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## Tips on Dealing with Rumination

Ruminators repetitively go over and over events asking questions like “why did that happen? Will this ever end? I don’t know how to change this situation”.

Research has shown long term over-thinking (ruminating) causes depression and anxiety.

Here are some tips to help bring it back within your control.

### ■ Write it Down

Try writing all your thoughts on a piece of paper then burn it.

### ■ Prioritise

Categorize your thoughts based on urgency; then try the traffic light system.

- Green = urgent...needs doing today.
- Amber = could wait a few days.
- Red = not that important.

### ■ Recognize

- When you are avoiding doing something you want to do.
- Jumping from one idea to the next.

### ■ Be Mindful of Rumination

Stop. Take some time to notice your thoughts. Try naming them, like here is a worry thought, here is a planning thought; then let them drift by.

- Practicing mindfulness is a way of paying attention to the present moment without getting caught in your thoughts.

*“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way;  
on purpose, in the present moment,  
and nonjudgmentally.”*

~Jon Kabat-Zinn

### Stop! Stop! Stop!

Use this CBT technique to interrupt your thoughts by saying **STOP! STOP! STOP!** out loud.

### Distraction

Try distracting yourself by doing something that takes your mind off the repetitive thoughts.

Like

- Walking and noticing your surroundings
- Your favourite hobby

### ■ Choose a Time

If you have to worry, than set aside, say, 10 minutes to worry. The rest of the day remind yourself consciously “this is not my time to worry about this”.



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### ■ **Breathe**

Use a focused breath like the 5/7 breathing technique...

breath in slowly through the nose to a count of five then out through the nose to a count of seven. Repeat this for 5 minutes.

### ■ **All or Nothing Thinking**

Or thinking in black and white terms.

Like

- “It’s always been this way, nothing will change”
- “I am a terrible person”
- “I’m a failure”

Try and recognise the messages you are saying to yourself, than look for an alternative way of thinking about the situation that’s more positive.

### ■ **Forgive Yourself**

You can carry on beating yourself up over something you did wrong or you can let it go and move on. You have a choice.

### ■ **Alternative Therapy**

Give yourself time for **YOU** by booking a relaxing therapy or class.

Like

- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Yoga or Pilates class
- Meditation

### ■ **Visualization**

Imagine a pleasant scene or experience. Close your eyes and play it in your mind like a movie. Connect with all the senses like colour, sound, smell and most important, feelings.

### ■ **General Tips**

- Engage in activities that foster positive thoughts.
- Control – Is the problem within your control? If not, nothing will be gained by agonising over how to change or control it. Think of ways to ‘manage’ it instead and how to work with the problem.
- Make a list of the things that are bothering you. Then categorize your worries as to which ones you can actually do something about. Develop small, do-able action-based goals to tackle the problems where you can take action.
- You are always going to feel better when you are taking concrete steps towards resolving problems as opposed to just worrying about them.
- Have a favourite photo you can look at to remind yourself of the nice things in your life.

*Do let me know how you found these tips. Were they helpful? Feel free to submit tips that have worked for you. I will add them to this list and credit them to you (only with you permission).*