



Grind Part 18 – Simple Questions During Complex Challenges

VIDEO INTRODUCTION: <https://youtu.be/tYHgX8y2noY>

As we all know, certain life situations can make life feel overwhelming. However, the goal is to keep grinding forward even when times are tough and circumstances are complicated. One way to help reframe challenging and complex situations that we may face is to break things down in simple terms. An effective way to do this is to carefully think about simple, strength-based questions in the face of stifling self-statements. This is probably best explained by considering some examples.

...When faced with a complicated, overwhelming situation we may think to ourselves thoughts such as:

“I can’t do this.”

“I don’t see a way out of this.”

“I don’t have the resources needed to solve this problem (money, time, etc.)”

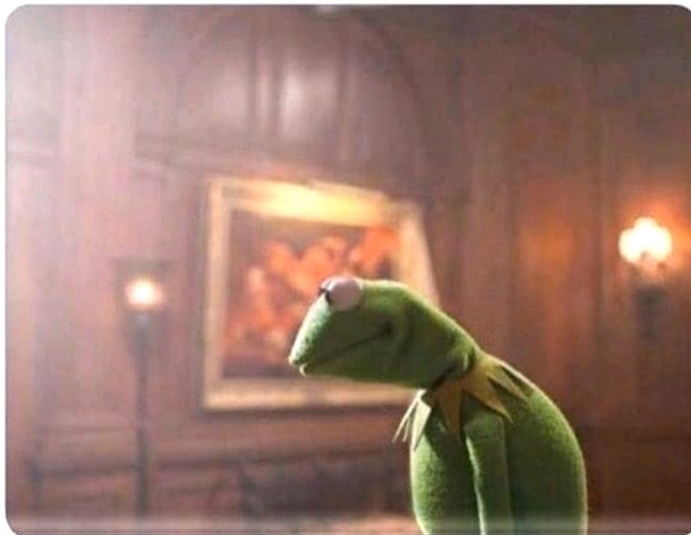
“I have no idea what I am doing”

“I’m all alone facing this.”

A SIMPLE SURVIVAL PLAN

things to do tomorrow:

1. get up
2. survive
3. go back to bed





There are many more examples of things someone may say when overwhelmed but these are just a few to illustrate the point of this exercise. That point is that when we find ourselves in these situations making these kinds of statements, it can be extremely helpful to pause, step back, and ask ourselves simple, strengths-based questions. Consider the same examples above with corresponding simple, strength-based questions.

| Overwhelming Thought | Simple, Strengths-Based Question |
|--|---|
| <i>"I can't do this."</i> | WHAT CAN I DO? |
| <i>"I don't see a way out of this"</i> | WHAT IS ONE THING I CAN DO TO TRY TO MOVE FORWARD? |
| <i>"I don't have the resources needed to solve this problem (money, time, etc.)"</i> | WHAT DO I HAVE THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL? |
| <i>"I have no idea what I am doing"</i> | WHAT DO I KNOW? |
| <i>"I'm all alone facing this"</i> | WHERE CAN I LOOK FOR HELP? |
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |

There are three empty rows for a reason. Think of a few more things that people may say when they are facing an overwhelming and complex challenge, then try to come up with the simple, strengths-based question that would correspond to that.



Finally as a group take turns thinking about some overwhelming of a real life situations people are facing where they may need some help and encouragement. Then do the following:

1. **Identify negative overwhelming thoughts.**
2. **Come up with simple strengths-based question.**
3. **Finally, come up with some ANSWERS for the simple strengths-based question.**

Examples:

1. **Overwhelming thought** - "I can't stop drinking."
2. **Simple, strengths-based question:** "What can I do?"
3. **ANSWERS** from group discussion:
 - a. I can attend an outpatient program
 - b. I can try an AA meeting.
 - c. I can get a book about quitting drinking and read it.
 - d. I can get all of the alcohol out of my house
 - e. I can take a different way home so I don't pass the liquor store

Now try it a group. Ask some people to volunteer to allow the group to discuss one of their problems.

In conclusion, negative thoughts can happen. However, we can still move forward in a positive way if we just give ourselves permission to try to make some small moves forward by reframing overwhelming thoughts with simple strengths based questions that we can answer.

