

Help Your Teen/Tween Promote Sensible Thinking.

From: When Rotten Things Happen: Helping Adolescents Learn to handle Emotionally-charged Situations
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Help students to recognize their own negative “silly” thinking and sensible thought process.

Exaggerated Thinking: Exaggerating the rottenness of an event, “awfulizing, terriblizing, horriblizing.” If I tell myself that something is awful, it may become just that.

- “If I fail this test, my parents will never forgive me.”

Rigid Thinking: Creating rigid or absolute demands which may lead to perfectionism or pervasive guilt.

- “I need to look good in front of my classmates all the time, I have a reputation to uphold.”

Negative Thinking: Looking negatively at events that invite sadness and fear of failure.

- “It will rain on Monday. My whole day will be ruined, and I will not do well on my class presentation.”

Magical Thinking: The tendency to think “magically,” connects to forming conclusions not based on fact.

- “I know they’re talking about me at lunch. I can just tell.”

Promoting Sensible Thinking: Helping students understand and analyze irrational self-talk of the fictionalized or over-inflated negativity of situations. Work with students to rewind/restructure their irrational beliefs into sensible thoughts.

Example: “If I fail this test my parents will never forgive me.”

Rewind,Restructure - “Failing this test may initially disappoint my parents, but they will forgive me and I can figure out my mistakes.”

Example: “I need to look good in front of my classmates all the time, I have a reputation to uphold.”

Rewind/Restructure - “I do not need to look “perfect” ... no one is perfect. Who I am does not revolve solely around how I am viewed by my classmates.”

Example: “It will rain on Monday. My whole day will be ruined, and I will not do well on my class presentation.”

Rewind/Restructure - “Yes, it may rain, but I will not let the gloomy day hurt the chances of performing my best during the class presentation. I will commit to my audience in a positive way.”

Example: “I know they’re talking about me at lunch. I can just tell.”

Rewind/Restructure: “Do I know this for sure? What concrete evidence do I have, and if they are, why does this matter to me?”

Rob Kerr: When Rotten Things Happen: Helping Adolescents Learn to Handle Emotionally-Charged Situations (grades 6-12).