

164 OVERCOMING BODY IMAGE PROBLEMS

EXERCISE 6.7: THE A, B, C, D, E OF MENTAL PLANNING AND TRYING TO SOLVE THE WRONG PROBLEM

Activating Event

Describe a recent typical situation in which you were mentally planning or investigating a solution for what you believed to be an appearance problem.

Behavior

What mental plans were you making or what did you do?

Consequences

Was there any pay-off from mental planning and investigating? Did it give you a sense of hope that you were doing something to solve your 'defect'? Did you avoid anything in life that you find difficult?

Thinking about thinking 165

Unintended Consequences

What effect did the mental planning have? Did it eventually make you more frustrated or angry?

What effect did your mental planning have on how self-focused you became on a scale between -3, which is totally focused on what you were thinking, to +3, which is totally focused on your environment or tasks?

What effect did the mental planning have on the time you could devote to your valued directions and what is important in your life?

What effect did your mental planning have on the people around you?

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Did you do anything in excess as a consequence (e.g. drink more, use drugs, binge-eat, purge)?

Overall, how helpful is it to do your mental planning?

Alternative Directions

What alternative direction could you find that is consistent with your goals and valued directions instead of mental planning?

Effect of Alternative Directions

What effect did following your alternative direction have?

Is there a pattern to the situations that are typically linked to mental planning, worrying or self-attacking that you could change? For example, can you do anything to prevent such situations from occurring? Can you plan the day using an activity schedule that follows your valued directions? What can you do to stop yourself from being alone at certain times?