

Ways to Respond Differently to Thoughts

- In an effort to remind yourself that thoughts are just words, when you notice a thought, try saying “I am having the thought that [insert thought]”
 - ▶ To take this a step further try saying “I am noticing, that I am having the thought [insert thought]”
- Remind yourself that you are in charge, not your thoughts/emotions or sensations. You might try doing the opposite of what your thoughts are telling you to do. For instance, I am going to go for a walk because my mind is telling me I do not have time. I am going to prove it wrong!
- Identify your main unhelpful thoughts/emotions/sensations and name them. Whenever you notice these arrive, acknowledge that that story is there and continue to take steps moving towards your values.
 - ▶ For instances- “there’s the dooms day story” or “this is the old catastrophizing story” or “the fortune teller is visiting again”.
- Acceptance of the thought/emotion/sensations- you don’t have to like it, want it or approve of it in order to accept it. Try making peace with what is already here.
- Reasons can be seen as excuses. If you have a reason why you can’t do something, try switching the “but” for an “and”.
 - ▶ For instance: I want to go to the gym ~~but~~ AND I’m tired/anxious/had a bad day
 - ▶ I want to go out ~~but~~ AND I am anxious/depressed/ had a bad day/tired
- Put your thought to a musical tune (Happy Birthday, Mary had a Little Lamb) and sing the thought to remind yourself they are just words
- Take an unhelpful thought and imagine a cartoon character’s voice repeating the thought in your head

Visualization

- Imagine leaves floating down a river and imagine placing the thoughts on the leaf and allowing them to float away on their own.
- Imagine your thoughts are clouds moving across the sky
- Imagine you are standing behind a waterfall watching the thoughts tumble over in front of you.
- Imagine thoughts are junk mail, you can’t stop it from coming in, but you do not have to read it!

Ask yourself...

- “What would I get for buying into this story?”
- “Is this an old story? Have I heard it before?”
- “How has this thought/behaviour worked for me in the past?” If it has not worked, ask yourself “what should I let control me, my mind or my experience?”
- “Does this thought help move me towards or away from the person that I want to be”. If away, you might try thanking your mind for the thought and focusing on an action that brings you towards the person you want to be

Coming to the Present Moment

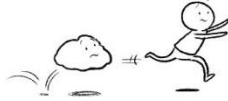
- Move your awareness to the breath and focus on the changing physical sensations as the breath enters and exits your body. When the mind wanders simply bring your awareness back to the breath
- Look around the room and identify 5 things you can: Smell, Hear, Taste, Feel, See

Thoughts and feelings arise and fall away,
Ebbing and flowing every day,

When we resist them,
We can get into trouble,



Trying to avoid them?
Make that double!

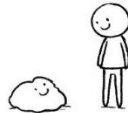


Instead can you be willing to just let them be?
Accept them as normal and natural as the sea,



Yes sometimes it will be stormy,
Sometimes it will be calm,

But thoughts are just thoughts,
They cannot do you any harm,



Imagine hearing them on a radio or said in a silly voice,
You don't have to take them so seriously..you always have a choice!

Instead put your energy into who you want to be,
What do you want to stand for, ask "what matters to me?"

Follow your Values and learn to float, sail and surf,
Create a life you love, full of meaning and worth!

