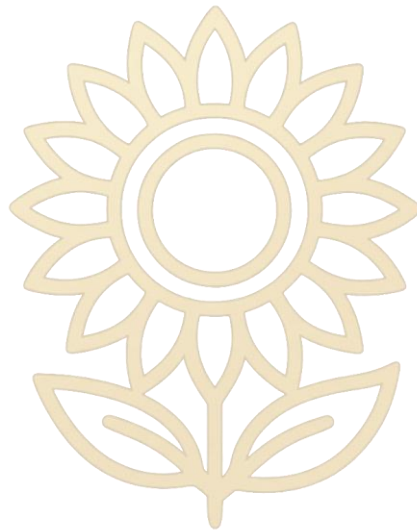


LUV Reflection Series

Small Guided Practices for Real Life

7 Steps to Overcome Negative Thoughts



Because You Deserve More Than Generic Advice

Hey, you. Yes, you — the one whose brain occasionally decides to throw a party no one asked for.

We all have those days. The thoughts loop, the inner critic gets loud, and suddenly you're buried under a pile of "not good enough" and "what ifs."

This worksheet is your way out. Work through each step, take your time, and write honestly. No one is grading you. This is just for you. 



STEP 1

Catch It Before It Spirals

Ever notice how one bad thought leads to another, and suddenly you're replaying every mistake you've made since middle school? It's like dropping a single sock in the mud and somehow the whole laundry pile ends up dirty. The trick here is simple: notice the thought the moment it shows up. Say to yourself, "Okay, I see what's happening here." No judgment, no drama — just awareness. You can't change what you don't notice.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Awareness is the first step to breaking any pattern. You can't redirect a thought you haven't caught yet.*

➡ **My Action Plan — What I Will Do:**

What negative thought pattern shows up most for you? How will you catch it next time?



STEP 2

Talk to Yourself Like You'd Talk to a Friend

Quick question: Would you look a friend in the eyes and say, "You're a total failure because you missed one workout"? No. Absolutely not. But we say that kind of stuff to ourselves on a daily basis and somehow think it's fine. It's not fine. Try this: next time the inner critic gets loud, ask yourself — "Would I say this to someone I love?" If the answer is no, rewrite the script. Be the friend you needed.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Self-compassion isn't weakness — it's actually one of the most powerful tools for resilience and motivation.*

➡ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

What's something harsh you've been telling yourself? Write the kinder version you'd say to a friend.



STEP 3

Find One Small Win

Negative thoughts are drama queens. They will convince you that EVERYTHING is terrible — that you've never done anything right and nothing will ever get better. But here's the reality check: something went right today. Maybe it was small. Maybe it was just that you got out of bed, made your coffee, or answered one email. Find it. Name it. Celebrate it. Because that one small win is proof that you're still moving forward, even on the hard days.

🔑 **Why It Works:** *The brain can only hold so much at once. Focusing on a win, no matter how small, interrupts the negativity loop and gives your brain new evidence to work with.*

➡ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

What's one thing that went right today (or recently) — big or small? How can you build on it?



STEP 4

Move Your Body — Even Just a Little

You do not need a gym membership, a Peloton, or a 5am wake-up call to shake off negative thoughts. Seriously. Stretch for 5 minutes. Take a walk around the block. Dance aggressively in your kitchen to that embarrassing playlist you'd never admit to having. When your body moves, your brain chemistry literally shifts — you change the channel. It gets you out of your head and into the present moment, which is exactly where those thoughts lose their power.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Movement releases endorphins and reduces cortisol. Science says so. Your body is one of your greatest mental health tools.*

➡ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

What's a quick, doable movement habit you can commit to when the thoughts get heavy? Be specific.

STEP 5

Swap "What If?" for "What Is"

"What if I mess everything up? What if things never get better? What if everyone secretly hates me?" Sound familiar? "What if" thinking is basically your brain's way of time-traveling to a disaster that hasn't happened yet. Instead, try bringing it back to "what is." Right now, in this moment: you are breathing. You are reading this. You are still here. That's enough. One moment, one step at a time — the mental load gets so much lighter when you stop living in hypothetical catastrophes.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Anxiety lives in the future. Presence lives in the now. Grounding yourself in "what is" calms the nervous system and breaks the spiral.*

➡ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

What "what if" are you currently stuck in? Write it down — then reframe it as "what is" true right now.

Reach Out — You Are Not Alone

When negative thoughts feel like they're closing in, talking to someone you trust is one of the most powerful things you can do. Send a text. Make a call. Sit down with a journal and write it all out — let the page hear it if you're not ready for a person to. Even just saying "I'm having a tough time" out loud takes away some of the power those thoughts have. You're not a burden. Everyone — and I mean everyone — goes through this. People care more than you think.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Isolation makes negative thoughts louder. Connection — with others or even with yourself through writing — makes them smaller.*

✦ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

Who is one person you trust that you could reach out to? Or how will you use journaling to process? Write your plan.



STEP 7

Remind Yourself: This Too Shall Pass

No bad day lasts forever. No heavy thought stays stuck forever. Even when everything feels like it's pressing down on you, it is temporary — and you have the receipts to prove it. Think about it: you have made it through every hard thing that has come before this. Every single one. That's not luck. That's you. So hang in there. The weight will lift. The thoughts will quiet. And you'll look back on this moment knowing you didn't quit.

✦ **Why It Works:** *Our brains convince us that the current feeling is permanent. It never is. Reminding yourself of that fact is a powerful act of self-trust.*

✦ My Action Plan — What I Will Do:

Write about a hard time you've already gotten through. What did that version of you need to hear? Say it to yourself now.

Negative thoughts don't get the final word — you do.
The fact that you worked through this means you're already on the right track.

You've got this. 💖