

PART 1. SPOTTING POLARIZED THOUGHTS

Start by writing down extreme, black-and-white thoughts you’ve noticed recently.

Rigid Thought	What Makes It Extreme

PART 2. PRACTICING BOTH/AND REFRAMES

Take one of your polarized thoughts and practice shifting it to a **Both/And** statement.

Old Either/Or Thought	Both/And Reframe
“They don’t care about me at all.”	“They care about me and we still disagreed.”
“I can’t be upset or they’ll leave me.”	“I’m upset and I still value the relationship.”

PART 3. VALIDATION PRACTICE

Validation builds bridges and lowers defensiveness. Write short validating statements for imagined scenarios:

Scenario	Validation Statement
A friend cancels plans last minute.	“I get that you’re exhausted, and I was really looking forward to seeing you.”
Your coworker snaps during a meeting.	“I can see you’re stressed, and this deadline is a lot for all of us.”

PART 4. USING THE MIDDLE PATH IN REAL LIFE

Reflect on situations where you felt stuck in extremes and practiced (or attempted) Middle Path thinking.

Real Situation	Old Extreme Reaction	Balanced Middle Path Response

Remember This:	Walking the Middle Path doesn’t mean giving up your values or siding with everyone else. It’s about making space for complexity, reducing emotional extremes, and improving problem-solving. Even noticing polarized thinking is progress — every attempt strengthens the skill.
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