**The mind tends to have a negative bias. In many cases, it can make a mountain out of a mole hill.**

**Example:** I said hi as my boss walked by my door and he looked but didn’t reply.

**Mind Says:** It’s because he is probably disappointed with your report. It’s because you took leave last week. It’s because he thinks you’re young and stupid; old and should retire; brand new to the field and don’t know what you’re doing. I’m probably going to get fired!

R**eality:** Stick with the facts. Maybe it’s not personal. Maybe your boss was distracted because his hot water heater broke this morning!

**Keep the brain in check!**

         Is this thought realistic?
         What is the evidence for and against this idea?
         Might this belief be a habit, rather than something based on facts?
         How long have I been thinking this?
         What possible misinterpretations might I be making?
         Am I thinking in all-or-none/black-and-white terms?
   o   Is there any room for “grey” with
        this thought?
         Am I using words or phrases that are extreme or exaggerated (i.e., always, forever, never, need, should, must, can’t, ever time, etc.)?
         Is extreme and/or exaggerated language implied in this thought?
         In what way might I be focusing only on one aspect of the event (possibly negative)?
         Who has given me this message before?
    o   Other people in my life?
    o   A younger version of myself?
    o   Is that person a reliable source
        of information when it comes to
        this thought?
         What are the odds that this thought is true? Am I overestimating the likelihood that this thought is true? Am I overestimating the odds that something bad will happen?
         Are my judgments based on feelings rather than facts?
         In what way might I be focused on irrelevant factors?
         What are the costs and benefits of this thought?
    o   How might I arrive at similar
        benefits with different thoughts?