

## **Your Mind is Not Your Enemy**

Your mind is not your enemy. When it criticises or judges you, it's not deliberately trying to make your life harder. Its underlying motive is always the same: to help you avoid something you don't want or get something you do want (or both).

For example, when it says you're not good enough at something, it basically wants you to do better. When it criticises you for neglecting something, it's trying to get you to take care of it. When it calls you names for screwing up, it's trying to help you learn from your mistakes. When it compares you harshly to others, it's trying to save you from rejection by the group. When it says you're a bad parent/partner/child/friend, it's trying make you behave better in those relationships.

So when your mind says these kinds of things, see it as an overly helpful friend with good intentions, who is trying very hard to help you but is doing so in a way that's ineffective.

## PRACTICE:

### Thanking Your Mind

When your mind starts coming up with those same old self-judgmental stories, try thanking it, with a sense of humour and playfulness. Silently say to yourself, *Thanks, Mind! How very informative! Or Thanks for sharing! Or Is that right? How fascinating! Or simply, Thanks, Mind!*

Then go on to acknowledge its good intentions: *Thanks, Mind. I know you're trying to help — but it's okay; I'll handle this my own way.*



## **The ‘Don’t Get Hurt!’ Machine in Your Head**

Your mind often tries to talk you out of trying new things, facing your challenges, confronting your fears, leaving your comfort zone or tackling your problems. Why? Because it’s trying to save you from unpleasant feelings like fear, anxiety and doubt. And it’s also trying to protect you from things you don’t want to happen, like failure, disappointment, rejection or getting hurt.

So, it says, *Don’t do it. You’ll screw it up! You’re not ready. It’ll go badly. You can’t handle it! Something bad will happen!* It’ll try anything it can to talk you out of taking that risk or facing that fear. Unfortunately, the more it succeeds, the smaller life gets.