

## EXERCISE: Weak-Strategies Checklist

Consider each strategy and place a tick (✓) beside any that you tend to use when responding to unwanted intrusive thoughts and feelings. You might find it helpful to consult your responses to the mental-control strategies questionnaire in chapter 3.

<b>Control Strategy</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Example</b>
_____ Unfocused distraction	Using multiple, unrelated distractors to draw attention away from a recurring intrusive thought	When the thoughts of regret intruded, Leah tried to think about her work, supper plans, the weather, news events, anything to draw her attention toward something else.

_____	Self-criticism	Making self-critical, disparaging comments for having the intrusion	Leah would feel frustrated when the intrusions returned and would tell herself to stop being so selfish and pitiful.
_____	Neutralization/ compulsive rituals	Responding in ways to try to counter or cancel the distress or negative effects of an intrusive thought	When she felt guilt and negativity over her decision to leave the marriage, Leah would sometimes try to recall a good decision she made.
_____	Reassurance seeking	Seeking information from others or external sources to reduce your concern about the unacceptability or feared consequences of the intrusion	Leah would sometimes consult with her closest friends about whether she had made the right decision to divorce.
_____	Rationalizations	Reasoning with yourself that everything will be all right	When regretful thoughts popped into her mind, Leah tried to convince herself that she'd made the right decision.

Which strategies did you end up ticking? It's likely these are your most immediate responses when feeling upset. These control strategies are among the least effective in dealing with unwanted thoughts.