



Challenging Negative Thoughts

Have you ever said to yourself?

- It's too difficult for me
- Everyone else knows how to do this but me
- I hate tests

Statements like above tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies. We focus our attention and energy on this inner dialogue without realising that these statements take away the energy needed for dealing with exam questions.

1. How can you deal with this negative self-talk?

The most important step is to become aware of the negative mind talk. Observe the little thoughts in your mind.

What do you hear in your mind when you worry or think about upcoming exam?

What thoughts get you nervous?

What are your worst fears?

What negative things are you telling yourself?

Write them down here

Once you identify your negative self-statements and bring them into open, you can deal with them more rationally.



2. Challenge each of these negative, self-defeating statements with positive, self-enhancing statements.

Here are some examples

Negative	Positive
I can't do it	I know I can do it
I feel very overwhelmed	I can do this one step at a time
It is too hard for me	I have the aptitude to learn this
I am stupid	I know I have good abilities
Everyone else knows this but me	I am learning how to do this
I will fail, why try again?	I am learning more each day, success will follow
I hate tests	Each time tests become easier for me
Who cares about this test anyway?	This test is a positive challenge for me to show what I have learnt
I am too nervous to concentrate	I am remaining calm and relaxed under pressure
I am stupid	I don't know this yet!

Here create your own negative to positive shifts

When you write positive enhancements avoid 'would' and 'should' and write the positive statements in the present tense. Even if in this moment you don't believe that this positive statement is true for you, it is necessary to state it and no 'wills' or 'ifs'!

This process of changing negative into positive self-statements will help you disempower your uninvited negative self-talk and eventually it will stop.

Every time a negative thought reappears you should reverse it into a positive statement.