



ENCOURAGE EXERCISE #10

Building an Optimistic Attributional Style

Directions:

Developing an optimistic explanatory style around life events takes some practice but can be enhanced through the following exercise which has four steps. Write down your responses to each of the questions for the steps below.

Step A

1. Write down one *bad event* that has happened in your life this week:

2. What type of event is it (e.g., health, social, personal, work, achievement, other)?

Step B

1. What is your *explanation* about why this event occurred?

2. How negative does it make your *feel* (1=Not at all negative to 5=Extremely negative)?

3. How strongly do you believe the cause for the event you wrote about in question #3 above?

4. Is this cause about you or other people/circumstances (1=Totally due to other people/circumstances to 5=Totally due to me)?

5. Will this cause be present in the future (1=Will unlikely to be present again to 5=Will likely to be always present)?
6. Does this cause effect just this event or others in your life (1=Affects just this event to 5=Affects all areas of my life)?

Step C

1. Write down one other positive yet realistic cause for why the event happened.
2. How negative does it make your feel (1=Not at all negative to 5=Extremely negative)?
3. How strongly do you believe the cause for the event you wrote about in question #3 above?
4. Is this cause about you or other people/circumstances (1=Totally due to other people/circumstances to 5=Totally due to me)?
5. Will this cause be present in the future (1=Will unlikely to be present again to 5=Will likely to be always present)?
6. Does this cause effect just this event or others in your life (1=Affects just this event to 5=Affects all areas of my life)?

Step D

1. Now that you have gone through this exercise, how *strongly do you believe* the very first reason you gave was the reason the event happened?
2. As you reflect on the situation you wrote about, do you *feel better*?
3. As you reflect on the situation you wrote about, do you see some *new ways you can effectively cope with the situation in a positive manner*?