

Creating Distance from Negative Self-Talk

It is natural to have some fusion with our thoughts due to the nature of our storytelling mind. Our thoughts can help us plan, prepare and problem solve. However, as life goes on our mind can create false narratives and realities that no longer serve us. "I am too depressed to make changes in my life." If you are fused and believe this thought to be reality you are unlikely to make changes in your life that would help you be less depressed. Try this activity to help see if you can create some distance from your thoughts and be able to act more flexibly or problem solve more effectively.

1. Start by bringing to your mind a common negative thought about yourself.
 - I am not enough.
 - I do everything wrong.
 - I am fat
 - I can't do this.
 - _____
2. Sit with this thought and observe any other thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations that appear when holding onto this statement.
 - What is the intensity or "fusion" with this thought?
 - Do I believe this thought or put a lot of weight on this?
 - What does this make me feel about myself?
3. Practice adding these statements before your previous statement:
 - I am noticing that I am having the thought that...
 - "I'm having the thought that..."
 - "I am noticing my mind is telling me..."
 - "My brain is telling me..."
 - Counter-intuitively say "Thank you, brain."
4. Sit with this new statement and observe any other thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations that appear when holding onto this.
 - Does this change the intensity and level of "fusion"?
 - What else is your mind telling you?
 - Do I believe what my mind is telling me and what is the rest of my present experience telling me?
 - Is my mind trying to tell me something that I am needing?
 - With this distance am I able to recognize one step or action I can do to start moving forward?