

**Dr. Robert Glover's Dating Essentials for Men**  
**"Mastering Your Mind"**  
**How to Untwist Your Thinking**  
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- **Identify the Distortions.** Use the Checklist of Cognitive Distortions to identify the distortions in each of your negative thoughts.
- **Straightforward Technique.** You try to substitute a more positive and realistic thought for each of your negative thoughts. Ask yourself, "Is this negative thought really true? Do I really believe it? Is there another way to look at the situation?"
- **Downward Arrow.** This technique will help you pinpoint your SLBs. To use this technique, draw a downward arrow under a negative thought and ask yourself, "Why would it be upsetting to me if this thought were true? What would it mean to me?" A new negative thought will come to mind. Write it down under the arrow and repeat the process several times. The negative thoughts you generate will lead to the underlying beliefs at the core of your suffering.
- **What-If Technique.** This technique is similar to the Downward Arrow Technique. Draw a downward arrow under a negative thought and ask yourself, "What if that were true? What's the worst that could happen? What do I fear the most?" A new negative thought or fantasy will come to mind. Write it down under the arrow and repeat the process several times. You will generate additional thoughts until you uncover the fantasy that frightens you the most. Then you can ask yourself, "How likely is it that this would happen? And could I live with it if it did?"
- **Double Standard Technique.** Instead of putting yourself down, you talk to yourself in the same compassionate way you might talk to a dear friend who was upset. Ask yourself, "Would I say such harsh things to a friend with a similar problem? If not, why not? What would I say to him?"
- **Experimental Technique.** You do an experiment to test the validity of your negative thought, in much the same way that a scientist would test a theory. Ask yourself, "How could I test this negative thought to find out if it's really valid?"
- **Survey Method.** You do a survey to find out if your thoughts are realistic. Ask yourself, "How do other people think and feel about this? Could

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I ask some friends about this to get some feedback?" For example, if you believe that social anxiety is rare or shameful, simply ask several friends if they've ever felt that way.

- **Thinking in Shades of Gray.** Instead of thinking about your problems in black-and-white categories, you evaluate them in shades of gray. When things don't work out as well as you'd hoped, you can think of the experience as a partial success or a learning opportunity. Pinpoint your specific errors instead of writing yourself off as a total failure.
- **Process Vs. Outcome.** You evaluate your performance based on the **process** – the effort you put in – rather than the **outcome**. Your efforts are within your control, but the outcome is not.
- **Acceptance Paradox.** Instead of defending yourself against your own criticisms, you can find truth in them and accept your shortcoming with tranquility. Tell yourself, "It's true that I have **many** inadequacies. In fact, there is very little, if anything, about me that couldn't be improved considerably."
- **Paradoxical Magnification.** Instead of refuting your negative thoughts, you can buy into them and exaggerate them. Don't try to argue with your negative thoughts. Instead, make them as extreme as possible. For example, if you feel inferior, you could tell yourself, "Yes, it's true. In fact, I'm probably the most inferior person in California at this time." Paradoxically, this humorous method can sometimes provide objectivity and relief. Of course, if you're feeling upset, this may have the unintended effect of making you feel even worse. If so, go to another method.
- **Shame-Attacking Exercises.** If you suffer from shyness, you probably have intense fears of looking foolish in front of other people. Shame-Attacking Exercises are a specific and potent antidote to these kinds of fears. You intentionally do something foolish in public. For example, you could stand up and loudly announce each stop on a bus or shout out the time in a crowded department store. When you make a fool of yourself on purpose, you realize that the world doesn't really come to an

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end, and that people don't really look down on you. This discovery can be tremendously liberating.

- **Cognitive Flooding.** Visualize one of your worst fears, such as talking to a beautiful woman at a party. Try to endure the anxiety for as long as you can. If you become panicky, tell yourself, "Don't fight it!" Instead, try to make it even worse. Eventually, your anxiety will burn itself out, because your body simply cannot create anxiety indefinitely. You can use Cognitive Flooding when you can't expose yourself to the thing you fear.
- **Rejection Practice and Rejection Feared Fantasy.** If you're shy and afraid of rejection, you can accumulate as many rejections as possible in order to learn that the world doesn't come to an end. You can combine this technique with the **Rejection Feared Fantasy**. You need a partner if you want to try this technique. Your partner will play the most rejecting, hostile person you can imagine. She or he will be far worse than any real human being would ever be, and is really just the projection of your own fears. When you confront this fantasy figure, you will discover that you had nothing to be afraid of in the first place.