"I am having the thought that..."

A two-minute exercise in getting distance from a painful thought.

1. Bring to mind a self-critical or upsetting thought that often hooks you. Write it as a short sentence. For example: "I am a failure."

The thought

2. Silently repeat it to yourself, believing it as much as you can, for ten seconds. Notice how it feels.

How much does it hook me?

0 — 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

Not at all — Completely

3. Now put this in front of it: **"I am having the thought that..."** Repeat the whole sentence for ten seconds. Notice what happens.

4. Now make it: **"I notice I am having the thought that..."** Repeat for ten seconds.

How much does it hook me now?

0 — 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

Not at all — Completely

What changed? Did the thought go away? Did I get some distance from it?

What this shows

The thought is the same. What has changed is where you are standing. You have moved from looking at the world through the thought to looking at the thought.

Using it in daily life

When	The thought	With "I am having the thought that..."	What I noticed

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