

Thought vs. Self

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A short cognitive defusion exercise

When a thought "hooks" us completely, we start believing it is the whole truth about us or the situation. This exercise creates a little distance between you and the content of your mind, without denying or fighting the thought.

1. The difficult thought

Write the thought exactly as it appears in your mind.

2. Add the observer prefix

Rewrite the thought starting with: 'I notice I'm having the thought that...'

3. How does it feel different?

What changes when you put distance between yourself and the thought?

4. An even more playful version (optional)

You could try singing the thought, or saying it in a funny voice in your mind, to weaken its grip.

Worth remembering

The goal of defusion is not to get rid of thoughts or make them disappear, but to notice that you are more than the content of your mind - and that you can choose how you respond, even when the thought is present.