

## Finding Alternative Thoughts

| Unhelpful Thinking Habit   | Alternative more balanced thought   |
|--|---|
| Mental Filter               | <i>Am I only noticing the bad stuff? Am I filtering out the positives? Am I wearing those 'gloomy specs'? What would be more realistic?</i>   |
|  Mind-Reading               | <i>Am I assuming I know what others are thinking? What's the evidence? Those are my own thoughts, not theirs. Is there another, more balanced way of looking at it?</i>                           |
| Prediction                  | <i>Am I thinking that I can predict the future? How likely is it that that might really happen?</i>   |
|  Compare & despair          | <i>Am I doing that 'compare and despair' thing? What would be a more balanced and helpful way of looking at it?</i>   |
| Critical self               | <i>There I go, that internal bully's at it again. Would most people who really know me say that about me? Is this something that I am totally responsible for?</i>                                |
|  Shoulds and musts          | <i>Am I putting more pressure on myself, setting up expectations of myself that are almost impossible? What would be more realistic?</i>  |
| Judgements                  | <i>I'm making an evaluation about the situation or person. It's how I make sense of the world, but that doesn't mean my judgements are always right or helpful. Is there another perspective?</i> |
|  Emotional Reasoning       | <i>Just because it feels bad, doesn't necessary mean it is bad. My feelings are just a reaction to my thoughts – and thoughts are just automatic brain reflexes</i>                               |
| Mountains and molehills   | <i>Am I exaggerating the risk of danger? Or am I exaggerating the negative and minimising the positives? How would someone else see it? What's the bigger picture?</i>                            |
|  Catastrophising          | <i>OK, thinking that the worst possible thing will definitely happen isn't really helpful right now. What's most likely to happen?</i>  |
| Black and white thinking  | <i>Things aren't either totally white or totally black – there are shades of grey. Where is this on the spectrum?</i>   |
|  Memories                 | <i>This is just a reminder of the past. That was then, and this is now. Even though this memory makes me <u>feel</u> upset, it's not <u>actually</u> happening again right now.</i>               |