

# Expressive Therapies LLC

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Creating a brave and empowering space for equality with – race, gender, sexuality, age, economic status, cognitive, physical, spiritual needs and those living with mental illness – through trauma-informed care: music therapy, art therapy, dance-movement therapy and psychotherapy, to improve health and well-being.



## INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

What are intrusive thoughts? Intrusive thoughts are unwanted and often distressing that seem to come from out of the blue and can lead to questions about identity, values, and belief systems. When it comes to intrusive thoughts, it is important to understand what they are, how they operate, and strategies for coping with them.



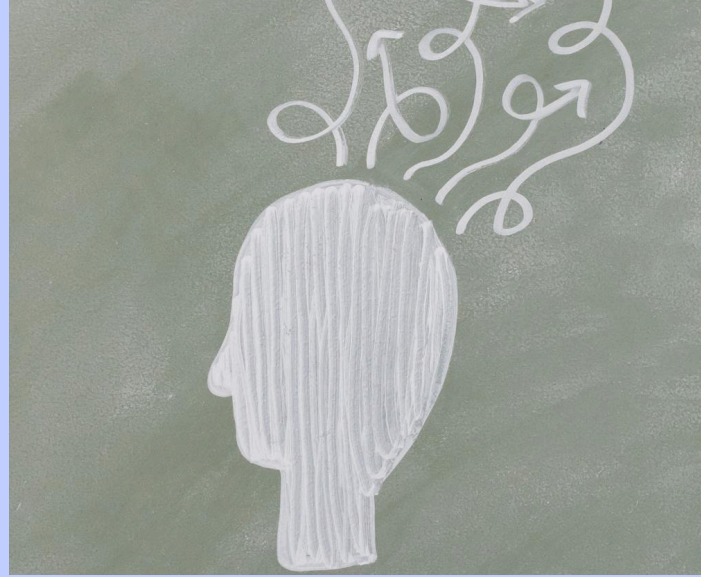
### WHAT ARE INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS?

- Intrusive thoughts are unwanted thoughts that cross the mind. Most people experience these on occasion, but some may have recurrent intrusive thoughts that consume their daily lives.
- Intrusive thoughts can be common in conditions such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and eating disorders.
- Common types of intrusive thoughts include:
  - Thoughts of germs/contamination.
  - Thoughts of violence toward self/others.
  - Thoughts related to self-doubt.
  - Thoughts related to religion/immorality.
  - Thoughts related to sexual/taboo acts.
- Often, intrusive thoughts occur outside of these categories.



# HOW DO INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS OPERATE?

- When intrusive thoughts are recurrent, they can alter neural pathways, which lead to increased intrusive thought patterns.
- Sometimes, there is no specific cause for intrusive thoughts. Our brains have thoughts, and sometimes a seemingly random intrusive thought pops in. While this can be distressing, intrusive thoughts do not define a person. Just because an intrusive thought is present does not mean that the thought represents the true values, beliefs, and identity of a person.



## HOW TO COPE WITH INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

- The goal of coping with intrusive thoughts is not to escape or fight them, but to allow them. Here are some common strategies that can be used at home:
  - Mindfulness
  - Grounding techniques
  - Externalization
  - Visualization
- Talk with your therapist for more information on these practices!
- If you are experiencing intrusive thoughts and do not currently have a therapist, give our office a call for more information!



## Coming Soon!

**Adult group focused on guided imagery and movement.** This group will use mindful movement and focused music and imagery to care for the soul. This group will follow themes such as intentions, self-love, and gratitude. Movement will be appropriate for everybody, and no experience is needed to participate in the group.

**Adult group focused on grief.** This group will focus on healing and growth during times of grief. It will incorporate the practices of coping/regulation skills, self-care strategies, and emotional expression to promote resilience among group members.

**More information coming soon!**

## Thank you for reading our newsletter!



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**Take care and be well!**