



Dealing with thoughts.....

Have you ever watched your thoughts? Do you notice that they are repetitive and focussed either in the past or in the future?

Thoughts are like seeds, they grow bigger if they are watered with attention. They fade away if they are ignored. If they are given enough attention they become beliefs. We can't stop thoughts happening, that is just a natural process, but we can decide which thoughts to give our attention to and which beliefs we want to strengthen.

Lots of people who self-injure have beliefs that they are 'bad' people or feel controlled by constant thoughts of wanting to cut or take pills. By separating out from your thinking you can start to enjoy the benefits of being in control of your mind rather than the other way around. You can free yourself from thought patterns that are not helpful to you and experience feeling more relaxed as you let yourself be in the present moment rather than in the past or the future.

Getting to know your thoughts.

Write down up to three thoughts that you have regularly - e.g.: 'I'll never be able to stop cutting

Ask yourself a) Can I be sure that this is true? & b) Is this just about the present moment?

If the answers are no then the thought is not worth believing. Each time it comes remind yrself that it's not true.

Dealing with thoughts that won't go away.

Some thought patterns are very persistent even if you know that the thought is not true. Learning to meditate is one of the best ways to mind. See our info sheet on [Mindfulness Meditation](#) for some ideas

Understand how thoughts affect feelings

Thoughts & feelings are directly linked. Read our [info sheet](#) on feelings to encourage you to stop being controlled by your thoughts.