

The image features a dark red background with a repeating pattern of white line-art mechanical components, including gears, levers, and springs. The Southco logo, consisting of the word "southco" in a lowercase sans-serif font with a registered trademark symbol (®), is centered in white.

southco®

Creating first impressions that last.

Leading through Uncertainty

Building Resilience through thinking well

Thinking is just thinking – right?

- Wrong. Thinking happens whether we like it or not, but we can train thinking. It's especially important in times of increased challenge or stress, as our brains can slip into negative patterns and become unhelpful to our efficiency.
- Our challenge is to recognise negative patterns and divert away from them. Talking to others is a key tool to help, and we can use questions to help make sure we're in perspective.

The Power of Thinking

“Man is disturbed not by things but by the views he takes of them”

Epictetus, AD 55-135

“My life has been full of terrible misfortunes most of which have never happened”

Michael de Montaigne

Some Unhelpful thinking patterns

- All or nothing thinking
 - (Thinking in extremes or absolutes gives no room to weigh up the pros and cons. Things/situations/people are rarely ALL bad or ALL good)
- Overgeneralisation
 - Labelling something on the basis of one example or situation is not accurate data
- Disqualifying the positive or focusing on the negative
 - Making sure equal weight is given to 'what went well' as what needs improving

Some Unhelpful Thinking Patterns

- Thoughts feelings fusion
 - Just because we think it, doesn't mean it's true! (See extra reading on last slide)
- Catastrophising
 - Imagining the worst, focusing on an irrational fear that something is worse than it actually is
- Personalisation
- Mind reading or predicting the worst
 - i.e. I didn't get a reply, they must think it's awful
- Perfectionism

Fighting off negative patterns


- Reflection: Does my thinking fit any of the negative patterns?
- Take control: Assign a timeslot to worry, then move on.
- Meditate / practice Mindfulness: Find an app or online class that helps
- The 'Best Friend Test': If my best friend came to me with these thoughts, what advice would I give them?
- Look for the positives: What might be good about this?
- Divide and conquer: Don't think about all your worries at once. Separate and avoid them becoming a jumble of concern.
- Keep in perspective: Things are rarely as bad as they appear; don't jump to conclusions
- Talk to peers/friends/managers or trusted others

Helpful Behaviours

- Maintain social and support networks
- Reflection and focus on learning
- Assertiveness
- Avoid procrastination caused by avoidance
- Develop goals in realistic timescales
- Time management
- Maintain Work – life balance

Build Thinking Resilience with...

Lifestyle **Choices**

- 
- Alcohol
 - Caffeine
 - Smoking

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Relaxation

Challenge the Negative – Helpful Questions

- Am I falling into a thinking trap, e.g. *catastrophizing* or *overestimating danger*?
- What is the evidence that this thought is true? What is the evidence that this it is not true?
- Have I confused a thought with a fact?
- What would I tell a friend if he/she had the same thought?
- What would a friend say about my thought?
- Am I 100% sure that _____ will happen?
- How many times has _____ happened before?
- Is _____ so important that my future depends on it?
- What is the worst that could happen?
- If it did happen, what could I do to cope with or handle it?
- Is my judgment based on the way I feel instead of facts?
- Am I confusing “possibility” with “certainty”? It may be possible, but is it likely?
- Is this a hassle or a horror?

Go for the Positive – Create a routine for Positive thinking

- Focus on the good things
 - Don't dismiss positives, however small
- Practice gratitude
 - Say thanks to someone who deserves it
- Keep a gratitude journal
 - Write down what you're grateful for (this is gaining popularity right now)
- Open yourself up to humor
 - Find tv shows, twitter feeds, etc that make you laugh. Include humour in your day to day
- Encourage others to be positive and follow your lead
- Practice positive self-talk
- Identify your areas of negativity
 - What stresses you. Tackle it to minimise it
- Start every day on a positive note
 - Create a ritual in which you start off each day with something uplifting and positive.

Extra Reading...

- <https://www.thecareerpsychologist.com/cognitive-fusion/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/click-here-happiness/201803/think-positive-11-ways-boost-positive-thinking>