

# CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS TO BE THE MASTER OF YOUR MIND



## CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS



### Why is this important to my health?

Automatic thoughts can affect your view of yourself, the world around you, and the future. These thoughts can affect health outcomes as well as overall quality of life.



### Daily Thoughts Create Automatic Thoughts



We have control over when we wake up, what we eat, drinking water over soda, deciding to

exercise, how we react to stressful situations, and the people we surround ourselves with. All of these choices each and every day lead to habits and automatic thoughts being formed. Negative thoughts can be hard to break and positive thoughts can be hard to form. The good news is that through repetition, it is possible to think more positive, automatic thoughts.

Often our thoughts happen so quickly that we fail to notice them and we rarely examine their objectivity. Yet these thoughts can profoundly affect our mood and well-being. These are called *automatic thoughts*. Our minds can be our greatest asset or our worst liability. Especially during times of stress, the mind can create unreasonable, inaccurate, or unhelpful ways of thinking.

### Practice These Three Steps

Thoughts have no power over us, apart from the power we bestow on them. The first thing to consider is having an understanding of how our thoughts, feelings and behaviors are connected. When an event happens or your mind wanders, we tend to have an automatic thought, which can then influence the way we feel emotionally, affecting our behaviors. Use these three steps to help you shift your thoughts to the positive.

#### 1. Catch

Pause, identify and **catch** your thought.

#### 2. Evaluate

Is there another way of looking at this?

How would you respond if a friend thought that way?

If your thought was genuinely true, why would it bother you?

#### 3. Reframe

What alternative thought might be more accurate?

*What can I learn from this new way of thinking?*



### Make Positive Thinking a Priority



The path to positive thinking and setting happiness as a priority is something many people strive to be on, yet might not have the tools to stay on. Struggling with depressive, anxious, or negative thoughts can often be a barrier to understanding that it's not always about what happens to you, but how you frame these situations.

The idea that you can't always control what happens to you, but you can control how you react to it is a good place to start by understanding that it is in our own power to see a situation through a certain frame.

Reach out for more information and to discuss your individual lifestyle habits today!

# REFRAME NEGATIVE THINKING



Below are examples of common thinking patterns and how to reframe them in a positive, productive way.

## All or None Thinking

Things are either good or bad, black or white, no middle ground.

**Example:** "This pandemic is ruining my life."

**Reframed thought:** "Although there are some challenges with the pandemic, it is bringing some opportunities into my life as well."

## Overgeneralization

A single negative circumstance manifests into pattern in your mind.

**Example:** "There was no toilet paper on the shelves today. I won't ever be able to obtain my necessities again!"

**Reframed thought:** "There was no toilet paper available to the store I went to today. I will call other stores and obtain my necessities as I am able."

## Disqualifying the Positive

Holding a negative belief that discounts any positive circumstances and maintains focus on the negative.

**Example:** "This whole thing is horrible and scary."

**Reframed thought:** "I am uncomfortable going to the grocery store right now. However, I have options to order online or have my kids drop off food as I need it."

## Jumping to Conclusions

Believing a negative interpretation often due to strong feelings as opposed to supporting facts.

**Example:** "That person is buying too much food in the grocery line. They must be hoarding."

**Reframed thought:** "Possibly this person is buying food for sick or high-risk family members in addition to themselves. They may also be feeling additional stress due to the extra time it has taken them to shop."

## Magnification

Exaggerating facts and missing the big picture.

**Example:** "My wife chatted with her friend and did not wear her mask. We will all be infected with the coronavirus now!!"

**Reframed thought:** "We have not done everything perfectly, but we are decreasing our risks. Overall, my family is following the recommended precautions pretty well."

## Emotional Reasoning

Assuming a negative emotion is necessarily a true reflection of how things really are.

**Example:** "I feel very anxious about this virus, therefore I just know something really bad is going to happen!"

**Reframed thought:** "Although this virus is serious and highly contagious, if I practice the recommended guidelines, I can decrease my chances of contracting it."

