

Unhelpful Thinking Habits

SPACE TO BREATHE THERAPY

Notice the pattern. Find another view.

● Mental filter

Focusing on one negative detail while overlooking the rest.

TRY ASKING

What else is true, including neutral or positive details?

● Judgements

Evaluating yourself or a situation instead of describing what happened.

TRY ASKING

What are the facts, and what is my interpretation?

● Prediction

Treating a feared future as if it is certain.

TRY ASKING

How likely is this? What else could happen?

● Emotional reasoning

Taking a feeling as proof that a conclusion is true.

TRY ASKING

The feeling is real. What evidence supports the conclusion?

● Mind-reading

Assuming you know what another person is thinking.

TRY ASKING

What do I know, and what could I check?

● Mountains and molehills

Making a difficulty huge or a positive seem too small.

TRY ASKING

What is the bigger picture? What is most likely?

● Compare and despair

Comparing your full life with someone else's visible highlights.

TRY ASKING

What might I not be seeing? What is a fair comparison?

● Catastrophising

Expecting the worst outcome and overlooking other possibilities.

TRY ASKING

What is most likely, and what support would help?

● Critical self

Blaming yourself or using a harsher standard for yourself.

TRY ASKING

What is my part, and what would I say to a friend?

● Black and white thinking

Seeing only extremes, with no middle ground.

TRY ASKING

What shades, exceptions, or partial successes are here?

● Shoulds and musts

Rigid rules that leave little room for real-life needs.

TRY ASKING

Is this realistic? Could "must" become "would like"?

● Memories

A past experience making today feel as if it is happening again.

TRY ASKING

What happened then, and what is happening now? If safety is uncertain, seek support.

PAUSE • NOTICE • CHECK THE EVIDENCE • TRY A BALANCED OR NEUTRAL THOUGHT