



## Practice Helpful Thinking

In the previous activities involving self-defeating thoughts, you learned a lot about what makes a thought self-defeating and what makes a thought helpful. You learned to convert self-defeating thoughts into **realistic**, **helpful**, and **reassuring** thoughts. In this activity, you will learn to make helpful thinking part of your daily life.

**Here are some examples of helpful thoughts:**

- I can manage my life.
- I have friends I can call if I need someone to lean on.
- My life has changed, but it is still good.
- I am in charge of my life.
- My pain is not who I am.
- My pain can't control me.
- I have pain, but my pain doesn't have me.
- Even though I have pain, I have a lot to offer.
- My pain doesn't change who I am.
- I can still be close to people.

### Step 1: List Up to 10 of Your Own Helpful Thoughts



## **Step 2: Select Daily Events or Activities to Cue Helpful Thinking**

Often people with chronic pain get out of the habit of thinking in ways that are helpful. If you are out of practice, how can you remind yourself to think in this way? One useful approach is to use daily events, situations, and activities as cues to remind you to think one or more helpful thoughts. For example, every time you get in to or out of your car, you can use that action as a cue to think one of your helpful thoughts. You will link the automatic daily aspects of your life with the less automatic helpful thinking. With practice, helpful thinking will become automatic in the same way that self-defeating thoughts may have been automatic in the past.

**In the space below, list up to 5 daily events, activities, or situations to use as cues for helpful thinking.**


**Your Helpful Thoughts Are:**

**Your Daily Events or Activities are:**