

Disputation: Challenging Upsetting Thinking

Examine your thoughts for key words:

unrealistic standards	predictions / labeling	labeling / predictions	labels
must need got to have to should	never always completely totally all everything everyone	awful terrible horrible unbearable disaster worst ever	jerk slob creep hypocrite bully stupid

Dispute or question the accuracy of the questionable thoughts

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 or believing about this?
7. Am I using extreme, black-and-white language? What less extreme words might be more accurate?
8. Am I fortune telling or mind reading in a way that gets me upset or unhappy? What are the odds (percent chance -- e.g., there is a 5% chance...) 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. 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 or someone I loved had this thought, what would I tell them?
13. If my best friend or someone I loved knew I was thinking this thought, what would they say to me? What evidence would they point out to me that would suggest that 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?