

## Uncover Your Patterns

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In order to gain a better understanding of your patterns of self-criticism, it is important to pay attention to self-critical thoughts and note down certain things.

As you now know, uncovering your negative thought patterns would help you combat the detrimental effects of self-criticism. After all, you can't change something if you don't understand what it is.



The banner features the Explorable logo at the top center, with the text "EXPLORABLE" in a large, bold, sans-serif font and "Quiz Time!" in a smaller, cursive font below it. Below the logo are three quiz cards, each with a different image and title. The first card shows a pair of red roller skates on a wooden deck, titled "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The second card shows a fan of colorful pencils, also titled "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The third card shows a Ferris wheel at sunset, titled "Quiz: Flags in Europe". To the right of the cards is a link that says "See all quizzes =>".

## What to Focus on

In order to uncover your negative thought patterns, you already know that you need to keep a thought journal. However, it would be even more beneficial if you were to pay especially close attention to the following areas:

### **The date and time when each thought occurs.**

It will help you see an overall pattern, as in how often a particular self-critical thought occurs and with which frequency. Is there an association between a self-critical thought and the time of the day?

### **The situation that triggered the thought.**

What were you criticizing yourself about? Were other people involved in the situation? What role did their presence play for the thought to occur? Was the self-criticism related to your thoughts, feelings, urges or behavior?

### **The self-critical thought.**

What exactly was the thought that came to your mind? List certain common expressions you tell yourself, such as 'I am stupid', 'I did it again', 'I am a bad person'. And try to define what they mean. For instance, what is your definition for "being a bad person"?

### **What followed after?**

After the self-criticism, what were your thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and urges? How did it affect your behavior? Did it lead to any self-defeating behavior?

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