The ‘Freedom Mantra’

Whatever your mood or state of being - and particularly if you feel yourself in any state of emotional or bodily dis-ease, distress, discomfort or even despair - do not say to yourself:

“I feel X, Y or Z” or “I am X, Y or Z”

(Example “I feel...” or “I am... depressed/anxious, angry/agitated” etc.)

For in reality you are not what you are experiencing, you are not your thoughts or feelings about yourself or other people, or your reality.

So eliminate the mental word “I” from your experience by using what I call the ‘freedom mantra’ of Awareness-Based Cognitive Therapy.

“There is an awareness of ...X, Y or Z”

In other words say to yourself - or simple wordlessly remind yourself and understand that it is not ‘you’ thinking, feeling or sensing anything – call it ‘X’ – but instead that:

“There is an awareness of currently experiencing, thinking/feeling/sensing X.”

At the same time feel that very awareness – which is not ‘you’ or anything you are experiencing – as a free space surrounding your experienced thoughts, feelings or sensations – wherever you sense them within your head or body - and surrounding your body as a whole.

Removing the mental word ‘I’ and replacing it with the understanding that there is simply an awareness of experiencing something is central to ABCT. It is what allows any experienced thoughts, feelings, sensations to just be there without identifying (‘I-identifying’) with them.

This is not the same as ‘repressing’ or ‘detaching’ from your thoughts, feeling or sensations. On the contrary, it is what allows you to freely let them be there or to freely let them go. Indeed freely letting thoughts, feelings or sensations just be there is what allows you to freely let them go.

It even allows you to freely take time to experience particular thoughts, feelings, sensations or moods more intensely and to explore them more deeply and for a longer time - but again, without ‘I-identifying’ with them and therefore feeling un-freely trapped by them.