Dealing with Negative Emotions

What emotion am I feeling? What am I thinking?	• What can I notice in my body? • Where do I feel it?	• **STOPP**! Take a breath. www.getselfhelp.co.uk/stopp.htm • What am I reacting to? What's pressing my buttons here? What does this situation mean or say about me? Is this fact or opinion? • Where is my focus of attention? • How could I see things differently? What would I say to someone else in this situation? How important is this? Is my reaction in proportion to the event? • Take the helicopter view!	• Do what works! • What will be the consequences of my action? • What will be the most effective action? • What will be best for me, for others and for this situation? • Is this in keeping with my principles & values?	• Where do you feel this emotion in your body? If this feeling had a colour, what would it be? What shape is it? How big is it? What consistency is it? • If you felt better: What colour would it be? What about the shape? The size? The consistency? Notice that feeling now.

Emotion	Body	Thinking differently	Doing differently	Imagery
Depression • I'm useless, I'm worthless. • Everything is hopeless	Fatigue Slowed down Do less Stay in bed/home Disinterest Can't concentrate *Action urge:* *Withdraw*	It's okay to feel sad about this situation, but I can get through it. I'm looking through those 'gloomy specs' again. This doesn't mean I'm a worthless person. What would be a more helpful way of looking at things? If I do something anyway – I'll feel better.	Do things anyway – in spite of how I'm feeling. Get up. Get out. Do something enjoyable or useful. Be with or contact others. Focus attention outside of me and my situation.	In your mind's eye, see yourself doing and enjoying the things you used to or would like to enjoy doing, and successfully doing what you need to do. ***Visualise orange for positive energy.*** *Breathe in orange, and breathe out blue/black.*
Anxiety • Something bad is going to happen. • I won't be able to cope	Adrenaline response – Body's alarm system. Energised for fight or flight *Action urge:* *Escape & avoid*	Is this threat a <u>real</u> one or is it <u>really</u> <u>bound</u> to happen? Am I exaggerating the threat? Am I misreading things? I feel bad, but that doesn't mean things really are so bad. I can cope with these feelings, I've got through it before. What would someone else say about this? What would be a more helpful way of looking at things?	How will doing this affect me in the long term? Don't avoid situations – go anyway, and stick it out. Problem solve or make plans if necessary. Take things slowly or gradually. Focus attention outside of me – external rather than internal focus.	Imagine yourself coping in a situation that you feel anxious about. See the situation through to a successful completion. ***Visualise blue for calm.*** *Breathe in blue and breathe out red.*
Anger • It's not fair. • Others are bad. • I won't stand for it.	Adrenaline response – Body's alarm system. Energised for fight or flight *Action urge:* *Attack*	What am I reacting to? What's pressing my buttons? Am I over-reacting? Is my reaction in proportion to the actual event? How important is this? I feel like I'm being unfairly treated, but maybe they didn't mean it that way. Am I misreading things? What's the best thing to do here?	Take a breath. Do the best thing – best for me, for others and for the situation. Walk away or approach gently. When feeling calm, if still appropriate, do something about it in a calm, non-aggressive but assertive way.	Visualise yourself handling this situation in a calm, non-aggressive but assertive way, respecting the rights and opinions of everyone involved. ***Visualise blue for calm,*** *or* ***green for balance.*** *Breathe in green/blue & breathe out red.*