

STRATEGY #2: THOUGHT CHALLENGING

Pick an “adverse event” that generated noticeable stress for you within the past week.

- 1) Complete the following downloadable form by writing down a brief, objective description of the Adverse Event.
- 2) Next, write down your emotional and behavioral responses at point C (e.g. sad, mad, fearful, yelling, withdrawal, etc).
- 3) Then, identify and re-frame your self-defeating thinking or ANT’S under B, and replace them with PAT’S or Positive Adaptive Thoughts.
- 4) Read your thought challenge form, once completed, out loud to yourself 2-3 times per day for 21-30 days.

CHALLENGE

Generate at least 4-5 examples over a 21-30 day period. You will soon become much more skilled at identifying the thinking traps which contribute to a defensively pessimistic mindset.

SAMPLE- Thought Challenging

Adverse Event:

-Identify the objective situation that is upsetting you:

My work schedule was changed by my supervisor and I'm missing my grandmother's birthday because of it. She is in bad health.

Belief(s):

-Identify your ANT'S (Automatic Negative Thoughts) about the situation which may seem Permanent (always), Pervasive (everything), and Personal (it's all about me!)

- *They always screw my schedule up!* (Always)
- *This will probably be the last birthday I get to spend with her* (Everything)
- *Why me?* (Me)

Consequences:

- Identify the stressful emotional consequences and any accompanying behaviors

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sad | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yelling | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mad | <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust | <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shame | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Throwing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other " <u>Bad mood for days</u> " |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | | <input type="checkbox"/> Whining/Pouting | |

Re-frame: Challenge and reframe your ANT'S by asking such questions as:

- Is this accurate
- Am I exaggerating?
- Is it helping me to think this way?
- What's another way to look at it?



Thought Challenge:

It's not always, just a couple of times actually

Thinking this way doesn't change anything.

It's too bad, but I can handle it."

Identify: List 2-3 PAT'S (Positive Adaptive Thoughts) such as:

- This will likely pass in time.
- There's no evidence I can't handle this, even though I don't like it.
- I've stood much worse.
- I can take steps to correct the situation.



Re-read and rehearse your PAT'S out loud for 60-90 seconds, 2-3 times daily over a period of 21-30 days.

Positive Adaptive Thoughts:

This is the first time my schedule has been changed in quite awhile.

They can't make scheduling decisions on a personal basis.

My grandmother will understand, and I'll make time for her and I to celebrate next week.

Thought Challenging

Adverse Event:

-Identify an objective situation that is upsetting you:

Belief(s):

-Identify your ANT'S (Automatic Negative Thoughts) about the situation. They may seem Permanent (always), Pervasive (everything), and Personal (It's all about me!)

Consequences:

- Identify the stressful *emotional* consequences and any accompanying *behaviors*

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Re-frame: Challenge and reframe your ANT'S by asking such questions as:

- Is this accurate
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Thought Challenge:

Identify: List 2-3 PAT'S (Positive Adaptive Thoughts) such as:

- This will likely pass in time.
- There's no evidence I can't handle this, even though I don't like it.
- I've stood much worse.
- I can take steps to correct the situation.

Positive Adaptive Thoughts:

Re-read and rehearse your PAT'S out loud for 60-90 seconds, 2-3 times daily over a period of 21-30 days.