

Change the Channel: Taking Back Control of Negative Thoughts

Why noticing sooner matters more than trying harder

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The moment before you realize you're holding the remote.

Change the Channel

A negative thought
isn't a life sentence.

It's just a channel —
and you hold the remote.

— Note to Self Chronicles | [Tony Brigmon.com](https://tonybrigmon.com)

The Chronicle

The first thought isn't yours to control. It shows up automatically — before you've had a chance to filter it, before you've decided anything.

That's just how the mind works, and no amount of positive thinking stops it from happening.

What you do control is the second move.

The moment you notice you're three minutes into replaying the same bad meeting, the same rejection, the same worst-case scenario — that's the moment the remote becomes real. Not before.

Most people wait for the thought to fade on its own before they act, treating the negative channel like something they have to just sit through.

But you don't have to finish the episode. You can change it mid-scene, even while the thought is still uncomfortable.

This shows up at work more than people admit.

A deal falls through, and the mental replay starts — every mistake, every what-if, running on a loop while you're supposed to be focused on the next call.

The people who recover fastest aren't the ones who never have the thought. They're the ones who catch it quicker and switch sooner.

The common mistake is waiting to feel calm before you try to change the channel. But calm usually comes after you switch, not before.

You don't need permission from your mood. You just need to notice you're watching something that isn't helping you.

Note to Self

The thought showing up isn't the problem. Staying on it is. I don't have to fight what plays first — I just have to remember I'm holding the remote. Noticing sooner is the whole skill.

Something to Consider

What's the channel you find yourself stuck on most often?

How much sooner could you notice it, if you were looking for it?

Here's What You Can Do

- Name it the moment you notice — even just silently: "I'm on the negative channel."

- Don't wait to feel calm before switching — the calm comes after, not before.
- Pick your next channel in advance — a task, a person, a plan — so you're not scrambling for the remote mid-thought.

A Final Encouragement

You can do this. Really.
There's only one thing left to do.
Begin.

Reminder

You don't control the first thought. You control the next one.

Now go smile and wave and make someone's day.



Same room, different channel

#MentalFitness
#Mindset
#Leadership
#SelfAwareness

