

ACT: Thought Diffusion Techniques

<u>The Mind</u>	Treating your mind as an external event, almost as a separate person. Example: 'Well, there goes my mind again' or 'My mind is worrying again'
<u>Just Noticing</u>	Using the language of observation (noticing thoughts) when talking about private experiences. Example: 'So I'm just noticing that I'm judging myself right now.'
<u>Buying Thoughts</u>	Using active language to distinguish between thoughts that just occur and that thought that are believed. Example: 'I guess I'm buying the thought that I'm bad.'
<u>Pop-Up Mind</u>	Imagine that your negative chatter is like annoying Internet pop-up ads.
<u>Annoying</u> <u>Cell Phone</u>	Imagine that your negative chatter is like a cell phone you can't turn off. Example: 'Hello,. This is your mind speaking. Do you realize you need to worry?'
<u>Experiential Seeking</u>	Openly seek out more material, especially if it is difficult. If your mind tells you not to do something that is scary but worthwhile, thank your mind for the great hint and do the difficult thing with enjoyment.
<u>Think The Opposite</u>	If your mind is stopping action, practice deliberately engaging in a behavior while trying to command its opposite. Example: Walk down the hall while saying, 'I can't move while I'm reading this sentence!'
<u>Thoughts Are Not Causes</u>	If a thought seems to be a barrier to an action, ask yourself, 'Is it possible to think that thought, as a thought, AND do X?' Try it out by deliberately thinking the thought while doing what it has been stopping.
<u>Monsters On The Bus</u>	Treat scary private events as monsters on a bus you are driving. See if it is okay just to keep on driving rather than doing what they say or trying to get them to leave.
<u>Who Is In Charge Here?</u>	Treat thoughts as bullies; use colorful language. Who's life is this anyway? Your mind's or yours?
<u>How Old Is This? Is This Just Like You?</u>	When you are buying a thought, back up for a moment and ask yourself, "How old is this pattern?" or "Is this like me?"
<u>And What Is That In The Service Of?</u>	When you are buying a thought, back up for a moment and ask yourself, 'What is buying this thought in the service of?' If it isn't in the service of your interests, stop buying the thought.

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<u>Okay, you are right. Now What?</u>	If you are fighting to be 'right' even if it doesn't help move you forward, assume that your 'mind' has deemed you are 'right.' Now as yourself, 'So what? What can I actually do to create a more valued life from here?'
<u>Get Off Your But</u>	Replace virtually all self-referential use of 'but' with 'and.'
<u>Why, Why?</u>	If you find that your 'reasons why' are entangling, ask yourself repeatedly why the event exists and why it functions the way it does, until you have very hard time answering. It may help to show how shallow the story really is and how experiential avoidance creates the pain of absence. Example: 'I can't do it.' Why? 'I feel anxious.' And why does that mean you can't do it? 'Ahhh... don't know.' You can be both anxious AND do something.
<u>Create A New Story</u>	If you find yourself entangled in a 'logical' but sad story about your life, and why things have to be the way they are, write down the normal story, then take all the descriptive facts and write the same exact facts into a different story. Repeat until you feel more open to new possibilities with your history.
<u>Which Would You Rather Be?</u>	If you are fighting to be 'right,' even if it doesn't help you move forward, ask yourself, 'Which would I rather be? Right or alive and vital?'
<u>Find Something That Can't Be Evaluated</u>	If you find yourself entangled in negative evaluations, look around the room and notice that every single thing can be evaluated negatively if you choose to. So why should you be any different? This is just what the mind has evolved to do!
<u>And How Has That Worked For Me?</u>	When you are buying a thought, back up for a moment and ask yourself, 'How has that worked for me?' and if it hasn't worked ask, 'Which should I be guided by, my mind or my experience?'