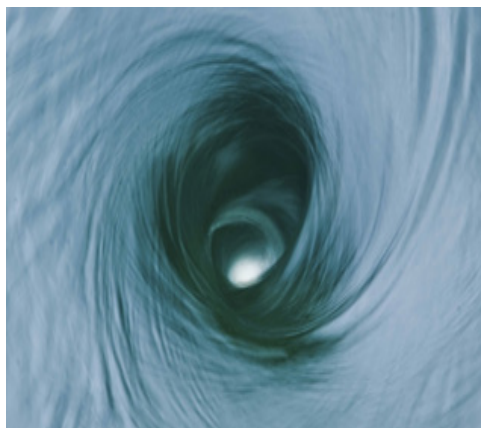


The Whirlpool Model For Beating Rumination



Rumination occurs when we find ourselves thinking about something negative or troubling over and over, often thinking that we're getting somewhere, when we are really just 'spinning our wheels.' Almost everyone ruminates from time to time; however, some people do it a lot. People who are dealing with depression, hurt and anger, and obsessive-compulsive disorder tend to spend a lot of time ruminating. Unfortunately, rumination doesn't solve problems; it makes problems worse!

Imagine you are on a sailboat that is in a giant whirlpool in the ocean. You are going around and around and around. Now imagine that as you are going around the whirlpool you are looking for THE answer to your struggles. You keep spinning and all the time you keep thinking that the answer is in here somewhere!

The more you go around the cycle, the more you are essentially putting fuel in the "rumination engine." The solution to rumination is to shift gears and "starve" the rumination engine.

1. Identify that you are ruminating. Call it what it is. You might want to call it by a name like "I'm spinning again." Or something like that.
2. Determine to steer your sailboat for the upper edge of the whirlpool. This means to make the hard choice to stop trying to figure out the solution TEMPORARILY. It's OK to work through big issues in your life; however, rumination is NOT working things through no matter how much it feels like it.
3. Find an activity to engage your body and mind in for the next 15 to 30 minutes. This is called the "shift activity." It is NOT the answer to what you were thinking about. Rather, it is a way to help your body and mind release its relentless grip on the negative thinking that is holding you captive in the rumination.