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Think Outside The Box

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[Home](#) > Evaluate Your Criticism

Evaluate Your Criticism

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Now that you have created a log of your critical thoughts and behaviors, as previously discussed, you need to evaluate that criticism and find a rational response for it.

Examine your standards to be arbitrary or fair, average, or strict. Does a single situation define you as a person? Do you feel adequate at times or are you always lacking one thing or another?

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text "Quiz Time!". Below the logo are three quiz cards:

- Card 1: Image of red roller skates on a wooden deck. Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
- Card 2: Image of a fan of colorful pencils. Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
- Card 3: Image of a Ferris wheel at sunset. Quiz: Flags in Europe

[See all quizzes =>](#)

Rule Your Perceptions

Depersonalize what you can't control. Taking ownership of external events will only put you down as these are situations beyond your control and can't be changed. Thus, a drop in the market, an unexpected company error, a last-minute deadline, aren't your fault and there isn't much you can do about it.

However, you do have an important say on the way you perceive those situations.

Reimagine Your Response

Find a rational response for each situation, so that it fits in more productively, compared to your self-critical comment. For example, in the situation previously discussed, a rational

response will look as follows:

Situation	Self-Critical Thought	Feeling	B
The project I was working on wasn't approved.	I am good for nothing. I couldn't even get a project right.	Angry at myself, withdrawn, demotivated, sad.	C w d

Practicing Reinterpretations

By repeatedly working on this log and jotting down rational responses, with which to substitute your irrational, negative self-judgment, you will gradually be able to change the way you think. However, this is not an easy exercise – it required patience and time to become internalized.

At the outset, even recognizing your self-critical thoughts may be tricky, but when you do get used to it, you will find that it becomes progressively easier. Finding rational alternatives is an even more difficult process, but with practice, time and patience, you will get there.

Let Go of Comfort

A common hindrance is often finding yourself wanting to stick to your old, self-critical beliefs. Despite of all the possibilities for more rational responses, you may find yourself refusing to believe in them, or being reluctant to give up the old ones.

This is natural, because on a subconscious level, we all feel more comfortable and secure with what we are used to, even if it is making us miserable. However, all you need to do is keep trying and it will eventually come to you.

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