FORM 8.4

Making Thoughts and Predictions Testable

We often have thoughts that are quite vague, so we might not be able to test whether they are true or false. For example, the thought "Life will be empty" is hard to test because it's hard to know what "empty" means. On the other hand, we can test the thought "I won't experience any pleasure" by keeping track of pleasure that we do experience. Sometimes we have thoughts that are quite unrealistic. For example, we might have the thought "I'm a failure," and we might think that the test of that thought is whether we have any failures or disappointments in life. Since all of us have some failures and disappointments, most people might not agree with the idea that "being a failure" is the same thing as failing on a test or getting rejected. List some of your troublesome thoughts below and then answer each of the questions.

Thought	How could I test it? What can I observe that would prove this is correct?	Would other people agree with my test for this thought?	Would other people see things differently?	Are my thoughts vague and general?

Double-check: Is there anything wrong with how your thoughts are stated? Are they really testable? Could we really collect information that could weigh against your thought?

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