



Award-winning
Student Wellbeing
Program

• Australia Wide •



PARENT SUPPLEMENT MODULE 5

Evidence-based psychological skills training
for mental health, wellbeing and resilience
in your school



5

Learning Helpful Thinking

- **Key Concepts**
- **Key Student Activities**
- ◆ **Discussion Points**
- ★ **Parent Self-Reflection**

● Key Concepts

See the *Helpful Thinking Template* (in the Appendix) as an example of how to train one's thinking.

- This week builds on principles we have discussed earlier – that thoughts affect the way we feel, but they are not always accurate or helpful.
- If we can learn to think in ways that are **balanced**, **realistic** and **helpful** then our emotional lives will be more balanced.
- Another important part of helpful thinking is in choosing helpful behaviours regardless of the emotions and urges we feel.
- Helpful thinking involves:
 1. Looking at many possible explanations
 2. Figuring out a balanced way of thinking about the situation (as opposed to accepting our automatic thoughts, which often include thinking errors)
 3. Choosing a helpful behaviour
- We can use various writing templates to help us practice helpful thinking. Remember – in order to write something down, we need to think it first. Structured writing tasks are actually also structured *thinking* tasks. That is why we recommend people write out their thinking when learning new (helpful) thinking skills.

■ Key Student Activities

- Students complete the 'Types of Thoughts' worksheet, exploring the multitude of possible ways in which thinking – rather than events themselves – affect our emotional reactions and subsequent behaviours.
- Students work through the examples of Jane at the choir, and Joseph after football training. They need to identify automatic thoughts, thinking errors and then;
- Create a more balanced, realistic and/or helpful way of thinking about the things that are bothering Jane and Joseph.

◆ Discussion Points

- Ask your child to talk you through how they were able to help Jane and Joseph resolve their concerns.

★ Parent Self-Reflection

- Why might 'positive thinking' not always be the most helpful kind of thinking?
- Try the Helpful Thinking Template (in the Appendix below) using an example of a situation (either current or past) from your own life.

The Helpful Thinking Process

Step 1 'What is my automatic thought?'	Write it down:	What is the feeling?
		How strong is it out of 10?
Step 2 'What are three other possible outcomes or explanations?'	Write them down:	
Step 3 'What has happened in the past in this situation, and what is most likely to happen now?'	Write it down:	

<p>Step 4 'What would my thinking brain say, compared to my emotional brain?'</p>	<p>Write it down:</p>	
<p>Step 5 'How would advise a friend in this situation?'</p>	<p>Write them down:</p>	
<p>Step 6 'Given what I've written above, how could I rewrite my original thought (from Step 1), to make it more: ✓ Balanced ✓ Realistic ✓ Helpful?'</p>	<p>Write your more balanced, realistic, and helpful thought here:</p>	<p>What is your feeling now? How strong is your feeling now, out of 10?</p>
<p>My helpful course of action is:</p>		

