

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

Feeling stressed? Thoughts like these do NOT help...

All or nothing thinking



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalising



Seeing a pattern based upon a single event or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence

Noticing our failures but not our successes

Disqualifying the positive



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

Jumping to conclusions



Mind reading: Imagining we know what others are thinking
Fortune telling: Predicting the future

Magnification & minimisation



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

Emotional reasoning



Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should must

Using critical words like 'should,' 'must,' or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration

Labeling



Assigning labels to ourselves or other people

I'm a loser
I'm completely useless
They're such an idiot

Personalisation "this is my fault"

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault
Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault

*Based on Cornell Health's *Unhelpful Thinking Styles* and Burns (1980) *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Use this worksheet to help develop your own S.M.A.R.T. Goals

| | Example | My Goal |
|---|---|---------|
| Specific | | |
| Specific goals are met more often than non-specific goals. Answer the "W" questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? | Study more (non-specific) vs. Study for two hours on M/W/Th between the hours of 7-9 p.m. in the library (specific). | |
| Measurable | | |
| How will you know when you have met your goal? How will you determine your success? | Track number of nights I go to the library and how long I stay. Consider 80% success (5-6 hours). | |
| Attainable | | |
| What will help you meet this goal? How can you reduce barriers? | Ask a friend to come with me. Make sure I eat dinner before 7 p.m. Stay organized. Silence my phone before studying. | |
| Realistic | | |
| Aim high, but not too high. Consider goals that can reasonably be met given your personal situation, time constraints, etc. Start with smaller goals and work up to bigger ones. | These days/times fit into my schedule given my other obligations and need for social time. Before starting my goal, I will practice going to the library once a week and stay for at least an hour. | |
| Timely | | |
| Determine a reasonable timeline for your goal. Do you want to begin this week? Next month? | I will start my goal in two weeks. I will try to meet my goal for 3 weeks and then evaluate my success. | |

*Based on Cornell Health's S.M.A.R.T. Goals



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Habit Change Worksheet

This form may be used as a tool to help change undesired or problematic habits.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| GOAL: (e.g., "Reduce Smoking") | |
| DELAY | Delay your decision to engage in your identified habit. Set aside a specific time to delay. (e.g., 10 minutes") |
| <i>Example</i> | "When I get the urge to smoke, I will delay for 15 minutes." |
| <i>My statement</i> | |
| DISTRACT | While waiting, engage in an activity that will distract your thoughts. |
| <i>Example</i> | "While I delay, I will take a 15 minute walk." |
| <i>My activities</i> | |
| DECIDE | After your set time has passed, consider the following before making your decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages of the change • Disadvantages of the habit • Reasons I want to stop • My life goal(s) that this habit affects negatively |
| <i>Example</i> | <p>Advantage: "I would be able to breathe easier." Disadvantage: "My partner doesn't kiss me when I smell like smoke." Reason for stopping: "Take better care of my health." Life goal: "I want my body to be capable of performing fun activities long into old age."</p> |
| <i>My thoughts</i> | <p>Advantages of the change: Disadvantages of the habit: Reasons I want to stop: My life goal(s) that this habit affects negatively:</p> |

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