

Alternative Thoughts

Often our thoughts regarding a situation or something that has happened are irrational and unrealistic. Such thinking can be unhelpful, make us emotional, and even invoke angry responses (Peters, 2018).

Use the reflective questions below to recognize unrealistic thoughts and how they may blow the situation out of proportion. Then consider more rational and realistic thinking and how it could change the interpretation of the situation.

Think of three very specific situations that made you feel angry:

Situation	
1.	
2.	
3.	

For each one, ask yourself the following questions:

- How was I thinking about the situation when I became angry?

Situation 1:	Situation 2:	Situation 3:

- What are the facts about the situation?

Situation 1:	Situation 2:	Situation 3:

- Were my thoughts realistic and rational?

Situation 1:	Situation 2:	Situation 3:

- What would more realistic and rational look and feel like?

Situation 1:	Situation 2:	Situation 3:

For example:

Situation: My friend ignored me when she got on the bus yesterday.

Thoughts at the time: She doesn't like me and wanted to look cool in front of the others on the bus.

Facts: There were lots of people on the bus and she didn't acknowledge me.

More realistically: The bus was busy. She got on and looked for the first available seat. She didn't ignore me, she simply didn't see me.

Re-framing irrational thoughts can change the emotions that arise and the behaviors that result.

References

- Peters, S. (2018). *The silent guides: Understanding and developing the mind throughout life*. London: Lagom.

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