You: The Boss of Your Brain

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Due to the covid-19 pandemic, many people have experienced several weeks without change in day-to-day life. Yet soon, parts of the country will begin to reopen, with each state taking a different approach.

Naturally, our brains want to rush to judgement, deeming the situation as right or wrong. This is a sign of the brain doing its job, since it is hardwired to sense danger and therefore quickly categorize things as good (safe) or bad (dangerous).

It’s easy to allow our brains to expend time and energy in judgement. “That governor is making a huge mistake by opening too fast and too soon.” “That governor is hurting the economy by being unnecessarily cautious.” It’s tempting to judge those who are gathering in groups, or those who we perceive to be overreacting.

Those judgements are simply thoughts in our minds, and they are certainly an option. But if we consider how those thoughts make us feel – perhaps frustrated, afraid, annoyed or angry – we can ask ourselves if that’s how we *want* to feel. If not, we can simply direct our brains to another thought which is still true, but makes us feel less rotten.

For example, instead of, “They shouldn’t be out without masks,” which may create a feeling of anger, we can choose to think instead, “We all have choices, and I’m going to do what’s right for me,” which might create a feeling of empowerment.

What we can’t ever change are circumstances, meaning anything outside of ourselves, including government, a virus, other humans and rules and restrictions, to name a few.

We tend to believe that our circumstances (i.e. covid-19) dictate how we feel (i.e. lonely, angry, sad). But here is the truth: it is our thoughts *about our circumstances* that determine our feelings. And the good news is that thoughts are 100% optional. Therein lies our power.

There are an unlimited number of thoughts we can choose. Out of those infinite possibilities, we can direct our brains to think thoughts that are both true and useful; thoughts that serve us. This is to be the boss of our brains.

So, if we’re not allowing our brains to expend time and energy thinking thoughts that make us feel terrible, what else might we be doing, and how else might we be feeling?