

Participant Guide

Bring More Positivity & Compassion to Each Day

Concern
Real help, real experts, real fast.

Overview

In times of stress and uncertainty, it's common to find our minds cluttered with negative thoughts and self-criticism. Negative thinking is one of the most significant and damaging risk factors that can impede our capacity for resilience. During this webinar, you will learn how to observe your negative thoughts with openness and clarity so that they can be held in mindful awareness and met with sympathy and kindness.

Agenda

- ✓ How negative thinking wears us down
- ✓ Awareness of negative thoughts
- ✓ Using mindfulness to interrupt negative thinking
- ✓ Self-Compassion

Seminar Length: 1 Hour

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- How negative thinking can wear us down
- Awareness of negative thoughts
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- Self-compassion



Negative Thinking: Your Inner Critic

Are you critical of your work, doubt your abilities, or assume you will fail?



ABCs to Change Faulty Thinking



Awareness of Negative Thoughts

- Never
- Always
- Judgment
- Failure…



Breathe

Create space between the thought and your reaction



Compassion

…for the thought and let it go

Awareness
Cognitive Distortions & Unrealistic Guilt

Do you ...

- See a situation in a way that does not compute with reality of event?
- Consistently feel like everything is your fault?



Awareness
Catastrophizing & Over-generalizing

Do you ...

- Turn one small incident or mistake into a much larger issue, focusing on the exaggerated worst-case scenario?
- Let the negative outcome of one event extend into other areas that are otherwise unrelated?



Awareness
Negative View & Polarized Thinking

Do you ...

- Think negatively about yourself, the world, and the future, which are inaccurate perceptions of reality?
- Commonly use all-or-nothing thinking ("always, never, should")



Awareness
Does This Sound Familiar?

I can't do anything right today.

Can it get any worse?

I just know that I will make a mistake.

No one likes me.

I am so not smart at math.

I always mess things up.

I'll never be as good as them.

Breathe
Practice Mindfulness of the Breath

- HOW we pay attention
- Make a new space for something before our emotional or behavioral reaction
- Training our mind, not fighting with it
- Don't believe everything you think



Breathe-Exercise
Create the Space to Choose Your Reaction



Compassion
Befriend Your Thoughts with Self-Compassion

This is a moment of suffering. Suffering is part of life. May I be kind to myself in this moment. May I give myself the compassion I need.

~Kristen Neff



Compassion
Three Elements of Self-Compassion



Self-Kindness vs. Self-Judgment

Accept that we are imperfect with sympathy & kindness



Common Humanity vs. Isolation

The definition of being "human" means that one is mortal, vulnerable, & imperfect



Mindfulness vs. Over-Identification

Willingness to mindfully observe our negative thoughts & emotions with openness & clarity

Mindful Moments All Day











Mindfulness Strategies

Tip	Action
Waking Up	While you're still lying in bed, before you do anything else, notice your breathing.
Showering	Open yourself to your senses during your shower. Feeling warm or cool? Notice the scent of your soap, the feel of sudsy shampoo in your hair.
Breakfast	Pay attention to the food you're eating, noting all that went into its creation. A piece of fruit, for example, requires sunshine, fresh air and rich earth and workers to pick and transport it. Look closely at your food, put it into your mouth and taste it.
Walking	Slow down. Pay attention to the movement and skill of walking.
Driving	When stopped at a red light, notice your body. Loosen your hold on the steering wheel. Relax your shoulders.
Lunch	Pay mindful attention to your food, to its flavors, its texture.
End of Work	Reflect on your day. What was good about it? What could you have done differently? Imagine how you would like to be tomorrow.





Exercise: How would you treat a friend?

How do you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend when they are suffering? This exercise walks you through it

1. First, think about times when a close friend feels really bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation (especially when you're at your best)? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you typically talk to your friends.

2. Now think about times when you feel bad about yourself or are struggling. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you talk to yourself.

3. Did you notice a difference? If so, ask yourself why. What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others so differently?

4. **Please write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way that you typically respond to a close friend when you're suffering.**

Why not try treating yourself like a good friend and see what happens?

Exercise
Self-Compassion Practices

Supportive Touch

Activate your parasympathetic nervous system by using touch to help you feel calm, cared for, and safe.



You might like to try putting your hand on your body during difficult periods several times a day for a period of at least a week.

Hand-on-Heart

- When you notice you're under stress, take 2-3 deep, satisfying breaths.
- Gently place your hand over your heart, feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand. If you wish, place *both* hands on your chest, noticing the difference between one and two hands.
- Feel the touch of you hand on your chest. If you wish, you could make small circles with your hand on your chest.
- Feel the natural rising and falling of your chest as you breathe in and as you breathe out.
- Linger with the feeling for as long as you like.

Some people feel uneasy putting a hand over the heart. Feel free to explore where on your body a gentle touch is actually soothing. Some other possibilities are:

- One hand on your cheek
- Cradling your face in your hands
- Gently stroking your arms
- Crossing your arms and giving a gentle squeeze
- Gently rubbing your chest, or using circular movements
- Hand on your abdomen
- One hand on your abdomen and one over heart
- Cupping one hand in the other in your lap



Cultivating Positivity

Actionable Strategies	Benefits
• Start the day with good thoughts • Greet everyone cheerfully • Accentuate the positive • Look at past accomplishments • Verbalize positive experiences • Spread good news • Embrace learner's perspective	• Greater achievements • Superior health • Increased resilience • Enhanced emotional health • Increased longevity • Better quality relationships



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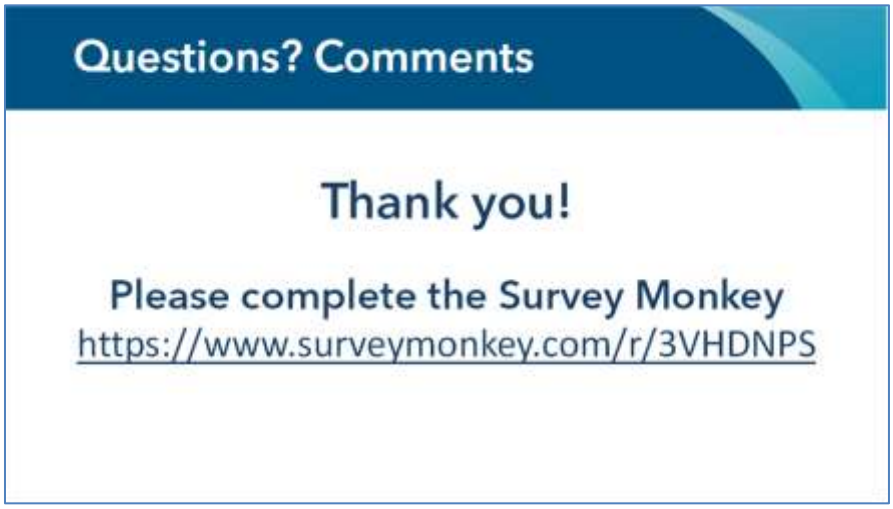


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Personal Coaching with a skilled coach includes actionable strategies to help you achieve personal well-being and professional development goals.

Financial Coaching. A Money Coach helps with topics like tax basics, money management, establishing credit, debt reduction, and more!


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