

Left-hand behinds	Between the Goal-posts	Right-hand behinds
<p><b>Explicit Thoughts and Awareness</b> -derived from considered or unconsidered research and reflections.</p> <p>We note basically anything we come up with in response to the disturbing critical open question: <i>what am I supposed to do in response to this crisis?</i></p> <p>A thought is valuable because we thought it in a moment of crisis, not because we know it to be relevant, which we don't. From this perspective, telling ourselves, I should not think this or that is nonsense.</p> <p>What we know for a fact is we have a thought in response to a question and a crisis. The real therapeutic question is: <i>why am I thinking these types of thoughts in this crisis? The clue to that question comes from not putting a value on the thought rather observing it and what it evokes in us.</i> Once we put a value on a thought, we cannot observe its impact on us. Furthermore, how we feel about something counts rather than whether or not it is supposedly objectively true or false, relevant or irrelevant.</p> <p>We write down and acknowledge all our rationalisations for action, research findings, so-called facts as just bits of information rather than as valued justifications for action in response to a critical open question.</p> <p>In a crisis, these pieces or bits of information are generally overvalued to the extent that they are deemed justification for compulsive or non-compulsive action in response to the critical open question.</p> <p>Everything in this space scores a behind, one point. Generally, the relevance of a course of action is understood via the evolving outcome, not in advance of it.</p>	<p><b>The Critical Open (and often disturbing) Question</b> that arises in a crisis: <i>What am I supposed to do now?</i></p> <p>The open question has a generative quality that is undermined by rationalisations and answers if they are overvalued. Answers kill the question. The open question dies a naturally quiet, unnoticed death when an evolving outcome addresses it satisfactorily.</p> <p><b>The blank space</b> is the mental state or posture from which tacit knowledge and creative instincts are accessed. This is a deconstructed space where there are no tightly held value judgements or valued rationalisations. There are no explicit reasons held to justify doing something or not doing something.</p> <p><b>The blank space</b> is the necessary and sufficient condition for spontaneous creative action.</p> <p>It consists of seven interrelated items according to this model:</p> <p>the open critical disturbing question;</p> <p>a blank deconstructed mindset;</p> <p>mindfulness of options and rationalisations;</p> <p>mindfulness of our reaction to options and rationalisations;</p> <p>an attitude of openness;</p> <p>an acknowledgement that the relevance of awareness is never known in advance of an evolving outcome,</p> <p>and finally,</p> <p>acts of faith in our tacit ability and capacity to act creatively in a crisis.</p> <p><b>Until you have arrived safely at your destination, surprised by your creativity, and you realise you are no longer tormented by the open critical question, keep the question alive.</b></p>	<p><b>Explicit Reactions</b> (involuntary: somatic and emotional feelings, associations and imaginings)</p> <p>A therapeutic exercise where we write down our reaction to an option that we allocated to the left-hand behinds area.</p> <p>Consider using a body/felt scale. For example, rate a panic attack a minus 8-10/10 on negative affect, stress, anxiety and depression, with plus 10/10 signifying euphoria or positive arousal.</p> <p>0-3/10 as boring non-engagement.</p> <p>Plus or minus 5/10 as a rating for ambivalence—moderate stress and moderate ease.</p> <p>Rate the ideas, options and justifications generated in the Left-hand behinds area accordingly.</p> <p>Scientific research about emotional regulation says moderate arousal, stress, and comfort imply the optimal mental state for appropriate action.</p> <p>Outside this, we are too aroused, emotional, overwhelmed or disengaged and bored to act optimally.</p> <p>However, it is a mistake to use mixed emotional moderate reactions as a justification for intervention according to this method and generally in my professional opinion.</p> <p>People say trust your gut reaction to something. I say acknowledge your gut reaction but don't adhere to it. Acknowledge it as a behind, scoring one point.</p>

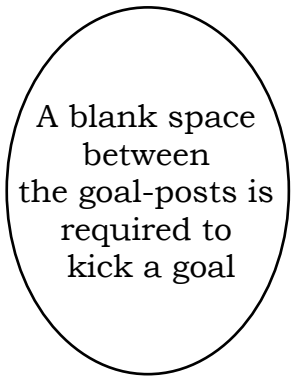
Example

A classic rationalisation or fixed belief triggered when we feel threatened and overwhelmed is: *I don't have a choice*.

Now, this can be very convincing when we examine our options from a traumatised perspective. This fixed belief may come from trauma in childhood when we had no choices and options outside what our parents allowed. Regardless of where this rationalisation comes from, whether true or untrue, acting it out will probably be self-sabotaging in my experience as a psychologist.

The idea in this Kicking Goals method is to acknowledge the rationalisation but then not invest in it. Don't put a value on it.

Our approach is purely descriptive and non-judgemental. We come like therapeutic scientists researching our experience. So even though we are emotionally upset, we may still observe rather than act out.



Our task is to resist the temptation to bring information from the left and right behinds areas into the blank space. We do this by only assigning one point to information from the left and right behinds area. This is counter-intuitive and requires practise and discipline.

Regarding the classic rationalisation, *I don't have a choice*; the idea is to notice and consider that option.

Predictably, we will involuntarily experience that horrible pit of the stomach anxiety experience followed by depression and involuntary associations in our imagination of similar times from the past.

If we have no freedom from the thought, *I don't have a choice*; then we will probably acquiesce and overcompensate. **This type of denial of self is a guarantee we will self-sabotage in my experience as a psychologist.**

The ground of mindfulness and healing is unconditional positive self-regard, non-judgemental self-awareness. That is to say: whatever my response is, it is ok. I am allowed to feel what I am feeling.

Furthermore, what I am feeling is observable and real. However, the value I put on that feeling is a construct, which is not a reliable source of information. Therefore, it is not primary data.