Problematic Thoughts.

# Anyone else have 'em? 🙋‍♀️

Sometimes, our problematic thoughts are pretty intense - detailed even...

Like a playback from a football game, with each play analyzed and suffered through again and again.

Other times, it's just full-on negativity and name-calling:

*You can't do that - who do you think you are?*

And then there are other times when we have full-on impulsivity, just like a child.

- *Who cares about another piece of pizza...*
- *Yes I'll eat the ice cream too...*
- *What's on Netflix...*

All of the above situations are a result of our inner voice calling the shots.

Eric Barker says it's because we give our inner voice the power of attorney for our behavior, and then we end up saying, *"Why can't I get done, follow through, or have what I want?"*

*"Why am I not showing up the way I want?"*

Researchers have been studying this forever, and one of the tenets for "getting over" the procrastination, rationalization, and excuses is a weird exercise:

## Start walking around the room and say out loud, "I cannot walk around this room!"

Two interesting things will happen when you do this:

1. This is called "decoupling." It's a reminder that every thought we think isn't necessarily true! And, not every thought needs to be obeyed.

2. People who did this decoupling exercise found their pain tolerance increased by 40%! This is huge because it PROVES that we can do hard, even painful things!

And while we absolutely 100% need to acknowledge bad feelings, thoughts, and emotions, there's also a management piece that needs to be in place. For example, PTSD from 9/11 witnesses was way less in those who were determined not to have PTSD-- interesting, right?

There's no easy off switch when it comes to how we feel; however, we can accept those negative bits as part of who we are - just maybe give them less of a vote.

Life is full of pain and joy - you can't appreciate a sunshiny day without the rainy ones.

Acceptance allows us to feel AND deal with our thoughts and feelings- BUT they don't have to be acted on!

When we walk around the room saying, "I can't walk around this room," we acknowledge that **it's NOT the content of our thoughts as much as it's the relationship to them!**

To change the so-called marching orders of negative thoughts, then, we need to defuse them.

Steven Hays - author of the book A Liberated Mind, says we need distance from our thoughts.

Look AT them, not FROM them.

We get swept up - like in a movie - where it feels real, but we also need to remember those dinosaurs are extinct — not even roaming the earth anymore. We're screaming in fear at CGI dinos...think about that.