

Hot Thought, Cool Thought

A thought record for anger: catch it, question it, rewrite it

Name _____

Date _____

It isn't only what happens (A) that makes you angry — it's what you tell yourself about it (B). Write a real situation, the hot thought, one question to dispute it (D), and a cooler thought you actually believe.

Five thinking traps to watch for

TRAP	SOUNDS LIKE
Should-statements	"He should know better."
Mind reading	"She rolled her eyes. She thinks I'm stupid."
Catastrophizing	"My car broke down. Now everything will fall apart."
Hostile attribution	"He bumped me on purpose ."
Labeling	"My landlord is a greedy jerk."

Dispute questions (pick one)

1. What's the evidence for this thought? Against it?
2. What else could explain what happened? (Name two reasons.)
3. Am I using always, never, should, or a label?
4. What would I tell a friend who had this thought?
5. Will this matter a week from now? A year from now?
6. Is this thought helping me get what I want — or making things worse?

My thought record

	ROW 1	ROW 2	ROW 3
A — What happened (facts)			
B — Hot thought			
Trap (if any)			
Anger with hot thought (1–10)			
D — Question I asked (#)			
My answer			
Cool thought			
Anger with cool thought (1–10)			

A good cool thought is: believable · fair · specific · useful. If it has "always," "never" or a name-calling word, rewrite it.

Example — A: Boss emailed at 4:55, "We need to talk tomorrow." · B: "He's going to fire me." (8) · D: Evidence? My last review was good. · Cool: "I don't know what it is yet. I'll find out tomorrow." (4)