

## your turn

You can learn to pay attention to what you think. The first step in the process of examining your thinking is to capture your thoughts. What's going on in your head? It could be a thought. It could be an image, a mental picture of your thoughts. It could be the meaning you attach to that thought or image—or to a memory, the time of year, a dream, and so on. Read this narrative and practice capturing your thoughts.

*It is lunchtime at school and the weather is exceptionally nice. Most people, including you, head outside to catch some rays. You hear two guys arguing and their voices are getting louder and louder.*

What would you think? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did any of these thoughts come to mind? Check those that do:

- This is getting interesting.*
- I'm getting out of here before this turns into trouble.*
- What a bunch of idiots.*
- You can't trust anyone, I better watch my back.*
- No one has any respect for anyone else.*

How would you feel? Circle all the descriptions that apply:

Anxious, Sad, Excited, Angry, Nervous, Uncomfortable, Neutral

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

activity 17 \* capture your thoughts

Would you do any of these things?

- Get closer to see the action.
- Disappear as quickly as you can.
- Stand your ground and stay right where you are.

*Now the argument has gotten physical. The two guys are pushing and shoving each other.*

What would you think? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do any of these thoughts come to mind? Check those that do:

- I've got to break this up.
- This is crazy, I'm out of here.
- Someone is going to get seriously hurt, I'll call for help.

How would you feel? Circle all the descriptions that apply:

Anxious    Sad    Excited    Angry    Nervous    Uncomfortable    Neutral

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you do any of these things?

- Get even closer to see the action.
- Disappear as quickly as you can.
- Jump in to help break it up.

activity 17 \* capture your thoughts

Reflect on the ways what is going on around you directly influences how you feel and what you choose to do.

Let's imagine another situation. Try to capture your thoughts about it.

*You are in math class and the teacher calls on one of your classmates. The classmate doesn't know the answer and is stumbling over her words. You don't know the answer either and the teacher is pressing this kid for an answer.*

What would you think? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do any of these thoughts come to mind? Check those that do:

\_\_\_ *Please don't call on me.*

\_\_\_ *I'm in trouble if he finds out I don't know the answer, either.*

\_\_\_ *The teacher should move on and let someone who knows the answer talk.*

\_\_\_ *Clearly none of us know the answer—he should just tell us what it is.*

How would you feel? Circle any descriptions that apply:

Anxious    Sad    Excited    Angry    Nervous    Uncomfortable    Neutral

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

activity 17 \* capture your thoughts

Would you do any of these things?

- Shrink down in your seat and hope you're not noticed.
- Speak up to say that you don't know the answer, either. Ask the teacher to tell the class what it is.
- Ask another question to divert the teacher's attention.
- Ask to use the bathroom so there is no chance of being caught not knowing the answer.

*The teacher is getting increasingly frustrated with the student. The teacher is turning red and his voice is getting louder. He starts to reprimand the student for being unprepared.*

What would you think? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do any of these thoughts come to mind? Check those that do:

- This is so unfair. The teacher should move on.*
- I hope I'm not next.*
- Who cares!*

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

activity 17 \* capture your thoughts

Would you do any of these things?

\_\_\_ Tense up and start to stress out.

\_\_\_ Tune the teacher out.

\_\_\_ Volunteer that, although you read the material, you are clueless as well.

Again, reflect on how what you think about the situation directly influences how you feel and choose to behave.