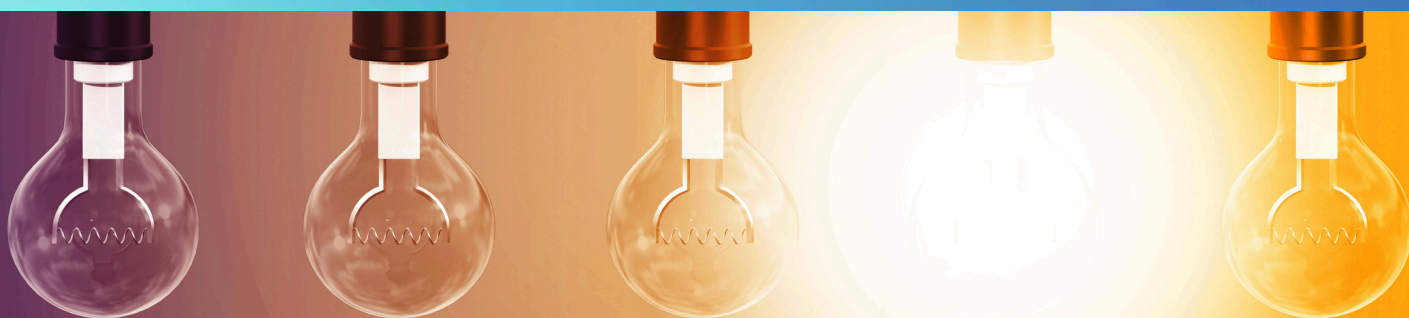# UNLOCKING CREATIVITY
Investigating Habitual Thoughts

pause

Once you start paying attention to your thoughts, you'll notice that you have a *"TOP TEN PLAYLIST"* **of unhelpful thoughts that you hear over and over.**

Naming these familiar mental habits helps you recognize them when they arise. This enables you to say, "*Ah, I am familiar with this mental script. This is my 'intense dislike for my supervisor' script or my 'I'm always behind schedule' script.*" These patterns are rarely useful and take up a lot of brain power that could otherwise be used to fuel creative thinking or fresh possibilities.

Recognizing these recurring thought patterns as they manifest creates a distance between you and them. With practice, you can gain enough clarity on these well-known patterns that they will no longer trigger your emotional responses.

Over the next few weeks, bring awareness to your own top ten "usual suspects" and keep a record of them here:

Thought #1 _____

Thought #2 _____

Thought #3 _____

Thought #4 _____

Thought #5 _____

Thought #6 _____

Thought #7 _____

Thought #8 _____

Thought #9 _____

Thought #10 _____

For each of the habitual thoughts in your top ten list, you can practice reframing them. Ask yourself, *"What thought would I rather have on a regular basis?"*

Thought #1 _____ Example: "I'm always behind schedule in my work." _____

Reframe: _____ "I'm managing so much and I'm exactly where I need to be." _____

Thought #2 _____ Example: "I'm such an anxious person." _____

Reframe: _____ "I feel anxiety like most other people and that's okay." _____

Thought #3 _____ Example: "My spouse never listens to me or understands my needs." _____

Reframe: _____ "Communication with my spouse can be improved, and we can work together to better understand each other's needs." _____

Thought #4 _____ Example: "I'm not as successful as other leaders." _____

Reframe: _____ "Success as a leader is subjective, and I am on my unique path of growth and achievement."" _____

Thought #5 _____

Reframe: _____

Thought #6 _____

Reframe: _____

Thought #7 _____

Reframe: _____

Thought #8 _____

Reframe: _____

Thought #9 _____

Reframe: _____

Thought #10 _____

Reframe: _____

Each time you notice one of the above thoughts arise in your mind during the day, see if you can catch it and reframe it. And you don't need to find 10 – even identifying and reframing one or several unhelpful thought patterns regularly can be highly impactful!