

What is Defusion?

Defusion is a technique used to help detach and get distance from emotions and thoughts.

The purpose is to:

- Look at thoughts rather than **from** them
- Acknowledge the thoughts rather than being caught up with them
- Let thoughts come and go instead of holding onto them

The goal is not to eliminate negative thoughts or to change your emotions. The aim is to help you be able to reflect more objectively.

When we become fused with our thoughts we might accept them as completely true which can then change our behaviour. When we are fused with our thoughts and emotions, we have challenges separating them from reality and our experience; which can lead to labelling, categorizing, judging, comparing, etc. Whereas, viewing thoughts for what they are (passing words, pictures, sensations), facilitates letting them go and being able to be present and focus on your experience in a broader way.

Defusion Techniques

Name the Story: What Story is the Thought Supporting?

“The I’m not good enough story”, “the I’m going to fail story”, “oh there is the inner critic”, etc. Naming it helps to take away its power and allows you to regain the feeling of control by reminding yourself that it is a thought pattern rather than a fact.

External Voice

Instead of saying “I’m going to fail,” say, “my mind is having the thought that I’m going to fail”, thereby creating some space between you and the thought.

Mindful Watching

When the thought pops up, imagine placing it on a leaf on top of a gentle stream and watching as it disappears. Leaves on A Stream (audio) can be used to assist this thought process. Looking at your thoughts with curiosity and openness, just noticing how they come and go (flow), without attempting to control or change them. The Beach Ball analogy also works for this.

Repeating the Thought

Use a silly voice (i.e. Shrek, Linda Belcher, etc.) or sing the thought out loud or in your regular voice repeat it multiple times. Over time the thought will likely lose its power and become more neutral. Another alternative is the “Say it Slowly” Technique where you repeat the thought slowly while sounding out each syllable as though in slow motion.

Thanking the Mind

Telling your mind “thank you for the feedback,” or “thanks for this interesting thought” when having anxious thoughts. It acknowledges that your brain is trying to help you while also keeping distance from the thought patterns.