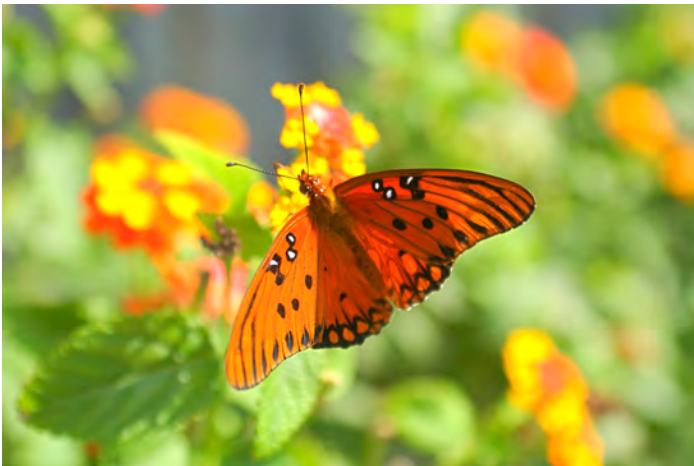


Stopping Negativity

Stopping Stupid Thoughts Brought to you by the Aurora EAP



“Of course, I messed this up. I always find a way to ruin things.”

“She still hasn’t replied to my message; she must be mad at me.”

Thoughts like these are painful and can happen so quickly that you may never stop to question them. That’s why we call them stupid thoughts. Known in psychology as “cognitive distortions,” these inaccurate or exaggerated thoughts can damage self-esteem, mood, and relationships with others. They can be extreme and frequent, often contributing to anxiety and depression. It’s hard to feel good when someone is saying mean things to you all the time, especially when that person is you!

Fortunately, with practice, you can address and change these thoughts. By noticing the negative things you say to yourself, you can choose nicer thoughts to replace them.

Writing out your thoughts will help you to process and reinforce the thought change in a different way. Putting the words up where you need to see them helps provide visual reinforcement where and when you need it - especially when it’s hard for your brain to do it. Over time, the positive thoughts will become more automatic.

Instructions:

1. Identify your most common stupid thoughts (cognitive distortions).
2. Use a post-it note for each and write the thought on one side.
3. Identify a corresponding compassionate thought (maybe think of what you would say to a friend who was having the stupid thought) and write it on the other side.
4. Tape or stick the compassionate (reframed) thoughts where you need to see them most - by your bed, in the bathroom, on your desk, or in your car!

Aurora EAP is also here to help: 800.236.3231. Give us a call if you would like one-on-one guidance on Stopping your Stupid Thoughts.