



Just throw negative thoughts away

If you want to get rid of unwanted, negative thoughts, try just ripping them up and tossing them in the trash.

Researchers at Ohio State University found that when people wrote down their thoughts on a piece of paper and then threw the paper away, they mentally discarded the thoughts as well.

On the other hand, people were more likely to use their constructive thoughts when making judgments if they first wrote them down on a piece of paper and tucked the paper in a pocket to protect it.

“However you tag your thoughts—as trash or as worthy of protection—seems to make a difference in how you use those thoughts,” said Richard Petty, co-author of the study and professor of psychology. The study was published in *Psychological Science*.

“At some level, it can sound silly. But we found that it really works—by physically throwing away or protecting your thoughts, you influence how you end up using those thoughts,” he said.