

HOW TO RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN



Fortunately, there are a number of ways you can fight back against negative thinking patterns, and retrain your brain to think more positively. Becoming more aware of your thoughts, learning how to turn negatives into positives, and focusing on self-care can help curb negative thoughts and improve mental health.

1

BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR THOUGHTS

An emotional response is created after an event is interpreted, judged, and labeled.

Often, this process involves self-talk and automatic thoughts that we accept as fact. It's important to know that thoughts are not factual statements, they are electrochemical impulses in the brain meant to help us interpret the world around us. However, sometimes they are truly the opposite of helpful.

For example, consider a situation where two individuals are given a promotion. One person might think, "This is great! I am finally being rewarded for my hard work!", whereas the other person thinks, "They feel sorry for me so they are handing me this opportunity."

These two interpretations or thoughts create vastly different feelings even though the event is exactly the same. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), a type of psychological treatment, tells us that what we think and do significantly affects the way we feel. In order to feel better, we must be open to changing what we think and do. CBT can help people identify and change harmful thinking and behavior patterns by having individuals examine and understand their beliefs. This type of therapy can really help people understand why they are interpreting the world in a certain way and start to reframe their perspective.

2

TURN NEGATIVES INTO POSITIVES

Positive, optimistic thinking can lead to improved physical and mental health.

We all know the saying, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." The phrase is meant to inspire optimism, which may be beneficial to individuals. Positive, optimistic thinking can lead to improved physical and mental health. The [Mayo Clinic explains](#) that a positive outlook may enable individuals to cope better with stressful situations, which ultimately reduces the mental and physical toll of stress on the body.

Challenging your inner critic, and changing your thoughts and outlook from a more negative, pessimistic perspective to a more positive, optimistic takes practice, willingness, and openness. Try to evaluate your thoughts, understand where they are coming from, and find a way to put a more positive spin on any thoughts that are negative.

For example, if you are considering going back to school, but then immediately tell yourself that it's too much work, instead try telling yourself that you are ready to rise to the challenge. Negative thoughts can have such a profound impact on our wellbeing, so it is critical to work on interpreting and processing information in a more positive way.

3

DEVELOP HEALTHY PRACTICES

Developing a routine, particularly a morning routine, can improve mental health.

Consider starting off your day doing something you love or committing to a healthy practice such as meditation, mindfulness, yoga or journaling.

Meditation can assist you in clearing out mental clutter, as well as helping you get in touch with yourself, and mindfulness can help you focus on the present moment. Consider finding a mantra or meaningful phrase you can repeat. A mantra can also help you feel more connected with your work.

Adding yoga to your morning or daily routine can also help you curb negative self-talk. Additionally, since yoga is a form of exercise, it has additional health benefits such as, increasing endurance and physical strength.

Finally, practicing self-reflection can help you develop emotional intelligence, increase confidence, and understand your strengths and weaknesses. Paying attention to the way you think, feel, and behave can be enormously beneficial. This self-awareness technique can help you look at yourself more objectively and better identify your passions, motivations, and purpose.



MY STORY COUNSELING LLC

Dialogue Inspires Change