How to Stop Overthinking

Do you have a tendency to overthink things and find it hard to switch off?

Learn invaluable ways to clear the mind of negative mental habits and remain balanced, calm and clear as you navigate the busyness of daily life.

The mental activity of overthinking is painful and can in its extreme be detremintal to the well being of the person.

We as Buddhist offer working with the mind as the only reliable method to be able to stop overthinking.

Overthinking always happens in the context of uncontrolled mind - suffering from either unawareness of doing it or being aware of doing it but not having the power to stop it.

We are helping people to become aware

We are helping people to develop the power to move the mind towards virtue

We need to explain how this method is reliable but it is slower - it takes time, and the person should not have unrealistic expectations. But that in time we can really gain control over our mind and that will allow us to recgonize (become aware) the start of our overthinking and beginning to reduce it.

There is also the point of aspiration -> decision -> determination -> commitment. This is where most people fail. We only fail our self - this is something that takes time to learn to deal with

- 1st Class
- 2nd Class
- 3rd Class
- 4th Class

1st Class

In the first class we establish

- What is overthinking
- How does it affect us
- What ways do people have to overcome their overthinking - do they work
- Since overthinking is a mental problem we will need to work with our mind to overcome it
  - This is going to take time - long time, which means people should not expect quick results

The practical aspect

- Developing clarity about the situation => leading us to a sincere heartfelt wish to end our overthinking
- Understanding the three difficulties -
  - Recognizing the times we are overthinking
  - Reducing
  - Abandoning This is of course to do with the topic from training the mind called the three difficulties.

For the time being we only think about the first two. And specifically we explain the improtance of recognizing when we start our overthinking process.

As a takeaway from the class - during the coming week just recalling the wish and training in alertness to catch our self starting the overthinking process.

Why is this important or how do these two work?

- Without sincere wish we will not put the effort needed - and we will need a lot of effort to undermine the real causes of overthinking (which we explore in the next class(s))
- The wish will help us to be alert to what's going on in our mind. Without knowing what's going on in our mind how can we ever stop overthinking before it grows and we can't do much about it other than

2nd Class

Starting with a recap

Roughly speaking we can divide the causes of overthinking into two:

1. external
2. internal

Changing externals such as environment, lifestyle, may offer some help but really we need to change the mind If you wish it may be helpful to explain a little about the mind vs brain and how with this Buddhist explanation of mind we have a chance to understand the situation in a simpler and clearer way that allows us to understand the mechanisim of overthinking.

With a basic understanding of the mind we can introduce delusions and how delusions are exaggerated imaginations.

With this we can show how at the bottom of much of our overthinking done through mental exaggeration I am suggesting few aspects as main factors in overthinking:

1. Inability to deal with uncertainty
2. Attachment to the fulfilment of our own wishes
3. Self-cherishing
4. Self-grasping

You can choose to talk about any or all of these three

There is also a need to touch on the nature of samsara which is the real context for everything. But this is diffcult for people to fully get to grips with.

The next class is about proactively prempting overthinking(which we understand as negative mental activity that repeats itself and causes us to spiral to an unpleasant mental space) and moveing the mind

3rd Class

In this class we are thinking of counter acting against our normal mental habits.

So we begin to develop ideas in our mind such as I am not the centre of the world My wishes do not and cannot realistically alway be fulfilled

4th Class

in this class we may consider two things that can help dealing with overthinking

1. karma
2. emptiness these two topics help with overthinking because overthinking is scrade from the uncertainty of life and overthinking creates in ourmind an appearance of the world which does not exist but we relate to it as if it does. becasue we relate to this inner appearance as if it is the reality we then experience all the painful issues associated with overthinking