

Thought Stopping

Depression often makes people brood and worry about current problems, things that have gone wrong in the past and things that might go wrong in the future.

When unwanted thoughts won't get out of your head, try the suggestions in Step 1 and Step 2. See which ones work best for you. Remember: success depends on repetition.

Step 1: Stop the thoughts

- Picture a large STOP sign and shout "STOP" to yourself
- Say "I give this thought to the universe, it no longer belongs to me"
- Count backwards from 100
- Recite a poem or sing a song in your head
- Symbolically, brush off your shoulders or brow to wipe the thoughts off of yourself
- Imagine pressing a "delete" button

Step 2: Keep the thoughts away

As soon as the thoughts fade a little, do something to keep your mind and body busy. This will prevent the thoughts from coming back.

- Take a brisk walk and concentrate on what you see around you
- Talk to a friend and keep the conversation positive or pleasant: no complaining
- Read an inspirational book or story
- Play a game, do a jigsaw or crossword puzzle
- Do a household chore that requires concentration
- Listen to a guided relaxation exercise
- Do crafts or hobby work
- Connect with nature or work in a garden
- Give thanks for the good thoughts