

DEALING WITH NEGATIVE THINKING

Negative Automatic Thoughts (ANTs) are engrained, go-to thoughts, opinions and ideas about yourself or the world around (i.e. "I am a loser", "No one truly loves me anyway"; "Happiness is not meant for me", "I am not good enough", etc.) thoughts (obviously negative) that rob you from happiness, self-confidence and self-love.

ASK YOURSELF:

1

IS IT TRUE? Many times we don't question the things we tell ourselves and we end up believing every single thought. Do you have evidence of the thought being true most of the time?

2

IS IT ABSOLUTELY TRUE? Our natural tendency is to think in absolutes (i.e. "I always, or "I never"). Is that absolutely true? Do you ALWAYS?

3

IS THIS THOUGHT HELPFUL? Is the thought helping you focus on the problem, situation, behaviour, etc. If it is not...discard it.

4

IS THOUGHT IMPORTANT? Sometimes we focus on details that are not helpful and take us away from the problem or situation we are facing. Are you on the right track? Are you being effective in your thinking

5

HOW DO I FEEL WHEN I HAVE THIS THOUGHT? Understanding how we feel about the thought can be helpful in exploring its accuracy. Ask yourself: "Do I feel sad, hopeful, frustrated, scared, happy, helpless, etc." Elaborate on the answer if you are able to.

6

WHO WOULD I BE WITHOUT THE THOUGHT? Ask yourself: "Without the thought, would I be happier, hopeful, a risk taker, confident?"

7

TURN THE THOUGHT AROUND: Is the opposite of the thought true as well? Is it truer than the original thought?