

Problematic Thoughts Types of Thoughts

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Drama, Drama, Drama Thoughts- When a person makes something bigger than it needs to be. It can keep the person from seeing or understanding what is real. It keeps the person from seeing the situation clearly.

Repeat or Stuck Thoughts-(Melinda calls them Sticky Thoughts)- Person keeps thinking the same thought over and over. It keeps them from being able to do what they need to do. Sometimes there is no room for any other thought. (For teens this can be obsessed thoughts) Example for a younger child: “When is recess? Do we have recess today? Are we going to get to go outside?” Repeat thoughts can often occur when there is a lot of worry, stress and anxiety.

Personal Thoughts- “It’s All About Me!” The belief that someone or other people are thinking bad thoughts about you. The belief that it is my fault! I caused this to happen. (May occur when a child has feelings of responsibility, may have had to take on the parenting role, or has a great deal of shame or guilt.)

My Way (or the Highway!)- If a person doesn’t think the way I do -they are wrong! My way is the only way to think about it. If you think about it differently you will not be accepted. This included black and white thinking and prejudices. (These types of thoughts for children can occur when they have had to make sense of their world and establish structure thoughts and rules that help to make things less chaotic. It’s a way to establish control for children who are anxious. This can often present as oppositional.)

Can play the “**Oops I did it Again!**” Game- as an individual or a family.

This is where the individual or family keeps track throughout the week of the types of inaccurate thoughts they have and keep a tally of the number of times they exhibit problematic thinking in each category. It develops awareness if they tend to lean towards one type of problematic thinking.

Use humor- Oops! What are you thinking? What type of thinking are you using right now?

Make signs for the family with type of thinking on one side and definition on the back to use as reference in the house.

Can also include:

Jumping Thoughts!-This is where the person jumps to a conclusion that they know what the other person is thinking!

Go! Go! Go! Thoughts!-This is where the person immediately does what pops into their mind without slowing down (no caution light) or stopping to think (no red light!) about the consequences. It is like the traffic light turning green and stepping on the gas! Pedal to the metal!