

TESTING YOUR THOUGHTS: SIDE ONE WORKSHEET

Remember, thoughts may be 100% true, 0% true or somewhere in the middle.

JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK SOMETHING, DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN IT'S TRUE.

1. When you notice your mood getting worse, or you find yourself engaging in unhelpful behavior, ask yourself the questions on the reverse side of this worksheet and write down the answers. It will probably take about 5-10 minutes.
2. Not all questions apply to all automatic thoughts.
3. If you'd like, you can use the list below to identify cognitive distortions. You may find that more than one distortion applies.
4. Spelling, handwriting and grammar don't count.
5. It was worth doing this worksheet if your mood improves by 10% or more.

Cognitive Distortions

All-or-nothing thinking	Example: "If I'm not a total success, I'm a failure."
Catastrophizing (fortune telling)	Example: "I'll be so upset, I won't be able to function at all."
Disqualifying or discounting the positive	Example: "I did that project well, but that doesn't mean I'm competent; I just got lucky."
Emotional reasoning	Example: "I know I do a lot of things okay at work, but I still feel like I'm a failure."
Labeling	Examples: "I'm a loser." "He's no good."
Magnification/minimization	Example: "Getting a mediocre evaluation proves how inadequate I am. Getting high marks doesn't mean I'm smart."
Mental filter (selective abstraction)	Example: "Because I got one low rating on my evaluation [which also contained several high ratings], it means I'm doing a lousy job."
Mind reading	Example: "He's thinking that I don't know the first thing about this project."
Overgeneralization	Example: "Because I felt uncomfortable at the get-together, I don't have what it takes to make friends."
Personalization	Example: "The repairman was curt to me because I did something wrong."
"Should" and "must" statements	Example: "It's terrible that I made a mistake. I should always do my best."
Tunnel vision	"My son's teacher can't do anything right. He's critical and insensitive and lousy at teaching."

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1. What is the situation? You might be having thoughts about something that just happened in the environment or something that happened inside of you (e.g., an intense emotion, a painful sensation, an image, a daydream, a flashback or a stream of thoughts, such as thinking about my future).
2. What am I thinking or imagining?
3. What is the cognitive distortion? (optional)
4. What makes me think the thought is true?
5. What makes me think the thought is not true or not completely true?
6. What's another way to look at this?
7. If the worst happens, what could I do then?
8. What's the best that could happen?
9. What will probably happen?
10. What will happen if I keep telling myself the same thought?
11. What could happen if I changed my thinking?
12. What would I tell my friend or family member [think of a specific person] _____ if this happened to him or her?
13. What would be good to do now?