Developing a Scientific Mind

Treating your automatic thoughts like *hypotheses* rather than *fact* can help you limit negative emotions such as depression and anxiety. In order to do this, you want to examine your thoughts critically, like a laboratory scientist, looking for evidence that supports or contradicts beliefs about yourself.

The following exercise will help you to develop your critical thinking muscles. In the first space, write down a triggering event from the first person perspective, paying close attention to the automatic thoughts, cognitive distortions, behaviors, and emotions that you experience.

In the second space, write down the SAME EVENT, but from the third person perspective. Be a scientist!! This description should include no judgments, criticisms, or personal biases – only the observable facts.

Situation #1 (*first-person*)

Situation #1 (*third-person*)