

HOW TO CHANGE NEGATIVE THOUGHT PATTERNS



Suggestions to help you transform the harmful thinking that's sabotaging your happiness and be better able to create more of what you want in your life.

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Introduction

Hello and welcome!

I'm Jill and I've written this e-book to help you change negative thought patterns. It's based on methods that I've used to transform my own unhelpful thinking. The key is to do them. And to do them consistently.

I used to be very good at acquiring more knowledge. I would read about something, understand it and perhaps try it for a day or two. Then I'd "forget" or be busy. It was only when I made a determined effort to stick with it that I began to see changes.

So that would be my advice to you: develop a consistent practise. Firstly, know your intent and why you wish to do this. Then set your commitment.

Maybe choose just one of these suggestions, the one that most appeals to you and would be the easiest to carry out, and then practise it every day for a month. If you want to choose more, that's fine. There are no set rules about how or when. They are ideas given to you to find what works for you.

My work is helping women heal, transform and thrive in their lives. I help them get unstuck and remove the hidden blocks, beliefs and patterning that are stopping them living the life they want.

I love helping them connect with the power and potential of their true authentic self. To see their own truth, grow in confidence and self-belief and be able to create a life they love.

If this sounds like you and you'd like to find out more then please visit: www.JillGraham.net

Mind Your Language

Paying attention to how you talk to yourself and to others can really help you in changing negative thought patterns. Do you find yourself saying any of the following? :

I can't ...

I don't ...

It's hard

I don't know how ...

I never ...

Idiot!

Why can't you...

Begin to notice how much of your self-talk is critical. Do the words that come out of your mouth talk about what is missing or lacking in your life? Are you harsh with yourself about what you "should" be doing? Do you compare yourself with others and feel inferior or less than?

Notice how much of the words you speak about others are critical. Do you tend more to find fault with what hasn't been done or what you don't like? Do you gossip about others and say things you wouldn't if they were there?

What words do you say to yourself when you wake in the morning? Is it along the lines of "yey, brilliant, another day!" or "*!*!another day. Here we go again". Do you hear yourself saying that you're tired, you're late?

What words do you say to yourself just before you go to sleep? "thank goodness today's over", "another horrible day over". Do you go over and over all the things that happened in the day that you didn't like?

What are the last words you speak – either out loud or silently – before you go to sleep? Those are the words that you're taking into your subconscious with you.

Mind Your Language (cont.)

Are the words that you speak empowering or disempowering? Would you like to experience in your life what the words you're speaking are portraying?

When you first start to notice what you're saying you may be shocked or discouraged. Know that noticing is going to help you to change. Those words have been said anyway. Affecting your life. You just didn't know. Now you do you have the power and the ability to do something about it. And that is incredibly powerful. Every teeny tiny shift is working for you to create what you want in life.

Meditation

Meditation is a very powerful tool to change your negative thought patterns. It lets you take control of your mind instead of your mind taking control of you.

Research has been done showing that meditation helps to reduce the occurrence of intrusive thoughts. It's understood that mindfulness meditation affects an area of the brain that's linked to mind wandering and mind chatter. Meditation is believed to reduce activity in the brain, especially in the amygdala which governs fear, anxiety and worry. It also increases activity in the part of the brain associated with mood and arousal.

Meditation doesn't have to be complicated. You don't need to sit for hours. That is an option. However you can also meditate for 5 minutes or 15 minutes or half an hour. Any meditation is effective. You can also do one minute meditations during your day or walking meditations.

So let's look at one of those – a sitting meditation. When you sit in meditation you might find it helpful to have a focus such as your breath or a candle. Set aside time for yourself without any distractions: No computer, no phone, no texting, no background music or tv.

You may want to sit in a chair or on the floor. Just get comfortable, ideally in an upright posture, not over-rigid or over-relaxed. Then you may want to focus on your breath. Simply become aware of your inhale and exhale. Or count to 3 with your inhale and exhale, if that feels comfortable for you. If you're sitting in meditation without a breath or object focus then you can simply notice your thoughts. When you notice them, don't follow them but let them go. It may help to think of them like clouds in the sky, there one moment and then passing by. Whenever you notice that your attention has wandered then gently bring it back.

Practising meditation on a regular basis can help to lessen an over-active mind and help you in changing unwanted negative thought patterns.

Breathing

Breathing is something we all do! So how brilliant that something we naturally do, without having to effort or take special training for, can be used to help change negative thought patterns.

Have you ever caught yourself holding your breath if you're nervous about something or afraid? Have you noticed yourself breathing faster in certain situations? Or breathing more slowly than usual? If you're feeling angry you might have a weak breath in and a more forceful breath out. If you're feeling upset your breathing may be more fitful and spasmodic. When you're feeling stressed your breathing is more shallow.

Breathing oxygenates our cells and is a vital key to our physical, mental and emotional health. So becoming aware of your breathing and developing optimal breathing patterns can help you in changing negative thought patterns.

There is much information available about how to use breathing to improve your well-being so take your time to find what resonates with you and introduce some simple practises to help encourage your mind to work positively for you.

Throw Away

This suggestion is about getting your thoughts out of your head.

Getting negative thoughts out reduces their power and allows you to begin to change them and direct your thinking in a way that's more beneficial to you.

There are several ways you could do this.

The first is to write down your negative thoughts. You might want to sit for five minutes or ten and write down anything you think about yourself; how you see yourself. Or it may be negative thoughts you're having about a situation. Simply writing them down gets them out of your head. It brings them to the light of day so you see them more clearly. It also gives them less power because you're aware of them and that's the first step to change.

Many of your negative thoughts are invisible because you may be so used to them that you don't even realise what you're thinking. Writing them down illuminates them and anything that's in the light is no longer hidden. You then have choice about whether you want them to stay or go.

You can go one step further and either tear up what you've written and dispose of or burn it safely in an appropriate container and place and then dispose of the ash. If you have your own garden or yard you could ask the earth to transform the negative energy into positive energy and bury it.

Another possibility, if you live near water is to ask for the negative thoughts to leave you and be cleansed. If you live near the sea or a lake, pond or river where there are small pebbles or stones then you could ask them and the water if they would assist you in releasing and clearing your negativity. Then you'd intend for your anger or worry to go into the pebble and for the water to wash it away.

Elastic Fantastic

The idea of this is to bring you back to the present moment and make it easier to step away from living on automatic pilot.

Thoughts that are on auto-play are going to affect your life. Do you really want a stream of negativity running unchecked?

I have long hair and often have a hair elastic on my wrist. So I've found I can use it to set my intent to change my negative thought patterns.

By taking hold of it and pulling on it and snapping it against my wrist it acts as a reminder of my intent and pulls me back into the present moment. Just by looking at it I remember what I want to do and it makes it easier to practise.

If you want to use this then I'd advise choosing a hair elastic like mine that is soft and also loose enough to go on the wrist without restricting the blood supply! Periodically twanging it throughout the day gives opportunities to notice your thoughts and then you can change the ones you don't like.

If you aren't aware of the thoughts running through your mind then you don't know whether they're affecting your life in a positive or negative way.

Mind The Media

I invite you to notice the content of the things that you read, watch and listen to. Begin to be aware of the nature of what's expressed in the newspapers and magazines you read, the tv programmes, films and movies that you watch and the adverts you hear or see.

If the things being portrayed are negative then it's going to affect you. If you're seeing images of suffering, difficulty, disaster, violence, things going badly, struggle, lack then that's being imprinted on your subconscious mind. Your subconscious mind acts as a recorder: It takes things literally. It doesn't qualify or differentiate.

The more often that your subconscious mind sees or hears something the more strongly it embeds. So if something negative is repeatedly being absorbed then the easier it is to have a negative thought come up.

Notice how you feel when you read the paper. Do you feel light or heavy? Do you feel hopeful and optimistic or anxious and pessimistic? If the focus in the newspapers that you read leans more towards the negative and you feel anxious, fearful, angry or low whilst reading it then that's being absorbed into your mind and body.

Have you ever played the red car (or similar) game? When you put your focus on a red car you start noticing them. It's not that there are suddenly more red cars on the roads - simply that you're noticing red ones more than any other colour. Whatever you focus your attention on grows. So if you are continually absorbing negative beliefs, thoughts and ideas then you're likely to experience more negative thoughts.

I also love the illustration with an orange that Wayne Dyer used. He asked what would come out of an orange if you squeezed it. The answer, obviously, is orange juice. What comes out is what is inside. So the more negativity you're absorbing the more negativity is going to automatically come out. So monitor what you expose yourself to and decide for yourself what you want to experience.

Pattern Interrupt

You may not be aware just how much of your life is done on automatic pilot. You have your fixed routine and go through much of your day without conscious thought.

Let's start with waking up. What's the first thing that you do? Do you visit the bathroom? Get dressed? Have a cup of tea or coffee? Eat breakfast? Do you rush straight out to work? Perhaps you go to the gym.

Think about the things you regularly do each day. Do you have lunch at the same time each day? Do you eat similar things such as a sandwich? Do you eat in the same place? Do you eat with the same people or by yourself?

How do you get to work or to visit family or friends? Do you walk, drive, go by bus or train? Do you take the same route? And what about your evenings – how do you spend them?

As you think about your day and what you do you'll most likely notice that you have a lot of routines and set ways of doing things.

So the idea here is to make some changes. Vary your route when you're making a journey. Eat or drink something different or change your meal times. If you always wear a suit then consider wearing jeans or tracksuit and vice versa. Or if you always dress in black then introduce some colour. Choose what appeals to you.

The point of this is that a lot of our negative thinking is routine. We don't consciously think about it. You might catch yourself calling yourself "lazy" or "ugly" or "stupid". Perhaps you drop something and say "idiot!" or you forget to do something and ask yourself "why can't you remember to do a simple thing?"

So by consciously changing your patterns you are taking your mind out of automatic pilot. You're becoming more aware and engaged in what you're doing and what's going on around you. I believe it also creates more space and more possibility for something new to come in.

Alarming

This suggestion is to help you become more conscious of the thoughts you're having.

What I've found is that I can start my day with the best of intentions and then I get caught up in what I'm doing and am no longer aware of my thoughts or mindful of what I'm doing.

By using an alarm or timer it means that my attention is interrupted and I have an opportunity to take control rather than running on automatic pilot.

You could use an alarm on your phone or an alarm clock. When the alarm sounds then notice what thoughts you're having: Whether they're helpful ones or unhelpful.

Another way you could use this to help you is to place your attention on your breathing when the alarm goes off. No need to do in any set way; just simply be aware of yourself breathing in and out. That will help to bring your focus back to your body and away from your mind and if you have a chattering mind it helps to slow it down.

Simple, but effective.

Sound

Sound and mantras can change your energy vibration and this makes it easier to change negative thought patterns.

If you choose to work with a mantra then I suggest you choose one that appeals to you. Choose one that you enjoy the sound of and also the meaning of the words.

The different words that make up a mantra have an effect on your internal vibration and the environment around you.

Perhaps one of the most well known mantras is "om mani padme hum". What does this mean?

My understanding is that "om" is the divine, the universal creation, the spark of life that is present in us. It frees your energy so that you can become the highest expression of who you truly are. "Mani" means jewel and can help to remove negative energies from your aura. "Padme" means lotus. The lotus is a flower that grows in the mud yet is not affected by the mud and is very beautiful. "Hum" represents the spirit of enlightenment, the unmoveable and the indivisible.

You may want to choose just one word to repeat.

You can listen to meditations using mantras but saying them yourself out loud is really beneficial as you can feel the vibration and the sound. Ideally, it's helpful to repeat a mantra 108 times. However, you'll still benefit even if you repeat it for lesser times.

Crystal singing bowls are a lovely way to change your vibration and thus help you with changing negative thought patterns. The bowls are made of pure quartz crystal which is a transmitter of energy. Our bodies also are crystalline in structure. The sounds and vibrations from crystal singing bowls can touch our cells and resonate with them by a process of entrainment. They can help to transform negative energy and thoughts and assist you in coming back into harmony within yourself.

Affirmations

Affirmations can be used in a couple of ways to help you change your negative thought patterns. .

You could create some positive affirmations that help you to feel light and optimistic and focus your thoughts on how you'd like your life to be. Here are a few examples:

"As I live my life today I choose to see myself as someone who enjoys his/her life."

"As I live my life today I see myself as someone who is healthy and happy."

"All I need comes to me at the perfect time and in the perfect way".

"I am safe, secure and all is well."

You can also use affirmations to counter your negative thoughts. One way to do this is to give yourself five or ten minutes to sit and write down all the negative thoughts that come up for you. These could be about how you see yourself or your life. For each negative then write down what the opposite would be and use this as a counter affirmation. Here are a few examples:

"I never have enough money" becomes " My needs are always met".

"I'm fed up of being sick" becomes "My body knows how to heal" or "I am healthy."

"I hate my job" becomes "I love the work that I do".

Affirmations (cont.)

If you find yourself experiencing strong emotions or resistance with any of your statements then choose ones that are easier for you to work with or see if you can write in such a way that it's believable for you.

If you really don't see yourself as successful then you could say:

"I am willing to see myself as successful" or "with every beat of my heart I see myself as more and more successful every day".

Experiencing strong emotions or resistance around an affirmation can actually be a wonderful clue and guidance to what may be causing you issues and what to address. If there's deeper work that you want to do you might benefit from the assistance of a coach or someone who can support you in this.

Have fun with your affirmations! I've enjoyed countering negative thoughts and deciding that no, I don't want to continue with that thought.

Imagine the kind of life you'd love to be living. Dream big! And then come up with affirmations that support and agree with that.

Let me finish this book and leave you with this affirmation:

"I am now creating a wonderful life for myself.

Everyday, I see myself as healthy, abundant, happy, fulfilled and enjoying wonderful relationships.

I love my life."

I hope you've enjoyed this book and found it helpful. If you'd like to know more about my work you can find me at

www.JillGraham.net

I'd be delighted to connect with you.