



II. Mastering Your Thoughts & Emotions

BACKGROUND: Managing your psycho-physiology, (Greek: thoughts-body (ie “State”)) is no easy task, especially when there are deep seated fears and insecurities. The application of Ethos, Pathos and Logos as ‘filtering system’ for **dealing with unwanted thoughts** is very useful, as this anecdotal story with Socrates demonstrates.

A long time ago in ancient Athens, the great philosopher is said to have come upon an acquaintance, who ran up to him excitedly and said, “Socrates, do you know what I just heard about one of your students?”

“Wait a moment,” Socrates replied. “Before you tell me, I’d like you to pass a little test. It’s called the Test of Three.”

“Test of Three?”

“That’s correct,” Socrates continued. “Before you talk to me about my student let’s take a moment to test what you’re going to say. The first test is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?”

“No,” the man replied, “actually I just heard about it.”

“All right,” said Socrates. “So you don’t really know if it’s true or not. Now let’s try the second test, the test of Kindness. Is what you are about to tell me about my student something good?”

“No, on the contrary...”

“So,” Socrates continued, “you want to tell me something bad about him even though you’re not certain it’s true?”

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed.

Socrates continued, “You may still pass though because there is a third test – the test of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my student going to be useful to me?”

“No, not really...”

“Well,” concluded Socrates, “if what you want to tell me is neither true nor good nor even useful, why tell it to me at all?”

The Three Filters we must pass our thoughts-beliefs-issues through:

1. **Is it 100% True?**
Represents **Ethos** (Consider: Integrity, Credibility, Accuracy)
2. **Is it Kind?**
Represents **Pathos** (Consider: Feelings, Emotions, Compassion, Kindness, Empathy)
3. **Is it Useful?**
Represents **Logos** (Consider: Reason, Practicality, Applicability, Utility, Facts, Strategies)

Now try it for yourself:

NAME: “The Test of 3” - The Truth Shall Set You Free®

PURPOSE: Using ‘filters’ to overcome distressing, frustrating, angering, alarming THOUGHT - BELIEFS.

INSTRUCTIONS: Bring to mind, a particular THOUGHT - BELIEF that worries, distresses or angers you, regarding your personal or professional life.

Write down this exact THOUGHT-BELIEF and describe it in a sentence or statement, exactly as it is formulated when you think it. It is a belief that you presently hold about yourself, another person or a situation. It could be something like this:

- “I am worried that I will fail at my job and be fired.”
- “I am angry at David because he shamed in front of colleagues.”
- “I am afraid that my business will fail and my life-standard will drop.”



Write down the THOUGHT-BELIEF that worries, stresses, frustrates or angers you. (It should be 1-3 sentences long, not more.)

Now ask yourself:

1. Is it 100% **TRUE**, or am I distorting the facts through distortion:
 - Dramatizing the situation and overblowing it’s importance
 - Generalizing and assuming things that are not 100% true
 - Over-Personalizing and taking offence at things that are not really related to me.

Now ask yourself again, **is my thought or belief 100% TRUE? (Yes or No)** If your answer is ‘No’, try to ‘process’ it, to gauge it’s actual truthfulness and its importance relative to your overall goals.

2. Is my thought or belief **KIND**?

Is it kind towards you? Are you putting yourself down, being too critical? Self reflection is good, but many times we judge ourselves too harshly. We’re all human and we make mistakes; the point is to learn from them, not to let them drain our energy and confidence. (You may find that you can trace back this harsh criticism to your mother or your father’s way of disciplining you when you were a child).

Also, is it kind towards the other(s)? Look at it from the perspective of the others who are involved. How does the situation look from their perspective?



Write your thoughts down..

This diagram may assist you in this process on showing perspective affects our view of truth: What do you see old lady (facing forward), or a young lady (facing to the



how
here, an
back).

3. Is my thought or belief **USEFUL**?

Although fear can sometimes be beneficial, alerting you to real dangers, too much fear and pessimism can poison your mind with self defeating doubt and paralyze you with indecision. You have to therefore “police” your brain, and only allow it to think thoughts which are useful, in order to keep it healthy and productive.

Consider your Thought or Belief. What is the benefit of allowing it to run around in your mind? Does it help you in any way? Who would you be if you didn’t have it? Would you be more productive, more courageous, more effective?

How would you **rephrase, change or modify** it so that it is more Truthful, Kind and Useful, so that it becomes a more empowering statement?



Write down this new, rephrased statement, and read it outloud.



“Medusa” was a monster, one of the **Gorgon** sisters and daughter of Phorkys and **Keto**, the children of **Gaea** (Earth) and **Oceanus** (Ocean). She had the face of an ugly woman with snakes instead of hair; anyone who looked into her eyes was immediately turned to stone. It was the hero Perseus who defeated her in her cave; he came upon the sleeping Medusa and by viewing her reflection in his polished shield, he safely approached and cut off her head. From her neck sprang Pegasus (the winged horse) and Chrysaor (a sword of gold). In psychoanalysis, the myth of the Medusa represents our fears and how we can overcome them through using a “mirror” of self-reflection, in order to get the prizes of freedom and power.

