

Questioning Anxious Thinking

Below is a list of questions and statements that help determine if the *way* you are thinking is accurate, helpful or consistent. The goal is to help you generate thoughts that help decrease the intensity and duration of the physical sensations and/or emotions you are having and help you better respond to what is happening.

1. Am I upsetting myself unnecessarily? How can I see this another way?
2. Is my thinking working for or against me? How could I view this in a less upsetting way?
3. What am I demanding must happen? What do I *want* or *prefer*, rather than need?
4. Am I making something *too terrible*? Is it really that awful? What would be so terrible about that?
5. Am I *labeling* a person? What is the *action* that I don't like?
6. What's untrue about my thoughts? How can I stick to the *facts*? What's the proof for what I am thinking?
7. Am I using extreme, black-and-white language? What less extreme words might be more accurate?
8. Am I "fortune telling" in a way that gets me upset or unhappy? What are the *odds* that it will really turn out the way I'm thinking or imagining?
9. What are my options in this situation? How would I like to respond?
10. Can I create more moderate, helpful, or realistic statements to replace the upsetting ones?
11. Have I had any experiences that show that this thought might not be completely true?
12. If my best friend had this thought, what would I tell them?
13. If my best friend knew I was thinking this thought, what would they say to me? What evidence would they have that would suggest my thought is not completely true?
14. Are there strengths in me or positives in the situation that I am ignoring? Am I underestimating my ability to cope with unfortunate circumstances?
15. When I am not feeling this way, do I think about this situation any differently? How?
16. Have I been in this type of situation before? What happened? What have I learned from prior experiences that could help me now?
17. Five years from now, if I look back on this situation, will I look at it any differently? Will I focus on any different part of my experience?
18. Am I blaming myself for something over which I do not have complete control?