

#### **Part 4: Challenging and Changing Unhelpful Thoughts**

**Instructions:** Learn to challenge unhelpful thoughts by finding evidence against them and reframing them in a more positive or realistic way.

**Unhelpful Thought:** Write down the unhelpful thought you identified earlier.

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**Evidence Against:** What evidence do you have that contradicts this thought?

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**Reframed Thought:** How can you reframe this thought in a more positive or realistic way?

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**Action Plan:** What action can you take to reinforce this new, healthier thought?

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#### **Reflection:**

What did you learn about your coping patterns and thoughts?

How can you apply this awareness to future situations?

What support or resources do you need to continue working on these changes?

## Examples of Negative Thoughts:

1. "I can't do anything right."
2. "No one likes me."
3. "I'm a failure."
4. "I'll never be good enough."
5. "Something bad is going to happen."
6. "It's all my fault."
7. "I'm worthless."
8. "People are out to get me."
9. "I'll never be happy."
10. "I'm always going to feel this way."

## Examples of Negative Thought Patterns:

1. **All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Seeing things in black-and-white terms, without recognizing any middle ground.
2. **Overgeneralization:** Making broad interpretations from a single or few events.
3. **Mental Filter:** Focusing exclusively on the negative details while ignoring the positive aspects of a situation.
4. **Disqualifying the Positive:** Rejecting positive experiences by insisting they don't count.
5. **Jumping to Conclusions:** Making assumptions without evidence.
  - **Mind Reading:** Assuming you know what others are thinking.
  - **Fortune Telling:** Predicting the future negatively.
6. **Catastrophizing:** Expecting the worst-case scenario to happen.
7. **Emotional Reasoning:** Believing that how you feel reflects reality.
8. **Should Statements:** Using 'should,' 'ought,' or 'must' statements can make you feel guilty or like you've already failed.
9. **Labeling:** Assigning labels to yourself or others based on specific behaviors or incidents.
10. **Personalization:** Taking responsibility for events outside of your control.

## **Challenge Negative Thoughts and Explore New Perspectives**

### **1. Examining the Evidence:**

- What evidence do I have that supports this thought?
- What evidence do I have that contradicts this thought?
- Are there facts that I am ignoring or discounting?
- Have I had any past experiences that disprove this thought?
- What would I say to a friend who had this thought?

### **2. Considering Alternative Explanations:**

- Is there another way to look at this situation?
- What is the most likely outcome, based on past experiences?
- How might someone else interpret this situation?
- Can I think of a time when I have been wrong about something similar?
- What are other possible reasons for what happened?

### **3. Evaluating the Impact:**

- How is this thought affecting how I feel and behave?
- Is this thought helping or hurting me?
- What are the long-term consequences of holding onto this thought?
- What might be the benefits of letting go of this thought?
- How would my life change if I no longer believed this thought?

### **4. Reframing and Finding a New Perspective:**

- What is a more balanced and realistic way to think about this?
- How can I reframe this thought to be more positive or constructive?
- What positive thing can I learn from this situation?
- How would I advise a friend to think about this situation?
- What strengths or skills do I have that can help me deal with this?

### **5. Self-Compassion and Kindness:**

- Am I being too hard on myself?
- What would I say to someone I care about who had this thought?
- How can I show myself more compassion in this situation?
- What can I do to take care of myself right now?
- What positive affirmations can I use to counter this negative thought?

### **6. Putting Things in Perspective:**

- Will this matter a week from now? A month from now? A year from now?
- Is this a problem I can solve or is it something I need to accept?
- How important is this thought in the grand scheme of things?
- What aspects of this situation are within my control?
- What aspects of this situation are outside of my control?