

Good morning and happy Monday team!

I hope you all had a wonderful weekend. Today, let us revisit working with our thoughts. I want to remind you all of a quote from Aristotle. "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." We have to learn to identify unhelpful thinking patterns and how to consider other, more adaptive ways of thinking.

A helpful tool to confront negative thoughts is to **identify** and **record** them.

Steps to Break Negative Thinking Patterns

1. **Identify thinking errors:** When you write down the thoughts, ask yourself, "What evidence is there to support this idea?" It would be nice if a thinking error would sound an alert saying, "Hey don't believe me." Pay attention to your feelings. If you notice a change in your mood, ask yourself, "What was I doing just before I felt this way?" Take a mindful pause to see what arises, remembering not to judge your thoughts.
2. **Reframe negative self-talk:** Ask whether a negative thought is realistic to dismantle it. That approach works particularly well with thoughts about outcomes. Reframing works for nerves too. The next time you are anxious, try telling yourself, "I feel this way because what I am about to do is important to me."
3. **Defuse from thoughts:** You have heard the expression, "Don't believe everything you read." Well, it is important to not believe everything you think, either.
4. **Avoid generalizations:** Try to make your self-talk balanced and as specific as possible. Avoid using words like always, all, or never. For example, generalization – "I always mess things up." Balanced self-talk – Sometimes things don't go as I had planned. Sometimes things go okay and sometimes things go better than expected."

"Fear is familiarity's imposter. It passes off what you dread for what you know, offers the worst in place of the ambiguous, serves up anxiety in the absence of comfort, substitutes assumptions for reason. Under the warped logic of fear, anything is better than the uncertain."

- Isaac Lidsky

Peace,
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