

Question Your Thoughts

Change your thinking to realistic optimism

Once you have identified what you are thinking and any distortions you may be using, come up with a new, more helpful way of seeing the situation. Become realistically optimistic.

To illustrate identifying distortions and coming up with a more realistically optimistic outlook, let's look at thoughts people might have if they were unexpectedly asked to speak in front of 250 people:



Automatic thought	Cognitive distortion	New, more helpful thought
I'll look like a fool	Fortunetelling	I'll practice and do my best
People will think I'm a complete idiot if I mess up	Mindreading	If I do mess up, people will likely empathize with me more than think negatively of me
I always forget everything I'm supposed to say	All-or-nothing thinking	Even if I forget exactly what I want to say, I know the concepts well enough to move on

Consider how you'd feel if you believed the more accurate and helpful thoughts in the third column. Probably a lot happier, right?

Practice questioning and reframing your thoughts on a daily basis and enjoy the happiness it will bring!