

The Thought Model Worksheet

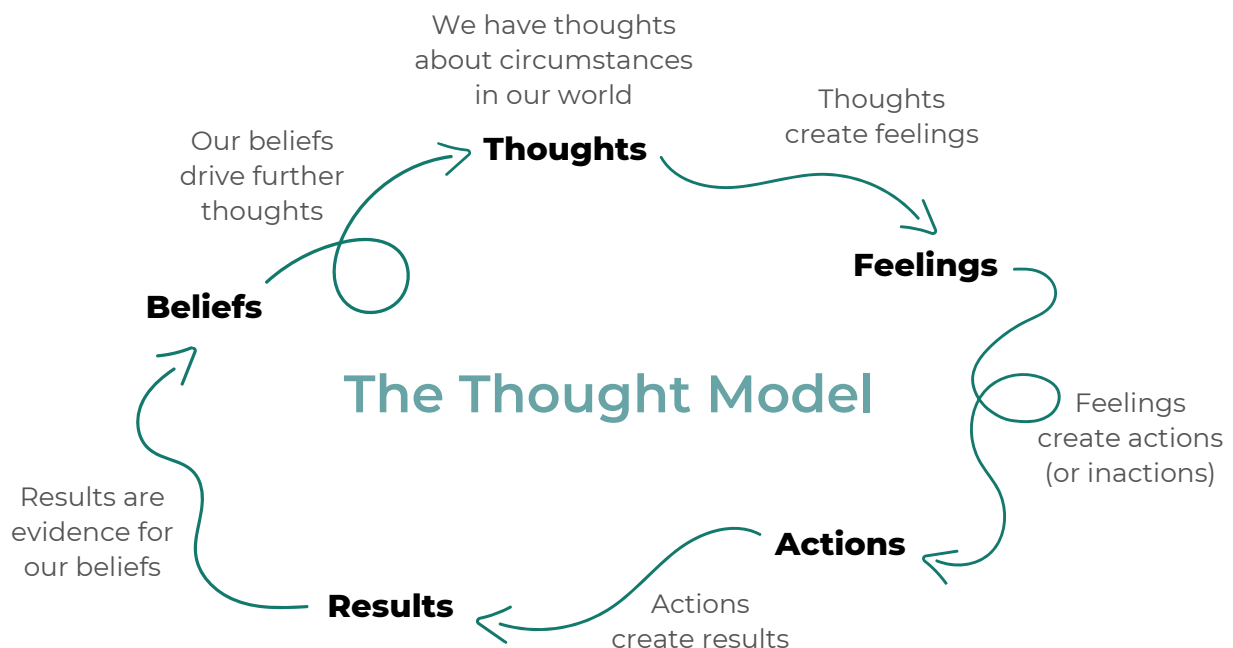
A tool for upgrading your beliefs

As humans, we've developed the unique ability to give word-based language to our thoughts. That is, thoughts can be expressed as sentences in our heads. We can observe and edit these sentences, changing their sentiment, how they impact us, and eventually, where the story goes.

By noticing our thoughts and consciously managing them, we gain more control over how we want to feel and act. We literally become more thoughtful and less reactive.

Using the Thought Model to change behaviour and beliefs

The Thought Model is a tool from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for gaining a deeper understanding of what's going on with your thoughts, feelings and behaviour in any situation. By bringing awareness to these thought patterns, you will be able to choose more productive thoughts, and ultimately, feel more empowered to achieve the things you want.



See the next page for Thought Model examples
describing a common work situation

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Example Thought Model – doing the “boring stuff”

The Thought Models below describe a situation where there is a lot of admin work to do. The first example shows what is currently happening. The second one illustrates how a small improvement to the initial thought can lead to better outcomes.

Circumstance: There are several work admin tasks that need doing.

Thought: These tasks are very tedious and boring.

Feelings: Tired, unmotivated

Actions: Spent all morning dreading the tasks and didn't start until the afternoon.

Results: Tasks took longer to complete. Got less done.

Beliefs: My dislike of tedium is a huge, unmanaged problem.

As you can imagine, this is a very unproductive thought pattern. By changing the starting thought slightly, we can shift how we feel, leading to different actions, more desirable results, and ultimately, better beliefs about the world and our place in it.

Circumstance: There are several work admin tasks that need doing.

Thought: These tasks are necessary and important and demonstrate I'm a professional.

Feelings: Accepting, committed (to my work)

Actions: Got on with it and did the tasks in the morning when I had more energy.

Results: Had a fairly productive day and spent the afternoon doing more enjoyable work.

Beliefs: My dislike of tedium doesn't stop me from getting things done.

Comparing the two models described above, we can see the knock-on effects from a small shift in thinking. This is important because actual, lasting change happens through tiny iterations, not drastic leaps of thought.

Use the Thought Models on the next page to work through your own thought patterns and make meaningful improvements.

Thought Model Practice

Start by describing a current situation that you'd like to improve:

Circumstance: _____

What is your current thought about that situation?

Thought: _____

Now reflect on that thought...how does it make you feel?

Feelings: _____

Notice what actions you take (or don't take) when you are having those feelings:

Actions: _____

When you take those specific actions, what results do you get?

Results: _____

With these results, what do you believe about yourself and the situation?

Beliefs: _____

What do you notice here? What would you like to change about this thought model?
Taking what you've learned, repeat the steps above, but this time imagine a more helpful
thought about the situation. What feelings, actions, results and beliefs do you get?

Circumstance: _____

Thought: _____

Feelings: _____

Actions: _____

Results: _____

Beliefs: _____

You can practice Thought Models anywhere, anytime, for any thought at all. The process will
become more automatic as you become more self-aware and skilled at this. Over time, this
practice can lead to feeling more productive, motivated, and confident.

Reminder: change happens in small, manageable steps. If you have a mindset goal,
you likely won't be able to get there in one giant leap of new thought. This is what
Thought Ladders are for and they're a great complement to the Thought Model.

Keep the momentum going!

If you got value from this, I think you'll enjoy Hold That Thought
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expert thinking. Get three insights each week, carefully
selected for overthinking creatives like you (and me)

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