

Life... Separation makes me want to avoid old friends

Situation:

This happened when I was at work last Tuesday. My wife and I are separated, and an old friend and business associate was in our office to see someone else. I really didn't want to see him and have to explain the details of what's happened, so I took an early lunch.

After I got back, my manager saw me in the hall and said, "I'm sorry we missed you, we wanted you to join us for lunch. Matt is in the conference room, come on over and see him."

I had no choice at that point. I went down and Matt and I talked briefly. The gist of the conversation made me think that my manager had already told him about my separation.

Symptoms:

I really didn't want to face Matt. I felt embarrassed inside because I had tried to avoid seeing him. I was tense and had more racing thoughts after we talked and I went back to my office.

"Being separated makes me feel like a failure. I wish things were different. I don't like this depression I'm in. I've talked to other friends from the past and it's always uncomfortable telling them of the changes in my life."

Solution:

When I couldn't concentrate on the work I was supposed to be doing, I knew I had to start changing my thoughts.

I'm not wrong I'm average for not wanting to see Tom. Being separated is distressing, it's not dangerous. Talking about being separated is uncomfortable, and that too is distressing, not dangerous.

I may feel like a failure – but feelings are not facts. I am not a failure.

Racing thoughts are average when you're in my position. My racing thoughts are a harmless outpouring, that's all. The thoughts are only a pesky symptom, and I can change my thoughts.

Nobody *likes* depression – I spotted my temper at the illness, and told myself that the condition was fate appointed. I didn't ask for it.

In the last few months I have met and talked to several friends from the past and I've learned to keep my story short, by controlling my speech muscles. It's not completely comfortable, but I know that I'm building up my nerve resistance.

At the time I didn't think of it, but the next day I endorsed for talking to Matt and bearing the discomfort.

In the past:

I would have avoided all contact. There was a time when my days were terror filled – filled with constant anxiety. It's not that bad now. I do have comfortable times. By practicing changing my thoughts, I'm learning to be self-led not symptom-led.

