

Underlying Assumptions – some examples

GAD: Generalised Anxiety Disorder (Worries)

The most generic underlying assumption for GAD can be stated as: ‘Something bad will happen and I won’t cope’. Here are some variations:

Original Assumption	New Assumptions
1. If something bad happens, then I can't cope.	If something bad happens, then what can I do?
2. If I worry, then I can prevent bad things from happening,	If I worry it won't necessarily help, and it almost always makes me feel anxious
3. If I make a mistake or something goes wrong, a whole series of negative events will follow.	If I make a mistake and something goes wrong, then I can usually figure out something to do to make it right
4. If a negative chain of events starts, then I won't know what to do and will just have to watch my life fall apart.	If a negative chain of events starts, then I can do something about it; I don't have to watch my life fall apart
5. If my life falls apart, then there is no way to recover.	Even if my life falls apart, then there is always a way to recover

- When something bad happens, then what can I do?
- When bad things happen I will cope with it somehow
- When bad things happen, I'll find a way to cope
- When the future is uncertain, that is OK, because no matter what happens I'll keep working toward my goals

When people have confidence in their coping abilities, they do not worry as much about potential dangers and mishaps and tend to take life as it comes

Follow your “What if ...” worries with “Then what can I do?” or “I will cope”