


SMART Tool

DISPUTING (D) UNHELPFUL THINKING

Disputing is a process of challenging the way we think about situations. Disputing, or evidence testing, is about trying to look at thoughts more accurately. Disputing unhelpful thinking can help us make more informed decisions about thoughts instead of just acting on them. Remember, thoughts are not facts!

The following questions can help us challenge unhelpful thinking:

- Do I have any experiences that show that this thought is not completely true all of the time?
- Is there any other way of viewing this situation?
- Is it rational? Does it make sense when I look at it with a clear head?
- If I were giving advice to someone I care about who was thinking like this, what might I say?
- Are there any strengths or positives in me or the situation that I might be ignoring?

Example: Someone thinks: 'I could just have one drink.'

Q: Do I have any experiences that show that this thought is not completely true?

A: The last time I tried this I ended up drinking the whole bottle.

Q: When was the last time I had 'just one drink'?

A: I haven't been able to have just one drink for many years.

Q: Is there any other way of viewing this situation?

A: There is a very good chance that I could jeopardise my recovery.

Q: Is it rational? Is this what I really want?

A: Not really. I'm using it as an excuse to give in to an urge.

Q: If I were giving advice to someone I care about who was thinking this, what might I say?

A: You know it's not realistic to have 'just one.' Don't blow it now – you've been doing so well!

Q: Are there any strengths or positives in me or the situation that I might be ignoring?

A: Even though I feel like a drink, not giving in to this urge will be better in the long run and I will feel good about myself.

Balanced thinking leads to (E) Effective new beliefs.