

Dealing with Unwholesome **THOUGHTS**

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Unwholesome Thoughts

3 POISONS

Greed (Attachment)

Hatred (Aversion)

Delusion (Wrong Views & Beliefs)

Wrong Views

- Not seeing things as they really are
 - Not seeing **existence** as it really is
 - Empty
 - Impersonal
 - Not seeing “I” as it really is
 - Empty
 - Impersonal
 - Not seeing **thoughts** as they really are

Common Assumptions about Thoughts

ASSUMPTIONS	REALITIES
1. They are my thoughts	1. Thoughts are not yours. They arise out of causes and conditions.
2. They are real	2. Thoughts are not real. They are like all things – mere illusions. They become real to us only when we <u>believe</u> in them.
3. They are all of equal importance	3. Thoughts are not all the same. Some are more useful or beneficial than others.
4. They should not be ignored	4. Not only do some be ignored, they should not be given any power over us.

Two Types of Thoughts

WHOLESOME THOUGHTS	UNWHOLESOME THOUGHTS
Renunciation Non-Ill Will Harmlessness	Sensuality Ill Will Harmfulness
Leads to neither affliction to self, to others or to both Does not promote vexation	Leads to affliction to self, to others or to both Promotes vexation
Foster discernment and unbinding	Does not foster discernment and unbinding
Leads to healthy mind and body	Leads to unhealthy mind and body

[MN 19 Devdhavitakka Sutta]

Managing ANTs

[Automatic Negative Thoughts]

1. Be Aware of Your ANTS
2. Recognise types of ANTS
 - Worries
 - Regrets
 - Self Criticism (Inner Dialogue)
 - Judgment
 - Fear of Not Enough
3. Observe
 - Their patterns
 - Your automatic reactions to them
 - Effects on your state of mind
4. Manage ANTS
 - Mindfulness – put a distance or gap to your thoughts
 - Lighten Up! No need to take your thoughts seriously
 - Challenge or Question your thoughts



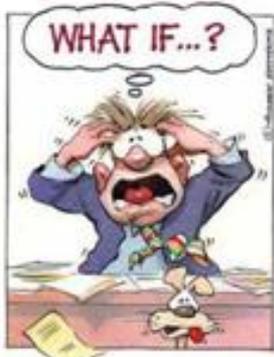
DON'T
BELIEVE
EVERYTHING
YOU
THINK

Checking In on Thoughts

Make use of the three filters:

1. Is it true?
2. Is it beneficial?
3. Is it appropriate for my goals?

Unwholesome Mental Habits



JUDGE



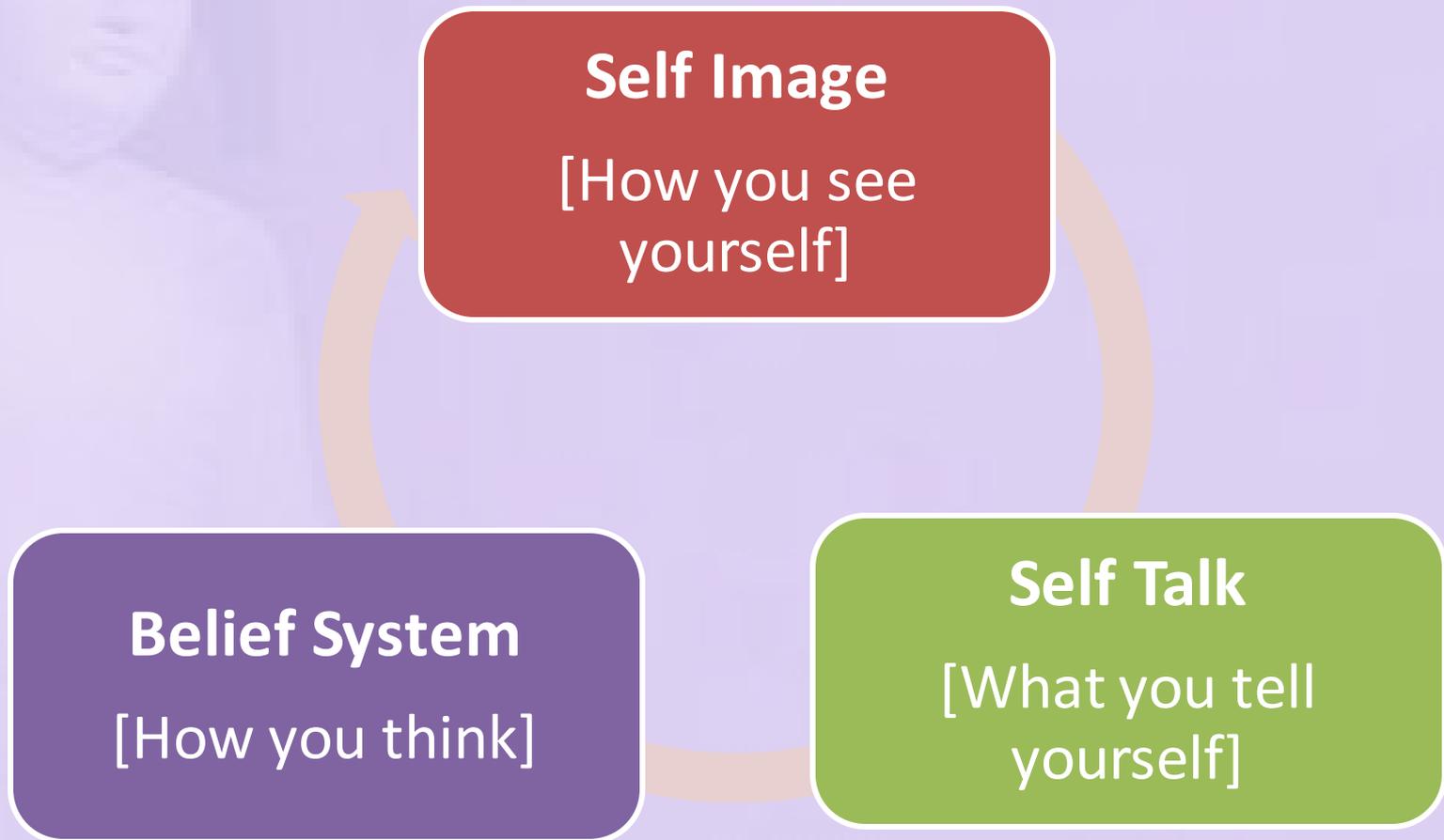


SELF-TALK

**The Most
Important
Conversation**

**You Will
Ever Have**

Self Talk Vicious Cycle



A photograph of two women walking away from the camera on a dirt path in a forest. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are lush and green. The lighting is soft, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting. The women are wearing jackets and dark pants, and they appear to be holding hands or walking very close together.

*Stop bullying
yourself.*

YOU'D STOP A BULLY
FAST FROM HURTING A
SMALL CHILD. WHY THEN
ALLOW YOUR INNER
BULLY?

- Farnoosh Brock

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Managing Negative Thoughts

STRATEGIES	ANALOGIES
1. Replace negative thoughts with positive ones	1. Dislodging an existing peg with a new one
2. Reflect on drawbacks of negative thoughts	2. Someone beautifying herself with a dead animal or carcass on her body
3. Pay no attention to negative talks	3. Someone ignoring a beautiful object or person, or walking away from it
4. Gradual relaxing or reduction of negative thought fabrications	4. Someone running who turns to walking, walking to standing, standing to lying down
5. Forceful restrain of negative thoughts	5. Someone strong restraining or pushing down someone else who is weaker

[MN 20 Vitakkasanthana Sutta]

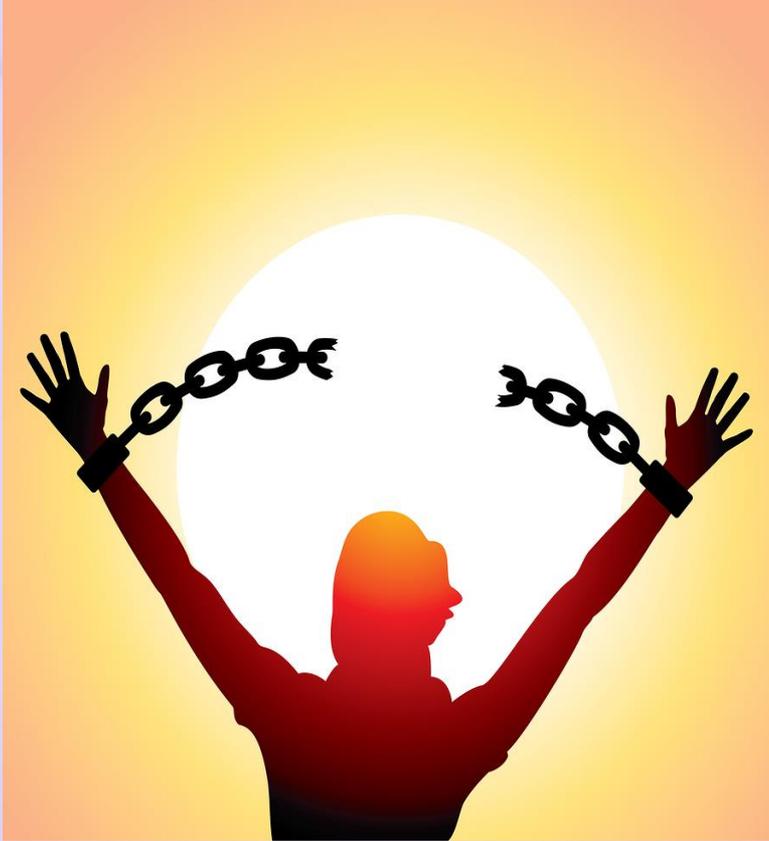
More Strategies to manage ANTs

STRATEGIES	REMARKS
1. Label your thoughts	Instead of saying, “I am a loser”, say “I am having the thought that I am a loser”
2. Let them float away	Put your thought on a leaf and let it float away in the river
3. Sing your thoughts	Sing it in a funny or ridiculous way
4. Say them in a funny voice	Make light of your thoughts
5. Name your stories	“Oh, here’s my Self Bully story starting again”
6. Do It Anyway	I can function even when I am anxious/fearful

Key Observations on Thoughts

1. There is **no one to own** the thoughts
2. They are not real. They come and go according to **causes and conditions**
3. Thoughts are **empty** of any intrinsic values. Their values arise only when we believe in them.
4. Thoughts are **not** all created equal

FREEDOM



“When you realise that your thoughts are **empty** of any intrinsic values except that which you gave to them, you would have found a way to **freedom.**”

Letting Go Defilements

- Defilements [kilesa]: that which prevents us from seeing and experiencing the Original Mind
- Types of defilements
 - **Greed**, sensuality, attachments
 - **Ill Will**, hatred, aversion
 - **Delusion**, wrong views, cruelty
- Let go the burden of unwholesome thoughts, mental habits, beliefs, wrong views

Key Thoughts

1. Happiness is a mind state
2. Our mind state is determined by our thoughts.
3. How we experienced life is dependent on our present mind state. Therefore, our habitual thinking determines our life experiences.
4. Thoughts are not all equal
5. Feed the wholesome thoughts and mental habits, let go of defilements (unwholesome thoughts and mental habits)
6. Mindfulness is a powerful tool. Letting go (forgiving) frees the energy.

Q & A



The image features the text "Q & A" in a large, blue, 3D-style font with a white outline and a drop shadow. To the left of the "Q" is a red question mark. Above the "&" is a yellow question mark. To the right of the "A" is a green exclamation mark.