

FM-PTS-07

SESSION 7

TRAP IT, MAP IT, ZAP IT

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THE CORE INSIGHT: THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS ARE CONNECTED

We've mentioned this principle before, but it's worth repeating because it is the foundation for everything in this chapter: thoughts and emotions are deeply connected. When you have a negative thought, it generates a negative emotion. When you have a negative emotion, it generates more negative thoughts. This cycle can feel like a runaway train.

The good news is that this connection also works in the other direction. Once you understand how thoughts and emotions influence each other, you can intervene — you can insert yourself into the cycle and redirect it. This is what Cognitive Restructuring is all about, and TMZ is your practical tool for making it happen.

"T means Trap It: learn to recognize when the negative emotion is calling the shots — which enables you to trap the feeling."

"M means Map It: understand the emotion, its trigger, and whether the response is accurate or habitual."

"Z means Zap It: replace the negative response with an adaptive one that moves you forward."

A SKILL THAT GROWS WITH PRACTICE

TMZ is not a one-time fix — it's a daily practice. Like any skill, it gets easier and more automatic the more you use it. In the early stages, it might feel forced or slow. That's normal. The goal is to build enough of a habit with these three steps that they become your default response when emotions start to escalate.

Pay attention to your signature emotion — the negative emotion you tend to experience most often. That emotion is your strongest signal that TMZ needs to be activated. When you feel it, you know: Trap it. Map it. Zap it.