

preventing manic thinking

Let's look at how you can learn to manage your thoughts to prevent mania. First, you need to learn to recognise what sorts of thoughts you get when you are beginning to get high. When you are in an elevated mood, thoughts that are overly positive might not be helpful to you because they could cause your mood to spiral upwards toward mania. Just like negative thoughts are considered to be unhelpful when you are depressed, thoughts that overly positive are also considered unhelpful when your mood is elevated.

Use the section on the right side of the page to record the sorts of thoughts you tend to get when you are feeling euphoric. Get into the habit of writing down those thoughts that might be overly positive when you are in a mildly or moderately elevated mood. You might not know whether or not they are helpful and that's why it is a good idea to write them down. You might find that some of your thoughts seem a little grandiose and are quite different from how you would normally view a situation, and these would be considered unhelpful to you. The next step is then to develop a more balanced thought in place of the initial unhelpful thought. Ask yourself the following questions to help you develop a balanced thought:



- What evidence do I have that my thoughts are true?
- What facts or details might I have ignored or overlooked?
- What other ways are there of viewing the situation?
- If I were not feeling high, what would I be thinking?
- What is a balanced view of this situation?

It is probably helpful if you practise this exercise before you start feeling high. Remember that preventing a full-blown episode of mania is all about EARLY recognition of the warning signs and intervening quickly before they escalate. Recognising early warning signs of mania is essential because cognitive behavioural therapy might not be very effective once a person is in a full-blown manic episode.

Once you have developed a balanced thought, say it to yourself regularly. Write it down on a card and refer to it now and again. This is one of the strategies to help you to stay balanced and prevent a full-blown episode of mania.

The "Balance" Sheet

When I am feeling euphoric, I often think:

An Alternative, Balanced View

Ask yourself:

- What evidence do I have that my thoughts are true?
- What facts or details might I have ignored or overlooked?
- What other explanations could there possibly be?
- Are there other ways of viewing the situation?
- What is a balanced view of this situation?