 Skillful Thoughts



Self-talk with more thought

*Wisdom is your ability to imagine*

alternatives and judge their likely

outcomes. Just choose to be wise

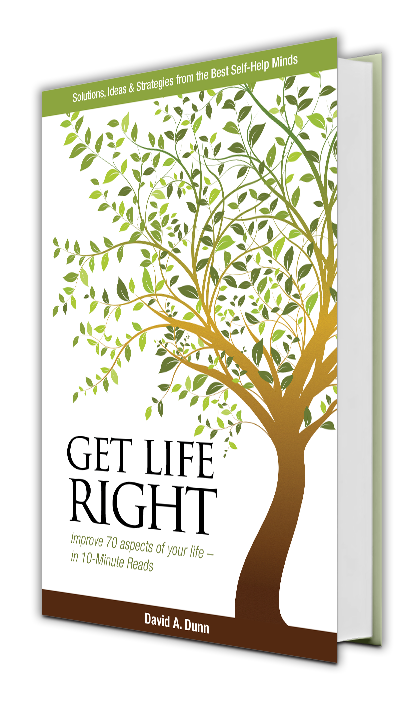
and you’ll make better decisions;

keep at it and you’ll become wise.

Weather your thoughts are right or wrong, helpful or hurtful, they become your reality. Your explanations lead you toward the outcomes you put into them. The common thoughts below that are (underlined) tell you that you can’t. The same thoughts (with the dots) tell you CAN, empower you, keep your life on course and LEAD you toward better outcomes.

Better thoughts come from trying to:

* use accurate facts and the proper emotions for each thought.
* consider carefully the interest and feelings of all others involved
* consider the likely consequences of each alternative
* include the absolute truth about your motivation and capabilities
* note your responsibility, if any, for creating the existing conditions
* note the direction you want this matter to have on your life

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Series

A – Sharpen Your Thinking

B – Plan a Really Exciting Life

C – Get the Most out of Your Attributes

D – Finance the Life You Want

E – Attract People You’d Like to be Like

F – Improve Your Relationships & Marriage

G – Create a Close Family

H – The Best Life You can Have

FS – Full Set

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**Skillful Thoughts**

**Series F – Improve Your Relationships & Marriage**

**Underlined thoughts diminish you - Thoughts with dots empower you**

**F-3 • Relationship Tools**

My spouse ruins every TV program by talking during the clues, punch lines, and final analyses.

* By listening more intently most of the time, it will be easier for me to get him or her on pause at the critical times.
* You and your spouse choose a signal which means “Zip-it” for the moment; I will get back to you as soon as I can get free.

**F-2 Clarifying Your Feelings (See also E6 & E7)**

Once she starts to complain she never lets up.

* If I let her know that she has been heard she will let up.
* If she knows I have acted on something she has said she’ll think I am wonderful.

**F-3 Relationship Clues & Cures**

My husband just closes up.

* He’s being the way he is because I’m being the way I’m being.
* I just learned that people who live in disapproval all stop talking.
* I guess I can’t expect a lot of affection if I don’t give any.
* He knows I never let up once I start.
* Now that he is listening more I praise him more; it’s a shame it took me so long to get that.
* Men tend to deal in issues; women tend to deal in feelings.

**F-4 Fixing, Resisting & Controlling**

My daughter refuses to listen.

* If I can be more of a fan and less of a coach, she will seek out my company rather than try to get away from my cautions and criticisms.
* If I show her lifestyles she likes; it may encourage her to strive for them, without me trying to push her.
* If I had been more interested, available and approachable when she was young she’d be less inclined to fall for the first guy who seem good.

**F-5 The Secret to Fix Others**

I feel powerless to get my son to be neater.

* I will praise him enthusiastically when he puts things away.
* I will not complain.
* I will remind myself that “My inclination to be neat doesn’t trump his inclination to be messy”.
* I will negotiate which areas can be messy which areas need to be standing tall.

**F-6 The Bubble Concept**

When my boss uses harsh tones everyone in the office wants to quit.

* He alienates everyone and will not change.
* He has a good heart and doesn’t mean any harm by his gruff manner.
* He has a bubble where most of us have people skills.
* Because I accept him the way he is, he confides in me and gives me more responsibility.
* I have become valuable to him, and my associates know that when they need to get something from him I can get it done.

**F-7 Reducing Conflict**

When my husband casts me in a bad light in front of friends I get furious.

* I will explain to him that when he tells others my faults it makes me feel unloved and disrespected. If you have problems with me I wish you would tell me. If you do I will listen.
* An affectionate response in public: “What would your life be like if you didn’t have me to nag?”
* A humorous response (in a group): “I’ll stop nagging when you stop wearing my clothes.”
* If he responds like he still doesn’t get it, tell him in private “Our friends have told me that it makes them uncomfortable when you criticize me in front of them.”
* If that doesn’t work say that to him in a group so all can hear.

I can’t get my child to learn.

* I will test to see whether John has physical problems like hearing or vision, emotional problems, a social problems, or bubbles?
* I will get him any therapy, tutor or tools what will help him in class.

How can I make it easier for him or her?

* To validate my son I will support his non-school interests more so my push for better grades doesn’t seem like the only thing I care about.
* I will try to get my daughter into activities with kids who are more ambitious than her current classmates; or do the things she likes best.
* I will try to expose my daughter to experiences that may spark her interest.

I can’t get my husband to stop; he bounces checks even when we have money.

* It’s a blessing that he can bring home the bacon.
* I will try to cover for him.
* Accounting is a bubble we both have. I’ll look for a bookkeeper we can afford or who can mentor us.

I am a neat nick and my wife is Mrs. T J Max; it’s never the same pace twice.

* Looks like I will be living in a lot more clutter than I want.
* She sees value in everything.
* I can live with it if she’ll keep her collecting out of the office, the garage and the front of the house.

I can’t control my temper.

* I have been using my temper to get my own way.
* I use my temper when I can’t justify what I want.
* My relationships will improve now that I am more empathetic.
* I getting it; the emotions I use I choose and I am responsible for.

**F-8 Making Your Point**

He gets difficult about too many things

* I will tell him that I am considering changing something about how we interact.
* If we make this change I want you to be happy with it.
* What are your ideas on the matter?
* Let’s try it out long enough to get used to it and change our change if it isn’t working?

He seems to like confrontations.

* I avoid discussions that are likely to get confrontational.
* I can be more persuasive if I wait for the right moment to present my case.
* I don’t feel the need to win, just to be heard.

**F-9 Arguments are Opportunities for A Peace Process**

All I do is defend myself and everyone thinks I’m a terrible person.

* My protestations tell others that I would rather be defensive or escalate the matter than take responsibility for behavior they consider inappropriate.
* I am beginning to get it; my anger is to get my own way or to keep me from having to defend what I say.

My anger causes others to shut me out which only makes me madder

* If I truly valued anyone else I would never show my anger.
* I am learning that my anger disrespects others.
* Before I can regain some friendships I will have to be more civil for a long time.

**F-10 Dwindling Romance**

I have quit trying because he’s so set in his ways.

* What am I doing that triggers or prolongs his stubbornness?.

I will.

* Stop trying to control or fix him.
* Give up all of my resentment.
* Show more interest in the things he does.
* Show him appreciation
* Be more affectionate
* Assume the responsibility for my own happiness

**F-11 Refreshing – Your Relationship**

She uses the silent treatment all the time. I am beginning to get it. When I don’t listen to her hurts, it tarnishes our relationship.

* I eventually do everything she asks but I am not careful to acknowledge that I am doing it in response to her request.
* If I started to put some of her things near the top of my to-do list, my stuff would still get done, and she wouldn’t think I was wonderful.
* I will set aside time for an old fashioned date on a regular basis.
* I will show more interest in the things she does.

I’ve given up on him; he’s a workaholic.

* Maybe I am not that interesting to come home to.
* Maybe I need interests of my own so I have something interesting to talk about
* He isn’t going to give me more time if I continue to withhold my appreciation, approval, and affection.
* The more fun I am the more time he will try to make for us.
* I’ll go out of my way to show him thanks?
* Every other Wednesday I’ll plan a date.
* Every day we will set aside 10 minutes to chat and coordinate our efforts; no criticisms allowed.
* **If I show more interest in his work he will make more time for my company.**