

We'll explore FEELINGS and SENSATIONS later. Let's stick with THOUGHTS for now.

THOUGHTS — TELL US ABOUT LIFE & HOW TO LIVE IT ...

... HOW WE ARE OR SHOULD BE AND WHAT TO AVOID.

DO THIS
DO THAT



LIKE THIS
DON'T LIKE THAT



What we tend to forget is that thoughts are just words which constitute our 'stories'.

These can be TRUE stories called **FACTS** ...

... or FALSE stories.

NO-ONE EVER LIKES ME!!!

IT'S MY DAY OFF!



But most stories are based on how we see life according to our ...

or what we want to do with our lives:

OPINIONS
ATTITUDES
JUDGEMENTS
IDEALS
BELIEFS
MORALS

PLANS
STRATEGIES
GOALS
WISHES
VALUES



THE HUMAN MIND IS LIKE A STORYTELLING MACHINE. ALL IT WANTS IS OUR ATTENTION!



BLAH, BLAH, BLAH, STORY, STORY, STORY, GIVE ME YOUR ATTENTION!



BUT IF WE GET TOO CAUGHT UP IN THESE STORIES, IT CREATES PROBLEMS:



BAD THINGS WILL HAPPEN!

I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

HOW DARE THEY?!

I CAN'T DO IT!





WHEN A STORY *DOMINATES* US
— WHEN IT CAPTURES OUR FULL
ATTENTION OR DICTATES HOW
WE BEHAVE — WE REFER TO THIS
AS *FUSION*.

NOW HERE'S AN *AMAZING FACT* ...



NEWS FLASH!

NO THOUGHT IS PROBLEMATIC IN
AND OF ITSELF. OUR THOUGHTS
ONLY BECOME PROBLEMATIC IF
WE 'FUSE' WITH THEM!



REALLY?

SURE! IN A MOMENT YOU'LL SEE
THAT NO MATTER HOW *NEGATIVE*
A THOUGHT IS, IT'S ONLY
PROBLEMATIC IF YOU *FUSE* WITH IT!



I DON'T
UNDERSTAND!



THIS WILL MAKE
IT CLEARER. JOT
DOWN SOME OF YOUR
NEGATIVE THOUGHTS
ON A SHEET OF PAPER.

OKAY.



NOW HOLD THE
PAPER IN FRONT OF
YOUR FACE AND GET
ALL ABSORBED IN
THOSE WORDS.



WHILE YOU'RE ALL
CAUGHT UP IN THESE
THOUGHTS YOU ARE *CUT
OFF* OR *DISCONNECTED*
FROM THE THINGS THAT
MAKE LIFE *MEANINGFUL*.





AND WHILE YOU'RE HOLDING ON TIGHTLY TO THESE THOUGHTS, IT'S HARD TO DO THE THINGS THAT MAKE YOUR LIFE WORK!

IMAGINE TRYING TO COOK DINNER, DRIVE A CAR, CUDDLE A BABY OR WATCH A MOVIE WHEN YOU'RE DOING THIS!



WHEN WE FUSE WITH OUR THOUGHTS THEY SEEM TO BE ...

- ▶ **THE TRUTH** You should BELIEVE THEM!
- ▶ **IMPORTANT** You should give them your FULL ATTENTION!
- ▶ **ORDERS** You must OBEY them!
- ▶ **GREAT ADVICE** You should do what they SUGGEST!
- ▶ **THREATS** They are DANGEROUS or FRIGHTENING.



NOW TUCK THAT SHEET OF PAPER UNDER YOUR ARM ...



... AND NOTICE — NOW YOU CAN CONNECT AND ENGAGE WITH THE THINGS THAT MAKE LIFE MEANINGFUL!



WHEN YOU DO THIS WITH YOUR THOUGHTS WE CALL IT DEFUSION.

CAN YOU SHOW ME HOW?



SURE. FIRST, BRING TO MIND A NEGATIVE SELF-JUDGEMENT ...

I'M USELESS!



... NOW FUSE WITH IT — BELIEVE IT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

I'M USELESS!

NOW INSERT THIS PHRASE IN FRONT OF IT – 'I'M HAVING THE THOUGHT THAT ...'



I'M HAVING THE THOUGHT THAT I'M USELESS!



EXERCISE

Pick an upsetting thought, and silently repeat it, putting these words in front of it: 'I'm having the thought that ...'

Now try it again with this phrase: 'I notice I'm having the thought that ...'

Can you feel the thought lose some of its impact?

You can use this simple defusion technique to unhook yourself from any thought, whether true or false – so please play around it.

When we defuse from our thoughts we realise they:

- ▶ are nothing more or less than WORDS and PICTURES
- ▶ may or may not be TRUE (we don't have to BELIEVE them)
- ▶ may or may not be IMPORTANT (we pay attention only if they're helpful)
- ▶ are not ORDERS (we don't have to obey!)
- ▶ may or may not be WISE – we don't have to follow the advice
- ▶ are never actual THREATS, no matter how negative.

SO LET'S DEFUSE ANOTHER TROUBLESOME THOUGHT. GOT ONE?



YEP!

I'M A LOSER!



NOW IN YOUR MIND SING IT TO THE TUNE OF HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

I'M A L-O-S-E-R
I'M A L-O-S-E-R



WHAT HAPPENED?

IT JUST SEEMS LIKE WORDS IN A SONG AND DOESN'T BOTHER ME!



EXERCISE

Pick a thought that bothers you, and silently sing it to the tune 'Happy Birthday'.

What happens when you do that?

Notice that you haven't tried to challenge it, avoid it, or get rid of it. But hopefully you can now see it for what it is: nothing more or less than a string of words.