

ART THERAPY RESOURCES



NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

INSTRUCTIONS:

The goal of this exercise is to explore the concept of black and white thinking, alternatively known as polarizing thinking. This exercise can show your client a physical representation of the many points of view and various actions that can occur.

- Ask your client to draw a line that identifies two very distinct end points which represent the extreme points of view that can be held.
- Ask your client to reflect on a recent experience, difficult situation, or personal opinion they hold that they believe represents a view that is fixed and unmoveable. An example might be beliefs about capital punishment or an interaction with a loved one about politics or social justice issues.
- Another example may involve your client exploring whether their behaviour in situations represents failure or whether they believe only perfection is acceptable. This could be based on expectations at school, work, or at home.
- Ask your client to write their held view on one end of the line. Then ask them to identify the opposite view of that held view on the other end of the line. This other view may be a complete opposite of the view they hold.
- Once the extreme views are identified on the line, ask your client to reflect on the space that exists between.

Discussion points may include:

- What might this space represent that exists between the two end points?
- Could the space represent other held views about the problem?
- Could the space represent the complexities that might exist in the situation?
- Can your client identify any other held views that might exist between the two extremes that might represent a compromise or a balance of the two extremes?
- Can your client identify any other held views or beliefs they might hold that can be explored on the black and white spectrum?



To read more about Challenging Negative Automatic Thoughts visit our blog post on the below link:
<https://arttherapyresources.com.au/negative-thoughts>