



WORRY WISE: RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO WORRY

LTCOL Steve Kearney

The background features a dynamic, abstract design with flowing, wavy bands of color. The top and bottom edges are dominated by vibrant red and orange waves that transition into bright yellow and light orange towards the center. The overall effect is one of movement and energy, set against a clean white background.

WELCOME

The B.L.U.F.

HE MAUREA KIA WHIRIA!

Ignore small matters and direct effort toward important objects



- Buddhist Aphorism

*“THE MIND IS A
GOOD SERVANT,
BUT A POOR
MASTER”*



- Dan Harris in "10%
Happier"

*"YOUR MIND IS
AN ASSHOLE"*





THE PLAN FOR TODAY

- What is worry
- Why we worry
- How it creates problems for us
- Some practical things you can do, that might help
- Based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
- Everything is googleable

YOUR MIND IS A PREDICTION & REFLECTION ENGINE

- 60 – 80 thousand thoughts a day
- 80% are negative
- 90% are redundant (repetitious)

	Short	Long
Worrying	✓	✗
Dwelling on the past	✓	✗
Fantasizing about the future	✓	✗
Imagining escape scenarios (eg leaving your job or your partner)	✓	✗
Thinking 'If only'	✓	✗
Talking positively to yourself	✓	✗
Talking negatively to yourself	✓	✗
Analyzing yourself (trying to figure out why you are like this)	✓	✗
Analyzing the situation (trying to figure out why this happened)	✓	✗
Blaming yourself	✓	✗
Blaming others	✓	✗

ADDICTED TO THINKING?

... Welcome to
the Human Race!

- Does thinking sometimes, negatively impact my overall well-being?
- Has thinking created problems in my relationships?
- Have work or home responsibilities been neglected because of thinking?
- When I notice that I haven't been thinking, do I experience fear or anxiety or a sudden excess of thinking?
- Do I find myself thinking more and spending longer stretches of time thinking?
- Have I tried to cut back on my thinking but not been able to make it happen?
- Do I spend a lot of time thinking?
- Has my thinking led to physical or psychological health problems, anxiety, or depression?
- Have I cut down on or stopped doing activities I once enjoyed in order to spend more time thinking?
- Do I ever look forward to or crave thinking?



WHAT'S YOUR POISON?

What is a thought that shows up for you a lot (5/10)?

When does this thought show up?

CORE NEEDS & CORE BELIEFS



- Competence
 - I'm not good enough
- Connection
 - I'm not liked or I'm not loved
- Safety
 - The world is hostile and not safe

USELESS ADVICE?



WHY WE WORRY AND RUMINATE

- It feels like problem-solving
- We tell ourselves we might find a way to see things that is not so upsetting
- It shifts our attention from our “unbearable feelings”
- To pre-empt disappointment or loss
- Because there is something precious in that pain that we don’t want to let go of
- It’s not boring
- We feel validated and “right”





WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO TO STOP THINKING?

DO THESE WORK?





THE BIG LIE

When thoughts happen and what they are about is in our control



WHAT WE AREN'T GOING TO COVER

How to have positive thoughts

How to stop thinking

How to change what thoughts show
up

How to pretend everything is okay

How to make unwanted thoughts
go away



WHAT WE ARE GOING TO COVER

- How to notice when you are overthinking, be willing to acknowledge that and turn your attention to what matters.
- Practice makes... progress



STEP 1: OPEN UP TO YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

**Look AT your thoughts and
feelings rather than FROM them**

- Pick a metaphor
- Be curious
- Without judgement
- With compassion and kindness



Leaves on a
stream



Trains on track



A neurotic
friend



Radio “Doom
& Gloom”

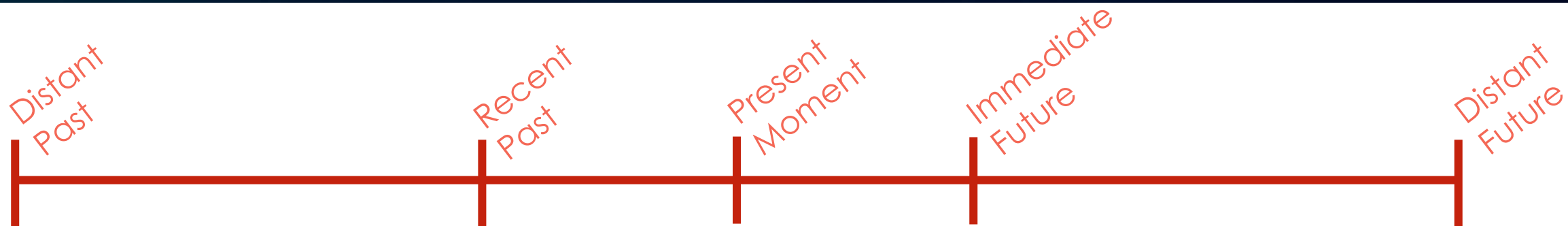


Mail sorting
room



Your mind as a
time machine

NOTICING YOUR "TIME TRAVELLING MIND"...



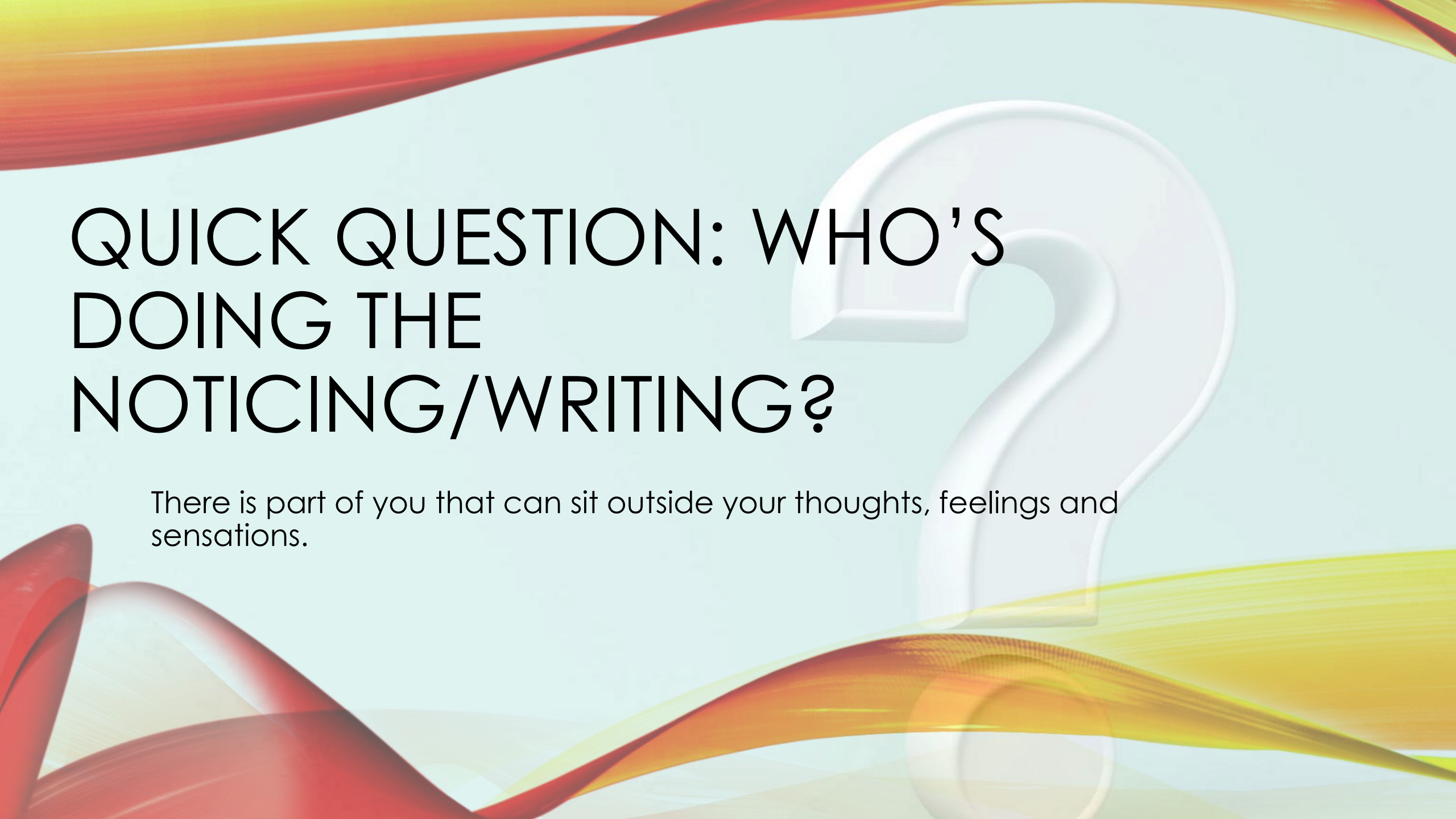


WRITE IT DOWN

Thoughts & Feelings



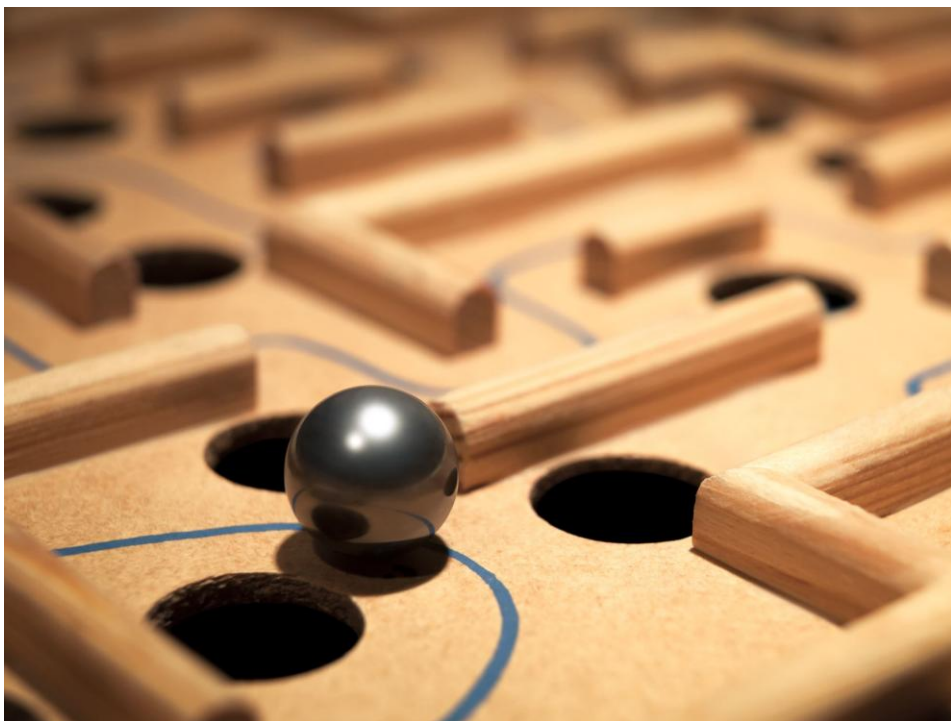
“I NOTICE THE THOUGHT THAT...”



QUICK QUESTION: WHO'S DOING THE NOTICING/WRITING?

There is part of you that can sit outside your thoughts, feelings and sensations.

TRAP



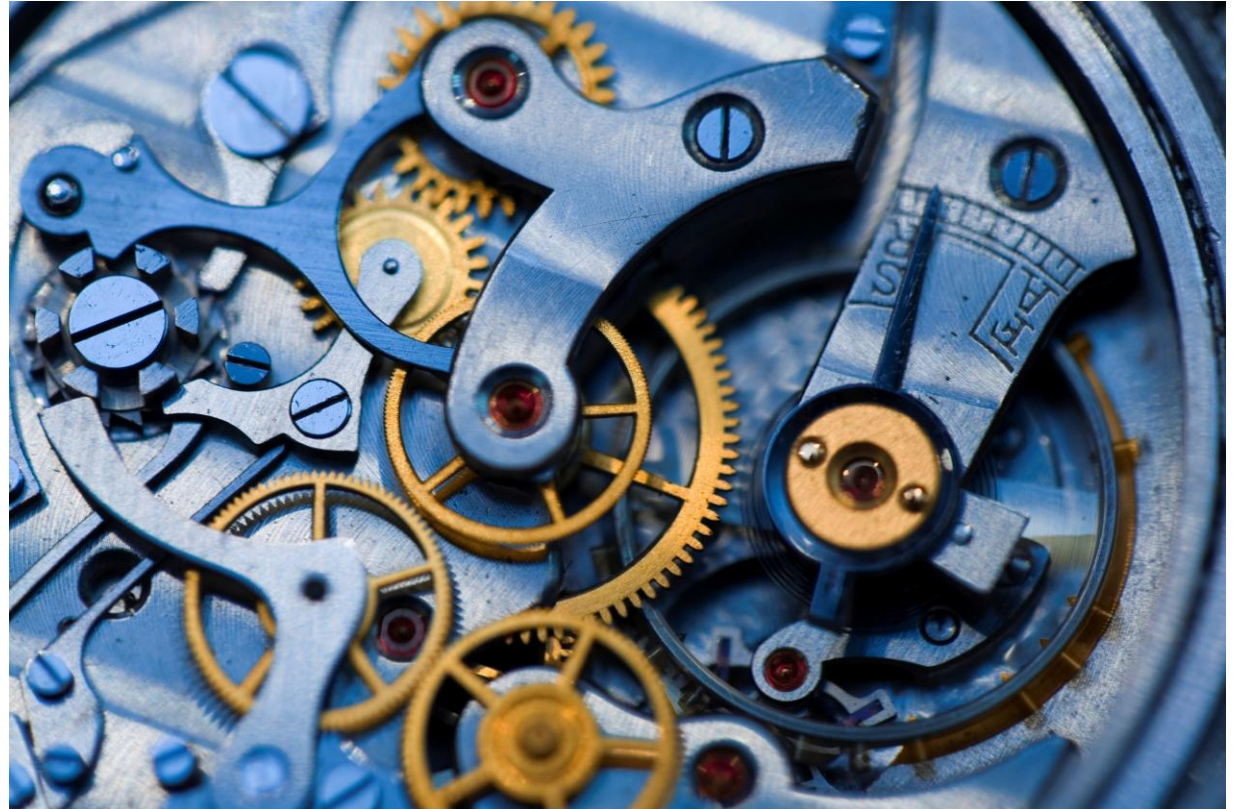
- The more you try NOT to think about something, the stickier it gets.
- Your anxiety might reduce, but that is not the aim.
- Sometimes your anxiety will peak a little. That's okay.
- The aim is to create space to **choose** what you do next

TIP 2: COME BACK TO THE PRESENT MOMENT

Situational awareness, inside and out

- Self (connect to your body, thoughts and feelings)
- Team (who is important to me here and now)
- Mission (what is important to me here and now)

- With compassion and patience;
 - Tactical breathing
 - Anchor phrase or action e.g. “Breath” or “Work the Problem”
 - Grounding in your senses

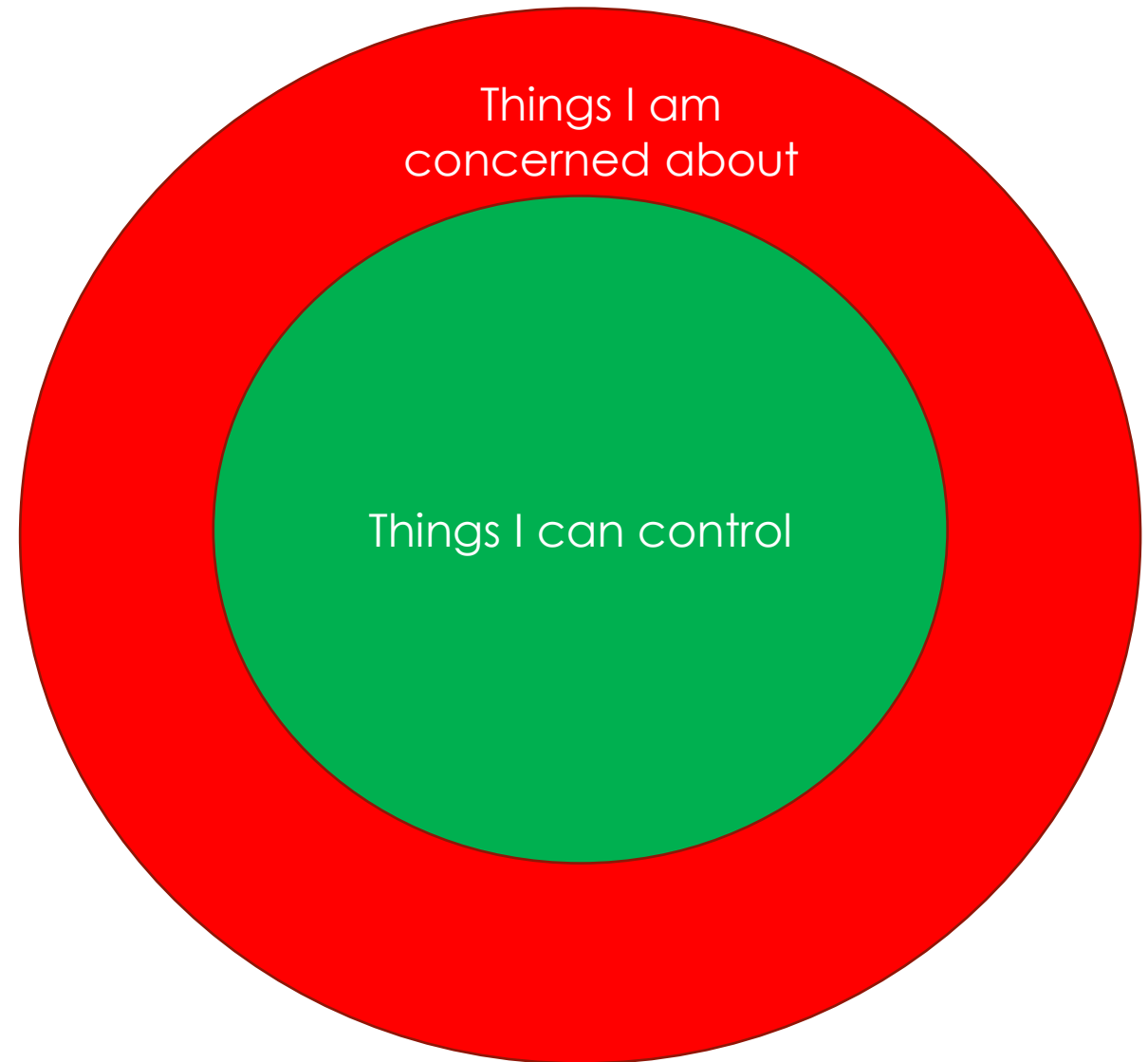


TIP 3: ENGAGE IN WHAT MATTERS, HERE AND NOW.

If you weren't thinking, what
would you be doing?

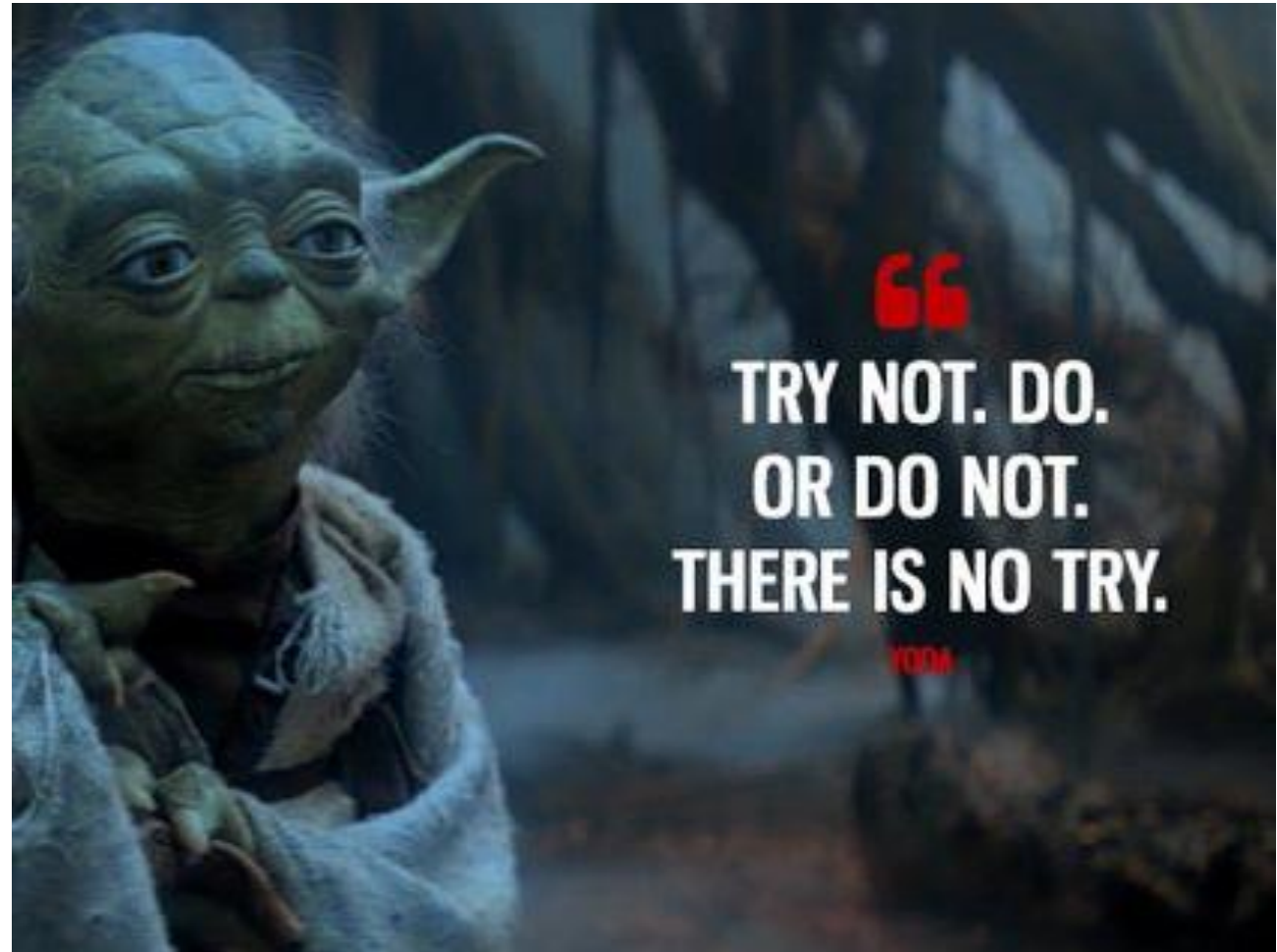
What if you could be anxious
and still act? What would you
do?

What can you control, right now?



RESOURCES*

- Headspace
- Mindfulness and Acceptance for Anxiety
- Can't Stop Thinking
- The Reality Slap
- The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F@ck



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