

## Coaching Tip: THINK, a new thought dissolving tool

Hi Coaches,

It's so great to be back with you all for another coaching tip of the week. First, I want to thank you and share my gratitude to all of who take the time to listen and/or read my bi-weekly coaching tips. And an extra heaping of gratitude goes to those of you who have written me your heartfelt emails about how these tips have helped your development as a Coach.

And now, back to our regular scheduled programming....

Coaches are always asking me about other thought dissolving tools besides The Work. Although The Work, in my opinion, is one of the most effective thought dissolving techniques out there, I also love ACT due to its simplicity, ease of use and its ability to foster gentle self-awareness and mindfulness. Although, I generally prefer to use The Work before the ACT tools because of its breadth and depth, I typically refrain from using this tool until I've developed a reasonable level of trust and rapport with my clients and/or until my clients have developed a certain level of self-awareness. In other words, they have a general understanding of what circumstances, thoughts, feelings and behaviors are, and can make distinctions between these components.

Mindfulness techniques like "cubbyholing", or focusing on categorizing thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, behaviors or urges to act, can be done anywhere (washing dishes, doing laundry, on walks or long drives) and can help your clients deal with their psychological content in a diffused way. In short, the mere act of labeling data out

loud as in “there’s a sensation”, “there’s a thought”, “there’s an urge” can help disempower its impact.

In Martha’s training, you learned *I’m Having the Thought, I Notice I’m Having the Thought, Musical Thoughts* and *Fact vs. Fiction*. These are some of my favorite ACT techniques but there are several others that we don’t teach you simply because there’s not enough time. Today I want to share a cognitive behavioral therapy exercise you can use with your clients which incorporates the essence of ACT – mindfulness, acceptance, experiential avoidance (the process of attempting to control or get rid of your experiences like thoughts, feelings, memories, body sensations) and cognitive diffusion (getting untangled from your thoughts). The questions below will foster self-awareness (noticing your thoughts vs. getting entangled in them), explore the difference between descriptions (facts or observable aspects) vs. evaluations (fiction or our interpretation of facts), notice the pull to act or avoid and encourage your client to create a newer and kinder story.

This strategy was created by Carol Vivyan from <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/think.htm> and with her permission I’m sharing it with you.

### THINK!

Once you’ve identified your client’s painful thought, ask the following questions. Use your intuition, marmoset and best judgment to determine whether or not to ask the clarifying sub-questions below.

1. Is this thought **true**?  
Is this thought a fact? Or is it fiction? What is absolutely true about this circumstance/situation?
2. Is this thought **helpful** to you right now?  
What might be more beneficial to think right now?
3. Is this belief **inspiring**?  
Is it helpful or important?
4. Is this thought **necessary**?  
Do I need to act on this now? Later? Ever? or Never?
5. Is this thought **kind**, benevolent or compassionate to you?  
Is it kind to others or about others?

6. What would be a **kinder** thought right now?

So, what do you think of THINK??? Please let me know by sending me an email to [Jackie@jackiegartman.com](mailto:Jackie@jackiegartman.com) or pm me on Facebook!! Also, if you find yourself saying “God I wish Jackie would write a tip on blah, blah, blah,” I want to hear from you. Tell me what challenges or what feels sticky to you when you coach? Or even what you want more of!! Maybe I’ll create a tip or strategy just for you...but, of course, it won’t be just for you because you already know if you’re experiencing or craving it, chances are your coaching colleagues are too!

Cheers,

Jackie