

Improving Mindfulness

Psychological Concept Filtering

Filtering occurs when you only hear the negative someone tells you, when their statement is a mixture of negative and positive. Here's an example:

- Your boss says: "I really enjoyed your presentation. You gave us a lot to think about. Some of it was pretty complicated. You also might want to shorten it, but I can tell you worked very hard on it, and I appreciate your dedication."

You hear: "The presentation was too complicated and went on too long."

Blaming

A similar distorted thinking pattern to personalizing is blaming. Whereas the personalizing distorted thinking pattern relates everything back to yourself, blaming occurs when you focus more on who you think is at fault in a situation rather than focusing on a resolution to the situation. When you cast blame, either at yourself or others, this rarely helps matters because it is more about identifying someone to punish than it is about finding a solution to a problem. When you find yourself casting blame on yourself or on others, try reframing the situation in terms that look for a solution. Ask yourself, "Regardless of who is at fault, what can I do to make this situation better?" Keep in mind that taking responsibility is different from taking blame. When someone is responsible, they are "able to respond," which means they are capable of changing a situation rather than being at fault in a situation.

Cultivating Confidence

Being confident is a delicate balance that many people have difficulty keeping. On the one hand, overconfidence can lead to arrogance that causes individuals to view themselves as better than or more important than other people. On the other hand, a lack of confidence causes self-doubt that will hinder creativity and can lead to blue emotions such as dejection and depression. Confidence is an arousal emotion where you believe in yourself and your abilities, and you can take steps to build confidence in yourself.

Steps to Creating Confidence:

- Trust yourself. Believe that you will be able to learn, grow, and accomplish your goals.
- Leave your comfort zone. Taking risks and trying new things will show you that you are capable of more than you realize.
- Accept praise. Be comfortable with well-deserved praise, but do not demand it. Refusing praise is not the same thing as humility.

Be humble. Being humble sounds out of place on a list of ways to improve your confidence. We often mistake the concept of humility for humiliation, but they are separate. Being humble means we honestly recognize our limitations as well as our positive attributes. Being humble means you can understand where you need to improve and you are willing to learn.