it doesn't feel good.
- ★ This feeling isn't comfortable or pleasant, but I can accept it.
- ★ This is an opportunity for me to learn to cope with my fears.
- ★ This isn't an emergency. It's O.K. to think slowly about what I need to do.
- ★ This isn't the worst thing that could happen.

Remember keep them:

- Personal
- Present Tense
- Positive



How To Use:

- ✓ Say them before bed or after waking up
- ✓ Use them with relaxation techniques
- ✓ Use as needed throughout the day
- ✓ Write them on cards or “post-its” and place them where you will read them.
- ✓ Create an audiotape and listen when you need them