



The Professional Woman's Mentor

Stop Ruminating & Start Taking Action

Tips for Taking Deliberate Action

Do You Think Too Much?

Perhaps WAY too much?

How many times in the past week have you found yourself in one of these thinking loops:

- ❖ Replaying a past conversation or situation that didn't go well over, and over, and over
- ❖ Wishing you had responded differently to someone
- ❖ Anticipating a negative outcome to a future situation to the point that you've anticipated the ENTIRE conversation (and not just once)
- ❖ Kicking yourself in the backside for something you did or didn't do

Sound familiar? If so... then welcome to the Rumination Club!!

Ruminating is absolutely exhausting, and completely avoidable.

This guide includes:

4 Tips for Taking Deliberate Action

&

4 Behaviors to Avoid

Are you Ready? Let's get started! ❤️🌀

4 Tips for Taking Deliberate Action

❖ Start with Gratitude

Moving to gratitude works like magic! It is impossible for spinning thoughts that are keeping you stuck to continue when you're in a state of gratitude. Try this:

- Sit in a quiet place and journal about all of the things you are grateful for. During very trying times, your list may only include the most basic needs. That's OK! Take 10 minutes and list everything you can think of.
- During the day when rumination sneaks in to derail your thoughts, think back to the list and say to yourself: "I'm soooo grateful for..." and mentally recite the list
- Other ways to Move to Gratitude include:
 - Tell someone in your life how much you appreciate them
 - Thank a service worker for a job well done
 - Let your boss know how much you appreciate their support
 - Send a thank you note
 - Submit a review / recommendation for a colleague

❖ Focus on Facts

Negative spin is typically just that... hype and not truth. When you feel yourself going into a thinking spiral it's time to look at your thoughts objectively. What is true about what you are thinking? Really focus on the facts, and reframe the opinion portion of your thoughts.

- Are you replaying a conversation that didn't go well? What is really true about that situation? Focus on elements that are true and factual about the situation. The beautiful thing about data is that it diffuses emotion! Here's an example:
 - You and your brother had an argument over where to have Christmas dinner. Your inner dialogue sound something like this:
 - Christmas is ruined
 - We are never going to talk to each other again
 - I always have to give in to what he wants
 - I should have said _____
 - I can't believe he said _____
 - Here's the truth:
 - Christmas isn't ruined, we just have to figure out Christmas dinner details
 - We've had arguments before, this too will pass
 - There is compromise in every relationship
 - Saying a powerful sentence to your Inner Critic is a great way to stop the spin. Something like "This is ridiculous. I'm not going to assume the worst. Christmas is not ruined. We have argued and figure it out before, and we will do it this time too."

❖ **Get Physical**

Moving your body is a fabulous way to stop the ruminating voice in your head! It's amazing how a change of scenery and a bit of movement will dial down your negative thoughts and have you thinking about possibility. I'm sure you have your own list of ways to do this... here are a few of my favorites:

- Go for a bike ride
- Walk the dog
- Take a Swim
- Go to the Gym
- Visit a friend
- When you're at the office, anything that gets you up and out of your desk works:
 - Take a walk around the block
 - Stop by a colleague's desk for a 10 minute chat
 - Go to a coffee shop or take yourself out to lunch

❖ **Recognize the Truth**

Ruminating is just one way that our Inner Critic shows up in our lives. We've all got one, and the sooner we learn how to quiet that negative voice the better! There are likely parts of the story that you... well actually, your Inner Critic... is "adding to the story". Let's go back to the conversation with your brother over where to host Christmas dinner... and follow this 3-step process

- Step 1 - Get to Know Her
 - Recognize when your Inner Critic shows up. She will exaggerate, distort the truth, and work very hard to keep you stuck. Her job is to keep you safe, and that means no change or big moves.
- Step 2 - Shine a Light on her
 - Actually say out loud (or in your head if people are around) "This is my Inner Critic talking. These thoughts are not the truth, and I am not going to assume the worst."
- Step 3 - Reframe Your Story
 - Change your story so that it has a positive ending that will move you forward. "I love my brother and he loves me. We will figure out Christmas dinner and it will be fabulous! Nothing is more important than family, and there is a solution that we simply haven't figured out yet

4 Behaviors to Avoid

- ❖ **Stop “Shoulding yourself in the foot”**
 - Every time you catch yourself thinking (or saying), “I should have <fill in the blank>”, you’re stuck in the past.
 - Forgive yourself for not being perfect, learn from your experience, and make a plan for better choices next time.
- ❖ **Comparing yourself to others**
 - When we compare ourselves to friends, coworkers, or models in magazines... we come out on the losing end.
 - Comparison leads to lower self-esteem and confidence. UGH!
 - Be aware of when you compare yourself to others.
 - Focus on progress you’ve made toward your goals, the things you are good at, and what you are planning for the future.
- ❖ **Hanging on unrealistic goals**
 - Are you trying to lose 10 pounds in a week?
 - Be able to run a marathon in 3 months?
 - Write a book in 30 days?
 - When we set ourselves up for failure by setting unrealistic goals, our inner critic has a grand ole’ time beating us up when we don’t measure up.
- ❖ **Waiting for rumination to pass!**
 - If you wait... overthinking will wait with you!
 - Move to Gratitude
 - Focus on Facts
 - Get Physical
 - Recognize the Truth

BE PRESENT

DO MORE BRAVE THINGS

LEAVE THE PAST IN THE PAST

MOVE FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE AND GRACE!

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