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Challenging Negative Thoughts

Have you ever heard the expression, "Don't believe everything you hear"? This is true even when it comes to your own negative thoughts. You cannot believe everything your own inner voice tells you. Your inner voice represents your worst, most negative thoughts about yourself often leading to feeling of sadness, guilt, depression and other unpleasant thoughts.

The process of being able to stop these challenging, negative thoughts is all about having that "wait a minute" moment. That pause or time-out. If you continue to allow yourself to think these destructive thoughts, you will spiral into a world of self-doubt and even self-sabotage. The good news is you can indeed reverse your thoughts. It takes a lot of self-talk, practice and even time.

What Are Common Negative Thoughts....

- "I'm so stupid"
- "No one will ever love me"
- "Nothing I do is ever good enough"
- "I am unlovable"
- "I am not good enough"
- "My boss hates me"
- "I'm such a failure"
- "No one wants to be my friend"
- "I am not worthy of...."

You are not alone if you've had these types of thoughts. These thoughts are often on auto-pilot and are an automatic response. There are many reasons for these thoughts and often it stems from childhood experiences, or negative experience with a teacher/boss, bad relationship that contributed to a lower self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness. These thoughts can be relentless & never seems to stop. So, how do we challenge these thoughts?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What has recently triggered me that led me to feel this way?
2. Has anyone ever told me this is what I am or what I do?
3. What evidence is there that this is true?
4. What do I know about myself that proves this is NOT true?
5. What will happen if I keep on believing this?
6. What would happen if I stopped thinking like this?

By asking yourself these questions you have taken the first step to challenging and questioning whether your negative thoughts are even true or factual. Take some time & really think about your thoughts that have become part of your identity. It's time to let them go and be the very best you. This CAN be done. But it will take time and effort to change your negative auto-pilot response to a more positive and valid one. YOU do have control over what you think!

Reach out to me if you continue to experience negative thought patterns & we will work together to get you to further develop strategies to overcome these thoughts. It's important to know you are not alone. Many suffer in silence. You don't have to. I am here to help. Heather Cohen Meiselman, MSW, LCSW