

The Judge: Evidence for and Against

The Thought (negative automatic thought): "Everyone will think I am stupid if I answer a question wrong in class"

The Defence (evidence for the thought):

- I saw someone look at me when I answered a question incorrectly
- Someone laughed when I got a question wrong
- Someone told me I was stupid when I was at primary school

The Prosecution (evidence against the thought):

- Not everyone looks at me when I answer a question incorrectly
- Lots of people have told me I am good at certain things
- I have received good grades in some of my lessons and exams
- The class tend to look at whoever is answering a question – this is normal behaviour
- Just because someone laughs, it doesn't mean they are laughing at me, and it doesn't mean they think I am stupid

The Judge's Verdict: In this case, the prosecution evidence outweighs the defence. Furthermore, the evidence provided by the defence can be discounted as it is not based on fact or it is historical. Much of the defence is based on suspicions that are likely caused by unhelpful thinking.

Another activity we know is very popular is one known as 'The Judge' or 'Putting thoughts on trial' activity- it is a process for recording evidence for and against a specific worry

This is about taking a thought (worry), and essentially putting it in on the spot, or 'in court' to be analysed and unpicked,

What evidence is there that this thought (worry) is true, vs what evidence is there that this thought is not true?

This activity is all about encouraging the child or young person to really think about the evidence that is available that supports their fear, vs the evidence which goes against the validity of their specific worry. Essentially, unless there is concrete evidence that backs up their fear or worry, the 'defense' is thrown out of court because it does not hold up- there is not enough evidence.