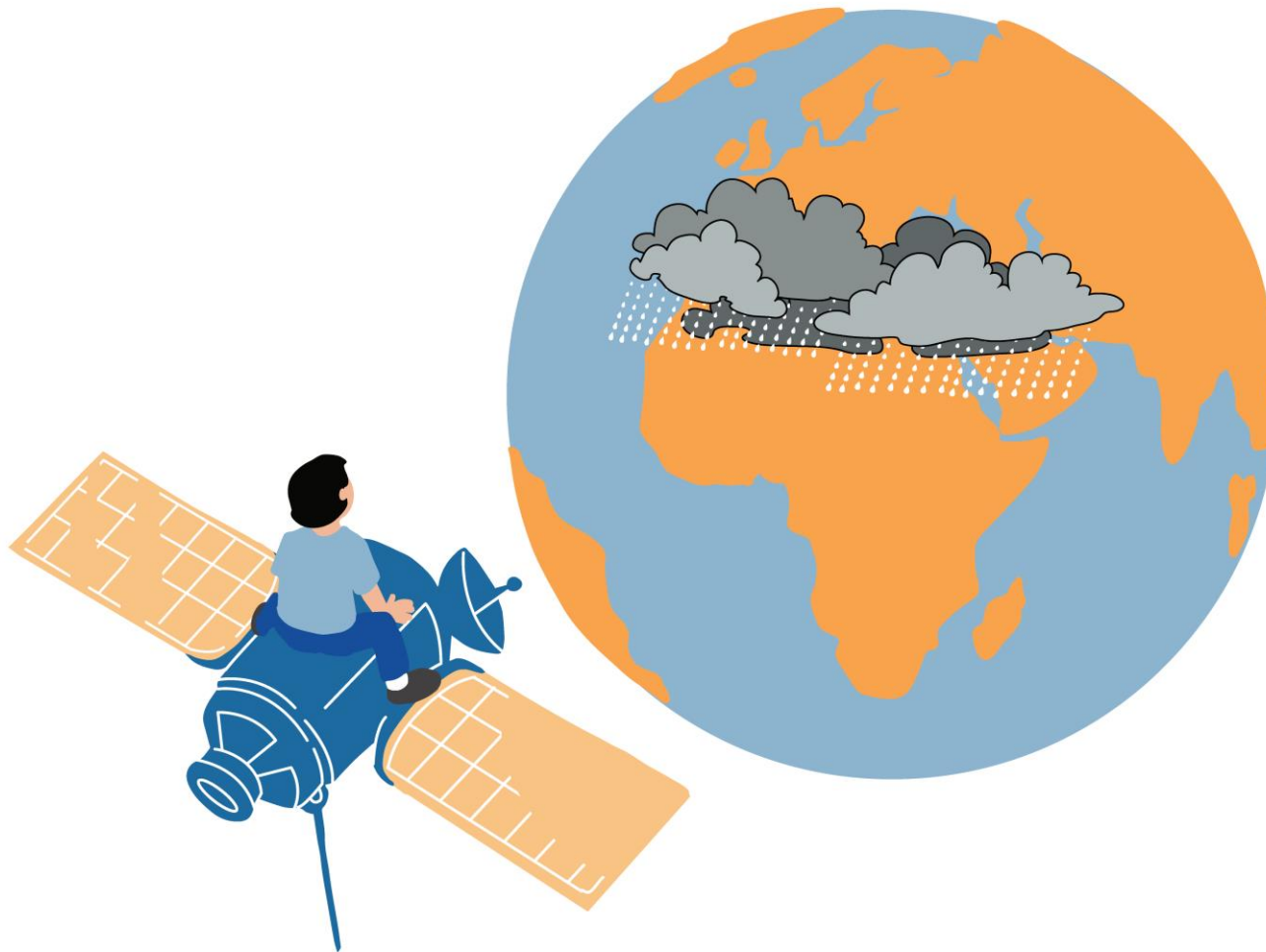




Metacognitive Training for Depression

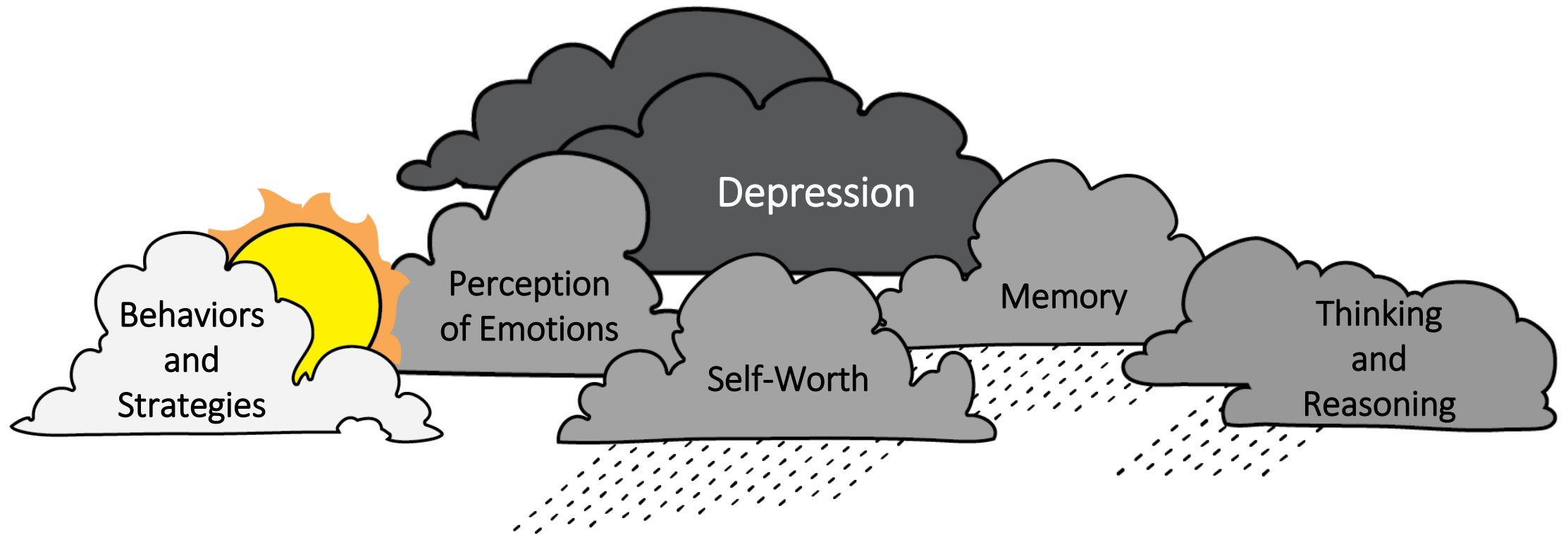


D-MCT: Satellite Position





Today's Topic





Previous session

- What did you do for follow-up?
- Do you have any questions or success stories?

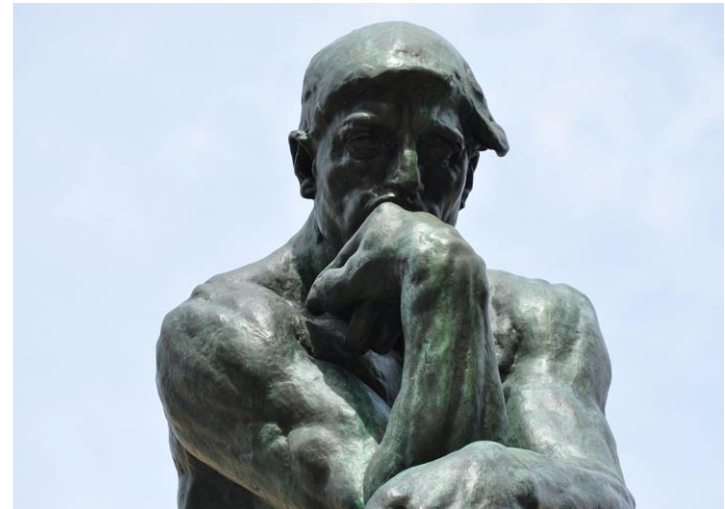


Training session

D-MCT 6 – Behaviors and Strategies



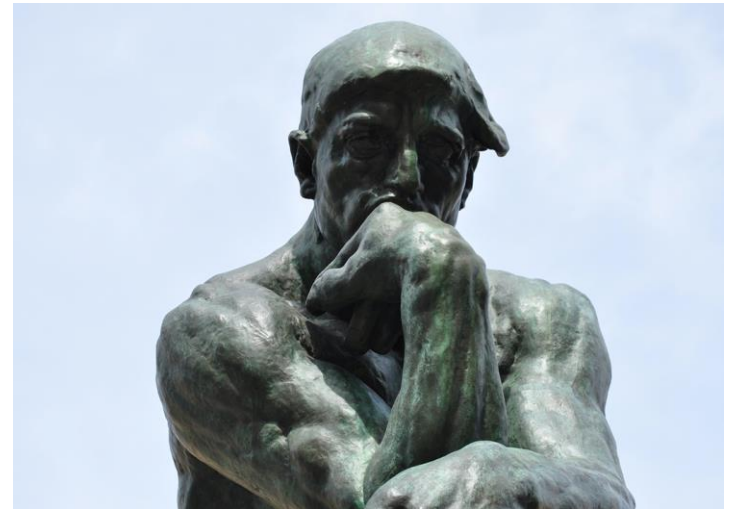
1. Ruminating





1. Ruminating

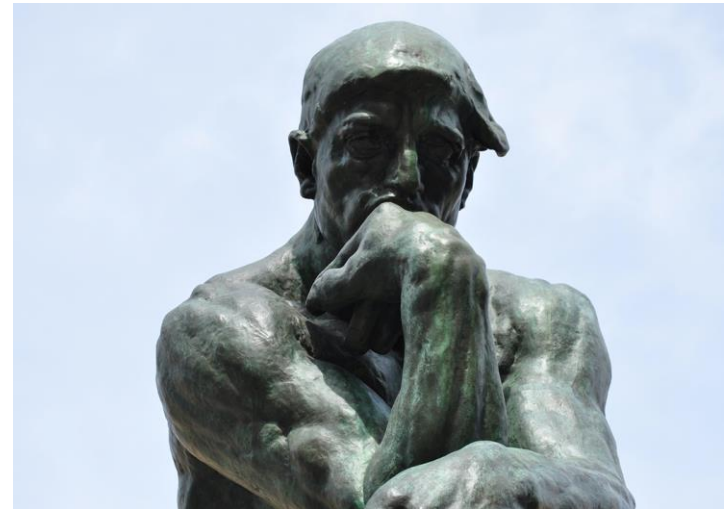
- Many people with depression complain of endless ruminating, brooding, and worrying.





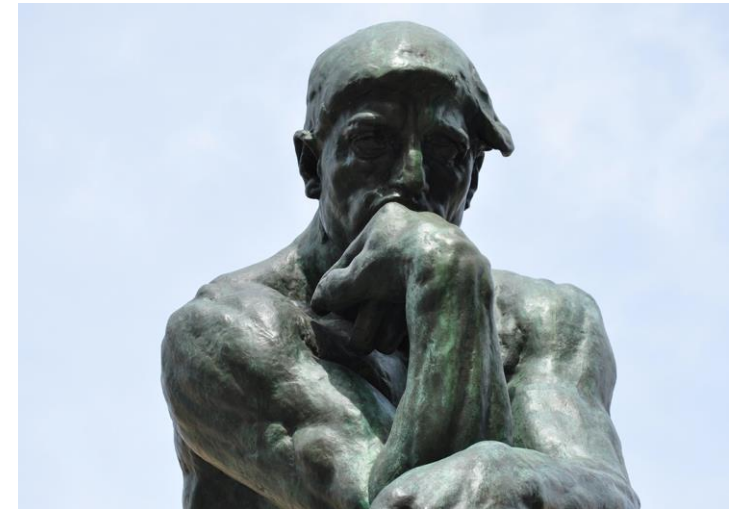
1. Ruminating

- Many people with depression complain of endless ruminating, brooding, and worrying.
- Are you familiar with brooding and worrying?





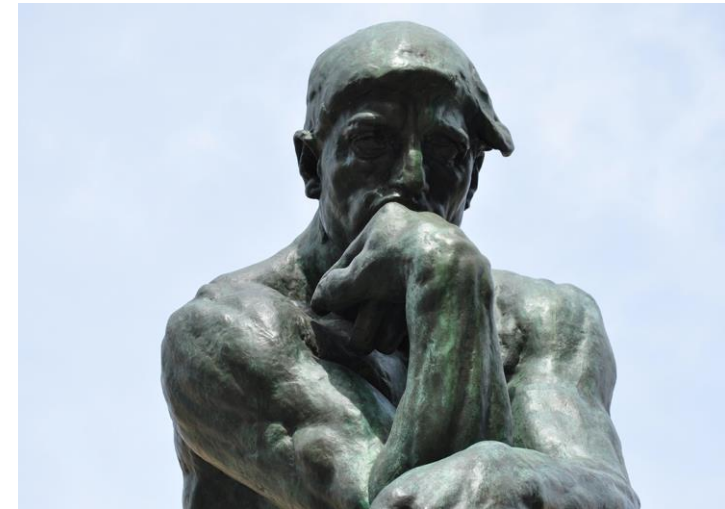
Can ruminating help ...





Can ruminating help ...

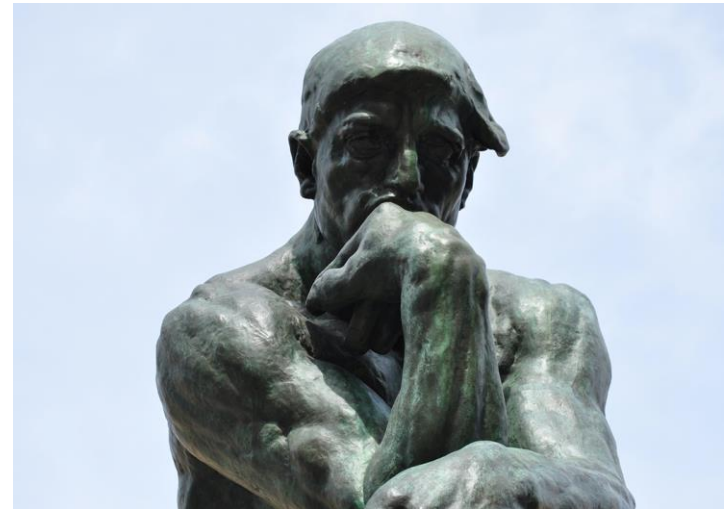
- to solve problems?





Can ruminating help ...

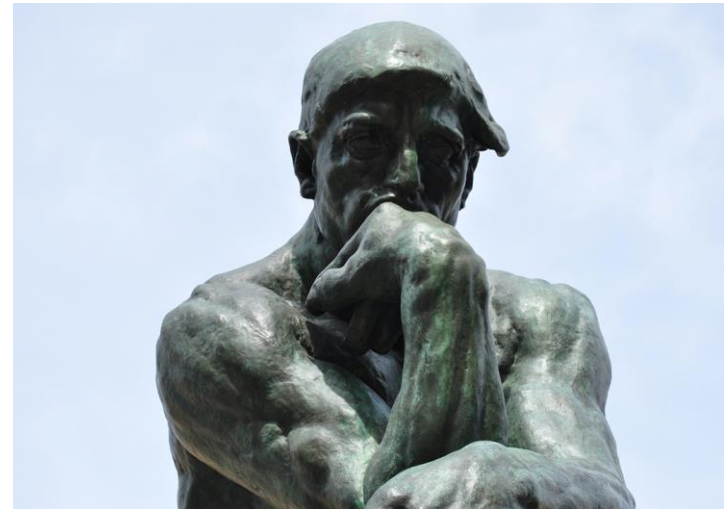
- to solve problems?
- to overcome problems in the future?





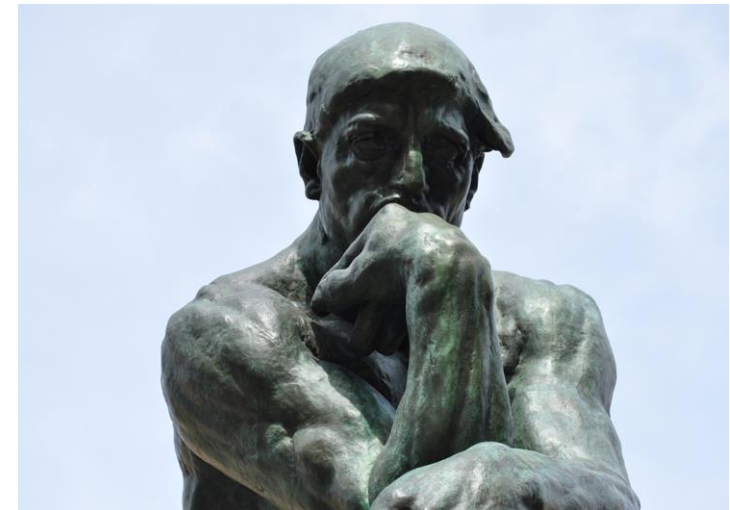
Can ruminating help ...

- to solve problems?
- to overcome problems in the future?
- to organize things in your mind?





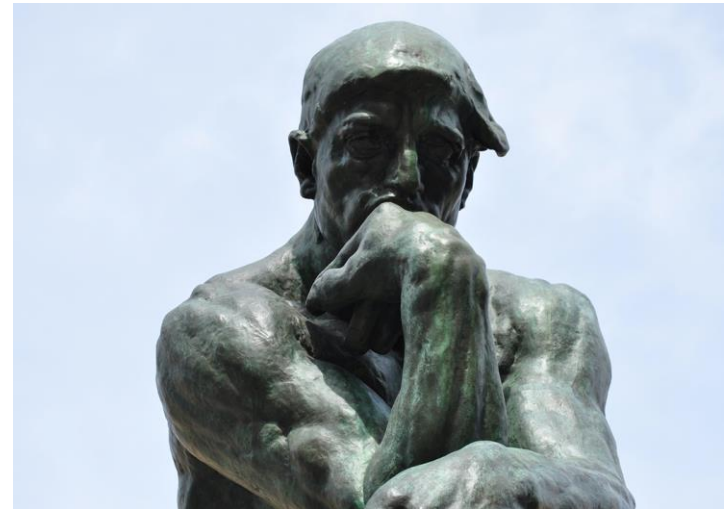
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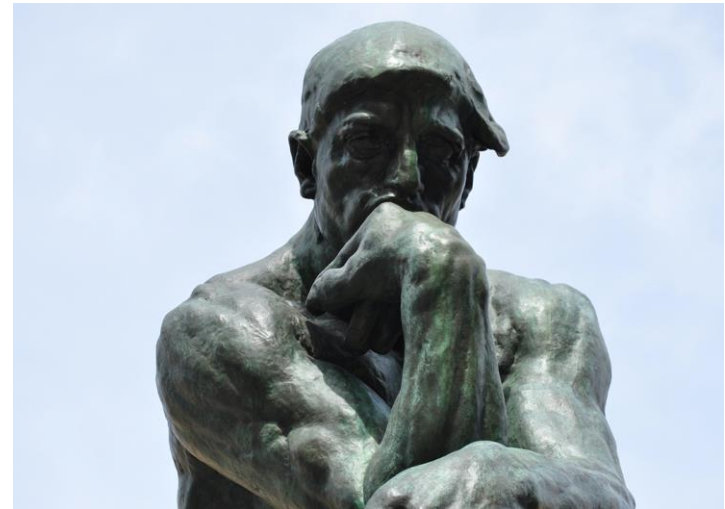
- But is rumination dangerous?





Ruminating is not helpful!

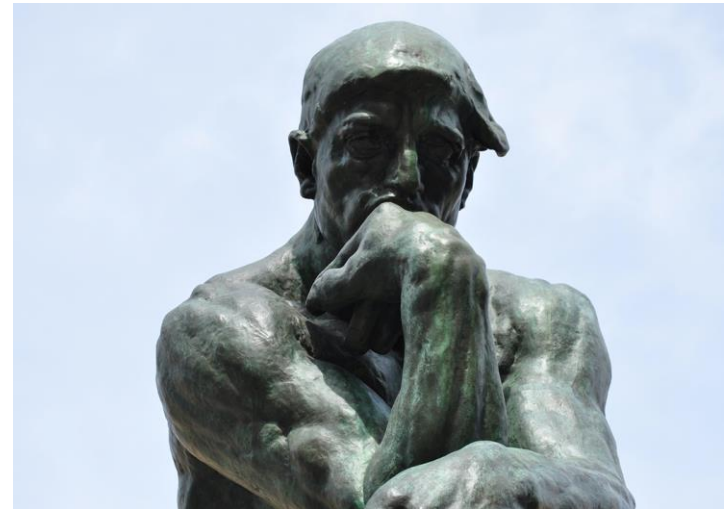
- But is rumination dangerous?
- Is it a sign that you will “lose your mind”?





Ruminating is not helpful!

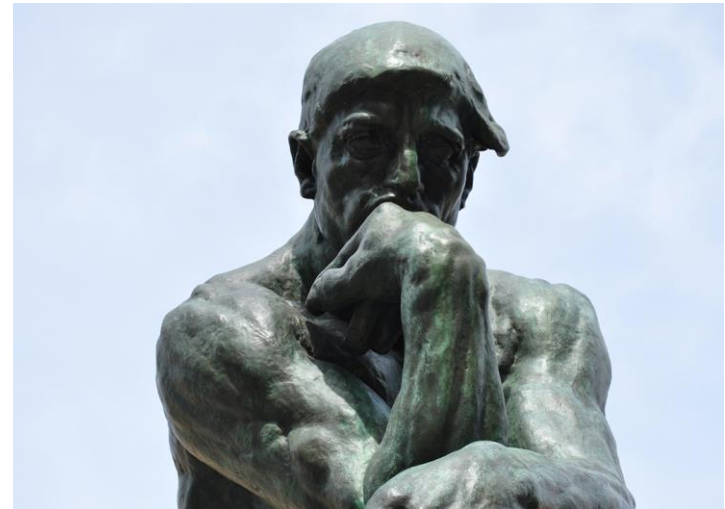
- But is rumination dangerous?
- Is it a sign that you will “lose your mind”?
- Is it unstoppable once you have started?





No! Ruminating is not helpful, but it is also not dangerous!

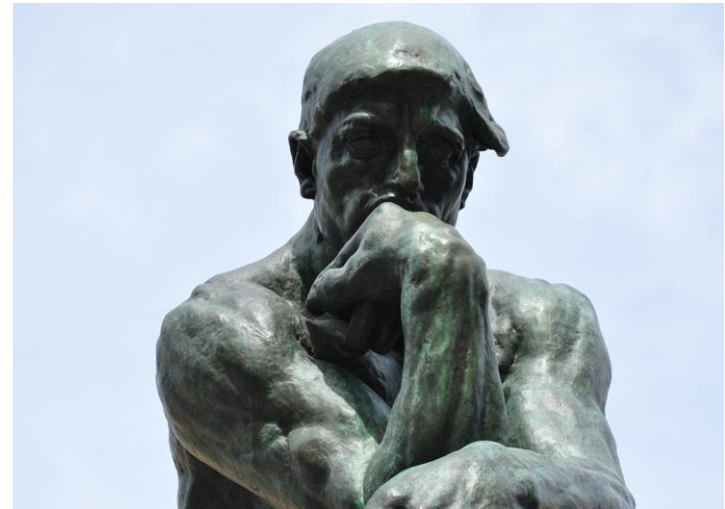
- Ruminating in itself is not dangerous, but it is not helpful either. Healthy people also ruminate, but they often experience it as more controllable.
- Thoughts \neq Actions





What is rumination?

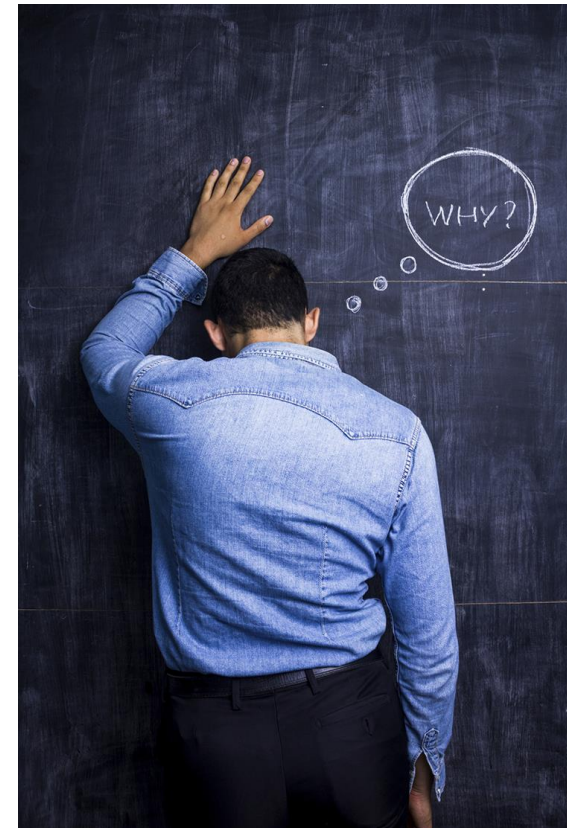
- What separates ruminating from contemplating (for example, about everyday problems)?
- How is ruminating different from planning?





Typical depressive ruminations

1. Content

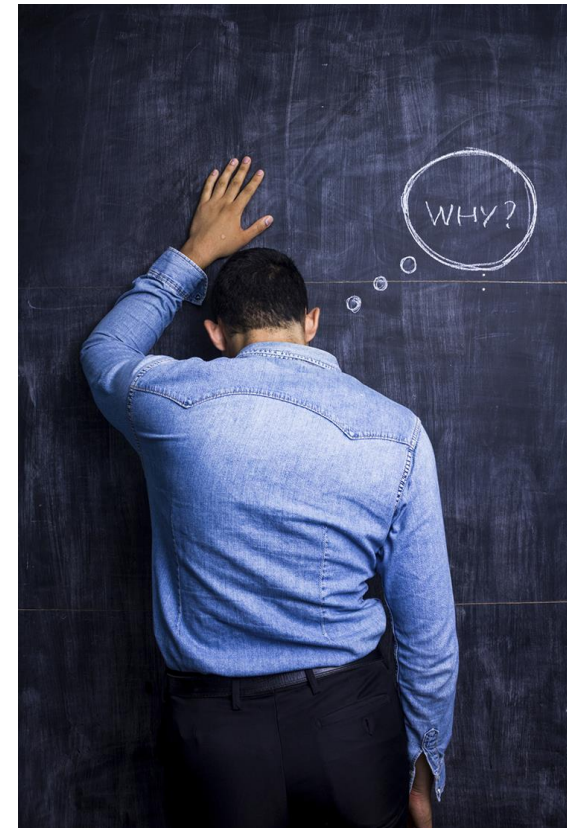




Typical depressive ruminations

1. Content

Ruminating about



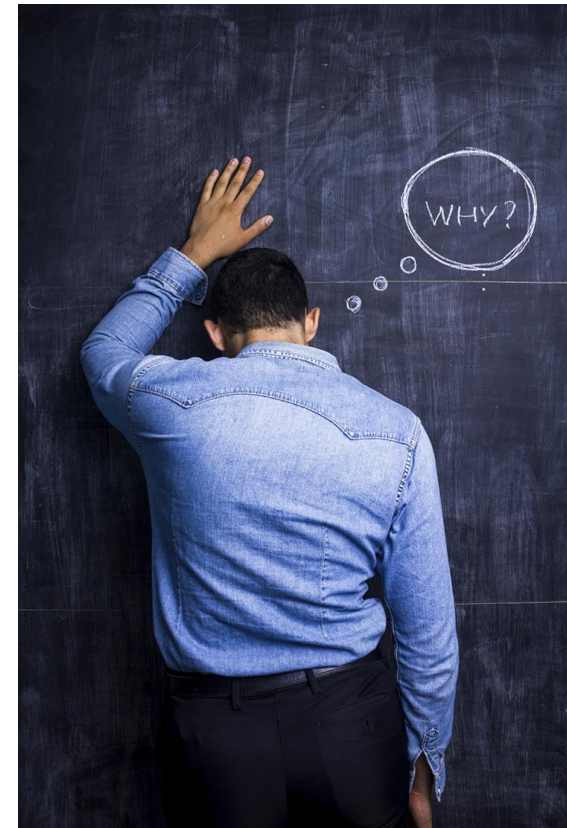


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- “Why?” (for example, the reason for a sickness).



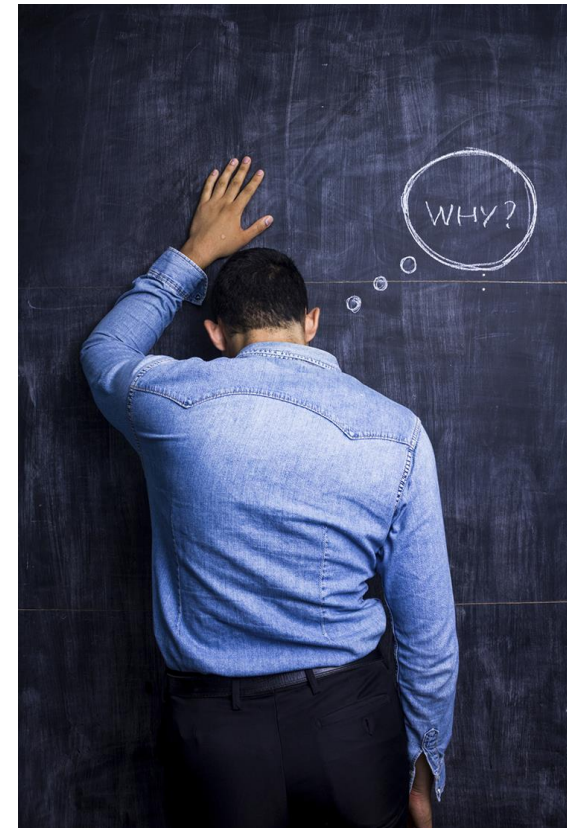


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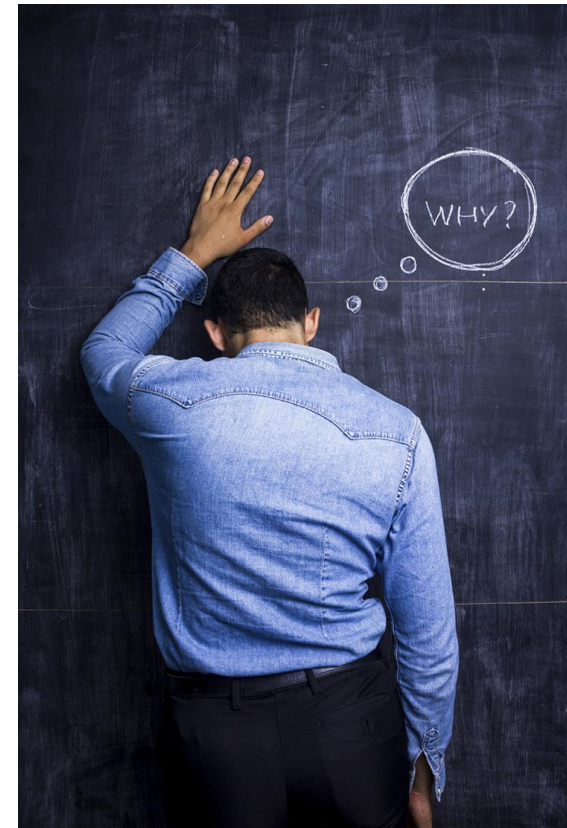


Typical depressive ruminations

1. Content

Ruminating about

- “Why?” (for example, the reason for a sickness).
- past events that have already occurred.
- your ruminations (“Why am I ruminating so much. Am I going crazy?”)





Typical depressive ruminations

2. *Type and Manner*





Typical depressive ruminations

2. *Type and Manner*

While ruminating ...





Typical depressive ruminations

2. *Type and Manner*

While ruminating ...

- it's hard to find an end, and we often go around in circles (creating “endless loops”).





Typical depressive ruminations

2. *Type and Manner*

While ruminating ...

- it's hard to find an end, and we often go around in circles (creating “endless loops”).
- We risk losing insight (as there is no input from outside ourselves).





Typical depressive ruminations

2. *Type and Manner*





Typical depressive ruminations

2. Type and Manner

While ruminating ...





Typical depressive ruminations

2. Type and Manner

While ruminating ...

- There is usually no “solution” (unlike problem solving).





Typical depressive ruminations

2. Type and Manner

While ruminating ...

- There is usually no “solution” (unlike problem solving).
- Actions rarely follow (unlike planning).





What helps prevent rumination?





What helps prevent rumination?

Is it helpful to suppress negative thoughts?





Thought Suppression

Try it out!

During the next minute, do *not* think of an elephant!





Does thought suppression work?

No!





Does thought suppression work?

No!

Most of you probably immediately thought about an elephant and/or about something related to an elephant (e.g., a zoo, a safari, Africa).





Does thought suppression work?

No!

Most of you probably immediately thought about an elephant and/or about something related to an elephant (e.g., a zoo, a safari, Africa).

The effect is even stronger when you try to actively suppress **unpleasant thoughts**, such as self-blame (“I’m a failure”).





Conclusion

Problematic strategy: “I am not allowed to think negative thoughts.”

Actively suppressing thoughts rarely works, so trying to do so can be frustrating.

Consciously trying *not* to think about something can strengthen the thought.





Instead:

1. Rumination date
2. Search for an inner space



Instead:

1. Rumination date
2. Search for an inner space



Instead:

1. Rumination date

Set a rumination date!

1. You notice that you are starting to ruminate.
2. Tell yourself, “I will deal with that at another time.”
3. Set a specific time with a beginning and an end time for your ruminating. This should not exceed 15 minutes and should not be directly before going to bed.



Instead:

1. Rumination date
2. Search for an inner space



Instead:

2. Search for an inner space

For example, imagine a place where you can observe your thoughts but not judge them (negatively):



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View a thought for what it is:



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- A **thought**—not reality!



Instead:

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For example, imagine a place where you can observe your thoughts but not judge them (negatively):

View a thought for what it is:

- A **thought**—not reality!
- An “event” in your mind. Attempt to register the thought but not judge it.



Instead:

2. Search for an inner space

For example, imagine a place where you can observe your thoughts but not judge them (negatively):

View a thought for what it is:

- **A thought**—not reality!
- An “event” in your mind. Attempt to register the thought but not judge it.

Imagine that you are at a train station. Like thoughts, the trains come and go—but you do not board every train!



Exercise (based on Wells): Search for an inner space ...

Observe your thoughts without intervening or judging them (“I’m an idiot. I’m ruminating again”). Instead, observe your thoughts like trains at a train station, or clouds moving across the sky, or leaves floating on a stream.



Breathing exercise ...



What did you do during the breathing exercise?

- You concentrated on your breath
- You observed your breath without changing it
- You perceived your thoughts and feelings without judging them or intervening





What did you do during the breathing exercise?

- You concentrated on your breath
- You observed your breath without changing it
- You perceived your thoughts and feelings without judging them or intervening

If this does not work immediately for you, don't worry. Regular practice helps!





2. Withdrawal

How does it happen?





2. Withdrawal

How does it happen?

In depressive phases ...





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How does it happen?

In depressive phases ...

- interacting with others can be difficult.





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How does it happen?

In depressive phases ...

- interacting with others can be difficult.
- you may often feel misunderstood by other people (“They have it good; I would rather have their problems”).
- your drive to do things is reduced;





2. Withdrawal

How does it happen?

In depressive phases ...

- interacting with others can be difficult.
- you may often feel misunderstood by other people (“They have it good; I would rather have their problems”).
- your drive to do things is reduced;
- your interest in others (and their problems) is often reduced.





Withdrawal is understandable. But is it helpful?



No – withdrawal leads to a vicious cycle!

“I pull back more and more and take on less and less.”

Depressive Behavior



“My mood becomes more and more depressed and dejected.”

Depressed Mood



Depressive Thoughts

“My bad mood and I are an imposition on other people.”



Try to break through this vicious cycle



Try to break through this vicious cycle

- Starting is always difficult! **But**, overcome your resistance and take a small step forward.



Try to break through this vicious cycle

- Starting is always difficult! **But**, overcome your resistance and take a small step forward.
- Take it **step by step**: Let small steps (such as getting up) lead to bigger steps (such as going out). Don't overcommit yourself!



Try to break through this vicious cycle

- Take care of necessities (such as personal hygiene, grocery shopping), but also do things that make you happy (such as listening to music, going for a walk).



Try to break through this vicious cycle

- Take care of necessities (such as personal hygiene, grocery shopping), but also do things that make you happy (such as listening to music, going for a walk).
- Also, if you do not immediately enjoy all your activities, remember that **being active leads to a better mood!**



Learning Points



Learning Points

- Certain behaviors (withdrawal) may do you good in the short term (by giving you “me time”) but may strengthen rather than reduce depression if done too long or exclusively!



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- Ruminating does not help solve problems. Instead, it strengthens negative thoughts and feelings.



Learning Points

- Certain behaviors (withdrawal) may do you good in the short term (by giving you “me time”) but may strengthen rather than reduce depression if done too long or exclusively!
- Ruminating does not help solve problems. Instead, it strengthens negative thoughts and feelings.
- Attempting to suppress rumination leads to further intrusive thoughts and is therefore not helpful.



Learning Points

Instead:



Learning Points

Instead:

- Practice perceiving without judging (breathing exercises, relaxation exercises, yoga, etc.).



Learning Points

Instead:

- Practice perceiving without judging (breathing exercises, relaxation exercises, yoga, etc.).
- Especially during depressive phases, it is important to maintain contact with important people in your life and to continue to participate in activities (small steps).



Final round

- What was most important for you today?
- Which thought distortion would you like to do an exercise on as homework?



For trainers:

Please hand out the worksheets. Introduce our app COGITO (download free of charge).



www.uke.de/mct_app





Thank you!

