



Sacred Depths Certification

The Five Steps to Support Clients to Re-Wire Negative Thought Patterns



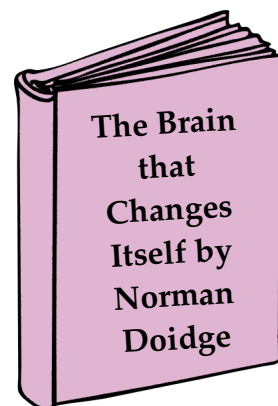
*To rewire Negative Thought Patterns, we
must first acknowledge that our mind is
incredibly powerful*



How the Brain Works

Understanding how the brain works is important when it comes to moving beyond negative thought patterns because your thoughts physically shape your brain

- Your brain is plastic/malleable. When you have a thought, your brain creates a physical groove or a fast track inside of it with that particular thought.
- The thought carries a certain energy, and that energy creates a groove in your brain. This is called a neural pathway.
- A neural pathway is created every time you have a new thought. The more you think a certain thought the deeper that thought gets grooved into the brain, changing the make-up of the brain itself.
- Once a groove has been created, the brain doesn't want to go through the trouble to create a new groove or a new idea. It doesn't want to think a different thought even if that thought would be more useful to you.
- The brain is much more prone to go down the already paved neural pathway.
- The work is to override the brain's laziness and create new, more helpful neural pathways instead of the ones that are just our MO or go-to's.



Book Recommendation

Five Steps to Re-wire Negative Thought Patterns

Step 1: Identify the Negative Thought

Often times your negative thoughts happen so quickly or persistently that you don't even notice you're having a negative thought. You just think it's the truth or that it's the way things always need to be.

That's why it's so important, first and foremost, to become aware of **when** you're having a negative thought and to **Identify the Negative Thought** right then and there. This process of identifying your negative thoughts allows you to begin to see the difference between truth and story.

Categories of Common Cognitive Distortions *(from David Burns' The Feeling Good Handbook)*

These categories can help you identify when a negative thought pattern is showing up for you or your client.

1. All or Nothing Thinking – evaluating people or situations in black and white terms
2. Mental Filtering – letting a single negative experience negatively color the whole situation
3. Disqualify the Positive – taking a neutral or positive experience and turning it into a negative one
4. Jumping to Conclusions – quickly jumping to a negative conclusion that isn't justified by the facts of the situation. You assume why someone does what they do but you don't bother to check it out to see if it's true.
5. Fortune Telling – you just “know” things are going to turn out badly
6. Emotional Reasoning – taking emotions as evidence for the truth. If you feel that something is right, then it must be true. This is different than tapping into your inner wisdom. This is more when you're feeling something because of fear not because of your inner wisdom.
7. Labeling – identifying a mistake or negative quality and then describing an entire situation in terms of that quality.
8. Personalization – taking responsibility for a negative event when you know the circumstance is beyond your control.

Some questions you can ask your clients to help them **Identify the Negative Thought** that is standing in their way of a goal:

- What's the belief that's holding you back right now?
- What's the belief underneath the fear you're experiencing?
- What's the story you're telling yourself about this situation?
- What's the thought that is stopping you in your tracks right now?

Deeper Dive

- > What are the most common negative thoughts that you have? Make a list of the top 3-5 that are your go-to Negative Thoughts?
- > Which category do they typically fall into?
- > What else are you noticing about your Negative Thoughts?

Step 2: Explore the Negative Thought

Once you've identified the negative thought, you can move to the second part of the process, which is to **Explore the Negative Thought** with the aim of understanding it.

In other words, once you have the awareness of the thought, then you want to gain insight into it.

There are a few different ways to Explore Negative Thoughts:

1. VISUALIZATION *(if your client is open to Visualization, here's an example you may use)*

I invite you to take a moment and get centered, and to close your eyes and move back into that centered, grounding feeling from our grounding at the beginning of the call. As you inhale and exhale, give yourself permission to go inwards, to journey into yourself.

Take the thought we just identified and allow that thought to come up for you as a visual or be personified. That might look like a young boy with a dunce cap on him. Or a really unattractive version of yourself. But whatever that negative thought is, allow it to come up for you in human or animal form as a visual.

Really see it. Breathe right into it. Really connect with it and breathe into this negative thought or thought pattern.

Then begin to ask it a series of questions:

- How long has it been with you?
- Is it a new thought, or one that has been with you for a very long time?
- What event or series of events brought it into being?

Ask where it comes from?

- Who is its role model?
- Whom or what did it model itself on?

Then I want you to ask this negative thought how it functions in your life:

- How does this negative thought function in your life?
- How does it express itself in your life?
- What are the feelings you feel because of it?
- What are the actions that you take because of it?
- What are the relationships you have because of it?

Now, ask it:

- What does it really want for you?
- What is it protecting you from?

And then, as you inhale and exhale, if there's anything else you want to ask or know from this thought, ask it right now, whatever it is. You might simply want to say, is there anything else that you'd like me to know? Or if there's a specific question in there, go ahead and ask it right now.

When doing the visualization with a client, mold your questions based on what comes up for client as she answers the questions.

And then, just thank it for bringing itself known and present today to give you wisdom, and let it go. Let it disappear for now. Then take two deep breaths, inhales and exhales. On your second exhale, when you're done with it, allow your eyes to open.

2. ASK EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

- How invested are you in continuing to believe this thought? (*Ask at the beginning and end.*)
- Who would you be betraying if you were to think differently/positively here?
- Who would you need to forgive if you were to change pattern here?
- How do your negative thoughts protect you?
- How does this negative thought protect you from taking action or responsibility?
- You can also ask any of the questions from the Visualization, above.

3. DRAW THE NEGATIVE THOUGHT

This “drawing” could be literal or abstract. Because Negative Thoughts are firing off all the time, so quickly, we want to slow them down so we can separate them out a bit. We want to be able to see them for what they really are.

Make a drawing or series of a drawing of what it means to feel like “I’m not enough”, or “I just can’t do it”, or whatever it is. Draw it.

4. DIALOGUE WITH THE THOUGHT

You can also dialogue with the thought through Journaling

- What is it you want me to know today?
- Why are you here?
- Again, you can also ask any of the questions from the Visualization, above.

Write these words in journal and then channel back from the thought itself. The idea is to get to know the thought really well.

The more you get to know your thoughts, the easier it will be to bring you to Step Three of the process of Rewiring Your Negative Thoughts, which is to **Consciously Choose a New Thought**.

Step 3: Consciously Choose a New Thought

To get to the point where you can choose a new thought, you first want to support your client to question the Negative Thought:

- Is the thought actually true?
- How do you know it's true?
- Is it possible that it's not true?
- Is it possible that it's not exactly true?

Remember, only use Yes/No questions when you sense your client is ready to affirm something important to themselves. After the exploration that has been done, your client may be ready to see what's really true about the negative thought.

Deeper Dive

- > What are you learning about this negative thought?
- > How has the "truth" of this old thought been holding you back?

Step 4: What's the Higher Wisdom vs. the Lower (Negative) Thought?

In order to Rewire the old Negative Thought (or the old neural pathway), you want to have a New Thought available, in order to create a new neural pathway.

Your work up until now has been at the MENTAL level. And the best New Thought is one that comes from the SPIRIT level of learning and processing (this whole step is really in the SPIRIT realm).

Bring in the Spiritual/Body/Heart:

- What would Spirit want you to believe?
- What does your highest wisdom want you to know about this?
- How does this new thought FEEL? (Feel it in your body.)
- What would be different in your life if you believed this thought deeply in your body, mind, heart and soul?
- Who would you BE if you chose to really believe this new thought?

Four Levels of Learning

1. *Mental*
2. *Emotional*
3. *Spiritual*
4. *Body-based*

Bringing in the spirit, body and heart levels helps build investment in the thought. Rewiring negative thoughts requires persistency and consistency. It takes commitment and your client will be more likely to commit if they are invested in it.

Deeper Dive

- > Think about the thought you've been working with, what's the higher wisdom that you have about this thought?
- > What's a better thought to have in this situation?
- > What's a more helpful belief?

Step 5: Create the New Neural Pathway through Thinking New Thoughts, Feeling New Feelings, and Taking New Actions

The next step is to Practice Your New Thought to **Create a New Neural Pathway**. Practicing your New Thought literally enables you to create that NEW groove in your brain, the one that holds the positive thought.

Remember – thoughts lead to things. So, you want to groove positive thoughts so that you can take positive actions. When you groove new thoughts, you take different actions. Or sometimes, you take the same actions but now you take them more easily.

The goal is to really be present with the New Thought. BE with it not simply repeat it like a parrot. There are a number of different ways you can practice your new thought in order to create a New Neural Pathway:

- You can visualize or dialogue with the new thought. Persistently and consistently; this is more than a one-time deal.
- You can write about it every day.
- You can repeat it like a mantra and breathe it into every nook and cranny.
- Collage it and connecting with the collage every day.

The more you practice, the easier it will be to catch or identify the negative thought when it shows up. In the moment you notice the negative thought, immediately replace it with the new thought.

To really create the new neural pathway, it's not enough to just think the new thoughts, taking action is also required. Taking new actions, based on the new thought, is the outer component of practicing your new thought. It literally means **to take action to begin to prove the new thought is true**.

Being in aligned and balanced action can be a great antidote to your negative thoughts.

Deeper Dive

- > When you think about your new thought, what are one or two baby actions that you could take this next week that would support this work? Write that down now.
- > What shifts for you as you consider taking this new action(s)?