Dealing With Upsetting Memories Through Mindfulness

Many people have recurring memories that they find disturbing. This is a common problem for people who have gone through a trauma, but it can also occur with people who have experienced more common unpleasant events like a divorce, a serious illness, or the death of a loved one.

One of the most useful ways to handle upsetting memories is to practice the technique Mindfulness. The concept of Mindfulness comes from a Buddhist tradition which encourages people to focus on accepting rather than fighting the thoughts and feelings that upset them. When you have an upsetting memory, you are encouraged to just pay attention to it without judging that it is good or bad. Be aware of your thoughts and feelings as well as your body and your senses. Observe what is happening in your mind, as if you were observing something outside of yourself.

Many people find that the regular practice of Mindfulness (also called Mindful Meditation) is extremely valuable for dealing with a wide range of emotional problems. This worksheet will help you in learning this technique.

1. Write down the memory you find upsetting.

Copyright 2016 Between Sessions Resources

2. Rate how upsetting this memory Is to you

Not Very Upsetting $\Box 1 \ \Box 2 \ \Box 3 \ \Box 4 \ \Box 5 \ \Box 6 \ \Box 7 \ \Box 8 \ \Box 9 \ \Box 10$ **Very Upsetting**

- 3. Consciously think about this memory for about a minute, without judging it as good or bad.
- 4. Sit comfortably and relax your body, and breathe slowly and deeply.
- 5. Now stop consciously thinking about the memory, but rather just "observe" your thoughts, feelings, and your body. Observe and accept what is happening, without being the least bit judgmental.
- 6. Write down your thoughts without censoring them in any way.

7.	Rate	How	You	Feel

Calm 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 010 Upset

Copyright 2016 Between Sessions Resources