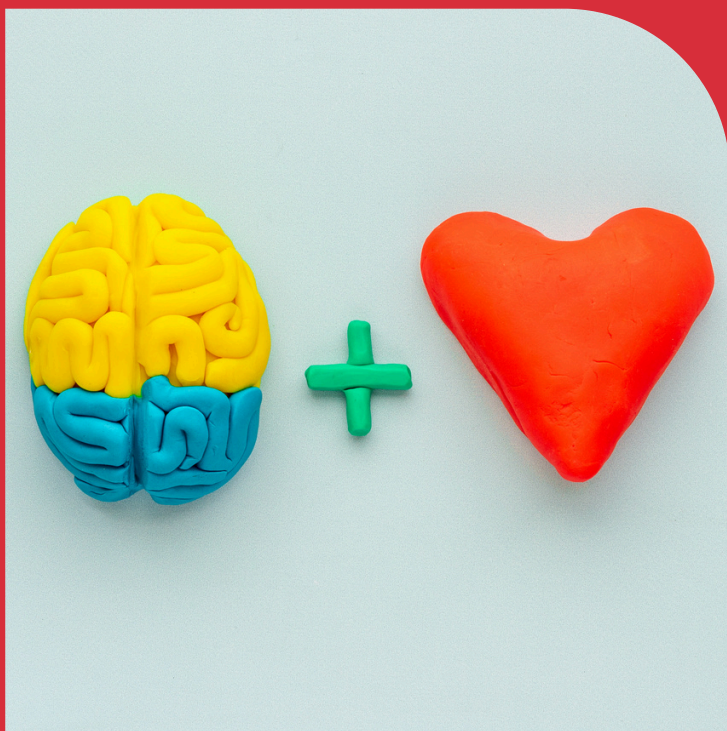



*Mental Wellbeing
Guide:*


Thoughts & Problem Solving




Examine the connection between thoughts and emotions that influences our mental and emotional health.




Thoughts and emotions are closely related and often influence each other. For example, when we are feeling down, our thoughts tend to be more negative; and, when we think about negative things, we start to feel down!, which impacts our ability to problem solve.



Neither of these experiences is wrong and can serve a useful purpose by letting us know there is something important to us that needs our attention.

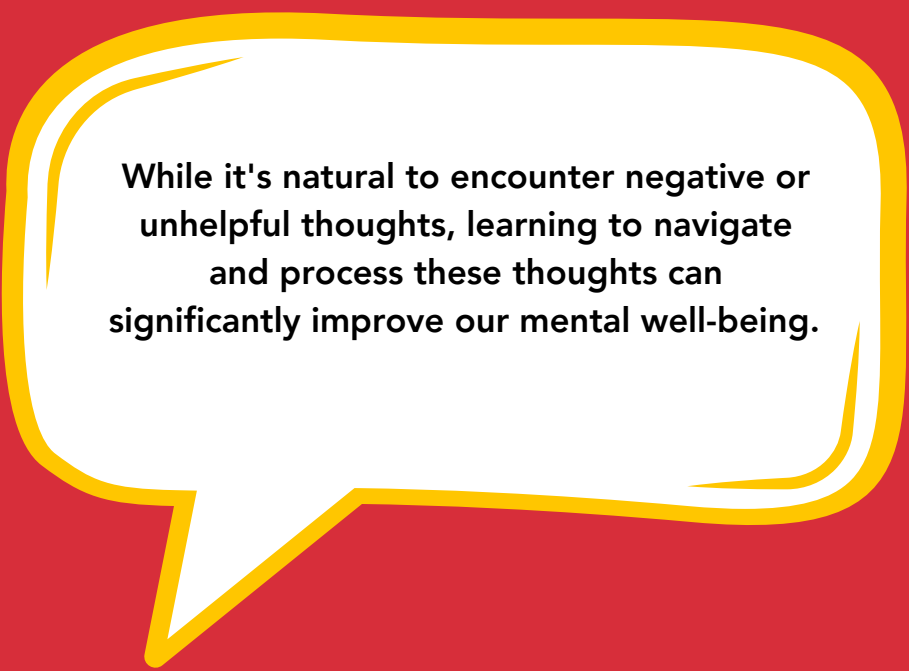


At the same time, we want to understand and work through some of the pitfalls associated with these experiences. For example, the thoughts we have when feeling strong negative emotions can often be inaccurate or just plain wrong, yet we still see them as being the truth!



And, when we're thinking about negative things that make us sad or angry, we can have a hard time seeing them clearly because of how bad we feel.

Let's take a look at thoughts first.



While it's natural to encounter negative or unhelpful thoughts, learning to navigate and process these thoughts can significantly improve our mental well-being.

Strategies to Manage Thoughts

Challenging Negative or Unhelpful Thoughts

- The process of challenging negative or unhelpful thoughts is a cornerstone of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), a widely recognized and effective treatment for various psychological issues. This approach involves several key strategies aimed at identifying, questioning, and altering thought patterns.

1. Identification of Negative Thoughts

- The first step in challenging unhelpful thoughts is to recognize them. These thoughts often arise automatically and can easily go unnoticed. Keeping a thought diary can be an invaluable tool in this process, allowing for the documentation of negative thoughts as they occur, alongside the situations in which they arise.

2. Questioning and Examining the Evidence

- Once a negative thought is identified, it's crucial to question its validity. Ask yourself:
 - Is there concrete evidence that supports this thought?
 - Are there examples that contradict this thought?
 - Am I interpreting the situation without considering all the facts?
- These questions can help us find a more balanced and objective evaluation of your thoughts.

3. Consider Alternative Perspectives

- After scrutinizing the thought, explore alternative interpretations of the situation. Consider how someone else might view the same scenario or how you might perceive it differently if you were in a better mood. This exercise helps to broaden your perspective and diminish the impact of negative thoughts.

Strategies for Effective Problem Solving

- **Identify the Problem:** Clearly define what you're dealing with. Breaking it down can make it more manageable and less overwhelming.
- **Consider Multiple Solutions:** Brainstorm a list of possible solutions. Thinking outside the box can sometimes lead to the most effective strategies.
- **Evaluate the Pros and Cons:** Weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each solution. This can help you choose the most viable option.
- **Take Action:** Once you've decided on a solution, take steps to implement it. Remember, action is key to overcoming challenges.
- **Reflect and Adjust:** After taking action, reflect on the outcome. If the solution isn't working as hoped, be prepared to try another approach.

Additional resources



[Anxiety Canada](#)



[UNB Wellness HUB](#)

