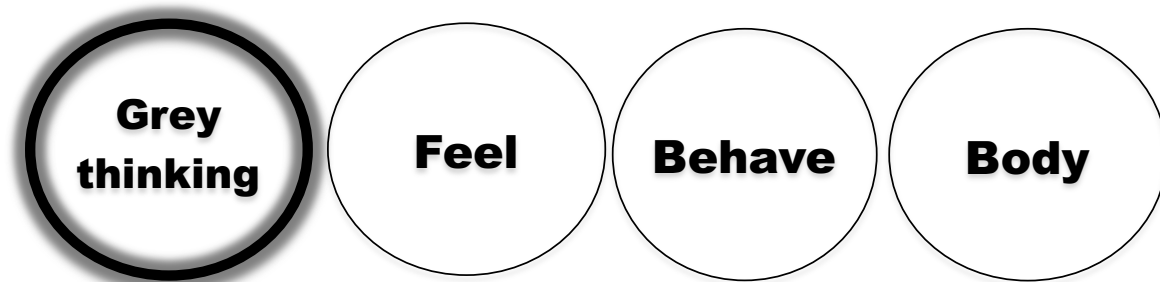


The Depression Thinking Checklist

Depression is often filtered through a grey 'hopeless' lens - identify where you might use this distorted attributional style through these examples:



- I can't cope.
- Nobody really loves me.
- I am alone in this..
- I don't have any willpower.
- I'll never be successful.
- I don't have any patience.
- I never get it right, so no point trying.
- I never know what to say.
- I'm stupid.
- Life is too hard.
- I'm ugly.
- Life is not fair.
- I bet they're talking about me.
- Things are just going to get worse.
- I can't really take care of myself.
- I have a horrible personality.
- No matter how hard I try, people aren't happy.
- I'm not normal.
- I'm always scared
- I'm always confused
- I'm wasting my life.

- I'm selfish.
- I get my feelings hurt easily.
- I can't express my feelings.
- I'll never find what I really want.
- I can't really get close to people.
- I am worthless.
- I'm not nice.
- I'm boring.
- People are horrible.
- It's all my fault.
- Bad things always happen to me.
- I can't think of anything that would be fun.
- I'll never get over this depression.
- People don't give real friendship any more.
- Things are so messed up that worrying about them is useless.
- Anybody who thinks I'm nice doesn't know the real me.
- I'm afraid to imagine what my life will be like in ten years.
- I'll never make any really good friends.
- I'm screwed.

How do you explain the world to yourself? Are these thoughts and beliefs 100% correct and rational? Or are they distorted and exaggerated? Are they grey and hopeless? Are they healthy or unhealthy? Helpful or unhelpful? How does believing such statements make you feel and behave? Language matters – catch and edit yours.

Review and reframe to clean the language up and strip it of hyperbole and drama. WRITE IT DOWN to *learn by discovery*, and design new evidence based compassionate and rational self-talk, to use every day.

e.g. "Example of new self-talk: It's not true that 'I can't cope', and when I say that it maximises my discomfort and can become a self-fulfilling prophecy where I literally choose not to cope - it's more true to say that I find it hard to cope, and that I wish I didn't have to cope, but I do cope, even if it's badly sometimes. And I'm working on my coping skills. Everything I've done has been based on what I was thinking and feeling at the time – I did my best, and I'm changing how I think and feel and my best will get better... I am of value and worth. There are lots of lovely things in this world for me right now, and in the future." Become your own best friend and your own therapist. Think different.