

Found Poem

In this lesson, we explore the way you can notice inaccurate, negative, self-critical thoughts. We discuss how you can reframe these thoughts so that they are more positive and accurate. In order to practice this, we are going to take one inaccurate thought, reframe it, and create a found poem to represent this transformational process.

Step One:

Choose a thought that has been bothering you. Write it down in the space provided in the table below under 'inaccurate thought.' Next, use the attached handout to help you think about how you can revise this thought. Write your revised thought in the table below under 'more accurate thought.'

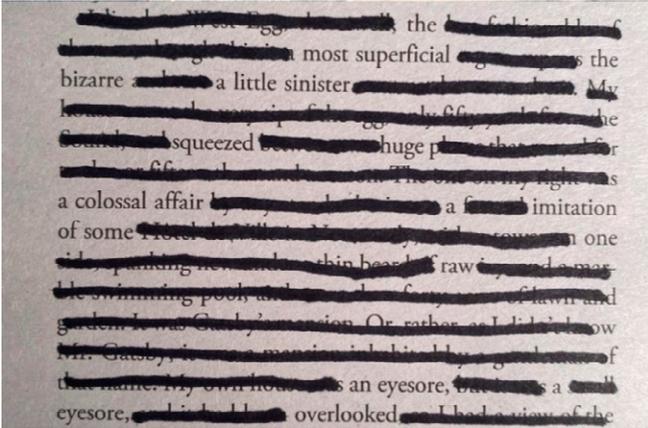
	Inaccurate thought	More accurate thought
Example:	I'm not good looking.	There are some things I like about the way I look.
Your Thought:		

Note: If you are struggling to choose a more accurate thought, ask yourself:

- What would a good friend say about this thought?
- Can I prove that this thought is true?

Step Two:

Use a black marker to block out text to create the first stanza of your poem. The first stanza represents your inaccurate thought. An example of stanza one is provided below.

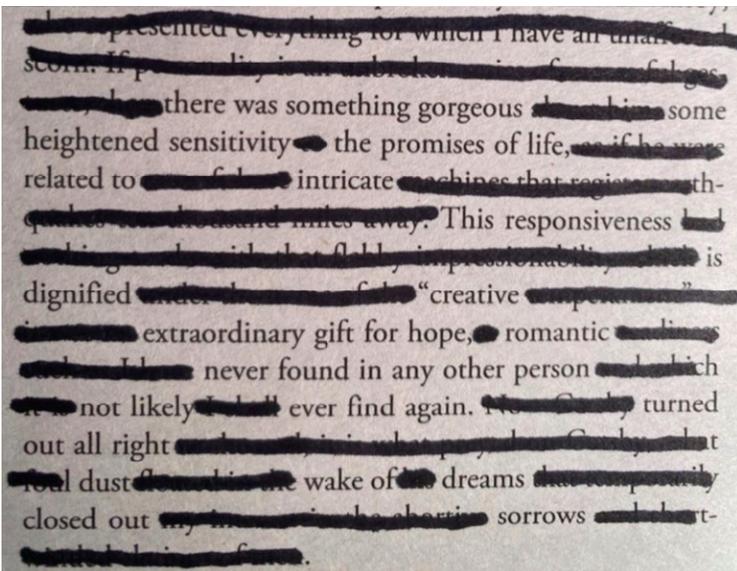


The most superficial
The bizarre, a little sinister.
Squeezed. Huge. A colossal affair.
A imitation of some one.
Raw. An eyesore.
Eyesore.
Overlooked.

Step Three:

Use a black marker to block out text to create the second stanza of your poem. This second stanza represents your more accurate thought. An example of stanza two is provided below.

More accurate thought: There are some things I like about the way I look.



There was something gorgeous,
some heightened sensitivity,
the promises of life related to intricate
This responsiveness dignified, creative,
extraordinary gift for hope, romantic, never
found in any other person.
Not likely ever find again.
Turned out alright.
Dust wake of dreams.
Closed out sorrows.

Examples of Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions are different types of inaccurate thoughts. Researchers have found that there is a link between our thoughts, our emotions and our behaviors. The awareness of this connection can help us to understand that we can break this cycle by changing our thoughts, which helps to change our behaviors, which then influences our emotions.

Here are a few examples of cognitive distortions and how, when you learn to recognize your inaccurate thoughts, you can begin to reframe them:

- **All or Nothing Thinking** - Seeing something only in two extreme categories. Something is either amazing or horrible, black or white - you don't see the shades of gray in between.
Example: Thinking you either did perfectly on a school project, or it was a total failure.
Question: How can I reframe this thought so it is not seeing things in the extremes? Is there another way to see this that includes more nuance or shades of gray?
- **Fortune Telling** - When something happens and you assume the negative point of view or predict a negative outcome.
Example: If your friend doesn't respond to a text and you think they must be mad at you or you did something wrong.
Question: Can I reframe this thought so that I'm not assuming the worst?
- **Catastrophizing** - Imagining that worst possible scenario will happen. Taking a problem or something bad that happens and blowing it completely out of proportion.
Example: You're having a difficult time falling asleep and assume you won't fall asleep at all that entire night.
Question: How can I reframe this thought to be more accurate about what is likely to occur?
- **Mental Filtering** - Focusing on a single negative piece of information in an experience and excluding all of the positive ones. This creates a pessimistic view of everything around you by thinking about only the negative.
Example: Dwelling on one negative comment a friend or romantic partner makes and viewing the whole friendship or relationship as hopelessly damaged or lost.
Question: How can I reframe this thought to include the positives?
- **Overgeneralization** - Making a conclusion based on one negative event or detail and then applying it to all other circumstances.
Example: You messed up your science experiment today. You never do anything right!
Question: Am I making a conclusion based on a very small amount of information and then applying it to other unrelated circumstances?