Challenging Negative Thoughts

Depression, poor self-esteem, and anxiety are often the result of irrational negative thoughts. Someone who regularly receives positive feedback at work might feel that they are horrible at their job because of one criticism. Their irrational thought about job performance will dictate how they feel about themselves. Challenging irrational thoughts can help us change them.

Answer the	following	questions to	assess '	vour though	t:
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Answer the following questions to assess your thought:				
♦ Is there substantial evidence for my thought?				
♦ Is there evidence contrary to my thought?				
♦ Am I attempting to interpret this situation without all the evidence?				
What would a friend think about this situation?				
♦ If I look at the situation positively, how is it different?				
Will this matter a year from now? How about five years from now?				

Countering Negative Thoughts

Come up with a rational counterstatement for each of the negative thoughts below.

Negative Thought	Rational Counterstatement
I got into trouble at work. They'll probably want to fire me soon because I can't do my job right.	Example: I made a mistake at work, but everyone does that from time to time. I usually get a lot of positive feedback about my work. I'll be careful not to make that same mistake again.
My husband was angry yesterday and he yelled at me for not feeding the dog. I'm so irresponsible.	
How will I ever get a date? Everyone else seems like more fun than me.	

Next, come up with three examples of negative thoughts and rational counterstatements from your own life:

Negative Thought	Rational Counterstatement	