

How can we switch off the persistent voice of self doubt?

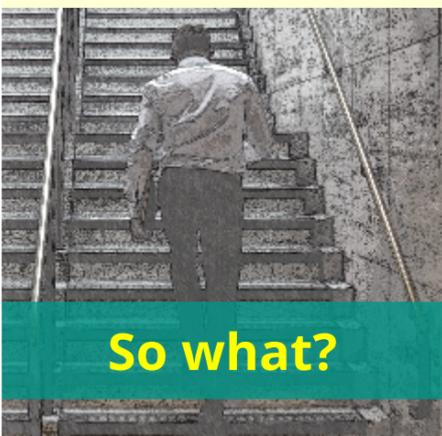
We move through life swimming against a constant tide of self doubt. The brain has evolved to protect us from harm and tends to play safe when outcomes are doubtful; a strategy that is not always in our best interest. How can we contend with this?



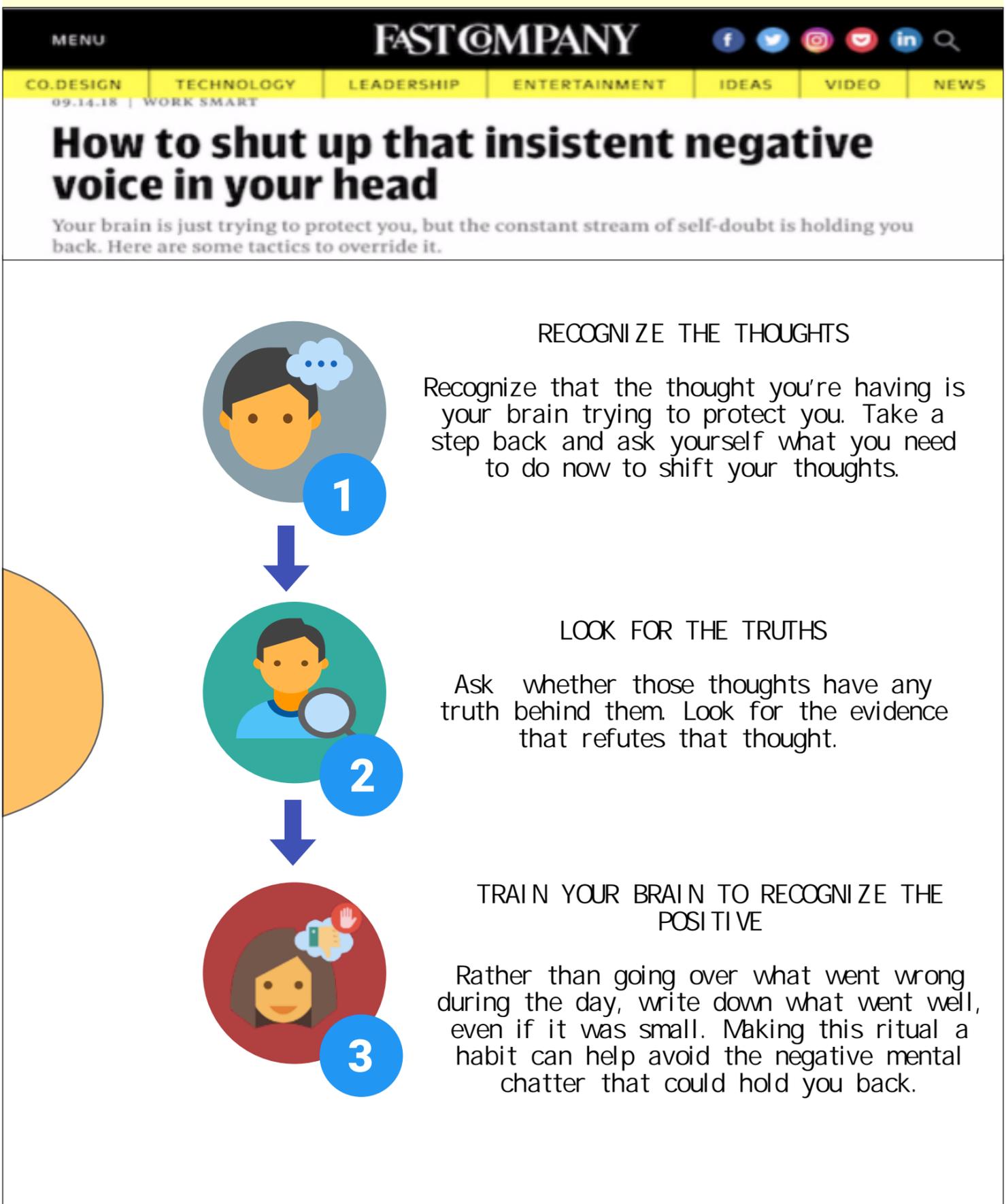
The brain has evolved as an organ whose primary function is to protect the individual from harm. Faced with a situation that is seen as being unpredictable or doubtful in its outcome, the brain will play it safe and advise staying away. Harm, hurt and humiliation are avoided. As humans, this strategy may not be in our best interests.



Many of our instinctual responses have evolved from the "fight or flight" mechanism that is key to survival. We tend to think of these as being beyond our control. Not so. Self doubt is a universally present negative voice which often stops us from reaching our highest potential. Using a three-pronged strategy, it is possible to train ourselves to switch off this restraining force.



Large quantities of persistence and patience are needed when tackling something as deeply ingrained as self-doubt. The journey is bound to be long but the rewards can exceed all expectations.



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How to shut up that insistent negative voice in your head

Your brain is just trying to protect you, but the constant stream of self-doubt is holding you back. Here are some tactics to override it.

- 1** **RECOGNIZE THE THOUGHTS**
Recognize that the thought you're having is your brain trying to protect you. Take a step back and ask yourself what you need to do now to shift your thoughts.
- 2** **LOOK FOR THE TRUTHS**
Ask whether those thoughts have any truth behind them. Look for the evidence that refutes that thought.
- 3** **TRAIN YOUR BRAIN TO RECOGNIZE THE POSITIVE**
Rather than going over what went wrong during the day, write down what went well, even if it was small. Making this ritual a habit can help avoid the negative mental chatter that could hold you back.

