THOUGHT DISPUTATION EXERCISE
(A CBT model adapted from ActivInsight)

1. Write a concise sentence describing something that you experience as stressful. It's helpful to use the words "should" or "shouldn't." (Example: My spouse should more understanding when I get home from a hard day at work.)

2. How strongly do you feel this belief is true? (1-10 scale, 10 = strongest).

3. How do you feel when you believe this? (e.g. afraid, angry, abandoned, annoyed, anxious, confused, depressed, desperate, embarrassed, frustrated, helpless, impatient, hurt, nervous, jealous, etc.)

4. How do you act when you feel this way? (e.g. argue, blame, belittle, complain, cry, drink, eat, fight, escape, give up, gossip, interrupt, lose sleep, obsess, overwork, preach, pretend, shut down, smoke, yell, etc.)

5. Write the negation of your statement from step one. Try adding 'In reality' at the beginning of your new statement and 'at this time' at the beginning or end. (Example: In reality, at this time, my spouse shouldn't be more understanding when I come home from work.)

6. Write below all the proof you can find that supports the new negation statement. You may want to write more than one negation statement. (Example: In reality, at this time, my spouse shouldn't be more understanding when I come home from work, given that I am often cross and stressed out and I quickly retreat to my office.)

7. How do you feel if/when you see the truth behind your negation statement(s)? (e.g.: calm, clear, compassionate, curious, enlightened, enthusiastic, excited, free, grateful, honest, humble, peaceful, happy, optimistic, supportive, tolerant, truthful, understanding, etc.)

8. What actions might come from this? (e.g. acceptance, apologize, communicate, delegate, exercise, explore, focus, follow through, forgive, give thanks, listen, make amends, network, open up, participate, prioritize, reach out, share, support, etc.)

9. Now read you original statement from step one again. How strongly do you feel this belief to be true now?
(1-10 scale, 10 = strongest).

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