



## Your inner-voice creates unhappiness or happiness, so choose your words carefully...

by Charlotte Hinksman

I had a significant life experience recently which caused a lot of disruption in my life and some very strong emotions. I turned it into significant personal growth and development. I unblocked a blockage that had been stuck for a while and was proving very difficult to work through: the outcome of which I am now enjoying: feeling calm, grounded, happy, clear-minded, focussed, living much more in the present, full of energy and aligned with my life's purpose. Through this process I have learned some very important things about "thinking" - our inner-world and what makes the difference to how we feel. I share these insights with you here in the hope of helping you in your own personal journey.

I'm in my fifth year of working with people one on one in my private therapy and coaching practice. People come to me because they are struggling. They are physically unwell, depressed, anxious and afraid, stuck and dissatisfied, not able to fulfil their potential, unhappy and unclear about the future. There are many factors which contribute to where we are in our lives and how we feel on a daily basis, and if we explored them all now we would end up with a very in-depth psychology paper! So, for simplicity I am going to focus on one thread: how we relate to ourselves and our lives through our own thoughts and what can be changed in order to create more happiness within ourselves.

Thinking is a very personal thing. No one hears or sees or knows your thoughts but you – right? And sometimes even you can't always get a handle on them or understand them fully. We are not always consciously aware of our innermost thoughts, and yet, they are there, ticking away in the background. That's not always a bad thing. It's just that they significantly influence how you feel. And how you feel is everything.

How does our thinking create unhappiness and what can we do to change it and create more happiness within ourselves? I spend a lot of time teaching my clients how to relate to their inner-thoughts in a much more useful way. I teach them how to: accept, control, reduce, and stop them, and, most importantly, cease taking them so seriously (detach from them). The results of this are mostly very profound; people become calmer, more grounded and focussed with a clear mind, create more energy and motivation, move forward in life, enjoy the present moment, sleep better, like themselves better and have better relationships with others and themselves. In short, they become happier.



The recent emotional experience I had caused me to act with immediacy: I knew that if I indulged any of my thoughts, I was going to depress myself. If I allowed myself to get

into a thinking loop when I woke up I would be in trouble for the rest of the day. So, I went on a mission to almost "save myself from my thoughts" and started doing whatever I could to stop myself from thinking. I could go into detail as to what these things actually were / are, and yet that is not the important part. What was and is important is the intention I have for myself: the message I am continuously sending my brain, through my actions, in order to train it into more useful neural pathways. That intention is:

*I am the one in control of choosing my thoughts and therefore my feelings, and I exercise this control through my actions in my desire (and deserving) to feel good in my life.*

Remember feeling good is not a destination we arrive at one day, it is a continuous process and way of life.

### We are at our happiest when we are doing the following:

- Living in the present moment
- Trusting ourselves, life, and the future
- Grounded in the body and clear in the head
- Focussed on what is in front of us here and now
- Responding and reacting more through instinct and / or gut feeling

### We create unhappiness when we are:

- Focussed on the past
- Focussed on what might happen in the future (fear or worry)
- Focussed on other's opinions of us

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- Analysing ourselves and our interactions constantly
- Comparing ourselves to others
- Criticising or judging ourselves or others
- Evaluating ourselves
- Focussed on pain or discomfort (emotional or physical)
- Creating conflict within ourselves by, instead of trusting our instincts, telling ourselves we “should” be doing / feeling something other than what we are doing / feeling now

From psychology research we know that as a human being with a conscious mind, we are capable of generating 60,000 thoughts per day. Per day! We know from research that 99% of those thoughts are repetitive and unnecessary and therefore useless. That means only 1% of your thoughts are useful: creative, problem solving or positive future planning. On a very basic neurological level, a thought is just a surge of electricity (or energy) in the brain that connects one neuron to another. 60,000 per day is a lot of wasted energy when we only need to pay attention to 1% of what really knocks through our head on a daily basis! Remember, each time you're paying attention to your “thinking”, you are using energy. My question is this:

*Is that a useful place for your energy to be, and, if not, how could this energy be channelled more positively?*

To relate to ourselves and our lives in a happier way we need to learn and practise:

- Identifying which thoughts are worth paying attention to (1%) and which thoughts can simply be let go of (99%)
- Techniques that allow you to let thoughts go (awareness, mindfulness, meditation, self-hypnosis, physical movement, creativity)
- Disassociating from thought (not taking them so seriously) “it’s not real, it’s just a thought...”
- Being focussed in the present moment – have our attention on what’s happening here and now, and what is being processed through our senses here and now
- Responding to life in the present moment through instinct and intuition, not through analytical or judgmental thoughts (i.e. “should”)
- Grounding ourselves in our body (taking attention away from our heads)
- Connecting with our body
- Living life by some basic spiritual principles (not necessarily religious)

These learnings and practices would be too much for me

to try and teach you in an article like this. I can recommend some books that will help you, if you choose to go down this particular self-improvement path:

- The Power of Now
- Practising the Power of Now
- Stillness Speaks - all by Eckhart Tolle
- Free Yourself from Fears – Joseph O’Connor
- The Happiness Prescription – Deepak Chopra

When you begin addressing yourself and working on yourself it’s the beginning of a life time of letting go and ever evolving into higher versions of yourself. It needn’t be a struggle or hard, and sometimes it can be challenging. There are many ways of going about improving yourself and your life and the one consistent thread through models of psychology and self-development (and Buddhism) is learning how to stop taking your thoughts so seriously. Let them come, let them go, let them mean less. Albert Einstein said “Thinking creates problems that the same kind of thinking cannot solve”. Some food for thought? (Or not).

#### About Charlotte

Charlotte is certified life coach and master practitioner of NLP with a degree in psychology. She runs her private practice in central Wellington. She can be connected with through her website and stays connected with people far and wide through her popular blog and free monthly newsletter. She welcomes your comments and feedback.

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#### GENERAL: Annual Ministry of Health Funding Survey, We need your help!

Included with this newsletter is a survey for the Ministry of Health, we have enclosed a self addressed envelope for its return. Please help us and take time to complete the short survey, your help is very much appreciated. Those who have received their newsletter by email please note that the survey is on our website to complete.



Thanking you for participating.