

Exchange Vocabulary

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Upset feelings are usually caused by the way we are thinking about what is happening, not the events themselves. To change your feelings (and your behavior), try the following "exchange vocabulary." This idea was given to me by a client, who related it to an exchange list for unhealthy foods. When you first try this new way of thinking, it might not feel right. The more you do it, however, the more natural these realistic beliefs will become. I think you will like the results, but prove it for yourself by giving it a fair try. Good luck!

Word Exchange Table

INCORRECT	CORRECT
<i>Instead of thinking:</i>	<i>Try thinking:</i>
Must	Prefer
Should	Choose To
Have To	Want
Can't	Choose Not To
Ought	Had Better
All	Many
Always	Often
Can't Stand	Don't Like
Awful	Highly Undesirable
Bad Person	Bad Behavior
I am a Failure	I Failed At

Statements:

INCORRECT	CORRECT
<i>Instead of Saying:</i>	<i>Exchange With:</i>
I have to do well.	I want to do well.
You shouldn't do that.	I prefer you not do that.
You never help me.	You rarely help me.
I can't stand my job.	I don't like my job.
You are a bad boy.	That behavior is undesirable.
I'm a loser.	I failed at this one task.
I need love.	I want love, but don't need it.

Emotional Vocabulary Exchange

REBT does not endeavor to eliminate emotions. Quite to the contrary! Emotions are very useful and part of the human advantage --- When Appropriate!

INCORRECT	CORRECT
<i>Instead of Saying:</i>	<i>Exchange With:</i>
Anxious	Concerned
Depressed	Sad
Angry	Annoyed
Guilt	Remorse
Shame	Regret
Hurt	Disappointed
Jealous	Concern for my relationship