***WORKSHEET: Identifying Unhelpful Thoughts***

*Repeated here are common unhelpful thoughts that can undo our efforts to change. Check off any that frequently interfere with your efforts. Use the blank lines at the end to write any of your own thoughts that aren’t written here.*

* *“I just don’t feel like it.”*
* *“I already blew it, so what’s the difference?”*
* *“Nobody else has to eat this boring stuff.”*
* *“Everyone else can eat more than I can and not get fat.”*
* *“I’m just too busy to exercise (or plan a meal, or make a lunch to bring).”*
* *“I’m hungry, so I have to eat right now.”*
* *“It’s not OK to be hungry.”*
* *“If the food is there, I’ll eat it.”*
* *“I couldn’t help it, the urge to eat was so strong.”*
* *“It’s not fair that I gain weight so easily.”*
* *“I’m not losing weight anyway, so why bother trying?”*
* *“I was good all week, I should have lost weight.”*
* *“I can’t make changes now, I’m too stressed out (or depressed).”*
* *“I’ll do that once I’m thinner.”*
* *“If I start eating that, I’ll never stop.”*
* *“No one can eat as much as I can once I get going.”*
* *“I just can never stick with things.”*
* *“It’s all or nothing for me.”*
* *“I deserve to have that treat, it’s been a tough day.”*

 *Now that you’ve identified your unhelpful thoughts, the next step is to return to them and write more rational, helpful thoughts beside each. (Examples follow.) In the days ahead, write down the thoughts each time they occur, then write the more helpful response beside it. If the thought occurs too often to write it each time, aim to do it several times a day. It is the repetition that starts to make a lasting difference.*

***Examples***

***“I just don’t feel like it.”***

*JUST BECAUSE I DON’T FEEL LIKE IT, DOESN’T MEAN I CAN’T DO IT. I DO PLENTY OF THINGS THAT I DON’T FEEL LIKE. I’LL FEEL A LOT BETTER LATER IF I JUST GO AHEAD AND DO IT. IT WON’T BE SO BAD.*

***“I already blew it, so what’s the difference?”***

*IT COULD MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IF I KEEP ON EATING BADLY JUST BECAUSE I’VE GONE OFF TRACK HERE. IT’S COMPLETELY ILLOGICAL TO SAY “WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE”. OF COURSE IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE WHETHER I GET BACK ON TRACK OR STAY OFF. I’LL FEEL BETTER IF I JUST LEARN FROM THIS AND MOVE ON, HOWEVER HARD THAT MIGHT BE.*

 ***“I’m hungry, so I have to eat right now.”***

*IT’S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD IF I’M HUNGRY FOR A REASONABLE STRETCH OF TIME. I’LL BE EATING LATER. I’LL TAKE A DEEP BREATH WHEN I SIT DOWN SO I DON’T WOLF MY FOOD THEN.\*\**

***“It’s not OK to be hungry.”***

*IT’S NOT IDEAL TO BE HUNGRY, BUT ONCE IN A WHILE I CAN COPE*

**Now you try!**

**Re-write out the thoughts you checked on the previous page. One by one counter those thoughts with a new and alternative thought.**