

Inspiring New Thoughts

By Dorothy Rosby

I read somewhere that the average person thinks 60,000 thoughts every day! That sounds like A LOT! Of course, that's if you're average, and really, how many of us can say that? The author went on to say that, no matter how many thoughts you have, 95% of them are the same ones you had yesterday. Ouch! That makes me feel so shallow! And it did yesterday too.

I don't know if I even have 60,000 thoughts per day, but if I ever start counting, I'm pretty sure I'll have fewer of them. "Where did I put my car keys?" That's one. "What about my sunglasses?" That's two. "If only I would learn to put my sunglasses and my keys in the same place every day!" That's three--all of which I had today, yesterday, and pretty much every day last week. You can see how counting would discourage deep thought.

Of course, like many other startling "facts," these two may not even be . . . well . . . factual! An e-mail I received recently claimed red cars are stopped for speeding more often than any other color of car. That's probably true when you compare red cars that ARE speeding with other cars that are NOT. Or there's that "fact" that periodically makes the rounds on the internet about how more people are killed by donkeys than by airline accidents. There's probably no way to prove that since, as far as I know, no one keeps records of donkey-induced fatalities. But if it were a problem, I'm sure someone would be keeping stats.

I apologize for getting off track, but I did give you something to think about, didn't it? And that's a good thing. I don't know about you, but if I were honest with myself, which I seldom am, I would have to admit that many of the thoughts I'm having today are the same ones I had yesterday and probably the day before that. Besides, "Where are my keys and my sunglasses," there's "What am I going to make for dinner," "Why can't my stomach be flat," and "There must be something in the water in Washington, D.C."

I know my life would be more interesting if I could think some new thoughts. I would probably be more interesting too. You're already very interesting, but I'm going to make some suggestions anyway.

Ways to Have New Thoughts

Try new things. I've never had a burning desire to try sky diving or bungee jumping. I worry that certain new experiences might kill me, and dead people are not known for their abundance of new thoughts. But I have tried sushi, and the cha-cha, and texting! In fact, because texting is my son's main form of communication, I have become--and I don't mean to brag here--almost adequate at it. Now I'm trying to encourage him to try something new too: CALL ME!

Read. I read whatever is in front of me, including cereal boxes, which recently inspired several new thoughts: "Why wasn't my box of Mini-Wheats the one with the \$100 cash card inside?" And "What is tripotassium phosphate and why are they putting it in my Cheerios? But when it comes to mysteries, I prefer mine in a book. Mystery novels

prompt many new thoughts: "Whodunit? What was the motive? And what was that noise I just heard in my basement?"

Travel. Traveling is a great way to trigger new thoughts: "Why do hot dogs cost \$20 when you're away from home," "Did I remember to lock the front door when I left," and "Thank goodness, I'm flying and not riding a donkey."

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