

UNTWIST YOUR THINKING



Positive Reframing



Divide a piece of paper into two columns. On the left hand side, write down any negative thoughts you have. On the same line using the right hand side, write down a positive way of looking at the same situation. How can you rewrite the thought to be more objective?

Examine the Evidence



Challenge your assumptions, so rather than believing a negative thought to be true, examine the actual evidence for it. Interview witnesses, create a statement for the prosecutor and the defense. What is the judge's verdict?

The Friend



To quieten the critical self, conjure up your best friend. What would they say about this problem or situation? What are the qualities and superpowers that you possess that they would remind you about?

The Experiment



Test the validity of your negative thought. Put your worst-case scenario to the test. For example, if you have a panic attack and feel you are having a heart attack, jog on the spot to prove that your heart is strong and healthy.

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Grey Thoughts

Instead of thinking about thoughts in extremes, evaluate things using a scale of 0-100. When things don't work out as well as you had hoped, think about the experience as a partial success, rather than as a complete failure, and write down what you have learned and gained from this experience.



The Survey Method

If you begin to catastrophise, ask friends and colleagues questions to find out if your thoughts and perceptions on a situation are valid, if they've experienced a similar problem, and what they did to resolve it.



The Empty Chair

Look at two chairs in the room. Imagine one is your critical voice. The other is the voice of compassion and reason. Sit in the chair that represents your critical voice. What are they saying? Now sit in the other chair and switch roles. Challenge the critical voice as to why their thought is not true, responding to them using a kind and loving tone. Continue switching positions and roles throughout the conversation.



Future Self

Next time you are in a situation that reminds you of a negative past event, write a letter to yourself from your future 'ideal' self. How can they reassure you that things are different this time? That this is a new moment and opportunity to be seized?

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Love Letter



Imagine you are someone who loves and cares for you. What would they write to you right now to give you strength and courage? If this is too difficult, use two different coloured pens. Write down your current thought in one colour and then a more compassionate thought in another. Then re-read the letter focusing only on the kind words.

Re-attribution



Instead of assuming that the reason the situation hasn't turned out well is all down to you or others, think about all of the other factors that have contributed to the outcome. Ask yourself what you can do to make the situation better or solve the problem, rather than wasting energy on blame.

Pros and Cons



Write down a list of the advantages and disadvantages of a feeling, negative thought, or behaviour pattern to work out whether it's worth holding onto them or not. Do they add value to your life, or do they hold you back?

Sometimes



Simply adding the word 'sometimes' into critical speech, such as 'sometimes I should...' or 'sometimes I must...' helps the statement become more moderate and gives us more choice in a situation, rather than being commanding.