



Module 13: Learn to Manage Your Thoughts

Lifestyle Coach Guide



Module Overview

Learning to manage your thoughts can help you stay in control of the choices you make to protect your health and prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. This module teaches participants how to replace negative thoughts with helpful thoughts.

Participant Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss how to replace negative thoughts with helpful thoughts
- Practice replacing a negative thought with a helpful thought

Things to Do

In addition to the Session Checklist, you will also want to do the following:

Before this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to prepare and motivate them for this upcoming session on taking charge of their thoughts. Here are some sample messages you can send to participants for this module:
 - 1 Week Prior: “Managing how you eat, drink, your activity level, and your sleep can feel challenging. Did you know how we think can make it easier—or harder? Join us for our next meeting where we’ll explore different ways of thinking about situations. Bring a pair of scissors for one of our activities. This will be a fun session that benefits everyone!”
 - 1 to 2 Days Prior: “By replacing negative thoughts with helpful thoughts, you can stay on track to achieve better health outcomes! At our next session, we will be participating in a group activity to explore this further. Bring a pair of scissors for this activity. See you soon!”
- Consider bringing enough pairs of scissors for the group to share instead of asking the group to bring them.
- Bring a few rolls of tape for the group to share.

After this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to continue the conversation on taking charge of their thoughts. Here are some examples of messages to post:
 - “Remember to notice how you’re thinking! Are you finding reasons not to focus on your health, or are you finding solutions to make healthy strategies work for you?”
 - “Have you found an effective way to put the brakes on your negative thoughts? Some people use a word or phrase or even an image. Share what’s working for you—someone in the group might want to give it a try!”

Session Content

The following content is designed to last for 60 minutes. Please allow about 10 extra minutes to receive weigh-in information and to consult with participants privately, if needed, at the start of each session.

Welcome and Review	Page 3	5 Min
Session Focus	Page 4	1 Min
Negative Thoughts vs. Helpful Thoughts	Page 5	14 Min
Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts	Page 7	30 Min
Plan for Success	Page 12	5 Min
Summary and Closing	Page 13	5 Min

Welcome and Review



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Method: Facilitated Discussion

SAY:

Welcome back, everyone! This is the [current session number] meeting of [name of program].

Today, we are going to talk about managing your thoughts to support your health goals. Before we start, let's spend a few minutes going over what we discussed last time.

I will try to answer any questions you may have.

DO:

Briefly summarize the previous session.

DISCUSS:

What questions do you have for me about what we talked about last time?

SAY:

Let's talk about how things went with the action plan you made last time.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?

SAY:

Now let's talk about how it went with the other things you tried at home.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?



Time Estimate: 1 minute
Method: Presentation

SAY:

Please look at “Session Focus” on page 1 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Session Focus” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Managing your thoughts can help you stay in control of the choices you make to protect your health and prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Today, we will:

- Discuss how to replace negative thoughts with helpful thoughts
- Practice replacing a negative thought with a helpful thought

Finally, you will make a new action plan.



Time Estimate: 14 minute
Method: Facilitated Discussion

This part of the session introduces the concepts of negative and helpful thoughts and the effect of each on choices and behavior. Use “Annie’s Story” to discuss the difference between negative and helpful thoughts. Then, talk about ways to prevent negative thinking.

Annie’s Story (14 minutes)

SAY:

Let’s start by talking about the difference between negative and helpful thoughts.

DISCUSS:

- How do you think negative thoughts get in the way of your eating and activity goals?
- How do you think helpful thoughts support your eating and activity goals?

DO:

Share the following (if not mentioned by participants):

- Negative thoughts can get in the way of your eating and activity goals, increasing your risk of type 2 diabetes.
- On the other hand, helpful thoughts help you reach your goals. So, they lower your risk of type 2 diabetes.

SAY:

Please look at “Annie’s Story” on page 2 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Annie’s Story” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

ASK:

What negative thought does Annie have at first?

ANSWER:

“Ugh, the weather is lousy. I’ll just skip my walk today.”

ASK:

What does Annie do next?

ANSWER:

Annie remembers how well she’s been doing at staying active. Walking every day has become part of her routine, and she’s so proud of herself!

SAY:

So, Annie starts out with a negative thought: skipping her walk. Then, she STOPS and remembers her success and how good it makes her feel. She knows that she is building a new habit of staying active.

ASK:

What helpful thought does Annie have to replace the negative thought about skipping her walk?

ANSWER:

“It’s raining, so instead of walking today, I’m going to exercise indoors.”

SAY:

So, Annie is telling herself: “Yes, it’s raining out. But that won’t stop me from reaching my activity goal. I’ll still be active. I’ll just do it inside.”

DO:

Make sure participants understand the difference between negative and helpful thoughts before moving on to the next section. For example, check for understanding by asking for additional examples of helpful thoughts for Annie.

Discuss the “Tips To Manage Negative Thinking” on page 3 of the Participant Guide.



Time Estimate: 30 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated
Discussion, Group Activity

This part of the session discusses how to identify types of negative thoughts, how to stop them, and how to replace them with helpful thoughts.

Note: You don't need to cover all the types of negative thoughts in this section. Choose the types that are most relevant to your group.

Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts (5 minutes)

DISCUSS:

If you had one habit or negative thought that you wanted to change in order to improve your health, what would that be?

SAY:

We've talked about the difference between negative and helpful thoughts. Now let's discuss how to replace negative thoughts with helpful thoughts.

Please look at "Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts" on page 4 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.



DO:

Use the “Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts” framework to discuss how to identify negative thoughts, put on the brakes, and think helpful thoughts instead. Pause after each step to give participants a moment to use the space provided in the Participant Guide to write down their thoughts to the questions.

Changing Negative Thoughts (25 minutes)

SAY:

Please look at “Changing Negative Thoughts” on page 5 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Changing Negative Thoughts” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Recognizing the type of negative thought can help you turn it into a helpful thought. Let’s look at each type.

DO:

Review and explain the six different types of negative thoughts listed on page 5 in the Participant Guide:

- All or Nothing
- Making Excuses
- Filtering
- Self-Labeling
- Comparing
- Pessimistic

SAY:

Now, let's participate in an activity to learn more about recognizing these types of negative thoughts and how to turn them around.

Cut out the examples of negative thoughts on page 6 in the Participant Guide. Keep the two "write your own" cards separate for now.

DO:

Shuffle your set of cards and place them face down in front of the group. Ask for a volunteer to choose one of your cards to read aloud to the group. Then, ask all participants to find that card within their deck.

Use the negative thought chosen by the participant to lead a discussion about that type of negative thought. First, ask participants which type of thought it is (All or Nothing, Making Excuses, Filtering, Self-Labeling, Comparing, Pessimistic). Then, have participants brainstorm ideas for replacing the negative thought with a helpful thought. Have participants write these ideas on the back of their card.

Encourage participants to tape the examples into the table on page 5 as each card is discussed.

Use the discussion points below as a guide.

DISCUSS:

All or Nothing:

- I can't eat ice cream ever again.
- Exercise is boring and tiring.

What are some helpful thoughts that could replace these all-or-nothing thoughts?

If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- I can have ice cream once in a while.
- When I do have ice cream, I'll measure it.
- I'll keep trying new activities until I find one that I like.

Making Excuses:

- I'm going to skip my physical activity today because of the weather.
- I can't meet my eating goals because my family keeps baking cookies.

What are some helpful thoughts that could replace these excuses?

If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- I will dress for the weather and walk anyway.
- I will exercise inside today.
- I will invite my wife to cook something healthy together.

Filtering:

- No one else supports my healthy lifestyle.
- I haven't stuck to my healthy eating plan this week.

What if you could switch the "negative" filter for a "positive" one and focus on the good? What are some helpful "positive filtering" thoughts you could think? If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- My friend Shelly supports it.
- I will ask for more support.
- I stuck to eating nutritious meals four out of seven days.
- I have a plan for how to stay on track in the future.
- My clothes are fitting better around my waistline.
- I've lost a couple of pounds already.

Self-Labeling:

- I'm such a weakling.
- I'm the world's worst cook.

Can you think of some helpful thoughts that could replace those self-labeling thoughts?

If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- I can climb stairs without getting out of breath now.
- I'll be a little more active each week.
- My daughter liked the stir-fry I made last night.
- I'll keep learning more about cooking.
- Now I know my way around the kitchen and can make some pretty tasty and healthy meals.

Comparing:

- Tommy has lost so much more weight than I have.
- Stella is so much stronger than I am.

Who can think of a helpful thought to replace these comparing thoughts?

If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- My weight loss has slowed down, so I'll ask Teo for some tips.
- I'd like to be stronger, so I'll try using a resistance band.

Pessimistic:

- I just know I'm going to get hurt. Then I won't be able to work out.
- I just know I'm going to get type 2 diabetes since both of my parents had it.

Who can suggest a helpful thought to replace these pessimistic thoughts?

If not mentioned by participants, share the following examples:

- I'll take steps to work out safely.
- If I do get hurt, I'll find a different way to be active.
- I know a lot more about how to prevent type 2 diabetes than my parents did.
- I'll do what I can to prevent type 2 diabetes.

Remind participants of their two extra cards to write in examples. If time allows, invite them to share their examples, discuss them with the group, and tape them into the type of negative thought they represent.

SAY:

When negative thoughts enter your mind, it's important to remember how well you are doing and how far you have come on your journey to prevent type 2 diabetes. It can take time to replace negative thoughts with positive ones. But keep practicing and it will become a habit.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Please look at your Action Plan Journal. Let's spend the next few minutes making a new action plan.

Keep in mind what worked and what didn't work well for you since our last session. Are there any changes that you want to make to your new routines? Are you ready for a new routine?

Also keep in mind what we discussed today about taking charge of your thoughts.

As you try out and practice your new routine, make sure to add in the following to make it automatic:

- Make your new routine easy and the old one harder to follow.
- Build in a healthy reward.
- Create times to repeat and practice your new routines.

If you are ready to add another routine, complete these 3 steps:

1. Identify what current routine needs to change or stop.
2. Plan a new routine that helps you make a positive change that will stick.
3. List cues or hints for when to use your new routine.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to make their action plans.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Between now and our next session, I'd like you to practice taking charge of your thoughts. Follow the "Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts" on page 4. You can use "Tips To Manage Negative Thinking" on page 3 for ideas.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Three Steps To Replace Negative Thoughts With Helpful Thoughts" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DISCUSS:

Answer questions as needed.

SAY:

We have come to the end of our meeting. Today, we discussed how managing your thoughts can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. We:

- Discussed how to replace negative thoughts with helpful thoughts
- Practiced replacing a negative thought with a helpful thought



Summary and Closing

DISCUSS:

Do you have questions about anything we talked about today?

SAY:

Next time, we'll talk about the things you tried at home, including your action plan. We'll also talk about [include specific topics that will be presented in the next session].

Thank you for coming to this session. Remember to bring your Participant Guide and Action Plan Journal to the next session.

End of meeting.