

GM HEALTH HUB

DEALING WITH NEGATIVE THINKING

Healthy thinking

Background

Bad thoughts are the kind of thoughts that actually CAUSE bad feelings. They also often cause you to start acting in unhelpful ways that makes how you feel even worse. Bad thoughts are really common and affect everyone - but at times when we feel under pressure, stressed or low they become more frequent, and also harder to put out of mind. Beat bad thoughts and you'll feel better. Bad thoughts are also known as unhelpful thinking styles. Here are some examples to help you spot when your thinking isn't helpful.

UNHELPFUL THINKING STYLES CHART	TICK
Are you your own worst critic? Do you always seem to be beating yourself up about something?	
Do you focus on the bad stuff? As if you were looking at the world through darkened glasses?	
Do you have a gloomy view of the future? Expecting everything to turn out badly.	
Are you jumping to the worst conclusions? It's called 'catastrophising'.	
Do you assume that others see you badly? When you haven't checked whether it's true, it's called 'mind-reading'.	
Do you take responsibility for everything? Including things that aren't your fault.	
Are you always saying things like 'Should' 'Ought to' 'Got to'? Setting impossible standards for yourself?	

How can I apply this to my life?

When you notice a bad thought:

1. LABEL IT

Oh, you're just one of those bad thoughts.

2. LEAVE IT

A bad thought needs attention, so don't give it any.

3. STAND UP TO IT

Bad thoughts are like bullies - weak underneath. And they tell lies. They say you'll fail if you try. They tell you you're useless, or you're scared or nobody likes you. But this is just the bad thought, not the truth. Don't be bullied! If the thought says "Don't" then DO! If the thought says "Can't" say "CAN!" Right back at it. You'll find you really can beat bad thoughts.

4. GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

What would someone who really loved you say? Trust them and let them help you beat the bad thought.

5. LOOK AT IT DIFFERENTLY

Give yourself the advice you'd give to a friend. Ask yourself if it will matter in six months? Will you even remember what the problem was? If it won't matter in six months, it's probably not that important now. Pick someone you know who seems to handle problems well and work out what they would do, or how they would think in this situation.

Don't worry if this seems difficult at first. It takes practice to beat bad thoughts.



Further Content

Why does everything always go wrong book and module.
Bad Thought spotter worksheet.
The Amazing Bad Thought Busting Programme worksheet.
All available at www.llttf.com.