

# Mental fitness in the workplace

Daena Douglas, Senior Advisor

April 2021

# Learning Objectives

- ❑ Understand what you can and can't control.
- ❑ Learn the basics of cognitive hygiene.
- ❑ Learn micro-skills to practice cognitive hygiene.

## **Howatt HR's mission**

is to transform the workplace experience so every employee walks into work with purpose – feeling empowered, energized, safe, and confident to handle whatever comes their way.



**Goal:** to intentionally focus and build awareness of our mental fitness through out the day.

Recall our charge is a result of personal and environmental supports and stressors.



=



Charged



Charging



Half-full



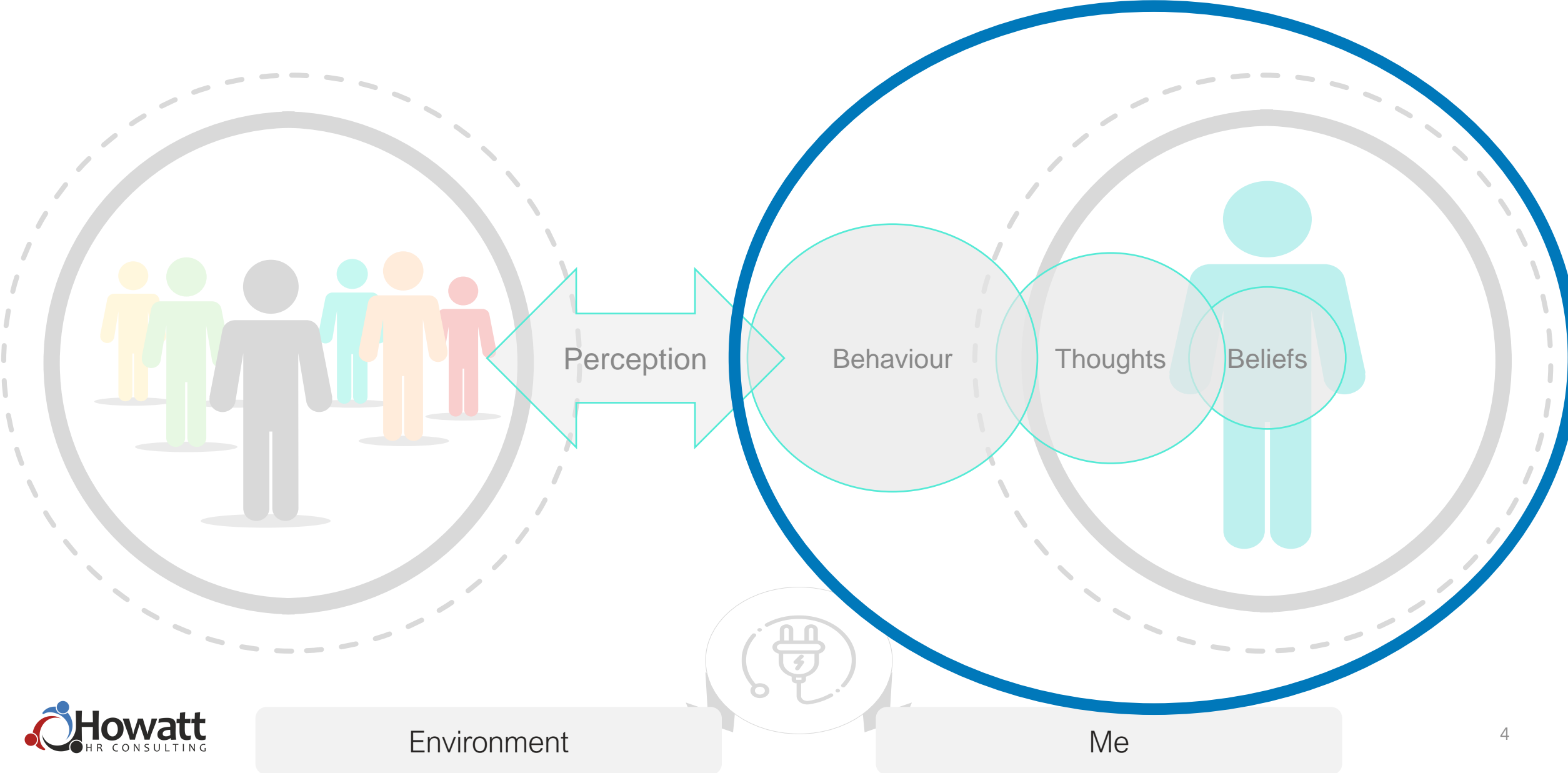
Drained



Empty



# How we relate to our environment



# Cognitive hygiene – cleaning our thoughts



The average person has 50,000 to 70,000 thoughts per day (35-48 per minute), it's normal to have moments of being overwhelmed or distracted.



Cognitive hygiene is a micro-skill that focuses on the daily action of cleaning out unhelpful thoughts.

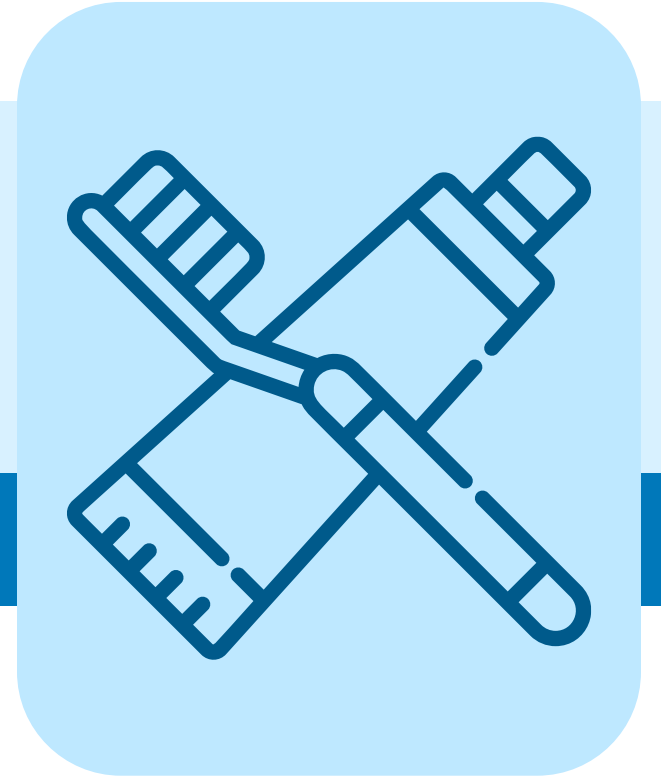


When negative thoughts are left unchecked they can negatively impact our perceptions, decisions and actions.

# Why do you brush your teeth daily and not monthly?

Most of us know why we brush our teeth a few times a day and not once a month.

Cognitive hygiene is the same. By paying attention to our thoughts daily helps us to clean our minds.



Due to negative bias our brain will do an excellent job of laying down negative tracks, meaning we become very skilled at facilitating negative thinking.

Through neuroplasticity, however, we can train our brain to think more positively and create new circuitry for relating to ourselves and others.



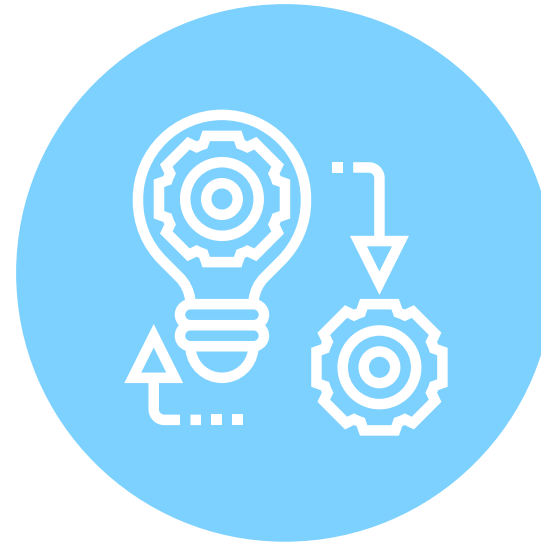
# Four micro-skills for cognitive hygiene



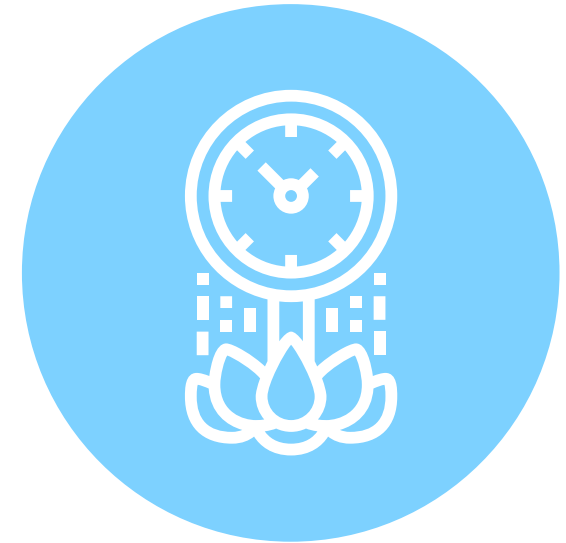
Become **aware**  
of a thought



Be  
**curious**



Chose to keep or  
**change** it

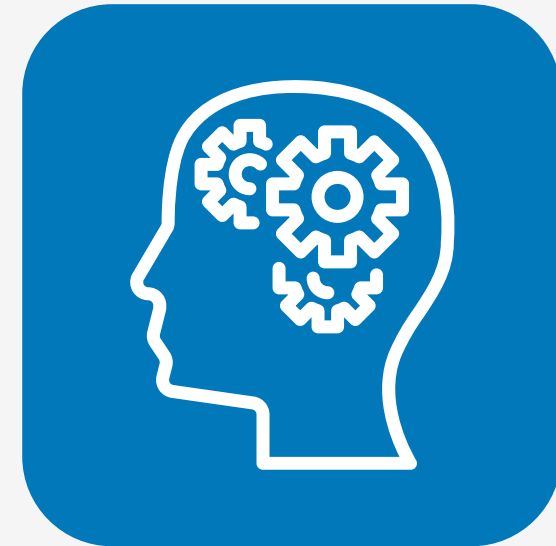


Practice  
**patience**

# Challenge negative thoughts one at a time

For very challenging and stubborn thoughts:

1. Write it down.
2. Observe emotions attached to the thought
3. Ask yourself how the thought serves you. *Do you think this thought is?*
4. Write down your judgements about this thought – are these true also?
5. Create a positive statement to replace the thought and any judgements.
6. Ask for help.



The goal of cognitive hygiene is to end each day with negative thoughts put to rest and a focus on what is within your control.





[www.howatthr.com](http://www.howatthr.com)

*Thank you!*