

EXPLORING AND ADJUSTING OUR THINKING

The strategic direction this section provides is designed to help us shift the mind's focus to a healthier position or to think more positive thoughts. Often asking ourselves the right questions can help us stimulate healthy adjustment to habitual, yet inappropriate ways we sometimes think. Consider the following intellectual measures to guide the mind toward thinking more healthfully:

A. Explore emotionally in-depth questions

1. How does applying effort to become a more emotionally intelligent person enable us to improve?
2. How does screening for harmful feelings and negative thoughts help us to reduce them?
3. How does being curious about the quality of our self-talk help us define it?
4. How does carefully monitoring how well we are directing ourselves help us to improve?
5. How does practicing to block out harmful feelings help to reduce them?
6. How does healthful purpose reduce unhealthy desires?
7. How does concern about being kinder to others help us to identify more ways to do so?
8. How does concern for the safety of others and ourselves ward off potential calamity?
9. How does suffering through painful behavioral adjustments build healthy endurance?
10. How does searching for better methods increase creativity?
11. How does thinking of improving the quality of our behavior, open our minds to do so?
12. How does realizing that our thoughts need positive adjustment stimulate healthier application?

Discuss the ways we currently guide the mind healthfully, rather than just allow it to roam naturally or to dwell incessantly. Ask participants to share remedies they've employed to prevent harmful feelings from crippling their thinking. Another valuable link from the EI Month Material's page worth sharing is the [Motivational & Stress Reducing Self-Talk page](#). Consider the following measures to guide the mind while under pressure:

B. We can ask ourselves revealing questions.

1. What else do I need to think about?
2. Am I spending my time thinking productively?
3. Why is my mind thinking the way it is?
4. Can I learn to do what is more sensible while I am under pressure or when I just don't want to?

C. We can think about more meaningful topics.

1. Visualize fun things you would like to do.
2. Reflect on fun things you did with friends and family.
3. Be cognizant of kind things others have done for you.
4. Consider kind things you have done or can do for others.
5. Create ways to help block harmful feelings.
6. Repeat things you know you need to remember.
7. Think back to the meaningful events of yesterday and the day before.

D. We can pursue mentally and emotionally absorbing activities.

1. Read an interesting book.
2. Do something fun or interesting by yourself or with a friend.
3. Watch something funny or uplifting on TV or go see an uplifting movie at the theatre.
4. Draw a picture of a harmful feeling to help eliminate it from the mind.
5. Work on your priorities list.
6. Call others who could lift your spirits, or perhaps do something that could lift theirs.
7. Do something kind for someone.

E. We can repeat mantras that help to calm and soothe our thoughts.

1. Strong anxious sensations can cause me a lot of trouble!
2. My emotions are on fire, but my head knows this must be controlled!
3. You can beat this!
4. Bear with me!
5. You have a good head on your shoulders. Use it!
6. This irrational kind of thinking is a conflict of interest with my well-being!
7. I cannot just do whatever my mind dictates and get healthier!
8. Change is too new for me to take any chances!
9. Don't do it! If I accept this wrong choice, I know I will make an ILL HABIT stronger!
10. Without screening my thoughts, I can't block ill-behavior!
11. I cannot think about this right now.
12. I need to think about something different.
13. Try to keep calm—remember that practicing patience will help you maintain emotional balance.
14. Calm your urges! Calm your urges!

F. We can take steps to increase our endurance.

1. Wait a little longer.
2. Be careful not to let comfort dominate, as the truth is, discomfort is not always unbearable.
3. Understand that effort is an emotional quality factor.
4. Try to increase your power.
5. Know that patience can make a big difference.
6. Accept forcing yourself to do what's right.
7. Apply developmentally appropriate direction.
8. Don't cower to wimpy habits.
9. Read articles and books that suggest techniques for increasing endurance.
10. Know that enduring pain can feel comparable to a deep cut wound, when it's only equal to a paper cut.