

Week 3/Video 3: Alternative Thought Patterns

Another way to shift some of our patterns of unhelpful thinking is to begin creating what we call alternative thought patterns. It's important to remember that as we are creating alternative responses, we are not saying to "just think positively," because we know it's not that simple. What we are asking for is to practice taking a step back and looking at the situation from a broader perspective in order to begin developing new patterns of thoughts.

Make sure that your alternative thought is realistic and believable. Don't try to jump to the positive extreme, as this would be an example of black and white thinking. For instance, using the example from Week 1 of Getting Unstuck- of the student whom asked a classmate to be their partner, try not to go from the thought "she must hate me" to "she thinks I'm the greatest ever." Instead, a good example might be, "She might still like me."

To begin this practice, we will be filling out an Alternative Thoughts Worksheet.

First, take a moment to review an example of the Alternative Thought Worksheet **on Page 28** that features the example of not being picked as a partner in class. This example should help you understand how you would complete your own blank Alternative Response Worksheet, **on Page 29**, using one of your completed cross sectional formulations. Use the questions on the worksheet as well as the Challenging Unhelpful Thinking Patterns worksheet on **page 30** to help you complete this. These questions are helpful for forming alternative thoughts. They are intended to guide you until alternative thoughts become second nature. This is an important and impactful skill and I encourage you to take time to work through these exercises before continuing to the next video.