



I'M NOT OKAY, BUT I WILL BE

Part 3: "The Path Back"

October 20, 2019

Pastor Chris Jung & Therapist Tony Overbay

"For as he thinks within himself, so is he."

Proverbs 23:7 (TPT)

"Finally, brothers and sisters, fill your minds with beauty and truth. Meditate on whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is good, whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy."

Philippians 4:8 (TVB)

"We are demolishing arguments and ideas, every high-and-mighty philosophy that pits itself against the knowledge of the one true God. We are taking prisoners of every thought, every emotion, and subduing them into obedience to the Anointed One."

2 Corinthians 10:5 (TVB)

TO NAVIGATE MY WAY OUT OF NEGATIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE THOUGHTS, I NEED TO...

1. ...REALIZE THAT EVERYONE DEALS
WITH NEGATIVE THOUGHTS, AND I'M
NO EXCEPTION

Introduction:

We have so many thoughts...good ones, bad ones, happy ones, sad ones and our brain is firing constantly....

The phenomenon was identified through thought suppression studies in experimental psychology. Social psychologist Daniel Wegner first studied ironic process theory in a laboratory setting in 1987. Ironic mental processes have been shown in a variety of situations, where they are usually created or worsened by stress. In extreme cases, ironic mental processes result in intrusive thoughts about doing something immoral or out of character, which can be troubling to the individual. These findings have since guided clinical practice. For example, they show why it would be unproductive to try to suppress anxiety-producing or depressing thoughts

2.

Negative emotions like fear, sadness, and anger are a basic part of life and sometimes we struggle with how to deal with them effectively. It can be tempting to act on what you're feeling right away, but that often doesn't fix the situation that caused the emotions. In fact, it may lead to more problems to deal with down the road.

Ironic Process Theory, aka Unwanted Thought Syndrome, "You can think about anything, just don't think about a fluffy white polar bear."

Everybody has unwanted thoughts

Just because you have them doesn't mean that they are going to come true, or that they hold significance

Thought suppression doesn't work...

You're NORMAL!

**2. ...AVOID THE OLD HABITS THAT
KEEP ME TRAPPED IN MY NEGATIVE
THINKING**

3.

Tony's Emotional Baseline Theory (Self-care)

Ways people typically deal with negative emotions:

- Denial

- Withdrawal

Withdrawal is when a person doesn't want to be around, or participate in activities with other people. This is different than wanting to be alone from time to time, and can be a warning sign of depression. Some people may withdraw because being around others takes too much energy, or they feel overwhelmed. Others may withdraw because they don't think other people like them or want them to be around. In some cases, people who have behaviors that they are ashamed of may withdraw so other people don't find out about what they are doing. But withdrawal brings its own problems: extreme loneliness, misunderstanding, anger, and distorted thinking. We need to interact with other people to keep us balanced.

- Bullying

- Self Harm

Which can include everything from cutting to binge eating, undereating, and other dangerous or risky behaviors

- Substance abuse, alcohol, gambling, pornography

**3. ...CHOOSE A NEW P.A.T.H. TO
HEALTHIER THOUGHTS AND
EMOTIONS**

So, what to do? PATH (Pause, Acknowledge, Think, Help)

Step 1: PAUSE

This step is important because instead of acting on feelings right away, you stop yourself and think things through. Count to 100 or say the alphabet backwards. Pray, Mindfulness!

Step 2: ACKNOWLEDGE What You're Feeling

For example, are you mad at someone, or are you sad because your feelings were hurt by what they did? Whatever it is that you are feeling, it is ok to feel that way.

INTRODUCE basic concepts of acceptance and commitment theory principle of private experiences....

Step 3: THINK

Now that you have taken a few moments to figure out what exactly it is that you are feeling, think about how you can make yourself feel better.

Step 4: HELP

Take an action to help yourself based upon what you came up within the "Think" step.

If You Are Having Trouble Thinking Of Ways To Help Yourself, Try One (Or A Few) From This List:

Mood Boosters

- Read the story of someone you admire
- Watch a funny YouTube video
- Play with an animal

- Watch a movie you loved when you were younger

Address Your Basic Needs (HALT, Hungry, Angry, Lonely Tired)

- Eat a healthy snack.
- Drink a glass of water.
- Take a shower or bath.
- Take a nap.

Process Feelings

- GO OUTSIDE! Top of the mountain
- Draw how you're feeling.
- Make a gratitude list.
- Let yourself cry.
- Rip paper into small pieces.
- Vent. Venting is not the same as asking for help, it's taking an opportunity to share your feelings out loud. We do this naturally when we talk with someone we can trust about whatever is upsetting us. You can also vent by writing a letter to the person who upset you. Keep the letter a couple of days and then tear it up. Stick to pen and paper—**using social media when you are highly emotional can be tempting, but you might say something you regret.**

Problem Solving

- Make a list of solutions to problems – it can help to brainstorm with a friend or family member.
- Make a list of your strengths. There are plenty of things about you that are awesome, no matter how down you are feeling at the moment.

Volunteering/Acts of Kindness Get outside of yourself

- Do something nice for someone you know.
- Help a stranger.
- Volunteer your time.

Hobbies/Stress Relievers

- Learn something new – there are tutorials for all kinds of hobbies online.
- Create - try a craft project, color, paint, or draw. Invite a friend to join you for added fun.
- Write – you could write a story, a poem, or an entry in a journal.
- Get active – dancing, running, or playing a sport are some good ways to get moving.
- Play a video game.
- Get a plant and start a garden. TRUE STORY I tried to grow bonsai trees!

Relaxation Exercises

- Practice belly breathing –put one hand on your stomach and start to inhale *slowly*. As you breathe in, imagine a balloon in your stomach filling up and continue to inhale until the balloon is very full. Put your other hand on your heart, feel your heartbeat, and hold your breath for 5 seconds. Now let your breath out slowly for 10 seconds – feel your belly flatten like a deflating balloon. Repeat this process 4 or 5 times and you should notice your heart beat slow down and your muscles relax.
- Try progressive muscle relaxation – clench your toes for a count of 5, then relax them for a count of 5, then move to your calves, then your thighs, then your abs, then your arms, then your neck.
- Go for a walk – feel the ground under your feet and the air on your skin. Focus on your senses.
- Find a guided meditation on YouTube.
- Do yoga – you can find videos on demand using your tv or online.
- Read a book.
- Listen to music, a podcast, or an audiobook.
- Unplug – turn off your phone, tablet, and/or computer for an hour or so.

Ask for Help

- Text a friend.
- Ask someone to just sit with you.
- Call a family member.
- Talk to an adult you trust.
- Call a friend you haven't talked to recently.

If Nothing Seems To Work...

If you still feel sad, worried, or scared after trying to help yourself, you might be showing the early warning signs of anxiety or depression.