

# Harness the Power of Your Thoughts



By Gayle Crist,  
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I recently started a meditation class and was struck by something the instructor said: “If you don’t take charge of your thoughts, they’ll try to run your life.”

This got me thinking (of course!), since it’s hard for me to slow down my

“monkey mind”. In fact, the main reason I want to learn meditation is to quiet my mind enough to hear messages from “Spirit” and my intuition, with the ultimate goal of inner peace.

Meditation gives us the opportunity to **observe our thoughts** and then notice if there are patterns of negative or unproductive thinking that are sabotaging us and our life goals. In fact, the reason meditation is called a “practice” is because we need to try over and over to catch ourselves in that type of thinking so we can then work to change it. As an observer rather than just a thinker, we are more in control of our choices and our lives.

You’re probably familiar with common, yet useless thought patterns such as judging, second-guessing, overanalyzing, and ruminating. All of these lead to anxiety (or even depression) rather than peace—definitely not a path to the mantra my instructor suggested: “I am well; I am happy; I am peaceful.”

**The good news is that, even though our thoughts can be problematic, they can also provide an answer to the problem—IF we learn how to harness the power of our thoughts for good.** That means noticing our negative, angry, or judgmental thoughts and consciously transforming them into positive, loving, accepting thoughts.

When meditating, we’ll always notice thoughts intruding on our silence. But we can accept their presence and then let them drift away—so we don’t give them the power to control us. Thank them for their input and then kindly ask them to leave.

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As you probably know, much research has been done on the power of positive thinking. Also interesting is what the experts say about the types and causes of negative thinking, which, of course, leads to the de-motivating internal dialogue many of us grapple with.

According to the Mayo Clinic, common forms of negative self-talk are:

- **Filtering:** You magnify the negative aspects of a situation and filter out all the positive ones. For example, you had a great day at work. You completed your tasks ahead of time and were complimented for doing a speedy and thorough job. That evening, you focus only on your plan to do even more tasks and forget about the compliments you received.
- **Personalizing:** When something bad occurs, you automatically blame yourself. For example, you hear that an evening out with friends is canceled, and you assume that the change in plans is because no one wanted to be around you.
- **Catastrophizing:** You automatically anticipate the worst without facts that the worse will happen. The drive-through coffee shop gets your order wrong, and then you think that the rest of your day will be a disaster.
- **Blaming:** You try to say someone else is responsible for what happened to you instead of yourself. You avoid being responsible for your thoughts and feelings.
- **Saying you “should” do something:** You think of all the things you think you should do and blame yourself for not doing them.
- **Magnifying:** You make a big deal out of minor problems.

- **Perfectionism:** You keep impossible standards, always try to be more perfect, and so set yourself up for failure.
- **Polarizing:** You see things only as either good or bad, with no middle ground.

*You don’t want this kind of talk running your life!*

When I’m working with a life coaching client who is stuck, confused, or unsure of her next step, it’s usually because her negative self-talk is LOUD. She’s focusing on the reasons she can’t make a change rather than on **why** she wants that change and **how** she’ll make it. I help her get unstuck so she’s ready to plan and implement the necessary baby steps.

I support her in creating her vision and then hold that vision for her even if she strays off track due to unhelpful thoughts. I help her get and stay excited, energized, and motivated to achieve her goal. I believe in her ability to reach that goal—even when she struggles to believe in herself.

Imagine how powerful you’d feel if both you and your goal were supported by someone who can channel positive energy to you. I specialize in helping people reframe their doubts, fear, negativity, or low energy into confidence, readiness, positivity, and higher energy so they can get going on their goals.

I’d love to help you. Let’s talk about how you can harness the power of your thoughts to soar higher than you ever thought possible!

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