

Steps in Cognitive Challenging

A. Identify negative thoughts

Notice negative emotion? Identify the negative thoughts.

B. Challenge negative thoughts

1. Is there an alternative explanation?
2. Am I jumping to conclusions?
3. Am I confusing a thought with a fact?
4. Am I mind-reading?
5. Am I relying on magical powers (e.g. predicting the future)?
6. Am I looking at things in black and white terms?
7. Am I setting unrealistic standards?
8. Am I using extreme words (e.g. always, never, must, etc.)?
9. Am I focusing on irrelevant facts, or forgetting important facts?
10. Am I focusing on my weaknesses and forgetting my strengths?
11. Am I underestimating my ability to cope?
12. Am I over-estimating my responsibility for the way things work out?
13. So what if it happens? What will be so bad about that?
14. What will it matter in 10 years time?
15. Does it matter now? Can I just observe this?
16. Am I over-estimating the probability of an event occurring?
17. How would another person view this situation?
18. Am I being hypocritical?
19. Am I asking myself questions that have no answers?
20. Is this the right time to make a decision?
21. Is it time to back myself?
22. Am I violating my rights with this thought?
23. Am I taking things too seriously?
24. Do they have a point?
25. Is there something to learn from this?
26. What do I want from this interaction?
27. Is this thought productive? Does it help me?

C. Develop balancing thoughts

Short statements you believe that defeat your negative thoughts.

D. Identify negative beliefs

Three tests - factual, logical and functional (does it help?)

E. Develop realistic beliefs