

## What Is Rumination?

Rumination is:

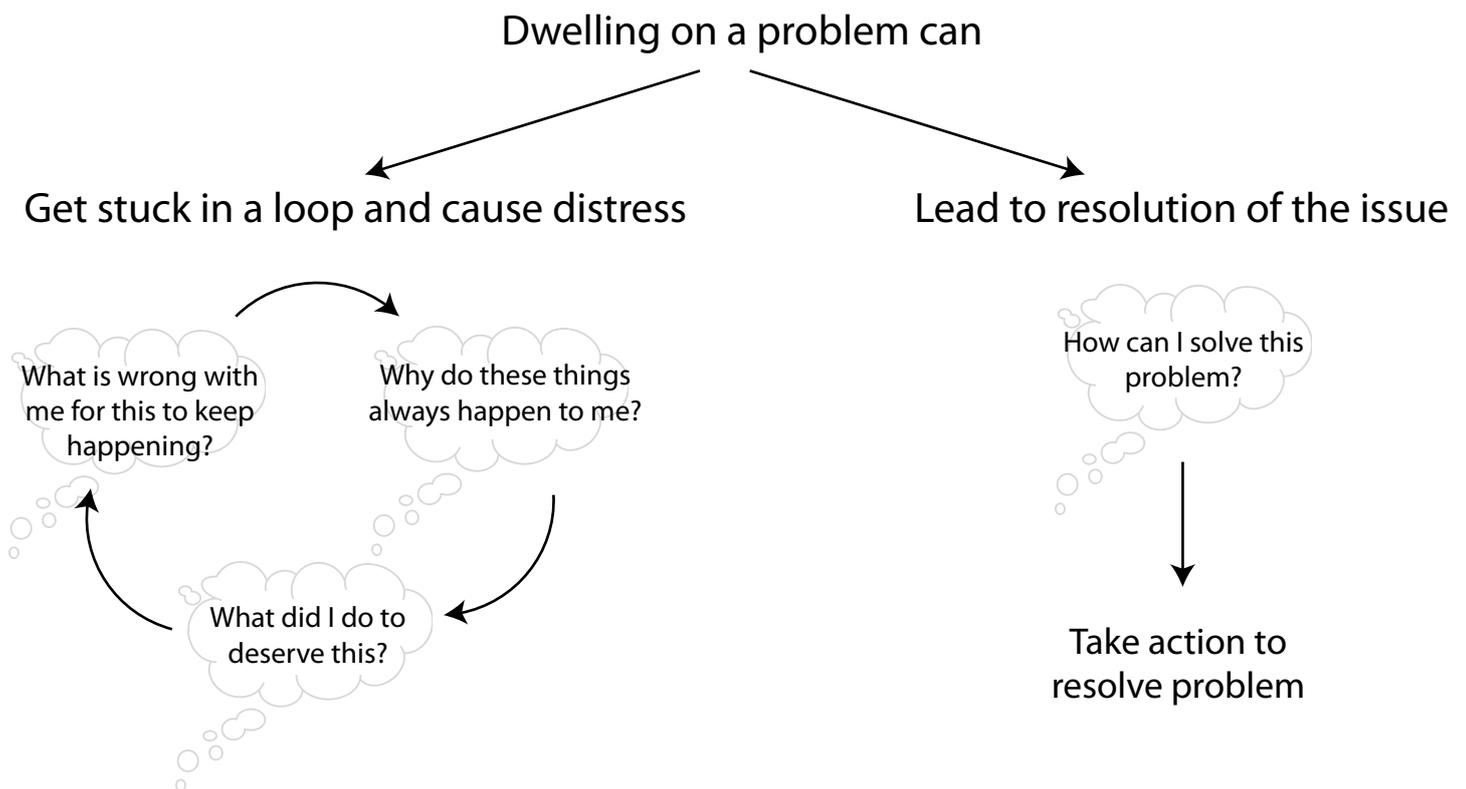
- dwelling on difficulties and things which distress us
- repeatedly thinking about events from our past
- becoming preoccupied with something and not being able to get it out of your mind
- a learnt strategy for trying to deal with our problems

Is rumination normal?

- Yes, to some extent everyone ruminates or dwells on their problems
- Thinking about our problems can be helpful: especially if we reach a solution and put it into action
- Most of the time, and for most people, rumination is time-limited: it stops when the problem is solved
- Although rumination is normal, excessive use of it can become problematic

What are the problems with rumination?

- Unhelpful rumination tends to focus on causes and consequences instead of solutions  
*"What did I do to deserve this"* and *"Will my life ever get better?"* instead of *"How can I make my life better?"*
- Rumination tends to focus on what has gone wrong and can lead to negative thinking
- When used excessively, rumination can lead to depression
- When used excessively, rumination can maintain an episode of depression
- Unhelpful rumination can lead to inactivity and avoidance of problem-solving



### Unhelpful rumination

Unhelpful rumination asks more *"why ... ?"* questions (this is sometimes called the 'evaluative mode' because these questions evaluate the meaning of events or situations)

*"Why ... ?"* questions tend to focus on the problem, its causes, and its consequences

*"Why am I in this situation?"*

*"What if it never gets better?"*

*"What did I do to deserve this"*

### Helpful rumination

Helpful rumination asks more *"how ... ?"* questions (this is sometimes called the 'process-focused-mode' because these questions focus on the process of how events and situations happen)

*"How ... ?"* questions tend to focus on solving problems

*"How can I get out of this situation?"*

*"What can I do to make this better?"*