

Notice What You Say to Yourself!

Recovery thinking means talking to yourself with respect and support.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE THOUGHTS

★ Compare the thoughts associated with substance use (left column) to the thoughts associated with recovery (right column).

<i>Substance Abuse Thoughts</i>	<i>versus</i>	<i>Recovery Thoughts</i>
"I need it now" (Wants instant satisfaction)	versus	"I can wait" (Self-control)
"I don't care about the future" (Unable to plan)	versus	"How will I feel later?" (Able to plan)
"Things should always go smoothly" (Can't tolerate frustration)	versus	"Sometimes things go wrong" (Can tolerate frustration)
"I can do what I want" (Focused only on self)	versus	"If I use, I'll hurt my kids" (Focused on self and others)
"I need drugs to numb the pain" (Can't tolerate bad moods)	versus	"I can tolerate feeling down" (Can tolerate bad moods)
"Abstinence will be boring" (Afraid of boredom)	versus	"I can try new things" (Locates exciting activities)
"I'll never get over this" (Overreacts)	versus	"Take it a step at a time" (Balanced)
"I might as well use—my life's a mess" (Doesn't care)	versus	"I matter" (Cares)
"I'll only have one drink" (Unrealistic)	versus	"I know I can't use" (Realistic)
"I have no self-discipline" (Stuck)	versus	"I can learn self-discipline" (Seeks to grow)

(cont.)

From *Seeking Safety* by Lisa M. Najavits (2002). Copyright by The Guilford Press. Permission to photocopy this form is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use only (see copyright page for details).

PTSD THOUGHTS

★ Compare the thoughts associated with PTSD (left column) to the thoughts associated with recovery (right column).

PTSD Thoughts	versus	Recovery Thoughts
"I'm worthless" (Beats self up)	versus	"I did that well" (Builds self up)
"I want to cut my arm" (Self-destructive)	versus	"I want to solve the problem" (Constructive)
"I don't matter" (Neglects self)	versus	"I need to attend to my needs" (Takes care of self)
"There's no point" (Chooses to die)	versus	"Life is what I make it" (Chooses to live)
"I'll always be alone" (Isolates)	versus	"I can connect" (Reaches out)
"I am my abuse" (Narrow identity)	versus	"I am a human being" (Broad identity)
"Nothing will change" (Rigid)	versus	"I can grow" (Flexible)
"I need to drink" (Seeks escape)	versus	"I can work on it" (Confronts problems)
"I'm nothing" (Devaluing)	versus	"I'm a decent person" (Affirming)
"I'm bad" (Hates self)	versus	"I'm good" (Loves self)
"Bad relationships are all I can get" (Stays with unsafe people)	versus	"I can find good people" (Seeks safe people)
"I can't cope" (Gives up)	versus	"I can try" (Seeks solutions)
"Suffering is all there is" (Sees only pain)	versus	"Life is a mix" (Sees pleasure and pain)