



What is happening in this situation is a spiral of negative thoughts (ending in catastrophic thinking) that is not helping you or your situation. If you were to actually look for the evidence of what you were thinking then you would most likely struggle for anything substantial to back it up. It is unlikely that you have never in your entire life to date been successful in obtaining a job (if you are of employable age that is; if not then you could consider any sort of assigned task as a job). Yes maybe you have had a string of unsuccessful interviews but I bet you can remember at least one, whether that was five months or 15 years ago, when you were positively beaming when you came out of the interview room. Most importantly, by not being successful in one job interview does not equate to being a hopeless and worthless human being. You will have lots of other areas in your life where you are very successful; maybe being someone's friend, partner or parent, or being a great cook, or having a wealth of knowledge on a certain subject, for example. We see here how the negative can be challenged and a pattern of more positive thinking can emerge.

Questioning negative, automatic thoughts in a structured way has helped many people get out of 'a hole' they may have been in for some time. Keeping a diary listing the situations, feelings, automatic thoughts and then noting how these thoughts can be challenged is very useful and highly recommended if you are feeling any of the unhelpful emotions I presented earlier on in this article. This process allows you to challenge these thoughts with evidence that will eventually tell you the opposite. Thus, the next time you experience a difficult situation, changing those automatic thoughts will happen much more quickly.

There are many fantastic books on the market which cover this are. However I recommend 'Mind Over Mood' by Dennis Greenberger and Christine Padesky (ISBN 0-89862-128-3) as it provides readers with lots of very practical guidance to changing how you feel by changing the way you think.

Note – Helen Bartimote is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist who has over a decade of experience working with private and public sector organisations. She currently works primarily for the emergency services in Central London.

Magnus The Masseur Says

Gratitude is the order of the day. Instead of focusing on where to get to next and what things our partners, colleagues or friends have not done, or not done well enough, I want you to focus for a moment on being grateful for what you have in life.

When you are aware of the gifts you have in your life then a space will open up for more gifts to flow. Take a moment out of your day, think long and hard about somebody who has done something for you. Appreciating what others do for you will open the door to others appreciating your contributions.

Don't be upset that you are 30, 40, 50 or older, be grateful that you are still alive in this game of life. There's no point being upset because you are overweight, be grateful that you at least live in a place where there is an abundance of food.

There is an upside to EVERY situation. Gratitude is the gift that we have been given to be happy no matter what is going on for us in our lives.

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