

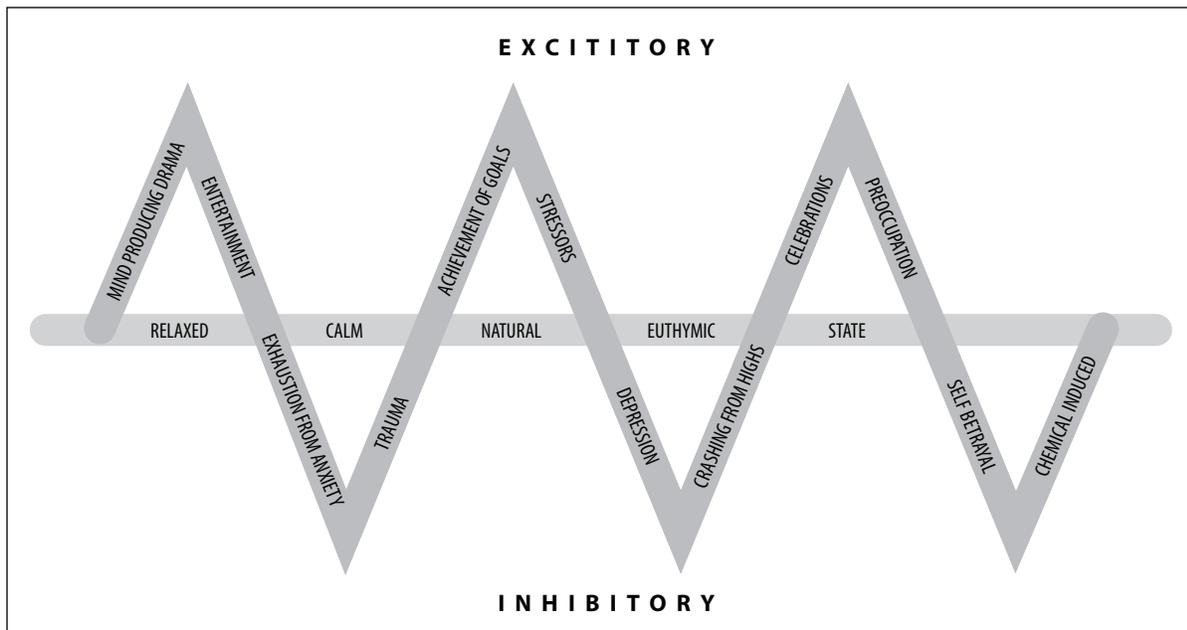
# Ceremonial Thought Processing

## **Introduction to Ceremonial Thought Processing (CTP<sup>2</sup>)**

An extraordinarily large percentage of the world's population has a tendency to be seduced by their own pathological thinking –habitually entertaining intrusive negative thoughts, those which produce worry, stress, anger, fear, resentments and hostility in one form or another, pre-occupation, impulses. Prolonged pathological thinking increases its intensity, the mind weakens, and the body tires, attitudes and behaviors are noxiously influenced. Mind, body and soul have become fragmented.

Mental anguish, in the form anxiety and depression, has at times been part of this person's life. Being elevated from a state of panic and discontentment to comprehensive peace and calm can be a challenging endeavor. Those who have begun to master the unraveling of the mind's mummery are no longer seduced by unsolicited thoughts but rather amused by the provocative nature of them. Chatter is the antithesis of peace, silence is calming. This is the evolution of spiritual application. Whether it is a dis-ease of addiction, a phobia, neurosis or psychosis, the solution will at least partially depend upon restructuring thought processing.

## Before CTP<sup>2</sup>



CTP<sup>2</sup> is an all-inclusive exercise prioritizing thought processing, silencing the mind, mind management, raising awareness, and spirituality. For all intents and purposes we are proposing a humanistic spiritual employment, centrifugal in nature. In its simplest form it is designed as a cognitive approach to self-regulate thought and emotions. “Ceremonial Thought Processing is a Cognitive Therapeutic Practice with spiritual implications”. It is a multi-dimensional, quintuple process aimed at cross-cutting the division between science and spirituality. CTP<sup>2</sup> does not contradict, undermine, challenge, or undervalue any religious beliefs or treatment models. The exercise is not intended to substitute traditional models but to enhance them.

Although there are never ending changes taking place in our society and culture, as it stands the term spirituality is more often than not associated with religion, and rarely with science. To avoid any controversy or confusion when introducing the exercise, precaution should be taken in defining it as a cognitive tool with spiritual implications. That is to say its primary

focus is redirecting the mind and calming the body in an attempt to raise awareness, and to create inner peace, leading to humanistic spirituality.

In attending to the dichotomy that has existed between science and spirituality, we may consider the following:

A) How modern **psychology** has influenced the idiom in expressing the dis-eased mind. Those who have a proclivity, if you will, of being seduced by ill thought; those that arrive in the form of anger, fear, insecurities, unwarranted suspicions, and produce worries and woes leading to confusion, frustration, and when continued, ending in depression. We have termed thoughts or ideas, intentional or unintentional that result in measurable influences over affective state, mood, attitude or behavior and have no significance other than a neurological spike as “ thinking bling”.

B) **Physiology**-science continues to validate the sequential influences of thoughts and emotions in correspondence to exacerbation of neuron transmissions. Whether those spikes are exhibitory or excitatory, slight or intense, measurable physiological effects are taken into consideration. Stressful nuances of the dis-eased mind produce damaging enzyme which attach to neurons housed in the pre-frontal cortex. As stress intensifies, focus becomes impaired which is critical in an area of the brain that controls complex thinking and problem solving. Prolonged entertaining of biochemical reward-boosting thoughts can hinder the brains “internal landscape” (extracellular levels neurotransmitters) not only biochemically but in collateral systems associated with restoring homeostasis. Although the exercise does not address physical fitness or diet consideration, both should be taken into account, keeping in mind the amino acids from proteins are valuable contributing factors in brain cell networking.

C) Perhaps the time has come for us to examine the possibility that science and **spirituality** are more of a paradox than an oxymoron. The random erroneous thoughts that enter

our minds can have harmful psychological, physiologic effects and lead to irrational attitudes and behaviors. Inadvertently the spirit which animates our soul continues to ceaselessly diminish. Desensitization will include proliferation of an interactive mutual causality between the approach of thinking and elucidation. Simply put, “If we can’t change our mind we can’t change anything”, George Bernard Shaw. Although the quote appropriately illustrates an objective, the means in achieving this has been withheld. Change generally involves efforts such as establishing and rectifying antecedents of thought processing.

Albert Ellis and Aaron T. Beck have suggested that limiting time spent reflecting on automatic thoughts would lead clients to treat them as valid. Beck termed these cognitions as “Automatic Thoughts” and categorized them as negative ideas about themselves, the world and the future. Both men helped patients identify and evaluate these thoughts and in doing so they became more in touch with reality which in turn had positive effects on emotions and behavioral functioning. Whether the term used is random, unsolicited, unprovoked, arbitrary, or automatic, the mind’s activity remains unavoidable. It will take conscious effort to redirect a preoccupied mind. A brain being distorted by its own mind is the equivalent of the tail wagging the dog. Further complicating the issue are the physiological effects caused by such garble. We extend to the possibility that there are those who unseemingly are seduced into a state of higgledy-piggledy by their own thinking. To the newly recovering individual, one who has mistaken peace for boredom can be at risk of such self-sabotaging effects as the heightened state of arousal brought on by random thoughts. A shift in consciousness involves the brain exploring, defining, identifying and analyzing the works of the mind. In doing so, we will explore the differences between sub consciousness and heightened awareness.

Social learning theories place an emphasis on human responses to environmental cues linking one behavior to another. Psycho-analytic theories investigate the conscious, unconscious and childhood development, while chaos theories tend to explore the randomness of events. Despite the prevailing circumstances that is presenting problem or method of treatment, a component of the armamentarium should include self-regulating techniques. Within self-regulation theory and control theory, attention is central. (Carver & Sheir). Carlo C. DeClemente concurs adding that we can only change the things we pay attention to and that goals receive much of their self-regulatory capacity from their connection to attention mechanisms. The DMSV has classified impulse control as “a failure to resist an impulse, drive or temptation to perform an act that is harmful to the individual or other”. This is precisely the initial intent of CTP<sup>2</sup>, a fast track endeavor to facilitate a schema shift. As participants are invited to explore the functioning of the mind inadvertently they are exercising their brain.

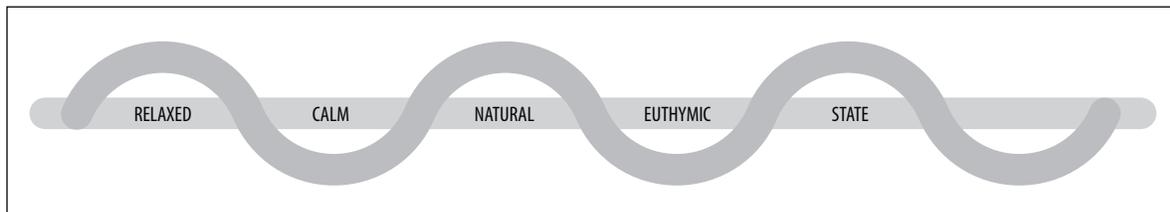
The CTP<sup>2</sup> exercise blends nicely with Motivational Interviewing, Harm Reduction, and Cognitive Behavior Therapy. It shares many of the evidence based characteristics of Mindfulness Based Cognitive Behavior Therapy (MBCT).

- A) Both focus on becoming aware of all incoming stimuli.
- B) Both agree that thoughts and feelings are automatic processes.
- C) They share the commonality in setting goals of interrupting thought patterns.
- D) Both are partial to educating participants on acceptance.
- E) remaining nonjudgmental is considered a path of least resistance and leads to healthier attitudes.

In short the CTP<sup>2</sup> exercise has been designed as a cathexis to interrupt and or distract obsessive, compulsive, and random thoughts. CTP<sup>2</sup> is an empowering cognitive approach to self-

analyze distortions in thinking. When iteration is prioritized, superfluous, systemic misrepresentations become fragmented and or compartmentalized, manageability is realized.

### After CTP<sup>2</sup>



The technique invites introspection to the approach of thinking and that a choice exists. An algorithm has been acquired to achieve and maintain peace. Success is measured in the individual's ability to avoid the nuances of ill thought, triggered by random thinking. The awareness of consciousness has produced enlightenment and time and energy is used for more meaningful purposes. Participants recognize and enjoy the comforts of a euthymic state.

In creating the exercise, consideration has been taken to answer the following questions. Is the exercise easily understood? Is it beneficial? Is it harmful in anyway? Is it adaptable to various treatment models? Does it undermine or challenge religious beliefs? Is it time and cost effective? Does mind management have positive effects on mesolimbic neurochemistry and can it help regulate the brains power reward system?

We have found it most effective to introduce and practice the exercise prior to beginning group sessions. Taking a few transitional moments of silence, a period to reflect and clear or observed thoughts, at this stage participant are guided thru specific steps of biofeedback techniques. Biofeedback techniques are an intricate part of the exercise; they are introduced early and repeated often. We have noticed a significant difference in the depth of topics and a more

solution oriented presentation of concerns. Clients appear to be more relaxed and group awareness is heightened. Distracting triggers, impulses, temptations, pre-occupation, and desires that lead to relapse have been significantly influenced.

**CTP<sup>2</sup>: a quintuple exercise:**

**1) STEP ONE: WE ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY THE PRECEPATORS OF A RANDOM THOUGHT.**

- a) Begin by monitoring thoughts.
- b) Think about what you are thinking about.
- c) What triggered the thought, where did it come from?
- d) Determine whether the thought is random or intentional.
- e) Distinguish the difference between the entertaining stories of the mind and the critical,intentional functions of the brain.

**2) SECONDLY, WE DETERMINE THE COURSE AND PURPOSE OF THE THOUGHT.**

- a) What amount of time is being displaced?
- b) How much energy is being absorbed?
- c) What will it ultimately produce?
- d) Does its purpose interfere with more productive thinking?

**3) THIRDLY, WE ANTICIPATE ITS LANDING PLACE, DESTINATION.**

- a) Does it end, if so, where?
- b) Is it a repetitive story?

- c) Are their action steps involved?
- d) What consequences will evolve from those actions?

**4) FOURTHLY, WE ASSOCIATE THE EMOTIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE THOUGHT.**

- a) Here we define the specific emotions.
  - b) We attempt to distinguish our role in creating those feelings.
  - c) We aim to separate the thought from the feeling.
  - d) We remain non- judgmental of either.
- 5) Finally,we place a realistic value on thoughts and emotions.
- a) Here we question whether or not to allow our thoughts, emotions to define us.
  - b) Have I over exaggerated my thoughts and emotions, if so, for what purpose? “Thinking Bling” a self-imposed neuro spike/charge.
  - c) We acknowledge the link between the mind and the brain.
  - d) We determine the significance between thoughts/emotions and action.TM

The exercise is designed to think about what you are thinking about – raised consciousness. The simple task of observing thoughts and emotions while placing a value on them will have physiological, psychological, and calming effects on participants. Recognizable changes in attitudes and behaviors are observable conditions as thoughts and emotions become congruous with reality. Triumph is measured by the diminished intensity and frequency of ill thought – that which produces negativity in physical, mental, or emotional form. Subsequently

in time, pure thought governs the psyche, which arrives in the absence of resistance and produces peace and acceptance.

Roy J. Gilgallon