

The Countering Anxiety Exercise

When we encounter social situations that may cause us anxiety, the first things that pop into our heads are usually negative. The problem with those thoughts is that we never take the time to think about them rationally or prove them wrong. Instead, we're too busy trying to figure out how to escape our social anxiety. Today's exercise will help you learn how to better respond to your thoughts by challenging their validity.

Instructions:

1. In the left column, write out one of your common immediate negative thoughts.
2. Ask yourself if there is any truth to your negative thought. Ask yourself if you have any facts to back up your negative thought.
3. Use the right column, to write out a new rational thought based on facts instead of an immediate response.

Negative Thought	Rational Counter-Thought