

The 6 “R’s” of Working with Problematic Thought Patterns

- Thought patterns can get us into lots of trouble!
 - They can have a tremendous “stickiness” that gets our minds “stuck” around certain issues, beliefs or concepts.
 - Once our minds are “stuck” we humans feel a tremendous “urge” to follow these thought patterns... which often times, doesn’t lead anywhere good.
 - This is an overview of working with this “sticky” quality of our minds, and freeing ourselves of the “urge” to follow destructive patterns.
1. **Recognizing**
 - Recognize that you are stuck!!
 - The 1st and most important step.
 - A useful quote that can help us out here is...
“the emotions are our bodies reaction to thought”
 - Chances are that if you are *feeling* strong emotions, you are probably “stuck” somewhere.
 2. **Refraining**
 - Refrain from following the “urge” to follow destructive thinking patterns.
 - I find it useful to ***do something other than the usual response here...***
 - If you know “The Work” then this would be a great time to do it!
 - By refraining we train ourselves to adapt and respond more appropriately to life
 3. **Relaxing**
 - Once we refrain from our habitual “urge” to follow, we may find that the *feeling* of being stuck is still there... this is normal.
 - Relax into the feeling of being “stuck”
 - You will find that if you can allow yourself to relax, both the feeling and the urge to follow our habitual responses dissipate and lessen!
 - I find it useful to practice a breathing exercise or grounding practice (like meditation) to allow this relaxation to occur.
 4. **Resolve**
 - Resolve to do this process again and again!
 - Why? Because you are human, and it’s in the nature of humans to get stuck in problematic thinking patterns from time to time!
 - Don’t be harsh on yourself with this... Don’t say to yourself “Oh jeez... here I am stuck again” in a negative way when you notice that you are stuck. Rather, congratulate yourself for noticing and having the ability to see that you are stuck! This leads to the road of release.
 5. **Rephrase/Reaffirm:**
 - Rephrase whatever the “negative” thought was that your recognized was keeping you stuck
 - Be careful how you talk to yourself because you are listening
 - Complete a “thought record” from Mind over Mood if necessary
 6. **Reward**
 - Treat yourself kindly by rewarding yourself with a simple life pleasure, such as a massage, a nice warm bath or to curl up with a good book.