

Changing Our Automatic Thinking Patterns

Our perception of reality is a result of our reaction to our experiences and our thinking forms our perception of what shape and form our reality becomes.

Our mind is constantly processing multiple sensory inputs and interprets this information at a sub conscious level. The process is automatic and happens outside of our awareness.

Automatic thinking is what happens skill sets become instinctive or automatic after you learn physical skill sets that require specific decisions to be completed to achieve a desired goal.

An example is learning to drive a car. If you are 60 or older, you learned to drive a car equipped with a 3 speed manual gear-shift that was the standard car transmission. If you took the drivers test using a car with an automatic transmission, it was noted on the license you received.

You had to concentrate very hard on coordinating your hands and feet to press the clutch at just the right moment to change gears while feeding the gas to avoid stalling the engine or moving down the street in a series of starts and stops that let everyone know you were a beginner!

With practice your skills improved and the coordination to actually perform other operations (multi tasking) while driving. Changing gears, navigating busy streets and highways became automatic responses not requiring your undivided attention except in an emergency.

Your everyday process of responding to issues and situations is another form of automatic thinking. You have practiced certain thoughts and reactions so many times that they are automatic.

You make a mistake and immediately think, "I can't do anything right" or "What an idiot." These automatic responses produce a mood, influence your behavior, and create your reality.

Do you stop to challenge what you think because you are not really aware of the process is occurring? Do you always mess up so your natural response is to think negative thoughts seem to be the truth?

It is very easy to say and very difficult to do, but you need to pay more attention your thoughts so you can challenge them.

You can make different choices! Is it true that you always make mistakes? There is another possibility, you can change your reality and achieve an entirely different experience. It is your choice!

Automatic thinking can create a distressingly negative reality based upon your habitual thinking habits.

- Explore other explanations for what, how, and why things happen
- Pay more attention to your thoughts and substitute positive images for negative images
- Consider the possibility that your first thought/reaction may not be right
- Challenge your thinking and give life the best positive meaning possible
- Don't dwell on the negative
- Channel your emotions to stress a positive outlook on life

Begin each day by looking for fresh possibilities and don't fall back on old, automatic defeatists habits.