

DEFUSION STRATEGIES for a “BUSY BRAIN”

Helpful questions for unhelpful/unwanted thoughts

1. Is this thought in any way useful or helpful?
2. Is this an old “story”? Have I heard this thought before?
3. What would I get for buying into this thought/story?
4. Could this just be my mind babbling on?
5. Am I going to trust me mind or my experience? Where is the evidence behind this thought?
6. Do I want to have this thought dominating my life, pushing me around and telling me what to do?

Mindfulness techniques

- [Leaves on a stream](#) - Mindfulness Meditation
- If your [hands](#) were your thoughts exercise
- Notice what your mind is telling you. This strategy can be a quick defusion technique you can do anywhere. It reframes our minds as a storyteller. Asking you notice your thoughts rather than being caught up in them. It’s designed to create distance from thoughts. You can also add some other defusion strategies for example; the helpful questions mentioned above.

“I’m having the thought that...”

This technique asks you to say either out loud or in your head whatever thought you may have with the preceding phrase “I’m having the thought that”. This technique is also about creating distance between ourselves and our thoughts. For example; “I’m having the thought that no one likes me”. You can then extend the exercise by describing your surroundings and then gradually broadening this description. For example; “I’m sitting in a chair having the thought that no one likes me” ... “I’m sitting in a chair in my bedroom having the thought that no one likes me” and so on. This strategy may be useful in gaining perspective on how small our thoughts are in comparison to the big wide world as you continue to broaden your surroundings.

Thank your mind

In this technique you can thank you mind for whatever it says to you even if it is nasty or scary. If you can try and do this sarcastically with a sense of humour it’s a way to be playful with our thoughts when they try and grab our attention... yet again!

Sing your thoughts

This asks you to hear or sing your thoughts either out loud or silently to a familiar tune. Some choose a tune such as Happy Birthday or a Nursery Rhyme. A variation on the strategy could also be to say your

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thoughts in a strange or playful voice, even change the rate to ultra-slow motion. You can even just repeat the thought over and over until it becomes meaningless... just words.

Notice the form

This technique asks you to take some time to try and notice the “form” of your thought as if you were looking at it. Is it made up of words or pictures? Do you see it, hear it or just sense it? What does it sound like in your head? Is it your own voice or somebody else? Is it loud or soft? What colour is it? What is the texture? Is it moving or still? Where does it sit in your body?

The idea of this is to examine the thought like a scientist or researcher.

Naming your story

This asks you to think about some of the common thoughts that you have about yourself and give them names. For example “the no one like me story” or “the loser story” or “the, my life sucks story”. As you do this you may be able to recognise that thoughts which feed this story and you can also name them. You might say “Ah I know this old story... it’s the, I’m a loser story”. The approach is not about over analysing it, just acknowledge it as stories that come and go, while you channel your energy into something you enjoy or value.