



Replacing Negative Thoughts—Examples

Negative Thought(s)	Replacement Thought(s)
There must be something wrong with me because I hurt.	Hurt doesn't always mean harm. Pain is not an accurate measure of tissue damage.
Nothing else can help my pain. There are no more biomedical treatments that might help me.	There are no more treatments to hurt me. Even though I can't find a medical solution, there are coping skills I can use to manage the pain and quiet down the noise.
I can't do anything anymore.	While I may not be able to do what I used to do, I can still be happy. I can live life well, despite the pain
It hurts when I do things.	I'd rather do things and hurt than not do things and still hurt. Despite pain, I can still take care of my responsibilities. I'm safe to move, moving is good for me.
I'm in so much pain, I'm going to have to stay in bed until it improves.	Though my pain is very strong today, it's a 'false alarm', so I'll get up and take care of my basic needs, using my pain management tools to make use of this day as given to me.
I don't have energy to do everything I want to do each day.	I can pace myself and set SMART goals to accomplish things.
If I do that workout/exercise I will have days of increased pain to make up for it.	I can learn a gentler way to exercise and keep track of which type of which exercises don't cause a flare-up.
I can't handle the pain today.	Not every day is a bad day. I can get through this. Better times lie ahead.
I'll never get any sleep. I'll never make it through the day.	I'm still resting. No matter the amount of sleep I get, I can still function the next day. I'll sleep later.
My career is over. I'll never be "Me" again.	The stress and labor that were bringing me down are behind me. I have more free time to do so many things I could never get to before. A career title doesn't define me. There are other ways I can provide value, like volunteer.
My life is a mess.	I have it better than other people. Things could be worse.
I don't think I can go on like this.	I'm doing this every day. I'm a survivor, not a quitter. No matter what happens, I know I'll make it. There's no problem that is hopeless.