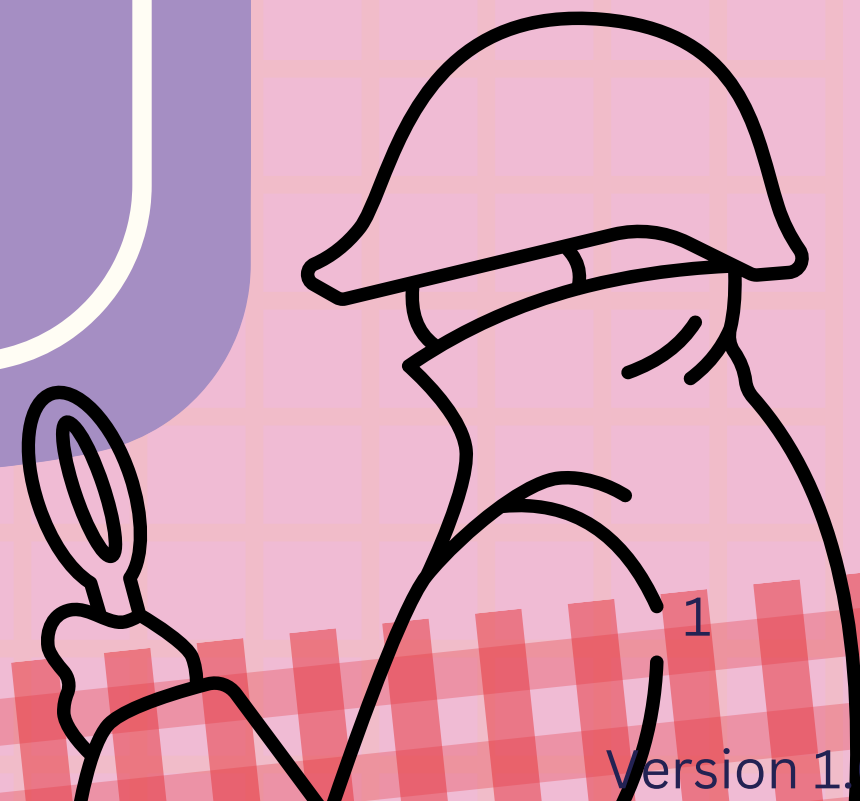




MISUNDERSTOOD INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

For those sick of fighting their own system



Resources

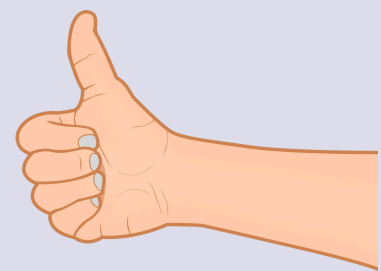
<u>What are intrusive thoughts?</u>	3	<u>Appreciating the unappreciated</u>	9
<u>Friend or foe?</u>	4		
<u>Think about this for a second...</u>	5		
<u>It's your fear that makes them powerful</u>	6		
<u>Understanding intrusive thoughts</u>	7		
<u>Shame and embarrassment</u>	8		



CONTENTS

WHAT ARE INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS?

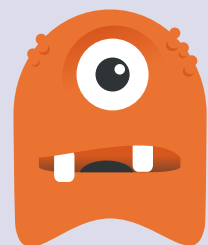
They are uninvited thoughts (visuals or voices) showing us scenarios or situations that feel really aversive to us.



They're upsetting. This is their main feature and reason why they feel 'intrusive'



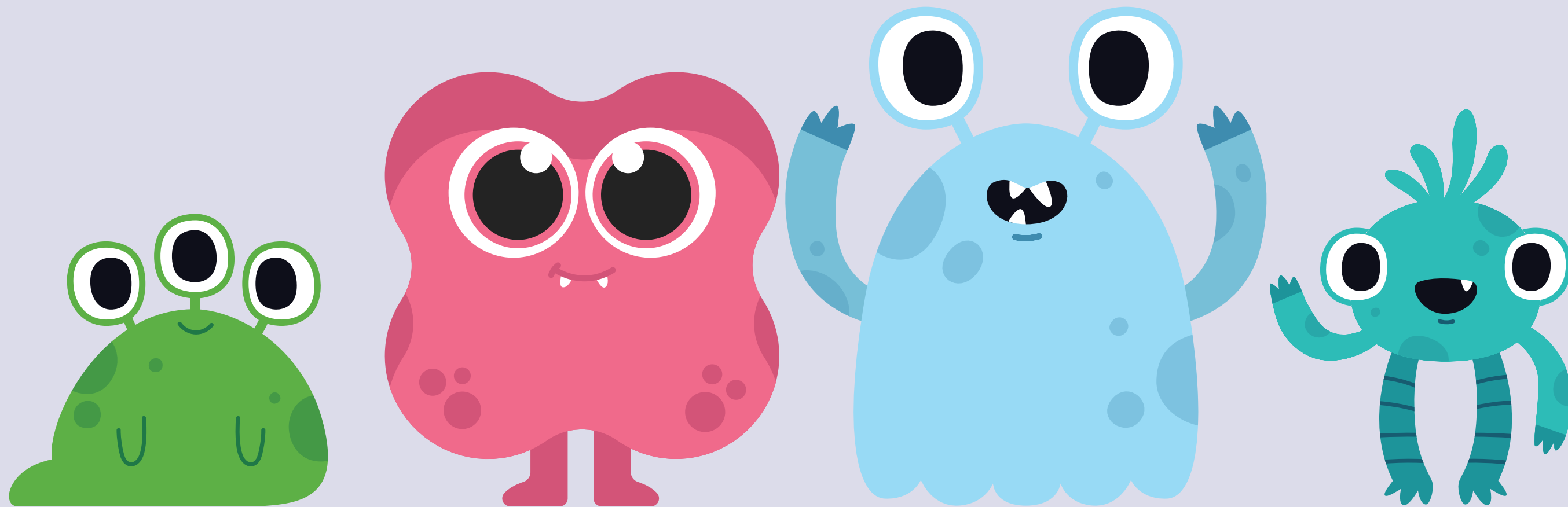
They are inconsistent with the way we like to see ourselves..



BUT...They are highly misunderstood! ³

FRIEND OR FOE?

Because 'intrusive thoughts' are upsetting, we judge those parts of us as being 'bad'. And definitely no one is saying having these thoughts is fun or enjoyable; however, if we get curious toward these parts of us and their true intention, we tend to find they are actually trying to do something for us.



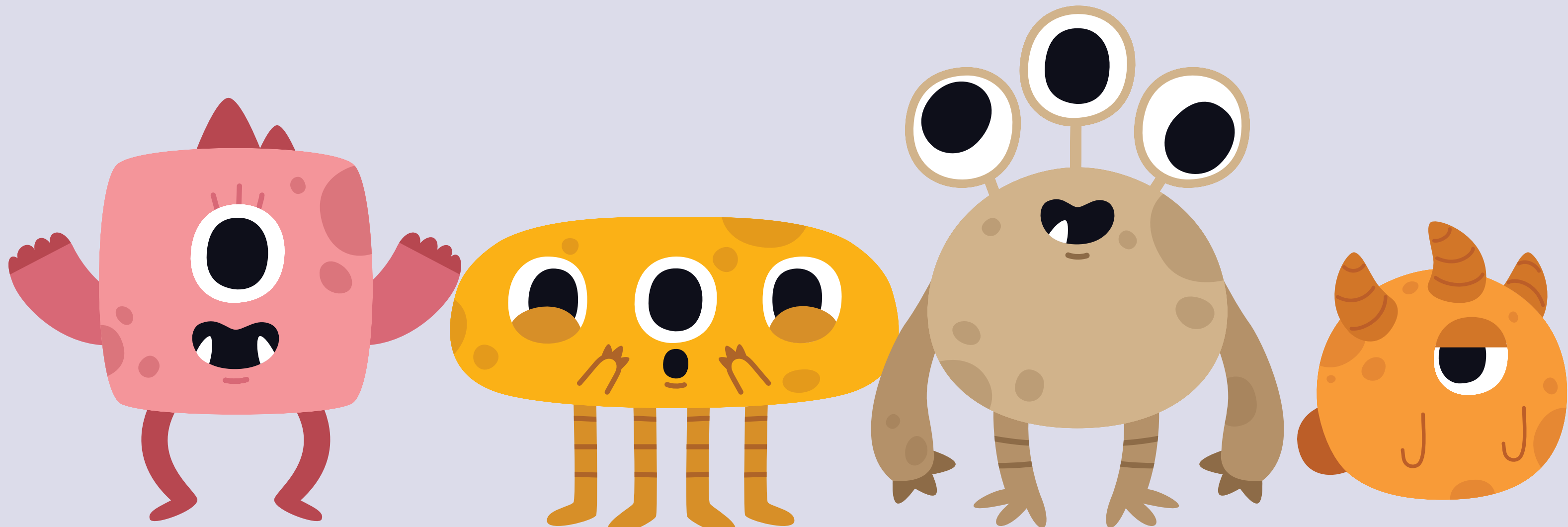
THINK ABOUT THIS FOR A SECOND...

If your job was to keep a being safe and out of trouble - how would you tell them what NOT to do? Or what we DON'T want them to do?
Or HAVE HAPPEN?



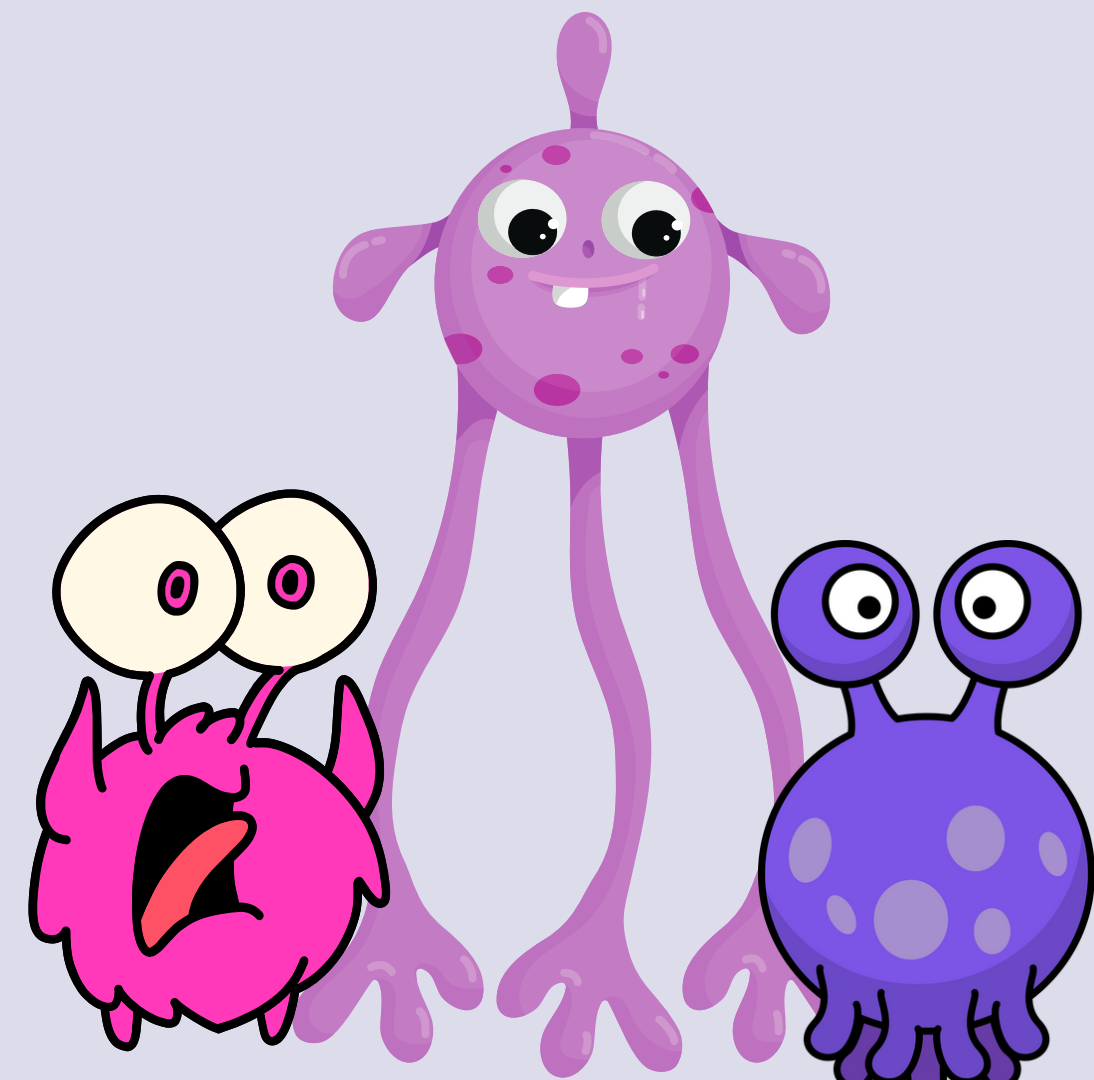
IT'S YOUR FEAR OF THEM THAT
MAKES THEM POWERFUL

If you are not afraid, it cannot hurt you



If we understand that these parts of us are giving us these thoughts **PRECISELY** because that is what they **DON'T** want to have happen, it can change how we feel toward the thoughts.

They become a little less scarier...
Still not fun though...



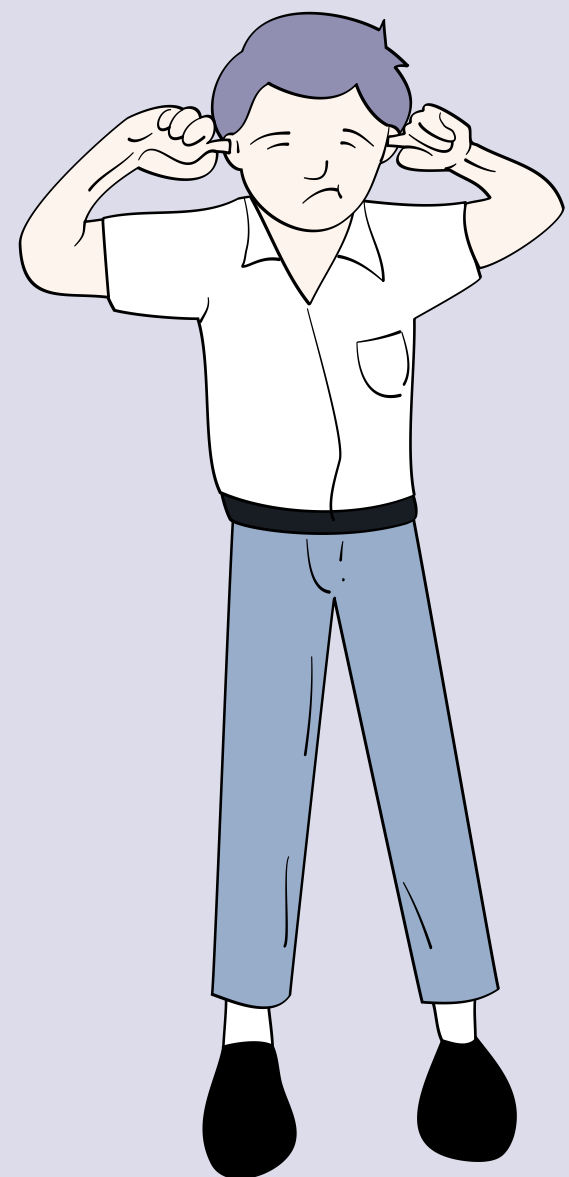
SHAME AND EMBARRASSMENT

We often have other parts of us that are embarrassed or ashamed to be having these thoughts.

Please let those parts of you know you have no control over what thoughts come into your system.

It's not your fault for having these kind of thoughts.

The only thing these thoughts actually tell you is how much you value the opposite of whatever they are showing you (otherwise why would we get so distressed by them?).



RESOURCE



Appreciating
the
unappreciated



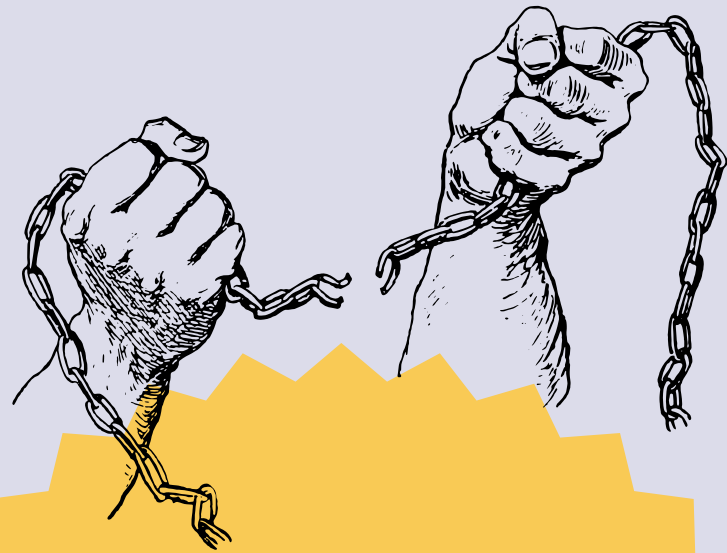

Next time
you have an
intrusive
thought...

THANK IT!

1. Let it know you **appreciate it** looking out for you.
2. Understand that the thought **only indicates the opposite** of what it's showing you.
 - EXAMPLE: I get thoughts of my partner being in a horrible car crash.
 - I say to that part, "Thanks for that. We love and value our partner so much...Of course there's a part of me that's afraid something will happen to him"
3. And then **send the thought on it's merry way**.
 - Paradoxically, this is actually the hardest part.

WHAT THE FLIP?!

How is 'thanking' it going to change things?



Reduces its power over you.

You change the power dynamic from one of fear to gratefulness (which truly feels powerful)

Less tension
As you're not fighting the thought, there is less overall tension inside.



Appreciating
the
unappreciated



Less distress
If the thought is less distressing, it's less likely to stick around (and potentially re-occur). Remember it's power comes from your fear of it.



NOT HELPING?

This is certainly not easy and everyone's systems are different. If you find it hard to see past the distressing reactions intrusive thoughts can create, meeting with a therapist can help.



This resource was created by

Kelly Lawrence

Clinical Psychologist

Meeting with Minds

meetingwithminds.co.nz