

What is influence?

*Who are your
influencers?*

*How do you know
you are being
influenced or
influencing?*



Who are influencers?

Why influence?

How do you influence?

Who am I? How can I influence myself? What does my inner voice tell me?

Who am I? Where do I want to go? How will I get there? What difference will I make?

How can I influence myself? What does my inner voice tell me?

Influencers know the answers to these questions depend upon how we develop your inner voice.

We all have a desire to direct our own lives, to learn, create new things, and do better by ourselves and others.



Influence is about changing hearts, minds, and behaviors.

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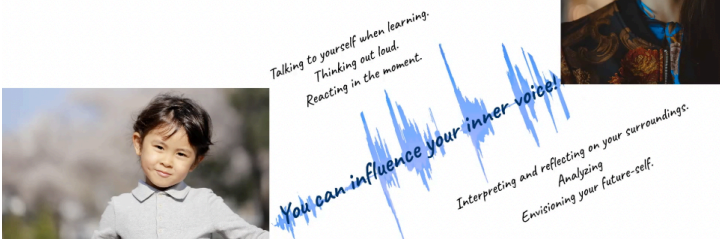


Listening to your inner voice and clarity of your personal vision influence how you see yourself and the actions you take.

How can you be proactive in influencing yourself, creating the person you want to be?

What strategies and techniques can you use to influence your heart, mind, and behaviors?

Your inner voice develops as you grow.



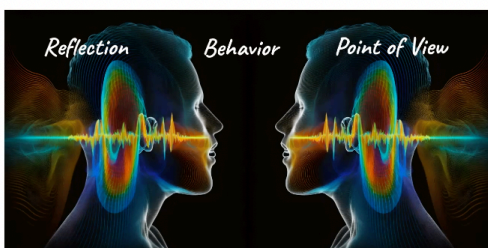
Your inner voice develops as you grow. As a child, you may remember talking to yourself while performing a new or difficult task, saying your thoughts out loud to reinforce your learning or form new ideas. You often reacted in the moment without thinking.

As you mature, your inner voice influences how you interpret and reflect upon your surroundings, how you analyze situations, and how you form your vision of your future self.

You can influence your inner voice toward both a positive or negative point of view.



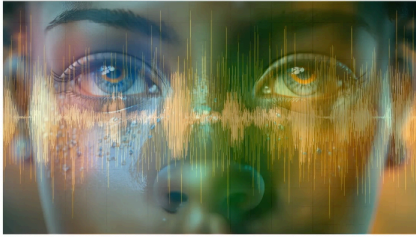
Your Inner Voice



Your inner voice plays an important part of how you feel, think, and behave.

Don't let the voice of others drown out your own inner voice. Your inner voice helps you reflect upon daily events, consider how you will react to different scenarios, and can shape how you see the world around you.

External Locus of Control ← *Who is in control of your inner voice?* → Internal Locus of Control



Are you in control? You are the greatest influence on your inner voice.

People who develop an internal locus of control believe they are responsible for their decisions. Your inner voice helps you stay focused, particularly when faced with uncertainty. Who is in control of your inner voice? Are you in control. You are the greatest influence on your inner voice.



Mindset of being proactive and positive self-talk

Your inner voice is your internal guide. You can use your inner voice as a way to filter out the chatter of negative influencers and focus on influence that benefits you and others. It helps us control ourselves. It also helps us plan for the future. You can create a mindset of positive self-talk.



How you are influenced varies depending upon your natural personality preferences.

Personality Essence of who you are



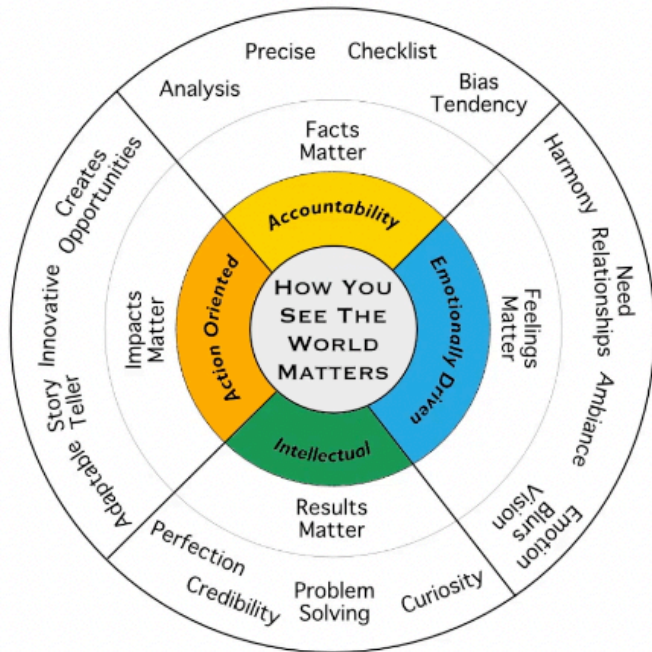
Your inner voice has a benchmark, something it knows is the essence of who you are.

Your preference may be grounded in **accountability**. Facts matter, you analyze things, you are precise, you like checklists. Sometimes your biases may cloud your judgment.

Perhaps you are **emotionally driven**. Feelings matter a lot to you. You want harmony, need relationships, you want the environment to be pleasant. Sometimes your emotions blur your understanding.

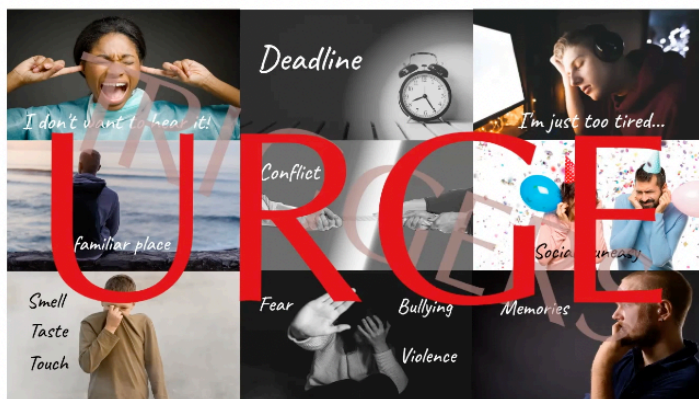
Or you're the brainiac type, **intellectually driven**. Results matter to you. You're very curious, like solving problems, and place a high value on credibility. Sometimes you strive for perfection at the expense of getting something done.

Or action, action, action is where you are. **Having an impact** is important to you. You like telling stories, are adaptable, innovative, and seek out varied opportunities. Sometimes your sense of adventure can lead to unexpected consequences.



How you interpret information depends upon how you see the world. That's where your self-influence comes in. You can decide how you view the environment or information, apply your personal preferences, and then determine to what degree a different lens could be used to expand your interpretation.

Influencers often use triggers that urge you to think and act in certain ways. They script the story they want you to act upon.



Triggers can lead to an adverse emotional reaction.

Triggers vary widely from person to person. They may be a word, an action, or something in the environment that leads to an adverse emotional reaction.

A trigger may result in an urge to act in a way that interferes with your inner voice. An urge is a strong desire or impulse to do something, sometimes anything, just to relieve stress or gain immediate gratification.



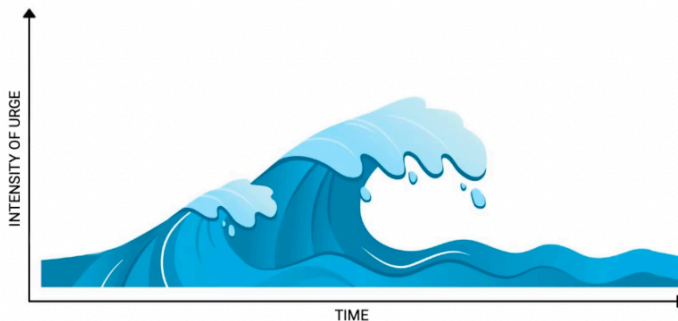
An urge is a feeling, not a requirement. You can have this feeling and choose not to act. Who is in control? You or an external influencer?



Social media is designed to influence you by keeping you interacting as much as possible. How much does your phone influence you? Do likes and notifications influence your behavior? It's possible to become obsessed with the number of "likes," creating a fake persona of your "other" self, or acting on urges that are not based in reality. You may find yourself being urged to look at your phone while at dinner, or when a notification alerts you, or when you are driving. Social media influencers have become prevalent in your daily life and often promote excessive behaviors. Does it ever feel like your phone is in control? How can you exercise influence and control your relationship with technology?

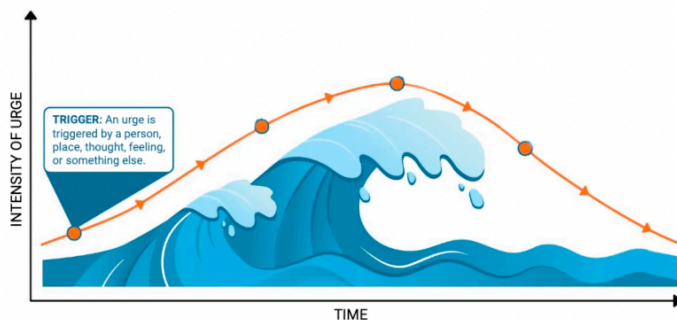
Urge surfing is a strategy you can use to keep from falling victim to triggers and impulsive behavior.

URGE SURFING



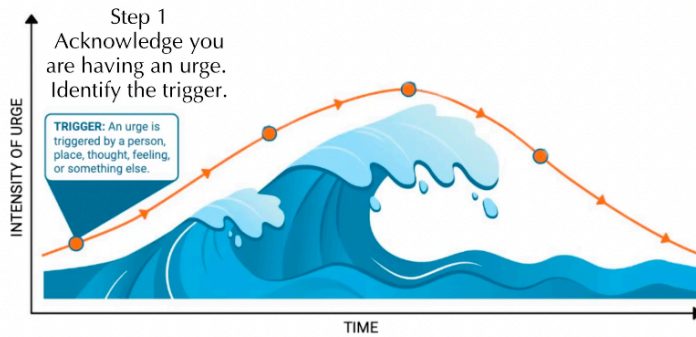
Urge surfing is a technique you can use to manage impulsive behaviors. Imagine an urge as an ocean wave. Urges rarely last more than 30 minutes. They usually peak at about 20 minutes. Most urges will peak and subside, just as an ocean wave does.

URGE SURFING

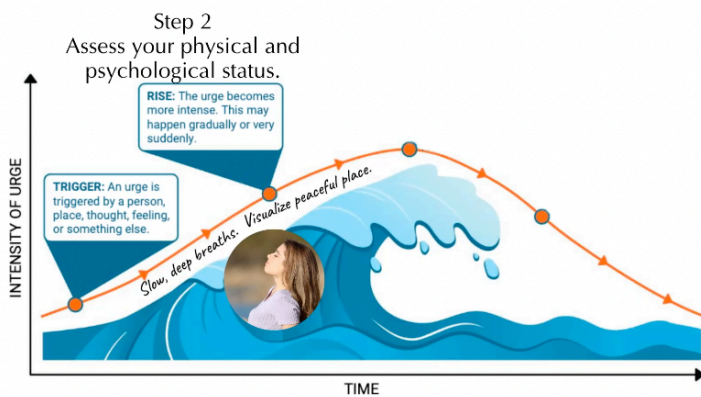


It begins with a trigger, builds in intensity, reaches a peak, and falls to shore. Urge surfing is a technique to manage unwanted behaviors. Rather than give in to an urge, you ride it out.

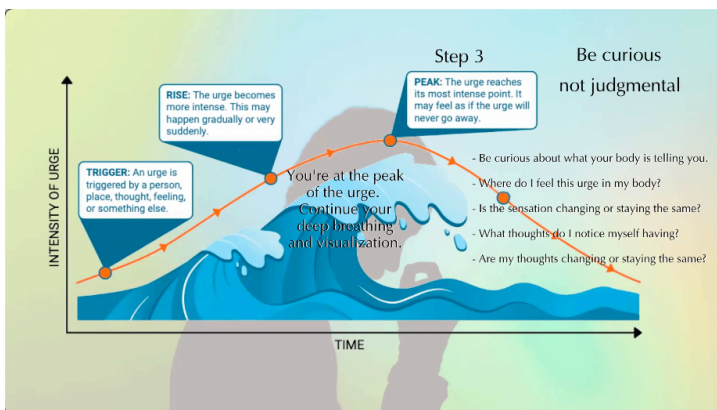
URGE SURFING



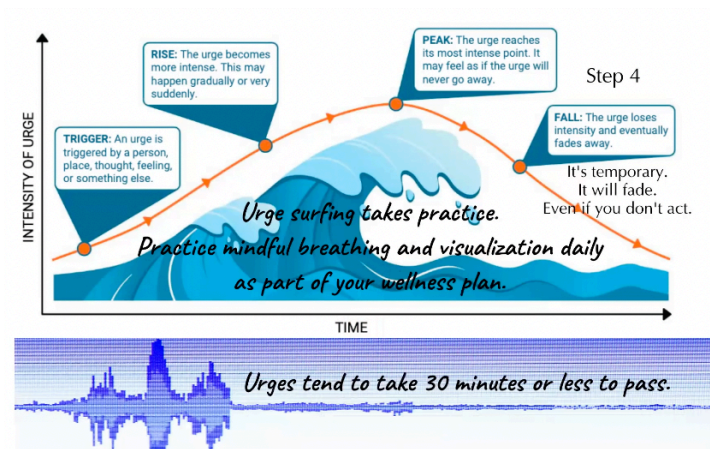
Step 1: Acknowledge you are having an urge. Identify the trigger.



Step 2: As the urge rises, assess your physical and psychological status. Pay attention to how you are breathing. Are your breaths long or short? Shallow or deep? Take slow, deep breaths, which will help reduce stress and anxiety. Use visualization to imagine a place of serenity, pleasure, and safety. You might think of a past experience that gave you peace, engaged with nature, or gives you a sense of success.



Step 3: You're at the peak of the urge. It feels as if it will never go away. Continue your deep breathing and visualization. Be curious about what your body is telling you. Ask yourself questions like: Where do I feel this urge in my body? Is the sensation changing or staying the same? What thoughts do I notice myself having? Are my thoughts changing or staying the same? Curiosity is a strategy to help you develop a nonjudgmental and observational stance toward your urge. Be curious, not judgmental.

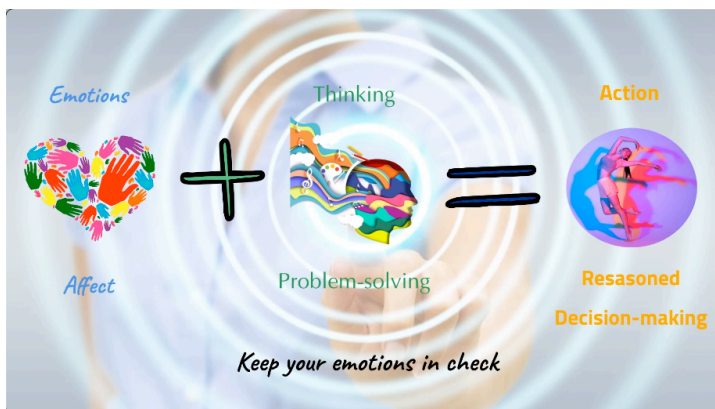


Step 4: Remind yourself that this is temporary. No matter how intense, it will eventually fade, even if you don't act upon it. Research indicates that urges tend to take 30 minutes or less to pass.

Urge surfing can be difficult when you start. It takes practice. Using mindful breathing and visualization as a part of your wellness plan will help you use these strategies when urges appear.



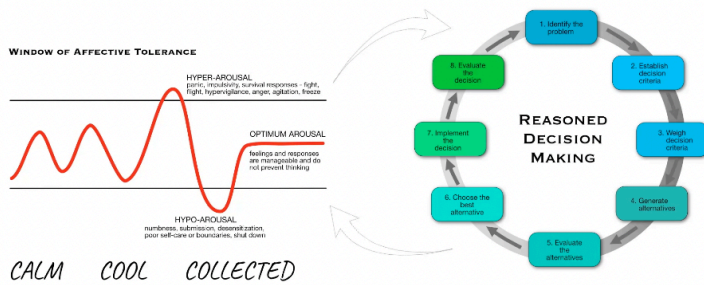
Negative influencers seek to create more intense emotions, confuse and minimize your thinking, resulting in actions or behaviors that may be irrational, and benefit them at your expense.



When emotions are calm, thinking is possible, and actions are the result of reasoned decision-making.

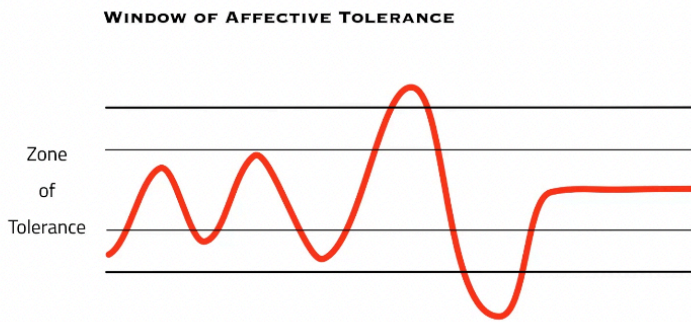
Your inner voice can keep your emotions in check and activate reasonable thinking.

Influence - Self-regulating Emotions and Reasoning

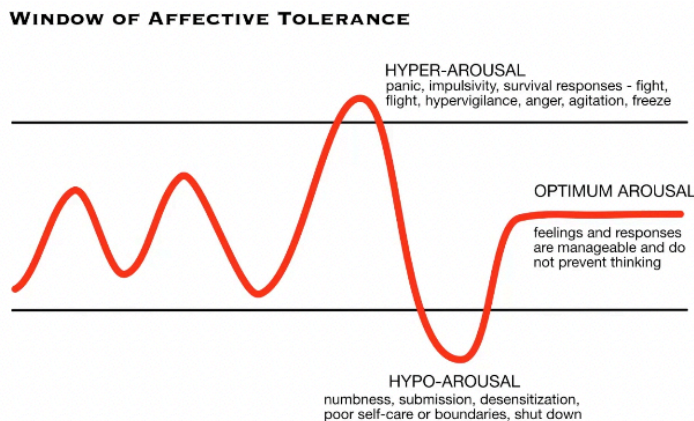


Mindful influencers manage emotions and reasoning.

If you understand the Window of Tolerance, the optimal zone to regulate emotions where you can stay calm, cool, and collected, and Reasoned Decision Making, a series of steps taken to make sure you make the best choices, you greatly expand your capacity to manage emotions and apply your knowledge to find effective solutions. This will lead to actions which will allow you to do better by yourself and others.



Everyone has a range of intensities of emotions which they can comfortably manage. This is their zone of tolerance. Some people have a narrow window of tolerance while others may have a wide zone of tolerance. There are times when you will go outside your comfort zone.

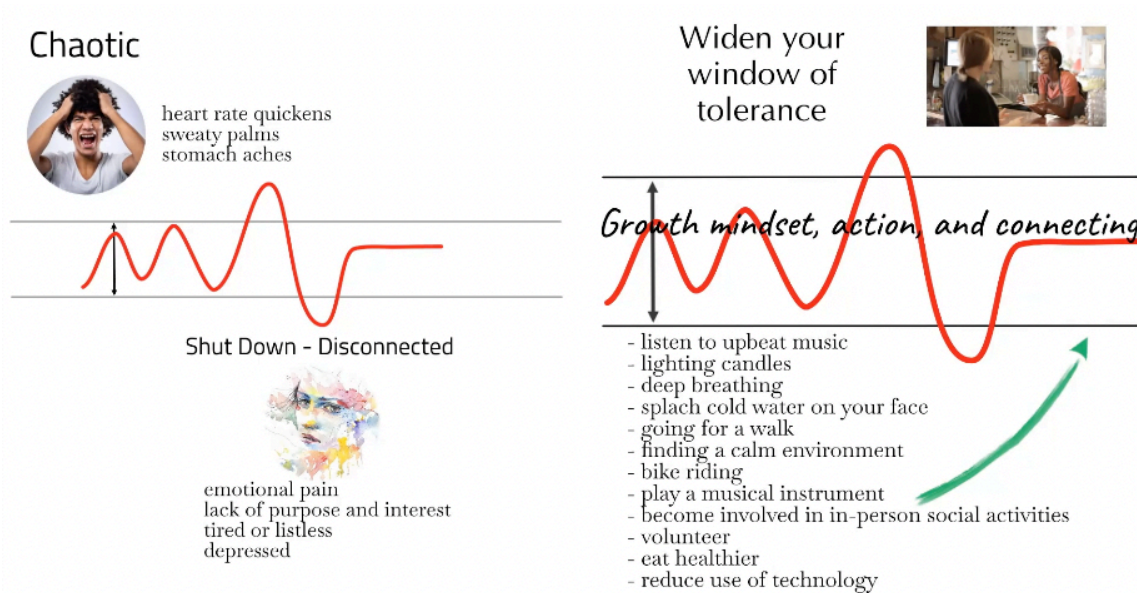


Recognizing when you are outside your zone of tolerance is the first step in managing your window of tolerance.

When you go on high-arousal, you may panic, are impulsive, go into survival mode, may get angry, or even freeze.

When you are on the low side, hypo-arousal, you may feel numb, submissive, don't take care of yourself and shut down.

When you maintain an optimum state, within your zone, feelings and responses are manageable and allow you to think, not just react.



Do you find yourself exploding at the smallest annoyance? Or getting frustrated to the point of not being able to focus?

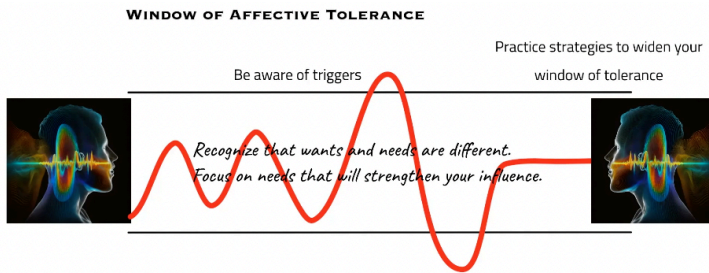
When in the fight or flight mode, you are extra sensitive to everything in the environment. You over-react. Your heart rate quickens, you get sweaty palms, or your stomach aches.

Do you find yourself frequently disconnected? Are you often in emotional pain? Do you feel a lack of purpose, disinterested in things you should care about, feel tired much of the time, or are depressed?

Widening your window of tolerance will keep you in your optimal emotional zone. You can expand your zone by:

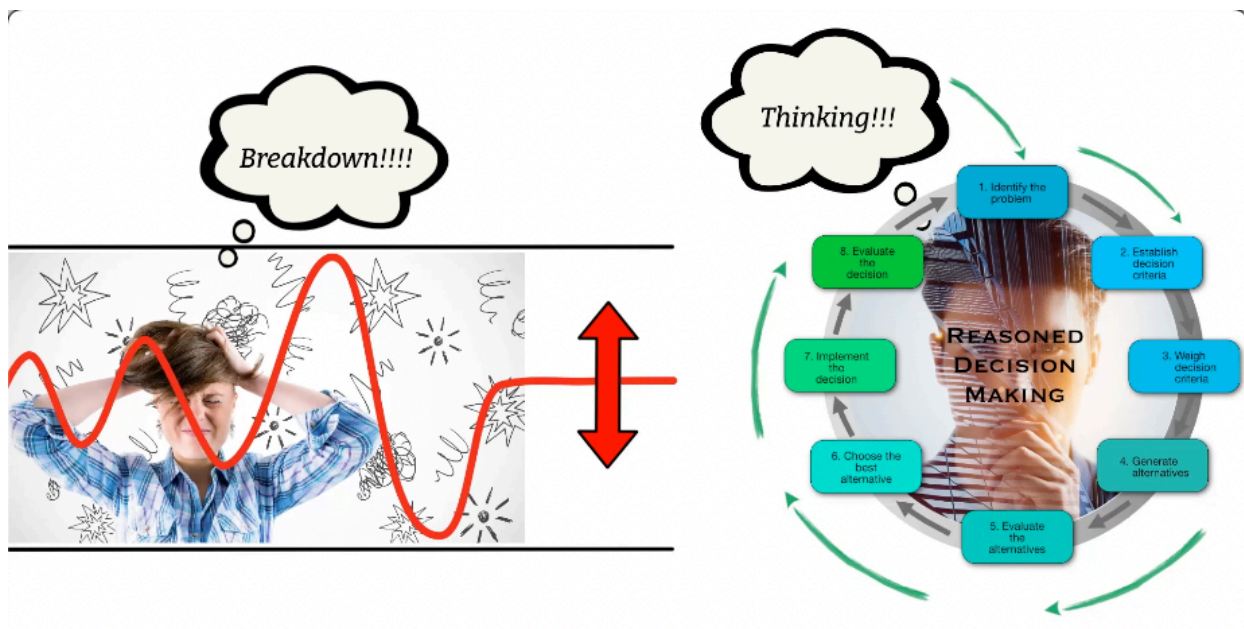
- listening to upbeat music;
- lighting candles;
- deep breathing;
- splashing cold water on your face;
- going for a walk;
- finding a calm environment;
- bike riding;
- play a musical instrument;
- become involved in in-person activities;
- volunteer;
- eat healthier;
- reducing your use of technology.

Practicing these strategies and others that promote a positive outlook will help you develop habits of mind that create a new mindset, a growth mindset, which empowers you to better manage emotionally difficult situations. Your inner voice strengthens your capacity to self-influence.



Recognize what your inner voice is telling you about your Window of Tolerance. Be aware of the what is triggering your emotional state. Practice strategies that widen your window of tolerance to keep you in your optimal emotional zone.

Recognize that sometimes wants and needs are different. Focus on needs that will strengthen your influence on doing better by yourself and others.

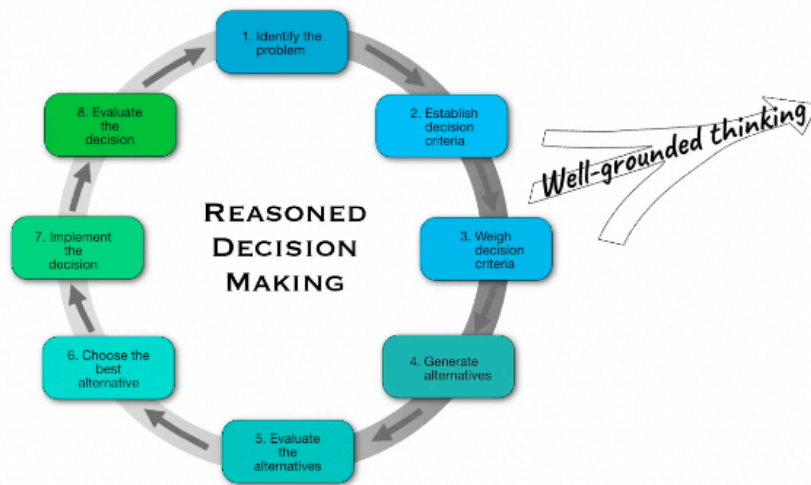


A flood of energy may bombard the mind and take over, resulting in irrational thinking or unacceptable social behavior. Emotions may flood conscious awareness. Some have called this an emotional “hijacking,” or “breakdown.” Expanding your window of tolerance is one strategy to deal with this hijacking.

Developing sound problem solving strategies and strong reasoning abilities is another way to strengthen your inner voice.

Reasoning is the process of thinking during which you are aware of a problem, and clearly define the problem, consider variables impacting your decision, brainstorm the possible alternatives, and decide upon a solution, and evaluate how it worked. Valid thinking can be achieved through effective problem solving.

Influencing your inner voice



focus

clarity of the situation
understand the problem

facts

cut through emotions
verifiable, reliable sources

alternatives

achievable options

Reasoned decision making is a strategy to help your inner voice make sense of what seems to be a chaotic world. Well-grounded thinking requires:

- focus, a clarity of the situation and understanding of what the problem really is;
- a factual foundation, looking past emotions, using reliable sources of information; and
- finding alternatives that are achievable within your window of tolerance.



Step 1: Clearly identify the problem

We sometimes try to solve problems that don't exist because we haven't clearly identified the essential question to answer.

College?

Cost?
Return on Investment?
Purposeful living?



The key is to clearly identify what you see as the essential question to be addressed. Remember to separate wants from needs. Sometimes we prioritize wants over needs. Then you can go about finding ways to address the challenges and achieve your goals.

Step 1: Identify the problem

Clearly understanding the problem will lead you to effective solutions.

We sometimes try to solve problems that don't exist because we haven't clearly identified the essential question to answer.

For example, you're confused about whether to go to college or not. It costs a lot. Will I get a return on my investment? What will be my life's purpose? Making money, making a difference, can I do both?

Is the problem paying for college? Or is it expectations of others? Or making a lot of money after college? Or do you need to focus on your life's purpose? Maybe it's a combination of all of these.

The key is to clearly identify what you see as the essential question to be addressed. Remember to separate wants from needs. Sometimes we prioritize wants over needs. Then you can go about finding ways to address the challenges and achieve your goals.



Step 2: Establish decision criteria

What factors are important to you? What standards will you use to make a judgment about possible solutions?



Step 3: Weigh decision criteria



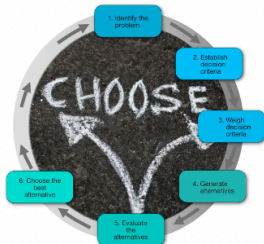
Step 2: Establish decision criteria

What factors are important to you? What standards will you use to make a judgment about possible solutions?

If you were thinking about buying a new phone, you would be concerned about factors such as cost, screen size, color, operating system, available applications, storage capacity, and more.

Step 3: Weigh decision criteria

Do some factors have greater priority than others? You need to decide how important each factor is to your decision-making. What are the pros and cons. If they are all equally important there is no need to prioritize.



Step 4: Generate alternatives

Brainstorm
Benchmark other's successes
Find reliable sources of information
Pivot to see other points of view



Step 5: Evaluate the alternatives

How does it fit your criteria?
Are you willing to go outside your comfort zone?
Take time to reflect.
Are these all the viable options?
Filter out triggers.
Listen to your inner voice.



Step 6: Choose best option

Choose best viable alternative.
Short-term option that sets you up for long term goals.
Be objective about your choice.
Be flexible and adaptable to changing environments.

Step 4: Generate alternatives

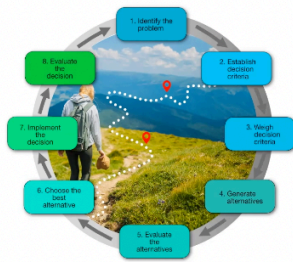
Alternatives empower you to make choices. Brainstorm, look for successful solutions from others, filter out the noise, look for accurate and complete information, and pivot to see other points of view. Make a list of alternatives. Use your inner voice, but also check with trusted others about your list of alternatives.

Step 5: Evaluate alternatives

How does each alternative fit with your criteria, values, and priorities?
How willing are you to go outside your comfort zone?
Take time to reflect and consider if these are the full extent of alternatives? Don't let personality, triggers, or external voices overly influence your evaluation of alternatives.

Step 6: Choose the best alternative that you see as attainable

Choose short-term alternatives that set you up for long-term goals.
Be mindful and objective of your choices.
Be willing to adapt and respond to changing environments.



Step 7: Implement the decision



Act in a way that aligns with your heart and mind.
Write down your plan of action.
Establish a timeline.
Identify the resources you need, time, money, collaborators...
Keep focused, filter out distractions.
Expand your window of tolerance.
Don't be influenced by negative influencers.
Resist urges that will take you off course.

Step 8: Evaluate the decision

Monitor your progress.
If you get off course, pivot to get back on track.
Adapt if conditions change.
Your inner voice will help keep you focused.

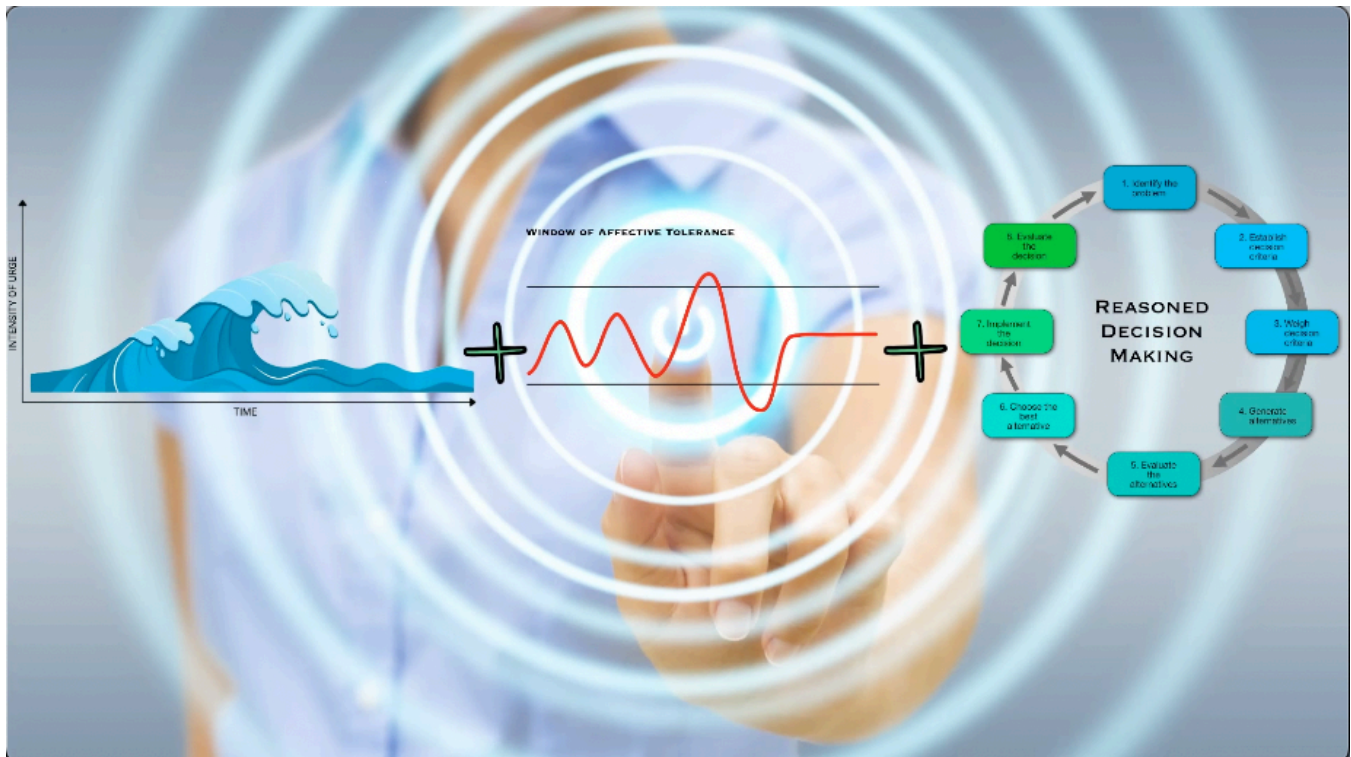
Step 7: Implement your decision

Act in a way that aligns with your heart and mind. Have a plan of action. Write it down. Establish a timeline. Identify the resources you need such as time, money, people that can help you, schools that will help you meet your goals, and jobs that will help you gain knowledge and skills.

Stick with the plan. Keep focused. Filter out distractions. Expand your window of tolerance as you encounter obstacles. Don't let negative influencers cause you to second guess yourself. Resist urges that may take you off course.

Step 8: Evaluate the decision

Monitor your progress. If you get off course, pivot to get back on track. Adapt if conditions change. Use your inner voice to keep you focused.

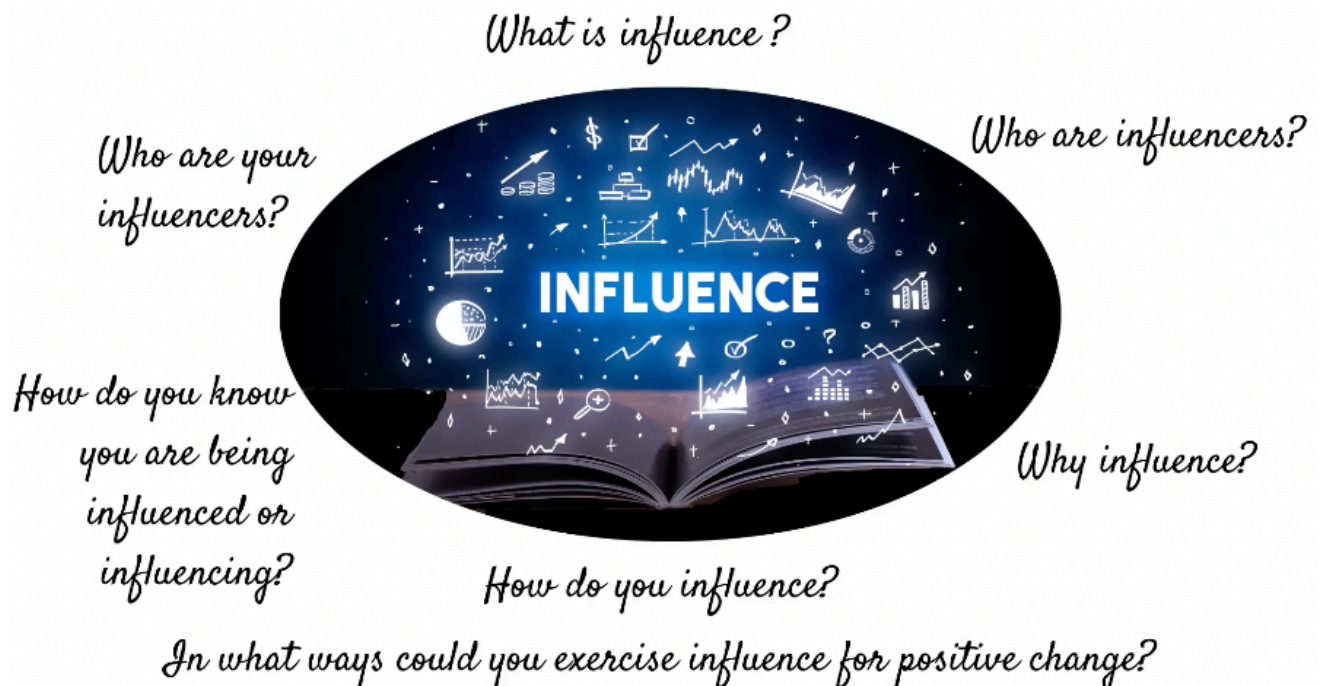


Urge surfing, plus expanding your window of tolerance. plus reasoned decision making, are strategies that will help you develop your inner voice. Your inner voice will become a reliable influencer.



Influence is about changing hearts, minds, and behaviors. You are growing your heart intelligence by identifying priorities, values, and your life's mission. You are developing your mindfulness by being fully aware of emotions, thoughts, and actions. Your mind is at work. You are living with purpose when you are behaving in a way that aligns with your heart and your mind empowers you to more fully influence the direction you want to go.

Clarity of purpose, curiosity about possibilities, and consciousness of options builds a strong inner voice. Be proactive, use your inner voice to influence you in every day decisions and purposeful living



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