Externalizing Depression and Rewriting the Story

Often when we have felt depressed for a long time, it starts to feel like depression is a critical part of our identity. This is one of the tricks that depression plays on us - making us think that we are our depression, and that there is no hope for ever feeling differently.

Instead of letting us become one with our depression, it can be helpful to remember that depression is just a visitor - we don’t have to let it stay forever.

First, imagine your depression as something outside of yourself. What would it look like?

- Think about your depression’s size, color, texture.
- Is it an object, or a creature?
- What name would you give it?

Then, reflect on the following prompts to rewrite your story . . .

- What are you that is more than your depression? Think about the relationships, goals, and accomplishments that set yourself apart from the lies depression tells you.
- Are there any ways your depression has tried to help or protect you?
- Are there times the depression tried to trick you and you didn’t fall for it?
- Are there ways you could remind yourself to catch the depression when it tries to trick you?
- Imagine yourself talking back to depression when it is telling you those lies. What would you say? How would depression respond?