

## Leaves on a Stream Metaphor

Imagine you are sitting or standing in the middle of a stream.  
The water is flowing away in front of you.

Notice if there is any sound from the running water.

Notice if there are any trees, etc. on the banks of the stream.

Now see leaves floating down the stream away from you.

They can be any shape, color, or size.

As the negative thoughts come into your mind, be aware of  
what the thought is, and then place it on a leaf.

Now watch it float away down the stream.

Do this with each thought as you notice it and for as long you like until  
you feel better.

As you acknowledge each of your thoughts, you do not need to hang on to  
them. There is no need to become attached to the thought.

Just acknowledge it and then place it on a leaf.

By watching it float away, it loses its hold on you and its intensity.

By paying attention to the here and now by observing one's thoughts  
without being critical or judgmental is what many people call Mindfulness.  
This term describes observing your thoughts, and by doing so, you are no  
longer your thoughts. You can notice the thought and make a choice to  
realize that it is separate from you.

