

The How to Stop Awwfulizing and Start Writing Worksheet

A	B	C	D	E
Activating Event	Beliefs/Thoughts	Consequences	Dispute	Evaluate Effects
<p>What happened?</p>	<p>What's the Critic saying to you? (This isn't just words; sometimes the Critic uses memories or pictures. Write about those, too.)</p> <p>What is it trying to make you think or believe? What did you think or worry about that made you feel so bad?</p>	<p>Your feelings as the Critic talks</p>	<p>Looking at the Critic's assertions more carefully and disputing them.</p> <p>See questions below.</p>	<p>Checking in to see how you feel.</p>

What evidence do I have that _____ is true?
 What evidence do I have that _____ isn't true?
 Is there another explanation?
 If the feared statement is true, then *realistically*, what's the worst thing that can happen?
 What would I tell a friend if she said these things to me?
 What would that mean about me if this were true?
 What effects are these thoughts (the Critic's words) having on me?

Is it reasonable for me to be so hard on myself for this?
 What would happen if I changed the way I was thinking?
 If it's really a problem, what can I do to make it better? (Should I take a class? Join a writing group? Practice my writing more?)
 If I had to prove my statement to a scientist, could I really provide enough data to convince him or her? How good is my proof?*

** Beck, J. S. (1995). *Cognitive therapy: Basics and beyond*. Guilford: New York.

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Example

A Activating event	B Beliefs/thoughts	C Consequences	D Dispute	E Evaluate Effects
What happened?	<p>What's the Critic saying to you? (This isn't just words; sometimes the Critic uses memories or pictures. Write about those, too.)</p> <p>What is it trying to make you think or believe?</p>	Your feelings as the Critic talks	Looking at the Critic's assertions more carefully and disputing them	Checking in to see how you feel.
<i>Example:</i>	<i>Example:</i>	<i>Example:</i>	<i>Example:</i>	<i>Example:</i>
Received a rejection slip	<p>I don't know why I even bother sending out queries, I always get rejection letters. Obviously I don't have any talent and I just look stupid to everyone who sees my work. I should just give up and admit I'm no good.</p>	<p>Hopeless, depressed, hurt, angry, worthless</p>	<p>What evidence do I have that I'm a failure? Well, all these rejection letters.</p> <p>What evidence do I have that I'm not? Well, my friends say they like my stories, and I did win that award back in college...</p> <p>What if I never got published? Would it kill me? No, but I'd feel bad. I guess I have to focus on how much I enjoy writing...</p>	<p>Well, I bother because I really care about my writing and would like to get published. But I write for myself first, because I enjoy it. As much as I want to get published, it's a process and I'm going through the same thing most writers do--even the ones I admire the most! I just have to keep working to get better. Maybe I could go to that writing conference I heard about...</p>