

The One Thing You Didn't Learn in Vet School: How to Feel Better

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Everything we do in life is because we want to feel better or at least we don't want to feel worse. None of us are taught where our feelings come from and how to make ourselves feel better. So we develop a belief system that the key to feeling better must come from outside of ourselves. Many attempt this by accumulating possessions, achieving more degrees/certifications, drinking alcohol, eating "comfort" or other foods, taking drugs, binge-watching Netflix, zoning out on Instagram or Facebook and overcommitting ourselves.

Our feelings, actions and results are all the result of our thoughts. That's actually a really good thing because we get to choose what to think about anything in our lives. Anything.

This model is simple, based on cognitive psychology and allows you to watch your thinking. It shows you the connection between your thoughts, feelings and actions and allows you to decide on purpose if you want to keep thinking the thought you're thinking.

The model is based on the following truths:

- We cannot control the world
- Nothing outside of us has the power to make us feel good or bad
- It is not the circumstances, but our thoughts about the circumstances that create our experience
- We attract what we think about
- Emotions are vibrations that lead to action
- We can't permanently change our results without changing our thoughts
- We don't have to get anything to feel better; we can feel better right now

Being conscious and choosing our thoughts are the most important components to feeling better.

Here are reasons to use this model:

- To feel better
- To create results
- To become conscious
- To think more deliberately
- To create/manifest what you want in your life
- To remove negative thinking and emotions
- To create positive thinking and emotions

The Self-Coaching Model



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Circumstances - the facts, something everyone would agree on, things you can prove in a court of law, always neutral

Examples: The patient was euthanized.

Client said "All you care about is the money!"

Your salary is \$x/year

Thoughts - a sentence in our mind about the Circumstance. Our interpretation, opinion, perspective.

Examples: *I failed him.*

They don't respect what we do.

This practice is taking advantage of me.

Feelings - emotion; what we feel when we think that Thought. One word.

Examples: Sad, Angry, Frustrated, Overwhelmed, Anxious, Excited, Confident, Certain, Stressed, Disappointed, Doubt, Motivated, Inspired, Love

Actions - what we do or don't do when we feel that Feeling.

Examples: Argue

Shut down

Overeat/overdrink

Ruminate/dwell/worry

Be short with others

Results - the result of your action or inaction. Always proves the Thought true.

Examples: Miss opportunity to connect with others.

Distract/procrastinate

Don't show up the best version of me.

Putting the Model to Use to Solve Any Problem

1. Start a journaling practice. Commit to 5-10 minutes of emptying your brain out on paper every day, Think of it like your daily mental hygiene. Make it a habit like brushing your teeth. What you will find is over time your mind will feel clearer because you are creating awareness for what you are thinking regularly and awareness over your thoughts is key to feeling better. You can't change what you don't acknowledge.
2. Identify a problem from your journaling. Even those things that seem petty, if it is bothering you it's worthy of your attention.

My client won't do what I ask.

I have no work/life balance.

I'm overwhelmed with the stress of the practice.

There's no way I can manage my student debt.

I made a mistake and my patient is now very sick and fighting to live.

3. Plug it into the model in the appropriate category.

Circumstance (C)

Thought (T) ***There's no way I can manage my student debt.***

Feeling (F)

Action (A)

Result (R)

4. Fill in the rest of the model based on the problem.

Circumstance (C) I have (insert actual number) in student debt.

Thought (T) ***There's no way I can manage my student debt.***

Feeling (F) Anxiety

Action (A) I ignore it, don't create a budget, spend mindlessly
Result (R) I don't manage my student debt.

This above is your Unintentional Model, the thought you're currently thinking that's creating your feeling of anxiety, current actions and current results.

How to Change How You Feel

In order to feel better we have to change what we are thinking. We look to change our thought to something we believe but yet makes us feel better (even just a little) when we think it. You can simply ask yourself "how else can I think about this situation" or "what might someone else think about this situation".

You must remember that it is never the circumstance that creates how you feel but your thoughts about the circumstance. Decide what you could think instead.

C I have (insert actual number) in student debt.
T *Lots of people have debt, I can figure this out.*
F Confident
A Educate myself on financial solutions, create a budget, stick to budget
R I learn how to manage my debt and work towards eliminating it.

Putting Into Practice

This is the practice of managing your mind, Becoming aware of what you are thinking through journaling and finding those thoughts that are causing you emotional pain is the first step. Once you identify that one sentence in your brain that is causing you misery you can begin to unpack it and first see how thinking that is causing how you feel and behave.

You'll also notice that your thoughts are always creating your results. Negative thoughts = negative results. We often think we need to change our actions in order to change our results but unless we change our thinking, our results won't change.

Commit to a daily practice of cleaning out your mind. This is mental HEALTH. It takes effort and awareness to create mental health but the rewards are monumental.