Exercise: Challenging your thoughts

Goal

You learn to challenge your negative and judgmental thoughts. You also learn to consciously think more positively and thereby change how you feel.

Instructions

Write down judgmental thoughts you notice in yourself in different situations. At the same time, think about alternative ways you could interpret the situation.

Also assess whether your emotional state changes when you use an alternative thought. Rate your emotions on a scale of 0–10.

Situation

For example: “I forgot to pay the bills.”

Thought

For example, "Damn, what a failure I am."

Emotion and its intensity (rate on a scale of 0–10)

For example: “Exhaustion, 8.”

Alternative interpretation of the thought

For example: “Many people also forget to pay their bills on time sometimes. This is completely normal.”

Emotion intensity now (rate on a scale of 0–10)

For example: “Exhaustion, 4.”