

Linda Hill

INTERNAL VS EXTERNAL EVENTS

YOU HAVE A BIG PRESENTATION FOR WORK COMING UP. ARE YOU A, OBSESSING OVER EVERY INTERNAL EVENT – MEANING, ARE YOU OVERLY PREOCCUPIED WITH EVERY NEGATIVE OR ANXIOUS FEELING/THOUGHT. OR ARE YOU B, OBSESSING OVER ALL EXTERNAL EVENTS – THAT IS, EMOTION AVOIDANT, PREOCCUPIED WITH WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND YOU TO AVOID DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONS YOU FEEL ABOUT A SPECIFIC EVENT.

**INTERNAL/
EXTERNAL**

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EXERCISE:



10 MINUTES AS NEEDED.

IF YOU ARE A IN THE ABOVE SCENARIO PRACTICE BRINGING YOUR ATTENTION TO THE EXTERNAL. SIT IN A COMFORTABLE POSITION. START TO FOCUS COMPLETELY ON THE WORLD AROUND YOU, USE YOUR SENSES. WHERE ARE YOU SITTING? WHAT COLORS/SHAPES ARE AROUND YOU? LOOK AT THE DIFFERENT SHAPES, STUDY THEIR LINES/EDGES. NEXT FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN HEAR. IS IT LOUD OR QUIET? MAYBE THERE ARE BIRDS CHIRPING IN THE DISTANCE. FROM THERE MOVE ON TO SMELLS. ARE THERE ANY SMELLS YOU ARE PICKING UP ON?

**INTERNAL/
EXTERNAL**

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IF YOU ANSWERED B IN THE SCENARIO PRACTICE THE FOLLOWING.

FIND A COMFORTABLE POSITION. BREATHE DEEPLY AND RELAX. ALLOW YOUR THOUGHTS TO WASH OVER YOU. NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS AND SEE HOW THEY COME AND GO. DON'T JUDGE OR REACT TO THE THOUGHTS SIMPLY TAKE NOTE OF THEM AND BE AWARE OF THE CONTENT OF YOUR MIND. NEXT, FOCUS ON YOUR EMOTIONS. HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY? MAYBE YOU FEEL CRANKY BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T SLEEP WELL LAST NIGHT. BECOME AWARE OF YOUR EMOTIONS. FINALLY, CHECK IN ON PHYSICAL SENSATIONS IN YOUR BODY. DO YOU HAVE TENSION IN YOUR NECK BECAUSE YOU ARE ANXIOUS? YOU MIGHT FEEL PAIN IN YOUR STOMACH. AGAIN, WHATEVER YOU FEEL. DO NOT JUDGE OR REACT. SIMPLY BECOME AWARE AND ACKNOWLEDGE.

**INTERNAL/
EXTERNAL**

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**ON THE NEXT PAGE WRITE DOWN THE DATE AND WHAT
YOU EXPERIENCED FROM EXERCISE A OR WHAT YOU
THOUGHT/FELT FROM EXERCISE B.**

**INTERNAL/
EXTERNAL**

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A series of horizontal dashed lines for handwriting practice, spanning the width of the page below the name.

Mindful Word Repeat

The purpose of this exercise is to reduce the power and influence of certain words or thoughts that may be causing distress.

Here's how you can practice this technique:

1

Select a Word: Start by picking a word that's been causing you stress or discomfort. This could be a self-label ("failure"), a worry ("unemployment"), or an emotion ("anxiety").

2

Slow Repetition: Begin to repeat this word out loud slowly and clearly. Pay close attention to the sounds of the word, the way it feels in your mouth when you say it, and any emotions or thoughts that come up as you do this.

3

Continue the Repetition: Keep repeating the word at a steady pace for about a minute. As you do this, you might start to notice that the word begins to lose its meaning. It becomes just a sound, separate from the idea or emotion it represents.

4

Reflection: Once you've finished repeating the word, take a moment to reflect on the experience. Did the word lose some of its impact? Did it feel less threatening or powerful?

This exercise helps to illustrate how thoughts and words are constructed and how their meanings can shift depending on context. By practicing "Mindful Word Repeat," you can learn to see your distressing thoughts as just words or phrases, reducing their power to cause emotional distress. Remember, the goal isn't to get rid of the thought or change it, but rather to change your relationship with it.

Avoidance

When someone experiences a trauma one of the most common reactions is to avoid. It usually works for a short time but trauma tends to pop up in other ways that get in the way of you living a happy and productive life. Fill out the worksheet below to see how avoidance and facing trauma directly applies to you.

AVOIDANCE

PROS

FACING TRAUMA

PROS

CONS

CONS

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MENTAL NOTING

OUR THINKING CAN SO OFTEN DISTRACT US FROM BEING MINDFUL. WHILE WE ARE PRACTISING MINDFULNESS A SIMPLE METHOD TO USE OUR THINKING TO KEEP US MINDFUL INSTEAD OF TAKING US AWAY FROM IT IS CALLED 'MENTAL NOTING'. MENTAL NOTING IS THE PRACTICE OF NOTING, ON A PIECE OF PAPER, THE THOUGHT THAT COMES UP DURING YOUR MINDFULNESS PRACTICE. AT FIRST, IT CAN BE AWKWARD, BUT WITH SOME PRACTICE, IT CAN BE A POTENT TOOL. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF NOTING IS TO KEEP YOU IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, HOWEVER, IT CAN BE VERY HELPFUL IN FINDING PATTERNS IN YOUR THINKING.

MENTAL NOTING

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EXERCISE:



10 MINUTES AS NEEDED.

FIND A COMFORTABLE, QUIET SPACE WITH SOME PEN AND PAPER. NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS WHEN THEY COME UP AND WRITE THEM DOWN. DON'T ANALYSE THEM SIMPLY NOTE THEM IN THE FORM "I AM THINKING ABOUT ____". FOR EXAMPLE, I AM THINKING ABOUT THE FIGHT I HAD WITH MY HUSBAND/WIFE" "I AM THINKING ABOUT THE WORK ASSIGNMENT MY BOSS GAVE ME".

EXERCISE:



10 MINUTES AS NEEDED.

ONCE YOU HAVE GOTTEN USED TO NOTING YOUR THOUGHTS, YOU CAN MOVE ON TO YOUR EMOTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS AND SENSATIONS.

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AGAIN, YOU ARE SIMPLY NOTING YOUR FEELINGS NOT JUDGING THEM. WHEN AN EMOTION/SENSATION COMES UP USE THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE "I FEEL X", "WHEN I THINK ABOUT X, I FEEL Y". FOR EXAMPLE, I FEEL SAD. WHEN I THINK ABOUT MONEY, I FEEL ANXIOUS.

USE THE WORKSHEET ON THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE EXERCISES.

EXERCISE 1:

1

Eg: I am thinking about what to cook for dinner

2

3

4

5

6

6

EXERCISE 2:

1

Eg: I feel a pressure in my chest.

2

3

4

5

6

6

Leaf on a Stream

his practice helps you to detach from your thoughts, viewing them as transient occurrences rather than solid truths.

Here's how to perform this exercise:

1

Visualization: Start by visualizing a gently flowing stream surrounded by trees, with leaves falling onto the stream's surface.

2

Acknowledge Your Thoughts: As thoughts come up, mentally place each one on a leaf in the stream. This could be a word, a phrase, an image, or even an emotional sensation that represents the thought.

3

Let it Go: Allow the leaf with the thought on it to float away down the stream. Don't try to influence its path or speed; just let it go and allow it to follow the current of the stream.

4

Repeat: Continue with this process with each thought as it arises. If your thoughts pause, just watch the stream until another thought pops up.

5

Redirecting Focus: If your mind gets hooked on a particular thought, or if a thought comes back again, just notice this and place the thought back on another leaf and let it float away.

6

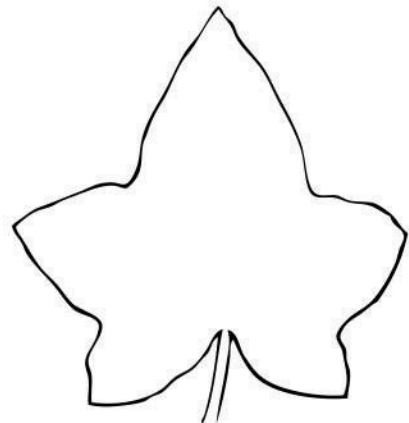
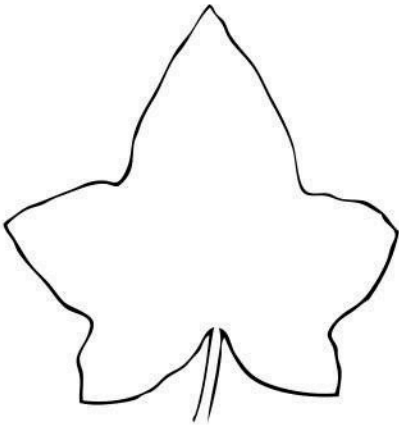
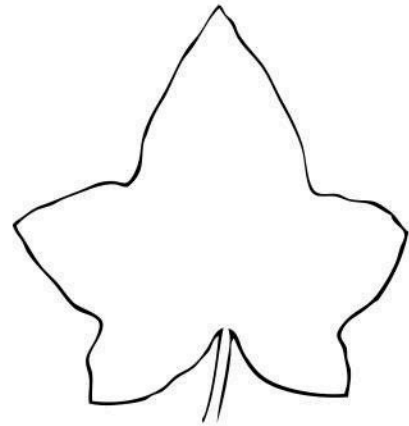
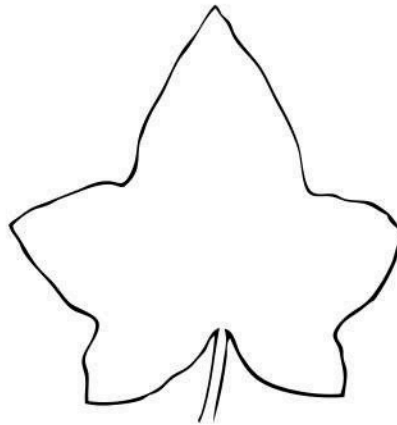
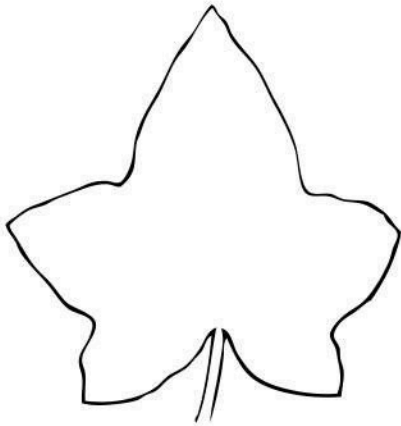
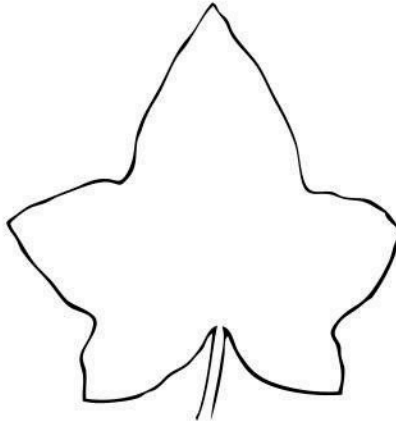
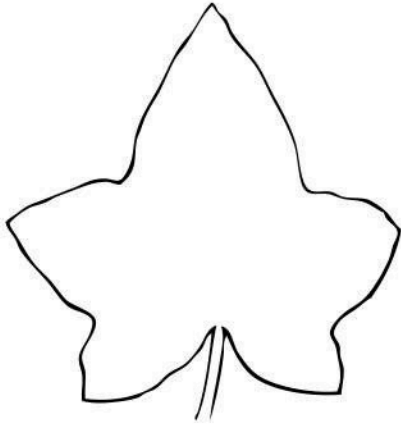
Be Patient: Some thoughts are sticky and keep coming back. That's okay. Each time, gently place the thought on a leaf and let it float away.

Through practising this exercise, you can develop a more detached and observational relationship with your thoughts, seeing them as fleeting and impersonal events that do not define or control you.

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Leaf on a Stream

write down some of your thoughts that come up during your visualization.



Daily check-in

This is just a quick check-in to track your feelings and how you use your chill-out plan. It can be helpful to keep track of what works and what doesn't so you can adjust your plan.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?

DID YOU PRACTICE ANY OF YOUR CHILL OUT PLANS TODAY?

WHAT CHILL-OUT DID YOU DO?

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY OF YOUR CHILL-OUT PLAN?

WHAT CAN YOU DO BETTER NEXT TIME?

Feelings

Feelings are emotions that you experience in your body. There are so many different feelings you can experience and they are constantly changing. Feelings are not always singular. You can feel many things at the same time (anger/hurt/disgust). Feelings are not good or bad. This is very important to understand. It is the way you respond to the feeling that positive or negative. For example, if you are angry and you act out violently. This is a negative reaction to anger. If you are angry and you walk away and calm down. This is a positive response.

HOW MANY FEELINGS CAN YOU THINK OF? WHAT FEELINGS DO YOU COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?

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HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THESE FEELINGS? DO YOU HAVE ANY COLOURS OR IMAGES RELATED TO THEM?



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COGNITIVE DIFUSION

COGNITIVE DIFUSION IS A TECHNIQUE THAT CREATES SPACE BETWEEN THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS. THE AIM OF DIFUSION IS TO DETACH FROM OUR INNER EXPERIENCE, REDUCE THE INFLUENCE THOUGHTS HAVE ON OUR BEHAVIOUR AND INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO STAY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT.

DIFUSION ALLOWS US TO HAVE MORE CONTROL OVER OUR THOUGHTS AND BE ABLE TO ASK IS THIS THOUGHT CAUSING ME TO SUFFER? AM I BEING BULLIED BY MY THOUGHTS?

**COGNITIVE
DIFUSION**

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EXERCISE:

THE FIRST DIFUSION TECHNIQUE IS TO NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS. IF YOU ARE HAVING A STRESSFUL THOUGHT ABOUT PAYING THE RENT THIS MONTH. SAY TO YOURSELF "I AM NOTICING I'M HAVING A THOUGHT OF PAYING THE RENT THIS MONTH". REPEAT WHEN YOU NOTICE REPETITIVE OR DISTRESSING THOUGHTS COMING UP.

EXERCISE:

THE SECOND DIFUSION TECHNIQUE IS TO THANK YOUR MIND FOR THE THOUGHT. IF YOUR MIND IS HAVING A DISTRESSING THOUGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, SAY TO YOURSELF "THANK YOU FOR LOOKING OUT FOR ME BUT I AM SAFE RIGHT NOW".

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IF YOU ARE HAVING A FUNNY THOUGHT "THANK YOU FOR THE FUNNY MEMORY". IT HELPS CHANGE THE RELATIONSHIP TO OUR THOUGHTS AND STOPS US FROM THINKING THAT EVERYTHING OUR MIND TELLS US OR SHOWS US IS GOSPEL.

THESE TECHNIQUES ARE VERY HELPFUL FOR PEOPLE WHO SUFFER FROM A LOT OF NEGATIVE THOUGHTS. IT MAY SEEM SILLY BUT OVER TIME THESE TECHNIQUES ALLOW YOU TO DETACH FROM YOUR THOUGHTS WHERE YOU CAN CONTROL HOW MUCH YOU WANT TO ENTERTAIN A THOUGHT.

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Thank Your Mind

The aim of this technique is to help create distance from unhelpful or intrusive thoughts and to change how you interact with them. Instead of becoming entangled in the thought or struggling against it, you simply acknowledge its presence.

Here's how you can use this technique:

1

Notice the thought: Whenever an unhelpful or distressing thought arises, notice it without judgement. Just be aware that the thought has entered your mind.

2

Thank your mind: Once you've noticed the thought, respond to it by saying, "Thanks, mind!" This may sound strange at first, but it's a way of recognizing that your mind is doing what it's designed to do (generate thoughts), even if those thoughts aren't always helpful.

3

Let it be: After thanking your mind, don't try to alter the thought, argue with it, or push it away. Simply let it be. If the thought persists, you can just keep thanking your mind as many times as necessary.

The "Thank Your Mind" technique helps you to become a more mindful observer of your thoughts, acknowledging their presence without getting caught up in them.

Feeling numb

It is common after a traumatic experience to feel numb or not be able to identify how you are feeling.

IS THIS SOMETHING YOU CAN RELATE TO?

**WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS?
(EG TALKING ABOUT IT, WRITING ABOUT IT ETC)**

if you can't think of anything you can brainstorm with a trusted person or therapist.

It is also common for people to try to not feel numb by doing things to get in trouble or act in a dangerous way.

IS THIS SOMETHING YOU CAN RELATE TO?

CAN YOU THINK OF SOME THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO INSTEAD TO HELP YOU FEEL THINGS THAT WILL NOT GET YOU IN TROUBLE OR ARE NOT DANGEROUS?

if you can't think of anything you can brainstorm with a trusted person or therapist.

Feelings in your body

One way to understand your emotions is to scan your body and pay attention to the different sensations. For example, when you feel anxious do you have a pit in your stomach? Can your chest feel tight? Go back to where you listed your feelings and use that as a guide to this exercise. Colour in where you feel your feelings the body on the next page. Describe what they feel like below.

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

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