

Freeing your thoughts from stress, trauma

Chronic stress and trauma trigger emotional and physical changes, but it can affect our thoughts as well.

Sometimes thoughts and images of a traumatic event from work or life outside of work can appear without warning.

These thoughts can cause anxiety and can potentially spiral into a negative self-talk reel that just repeats and intensifies. This can lead us to become stuck in the quicksand, spinning our wheels in a pool of stress and worry.

This may also interfere with our ability to get into a flow of thought and can trigger a variety of other mental reactions to stress including difficulty concentrating, poor memory, poor problem solving/abstract thinking and blaming others.

The good news is that we can all play an active role in coping with our intrusive, disruptive thoughts by considering the following ideas:

- Write things down
- Be patient with yourself
- Break large tasks into smaller ones
- Make small, daily decisions
- See a counselor
- Remember you have choices
- Plan the future
- Review previous successful problem solving
- Ask for help from friends and family
- Notice when things are ok
- Practice gratitude

