



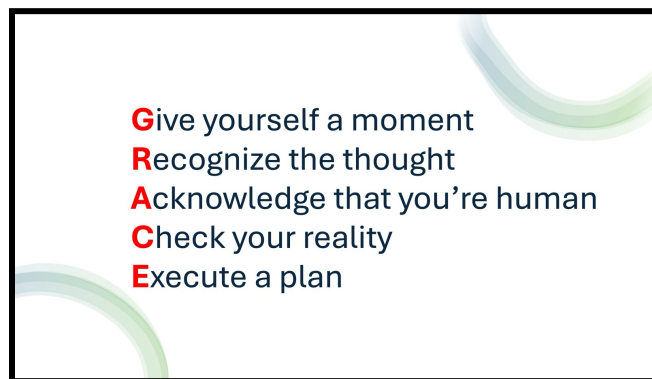
The G.R.A.C.E. Method for Working Through Self-Defeating Thoughts

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Self-defeating thoughts are mental scripts that disrupt the goal-seeking process by lowering the expectations we place on ourselves and/or others. Examples include: “*I don’t belong here*,” “*I’m an imposter*,” and “*I don’t want to be a bother*.” Self-defeating thoughts are invasive, and can turn into self-doubt and self-sabotage.

The G.R.A.C.E. method is a 5-part strategy to help college students create a plan to move past self-defeating thoughts.



Give yourself a moment

Life moves fast, and challenges strike quickly. It’s tempting to stay on the go and never look back. However, when you feel like you’re questioning yourself too much, giving yourself a moment to stop, breathe and reflect is crucial.

Recognize the thought

Now that you’ve given yourself a moment to reflect, try to call out exactly what self-defeating thoughts you are having. If you have trouble describing them, focus on the feelings you are experiencing.

Acknowledge that you’re human

Remember that you are a human being experiencing self-defeating thoughts that many – if not all – humans experience at some point in their lives. Many others have overcome these thoughts; have confidence that you can, too.

Check your reality

The greatest tool you have to weaken self-defeating thoughts is reality. Take inventory of things you have accomplished, past adversity you have overcome, and people in your life who are ready to support you. Reminding yourself of these things can help strengthen your confidence as you prepare to move past the self-defeating thoughts.

Execute a plan

You’re ready: now’s the time to execute a plan or strategy to address whatever challenge or obstacle you have in front of you. Construct the plan (don’t be afraid to write it down) and move forward one step at a time. As you execute the plan, don’t forget to celebrate the small wins during your progress.

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