

Automatic Thoughts

In so many ways our thoughts control how we feel about ourselves and the world we live in. So it makes sense that positive thoughts lead to positive feelings, while negative thoughts lead to negative feelings. We don't always notice our thoughts because they happen so quickly, but they can still affect our mood.

These quick thoughts are called automatic thoughts and they can often be irrational, negative and harmful to us. This exercise is meant to help you slow down the thinking a bit, identify the trigger and the automatic thought, and then replace this with a new, more rational thought that can help improve your mood.

If possible, document a day's worth of triggers and automatic thoughts on this sheet, and then when you get home, develop the New Thought. The next day, document the triggers and automatic thoughts again, but this time, on the spot, develop your New Thought and write it in.

Remember: Thoughts = Feelings = Behaviour

TRIGGER	AUTOMATIC THOUGHT	NEW THOUGHT
Ex. "I was too abrupt with that sales rep."	"I'm a rude person. People must be so tired of my rude behaviours."	"I don't want to be abrupt, and sometimes I make mistakes. I'm going to keep working on this, and also celebrate that I am a person who is working on herself."