

## Generating Rational Responses (Positive Counterstatements)



Recognizing mistaken beliefs, or cognitive distortions, is the first and most important step to letting go of them. However, there are times when these negative statements about yourself, your current situation, or your future are difficult to dismiss. When this occurs, rational responses, or positive counterstatements, become a means for “deprogramming” these mistaken beliefs and reducing the negative emotions associated with your automatic thoughts.

In this exercise, you will record your automatic thoughts and begin to develop rational responses to offset negative beliefs. In developing rational responses, try and remember a few things: 1) keep them short, simple and direct; 2) keep them in the present tense; 3) avoid using negative words; 4) start with a direct declaration of a positive change, and most importantly, 5) make your rational responses *believable to yourself*. Examples are provided:

Triggering Event:	Automatic Thought(s)	Emotions	Rational Responses (Positive Counterstatements)
Negative phone call with mother, she called me “lazy and selfish.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I’m the worst daughter in the world.”</li> <li>• “Nobody loves me.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sadness</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Shame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I’m working hard, every day, to improve things in my life.”</li> <li>• “Everyone is entitled to their opinion. But I know how hard I’m trying.”</li> <li>• “I’m a good person, but the world is imperfect.”</li> </ul>
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