

“The Mind”

Speak to your mind (and your mind’s thoughts) as though you were speaking, *out loud*, to a separate person

Name the Story

If your thoughts were made into a book or movie, what would the book or movie be called? Each time this story shows up, remind yourself that “There’s the _____ story again”

Gratitude

Our minds do the best they can to help us – even when minds aren’t helpful. Show appreciation for your mind’s hard work. “That’s an interesting thought; thanks Mind.”

Observe Your Mind

Notice your thoughts. “I notice that my mind is telling me _____.” “I’m having the thought that _____.”

Titchener’s Repetition

Pick a single word that summarizes what you’re thinking – and say the word out loud, listening to the word as you say it. Repeat until the word becomes a jumble of sounds.

The Computer Screen

Imagine you’re typing your thought out – or better yet, actually type it out. Change the font, color, format. Animate the words. Add in a ball that bounces from word to word.

Giving Form to Thoughts

Describe the physical properties of your thoughts. What does the thought look like? How big is it? What does it sound like? Is it moving, or still? Anything else?

The Mind Station

Your mind is like a biased news station – it reports things as it sees fit. You aren't able to turn this news off, but you can choose whether to let it influence your decisions.

Workability

Ask yourself if the thought helps you lead a rich, meaningful life. Does it work for you in the long run?

Sound it Out

Speak difficult thoughts out loud - very, very slowly

Mindful Watching

Practice watching your thoughts come and go. Imagine your thoughts floating by in the sky like clouds, as suitcases on a conveyer belt, waves washing onto a beach...

Buying & Selling

Your mind is like a machine in a factory that runs 24/7. 365 days a year – it manufactures an endless stream of words, and it never stops, but you don't have to buy what it's selling.

Observe Your Mind

Notice your thoughts.
“I notice that my mind is telling me _____.”
“I’m having the thought that _____.”

Sing Your Thoughts

Sing your thoughts – to the Happy Birthday song, a fun, upbeat song – you aren’t able to change the words of your thoughts, but you can modify the tone

Silly Voices

Imagine your mind is a silly cartoon character – Donald Duck, Spongebob – and say your thoughts in that cartoon character’s silly voice.

Secondary Gains

If you take this thought at face value and go along with what it tells you to do, what does it help you avoid or escape from?

Do the Opposite

Do the opposite of what your mind is telling you to do.

Your Mind is Not Your Friend

Suppose your mind is a bit mindless and self-centered, and doesn’t always have your overall best interest at heart. Should you listen to what it’s saying?

Passengers on a Bus

Treat your thoughts as unruly passengers on a bus that you're driving. Does listening to what those passengers say help you get where you want to go?

Thoughts are Not Causes

Is it possible to think that thought – think of the thought as a thought – AND do _____?

Who's in Charge?

Who's in charge here, you or your thoughts? What if your thoughts are a bully that you won't be able to get rid of? Practice compassion towards the bully.

How Old is This?

Ask yourself how old your thought is? Is it new? Or is it the same old tired story?

Unwanted Party Guest

Imagine your thoughts are an unwanted, annoying-yet-harmless guest who won't leave a party you're hosting. What if you choose to *not* pay much attention to the unwanted guest?

Now What?

Focus less on whether your thoughts might be right or wrong and focus more on whether they are helpful or unhelpful

Mary had...

Mary had a little _____
Row, row, row your

Are the words in your thought as *automatic* as these phrases? Slow the thoughts down and make your behavior purposeful, not automatic

The Can't Trap

Regardless of what your mind tells you, it's usually not the case that you can't. You can usually make a choice.

Get Off Your Buts

Replace all of the "buts" in your thoughts with "and"

Do Not Think...

Don't think about an elephant. Do not think about it. Now don't think about one of your thoughts. Does struggling to not think about that thought make it bigger or smaller?

Evaluation

Look around the room, and find every single thing that can be evaluated negatively. Can you find anything that can't be evaluated? Is your thought a factual, accurate description, or an evaluation?

Index Cards

Write your thoughts on an index card or a piece of paper, and carry them around in your pocket.

Description vs Evaluation

Look at this card, and describe it factually (color, size, etc). Then use words to evaluate it (ugly, nice, etc). Are your thoughts factual, accurate descriptions, or evaluations?

Carry Your Keys

Assign each thought to one of your keys. Think about the thought each time the key is handled, and then carry the thought from there.

Tug of War with A Monster

Think of your thoughts as a monster you're struggling against in a game of tug-of-war. If you tug harder, what happens? What if you drop the rope?

This Card Says...

Think of a sound effect, and imagine this card makes that sound. Practice so you'll be sure to remember the sound this card makes. What if your thought is just as arbitrary and practiced as this card's sound effect?

Times Square

Imagine you're in the middle of Times Square, and watch your thoughts scroll by on the huge electronic news ticker. (Part 2: If you only pay attention to that thought ticker, what else in Times Square do you miss?)

Post-Its

Write your thoughts on Post-It notes, and hang them up around your house.