

EVENT/SITUATION CAUSING DISTRESS

I got angry and shouted at my six-year-old son when he continued to play with his toys after I had told him to tidy his room.

FEELING & ACTION TAKEN

Felt really angry and shouted at him, then felt really guilty and sulked around the house.

RATIONAL/IRRATIONAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT EVENT

He is really hopeless – completely out of control.

He did it on purpose – deliberately messing his room up more to upset me.

He takes absolutely no notice of me – he has no respect.

He will end up as a complete waster, idling his life away.

Maybe I was too hard on him – I guess it's natural for kids that age to be untidy.

I am a bad mother – I should be more patient.

I'm a horrible person for losing my temper and shouting like that.

THINKING DISTORTIONS

Awfulising
All-or-nothing
Personalising

All-or-nothing

Jumping to conclusions
Rational

All-or-nothing
Awfulising
Fixed Rules

All-or-nothing
Awfulising

NEW RATIONAL CHALLENGES

He is a dreamer and is difficult to control but that's not so awful.

No he didn't, he just got carried away with his play. It's only natural that six-year-olds find playing more interesting than tidying.

He does take notice most of the time. I know he loves me and I love him dearly.

I have no evidence of that – he might well be very creative.

Yes, now that one sounds more rational.

Why am I a bad mother? I do lots of good things for him. I don't have to be perfect. It's quite normal for children to mess rooms up and for mothers to shout.

I will try to control my temper, which is a weakness, but doesn't make me a horrible person.

UNDERLYING IRRATIONAL BELIEFS

I must be successful and competent in everything I do if I am to consider myself worthwhile.

When people act badly or unfairly I blame them and view them as completely bad and want them severely punished.

NEW FEELINGS & ACTION

Stop feeling so sorry and guilty and get on with my life.