

Introduction

This exercise is used in complex situations, when it is not clear what to do, how to respond to a challenge in complex situations. (for example, you have a new career offer, trip, training, risk), a conflict with colleagues who hold contrary opinions, think differently etc., and you do not know what to do – take on the risk or submit to the easiest path, fight or run, engage or abstain. You are ruled by doubt and uncertainty, but it is not possible to avoid decision-making. The exercise in resilience development refers to changing a person's mindset. It presents the formula ***change of mind plus change of emotion and attitude equals resilient behaviour.***

The exercise helps

- to learn how to recognize your **thinking** habits in **CHALLENGING** situations;
- to understand how your thinking typically functions in challenging situations, identify the thought that most often freezes you, causes you to **get stuck** and prevents you from dealing with the situation;
- to understand the origin of this chilling thought, what experience has shaped it, and who may have inspired it;
- to learn how to **calm down** to temporarily postpone worrying rash decision-making and “pull yourself together”;
- to practice finding **new** certainties and perceptions upon which the new mindset can be built, enabling you to accept the challenge/cope with hardship with greater **optimism**;
- to learn how to **look** at the specific challenge from the perspective of three scenarios - FIND A MIDWAY SCENARIO;
- to learn how to apply these seven steps **quickly** in a new situation. [Read more link](#)

The 7-step positive thinking training method was created by the founder of positive psychology Professor Martin Seligman (USA). The original name of the method is *Penn Resilience*; it has been experimentally tested with depressed youth in the United States since 1999. The methodology is based on the idea that self-observation can help a person shift from catastrophic to more optimistic thinking.

To achieve this, you must first learn to consciously recognize what is typical of your thinking in difficult situations. That entails being able to describe your thinking process in a situation where pessimism and disbelief in the success of situation X are prevalent. If a person is able to describe the sequence of their negative thoughts distantly by naming/recording them, the process of changing their thinking has begun! The exercise must be completed in writing – prepare a sheet of paper or print the table provided.

Instruction

Take 7 thinking steps to understand how your thinking changed during those steps.

STEP 1. Situation and a list of negative thoughts. Recognize your own thinking habits (or those of a pessimist you know).

- Recall the thoughts **usually/most often** automatically come to mind when you have overcome a significant challenge (e.g., overcoming doubt, fear, anger, disbelief, etc.)?
- Imagine a **specific situation** in which you must make some choice that are difficult for you to make, where you are afraid or have doubts, and where you want to abandon everything and run away or pretend you do not see it.

- What does your inner pessimist say in this particular situation in which you are scared or do not feel it is worthwhile to accept a challenge? As if you were listening to the radio, briefly capture the flow of negative thoughts that suddenly occur when you think the situation. Define at least 4-8 thoughts.

For example: I am horrified by the thought that I would receive an inappropriate mark for my abilities, that someone would make fun of me, that I would feel like an idiot, that I would lack the strength ...

STEP 2. Thinking traps. Recognize the mistakes in thinking which we often make unconsciously in our assumptions - that we will not succeed, that we are not worth it.

- Select which of the thoughts that your internal radio just said freeze you most strongly, prevent you from acting, discourage you from at least trying.

STEP 3. Thinking Iceberg. Understand where these negative thoughts come from. You were not born with that mindset. On the contrary, it is typical of children to risk and not be afraid, and adults often do everything to stop a child from being active (*God forbid anything happens!*). Write down:

- When was the last time you had such a thought?
- Where did you hear such a text?
- Who has said anything similar to you? Write down if another statement comes to mind (for example: *Don't go! Don't go! You won't succeed! You want too much!! You can lose everything! You are ... (stupid)!*)

How could this (possibly) affect your thoughts, feelings and choices?

For example: last time I was told something similar by a teacher ... and my husband, and one of my colleagues when I

4 STEP 4. Calming down and focusing (Relax). Give yourself a pause in this exercise! This is important when there are too many thoughts and excitement appears. It is exactly as the brain calms down that the idea matures (incubation period), which will help to reveal something new about itself and/or this situation.

- allow your mind to rest, calm down, inhale, counting to 4, and exhale, counting to 7 (exhalation longer than inhalation), then breathe calmly. You can use *awareness* or *conscious savouring* exercises)

STEP 5. Values. Start a transformation of doubt and ignorance.

- Review the values table.
- Select one value from the list that is very important to you (see *Table 2*).
- Look at the situation described in Step 1 from the point of view of this value.
- Write down one or more sentences how the value you have chosen can help you decide what to do in a challenging situation!
- Choose another 3-5 other values from the list and think about what choice in the situation described in Step 1 would prompt them - either not to risk and, not to do "IT", or to risk and go into the unknown.

It is worth noting here that, for a person, their values are always positive, they are contradictory and it cannot be said which ones are "more correct" and worthwhile, which are worthless in a particular situation. So, any choice you make will be positive.

For example: I chose such values as Self-confidence and Reputation. From their point of view, I realised how important it was to me to ...

For example, if you have a challenge to change your job and go completely at risk into the unknown, but for you the primary value is Health, then you're not likely to risk being left without a living, etc. But if you're dominated by the value of Freedom and Belief (in yourself) right now, then chances are you'll change your job

- Compare the values you have chosen with your challenge - whether it matches the values that matter most to you in life right now.

STEP 6. Scenarios. Learning to stop “catastrophic” thinking and turn it on realistic thinking. Modify this situation into 3 scenarios so you could transform your doubt, fear, or ignorance which was described in Step 1! It helps to deal with the situation creatively.

- Imagine and briefly describe 3 possible solutions of the described challenge situation:
 - **Pessimistic scenario** - what, is the very worst that could happen if you accepted the challenge.
 - **Optimistic scenario** – what is the very best that could happen if you accepted the challenge.
 - How else could it happen if you combined the two previous scenarios?

For example:

According to Scenario 1 - I fall out or get a mark of 5 ...

According to Scenario 2 I get a mark of 10 and applause...

According to Scenario 3 I get a mark of 8 and a good comment about the next step.

STEP 7. Changing the real situation and making a decision. Analyze the process of developing your abilities during the exercise.

- describe what changed or didn't change in your perceptions of the challenge after modeling the situation, which question was the most powerful for you, who gave the biggest revelation, etc.

- describe how the perception of the challenging situation changed from disastrous to positive.

Of course, one might think that if one already has positive thinking, they do not need that exercise. In that case, your task (challenge) is to remember yourself in a situation where you did not have that positive thinking, or someone you know - a pessimist with whom you can also try these steps.

For example: as I went through all the scenarios, I realized that I changed my attitude to value, that the main thing was not confidence anymore, but rather the diploma and qualifications.