



STOP SEEKING REASSURANCE AND REGAIN CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF



Reassurance seeking is continually seeking for new information from different sources, despite the fact that you may already have the answer, because you are unsure and are afraid of making a mistake. In essence, reassurance seeking occurs when you lack confidence in yourself.

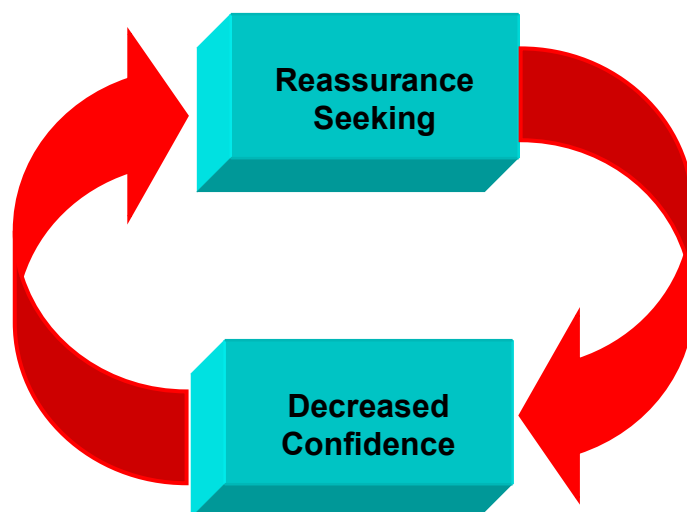
Do you frequently seek reassurance? Here are some common examples of reassurance seeking:

- Asking the same question over and over to a friend or loved one.
- Asking the same question to different people.
- Searching excessively on the internet or in books for information.
- Check things over and over.

If you continually seek reassurance, chances are that your life is being impacted negatively in at least one of the following ways:

- You have lost confidence in yourself and in your ability to make decisions.
- Friends or loved ones react negatively to you because you continually ask them the same question over and over.
- You are paralyzed to act because you are afraid of making a mistake.
- You have a tendency to repeat things over and over.
- You take excessive time to complete tasks.

Studies have shown that excessive reassurance seeking, even in people who do not have this problem, leads to a decrease in confidence and further reassurance seeking. This means that reassurance decreases confidence.



HOW TO STOP REASSURANCE SEEKING AND REGAIN CONFIDENCE

1. Use Exposure Therapy

- a. Make a list of all the ways in which you seek reassurance. Make sure to look at the list above to help you out. Create an exposure hierarchy by ranking all these behaviours in terms of how difficult it would be to stop seeking reassurance. Make sure to read the toolkit on Exposure Therapy to help you out!
- b. Stop seeking reassurance by starting with a behaviour that would be easy to change and practice. Be confident in your ability to not require any reassurance. For example, if you seek reassurance from numerous people, only ask one person once! If you have the tendency to check things over and over, stop and double check once only!
- c. Make sure to write down your predictions of what will happen before you perform the exposure exercise. What is the worst thing that can happen if you don't seek reassurance? What is the chance that something bad will happen? What will happen to your anxiety? Will it increase to an intolerable level? Make sure to re-evaluate these beliefs after the exposure exercise. Did your fear(s) come true? Did anything bad happen? Did your anxiety spiral out of control? As you repeat successive exposure exercises, do you find that you need to seek less reassurance? What happens to your confidence? Has it increased as you have stopped seeking reassurance?

2. Take Control Of Your Negative Thinking

Chances are that negative thinking is contributing to your need to seek reassurance. When performing exposure, make sure that you talk back to any negative thinking with balanced and realistic thinking. Make sure to use the Change Your Negative Thinking toolkit to help you out.