



Check the Facts

FACTS

Many emotions and actions are set off by our thoughts and interpretations of events, not by the events themselves.

Event → Thoughts → Emotions

Our emotions can also have a big effect on our thoughts about events.

Event → Emotion → Thoughts

Examining our thoughts and *checking the facts* can help us change our emotions.

HOW TO CHECK THE FACTS

1. Ask: What is the emotion I want to change?

(See Emotion Regulation Handout 6: Ways of Describing Emotions.)

2. Ask: What is the event prompting my emotion?

Describe the facts that you observed through your senses.

Challenge judgments, absolutes, and black-and-white descriptions.

(See Mindfulness Handout 4: Taking Hold of Your Mind: "What" Skills.)

3. Ask: What are my interpretations, thoughts, and assumptions about the event?

Think of other possible interpretations.

Practice looking at all sides of a situation and all points of view.

Test your interpretations and assumptions to see if they fit the facts.

4. Ask: Am I assuming a threat?

Label the threat.

Assess the probability that the threatening event will really occur.

Think of as many other possible outcomes as you can.

5. Ask: What's the catastrophe?

Imagine the catastrophe really occurring.

Imagine coping well with a catastrophe (through problem solving, coping ahead, or radical acceptance).

6. Ask: Does my emotion and/or its intensity fit the actual facts?

Check out facts that fit each emotion.

Ask Wise Mind.

(See Emotion Regulation Handout 11: Figuring Out Opposite Actions, and Emotion Regulation Handout 13: Reviewing Problem Solving and Opposite Action.)