

Toxic Thinking Patterns

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Introduction

There are thinking patterns that cause one intense negative feelings like shame, anger, guilt, or fear. According to Staik (2016), these thinking patterns are both toxic and addictive since they stimulate certain areas of the brain in the same manner that addictive substances like nicotine do. Often, toxic thinking patterns trick one's body and brain into thinking that they can rely on them as "trusted friends" (Staik, 2016). Examples of these toxic thinking patterns include complaining or fault-finding, communication blocking, gossiping, rescuing others, self-victimization or portraying self as helpless, making excuses, and blaming (Staik, 2011).

The thinking patterns mentioned above are chiefly toxic in the manner in which they interact with one's brain and body. First, through thoughts that bring to life one's core fears like inadequacy, rejection or failure, they activate the fight and flee response of one's body (Staik, 2011). Second, they keep one's brain from reflective and positive thinking, which prevents them from learning. Instead, toxic thinking patterns needlessly put the brain in "protective mode," which may even last for lengthier periods. Lastly, toxic thinking patterns prevent one from growing their capacity to regulate their fears effectively (Staik, 2011).

In summary, although toxic thinking patterns can be well-intentioned, they fail to add value to one's life since they cause feelings and behaviors that can never satisfy one's need for emotional fulfillment as a human being (Staik, 2011). Instead, they stand as futile attempts to delivering emotional satisfaction, which leave one craving for more quick reliefs from pseudo "feel-goods" (Staik, 2011). This constant desire of quick reliefs from pseudo "feel-goods" further extends the streak of toxic thinking in one thereby working against their progress.

References

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