

## Changing the Thought Process

As we have already mentioned, most people run around on automatic pilot the vast majority of the time doing the same things in the same way over and over again. Why? Because, if you continue to think the way you have always thought, you will continue to do what you have always done. That means, most of the thoughts you have today are the same thoughts you had yesterday and these same recurring thoughts keep creating the same experiences for you. If you want to change your actions you must first change your thoughts. Your possibilities and potential are truly limitless, so if you wish to stop recreating the same negative experiences, you must choose to change who you are by thinking differently.

You can change who you are by changing what you put into your mind; for example, don't allow your thoughts to ponder on the toxic waste the media would like to dump on you. There is a saying, "garbage in, garbage out" and it proves only too true with your thought life. Beware the rubbish coming at you from so many different directions in society which will try to mould you to its shape and have you ingest its pollution.

Don't allow problems and difficulties to overwhelm you and consume your thought life and don't wait until circumstances change. Instead, realise that circumstances won't ever change until you make the switch from a negative to a positive form of thinking. Do you speak the words, "I am all right, *under* the circumstances"? It is preferable that you always see yourself *above* the circumstances and controlling them; don't allow them to control you. Certainly it's not easy to do, especially in the midst of dark times and trials. So what can you do?

First, you can take your thoughts captive. You can only think one thought at a time, so determine to keep your thoughts in the positive realm by concentrating on your assets and focusing on your strengths. Make an effort to free your mind from distracting thoughts and restless thinking. The negatives will try to intrude but stay aware of them and deliberately concentrate on the good that can come out of a situation. Second, be confident in yourself that you can win. Stay around people who have faith in your abilities to overcome the situation and who will help strengthen your resolve. Third, take action and work towards resolving your difficulties. There are many paths you can take to a solution and if you keep your thoughts harnessed in that direction and take the necessary action, you will be free.

It is also important to make an effort to free yourself from your past. Don't wallow in it; instead leave it where it should be – behind you. Face toward your hope for the future and enjoy the 'now'. Recognise that you do have the power to change your self-talk from the depressive to the enthusiastic. Just make sure you don't leave a void when you get rid of polluted thinking; fill the void with positive and constructive thoughts and make an effort to think well of everyone.

One of the main problems with changing from one kind of thinking to another is “habit”. It is so easy to get into the habit of thinking a certain way and when it becomes automatic one rarely questions why things are as they are. Many habits of thought begin in our childhood when we learn to keep things to ourselves to keep out of trouble. Keeping our worries to ourself or blaming outside forces for every negative situation that happens to us becomes the safe thing to do and as we grow into adults it becomes automatic. This can mean that we become poor communicators with our family and friends and instead of keeping us safe these habits can, instead, cause distress.

When you decide you need to change your thoughts your mind will take time to come to terms with these changes so be gentle with yourself. Attitudes and thoughts do not change overnight; work and training are required. Make a conscious effort to change and as you become aware of your thought patterns you will start to question why you think and act the way you do. Building new habits takes time. It may take a while before your mind feels it is safe to change but by being aware of your thoughts your results will eventually be all that you could wish for.

Finally, learn from others. When you have decided on and are happy with the thought processes you want to build into your belief system, find the people who best mirror what you want and interact with them on a regular basis. The goal is not to become a carbon copy of those people but to learn from the experts, listen to new ideas, observe different ways of thinking and then try to amalgamate those ideas with your own beliefs.