

Text Misinterpretation

Interpretation is vital for changing how we feel

Perhaps we are not seeing situations as clearly as we think.



What does “k” mean?

Have you ever gotten a text message from someone that simply states “k” or “fine” - and wondered to yourself, “What does that mean? Are they really okay? Are they mad at me? Did I forget to do something?” You feel like you’re shooting in the dark, trying to figure out what this pesky single-letter (or four-letters for “fine”) could possibly mean. This can often lead us to feeling worried, confused, and frustrated.

It all comes down to interpretation.

Am I seeing this clearly?

We are constantly soaking in information by using our 5 senses: smell, touch, sight, hearing, and taste. From this information, it is our mind (cognition) that is interpreting this information - but sometimes that interpretation may not always be the most accurate

*Texting is a brilliant
way to miscommunicate
how you feel, and
misinterpret what other
people mean.*



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The above example of getting a text message with the words “k” or “fine” can have so many interpretations. We seemingly become a detective trying to investigate and determine what the most likely interpretation may be. How can we know? Here are a few tips:

1. Notice that there are different interpretations in the situation.

Noticing and being self-aware can benefit our lives greatly by just recognizing that maybe we do not have the right interpretation or there could be another way of seeing something - this saves us time, energy, and frustration.

2. Get the thoughts out of your head.

Write down the thoughts that come to your mind when you run into a situation that makes you worried/angry/sad/ etc. Once we write them down, we begin seeing things down more clearly.

3. Introduce other thoughts that may apply to the situation.

If I got a text saying “ok”. I may be thinking “They are mad at me”. But what could another thought be? Perhaps “Maybe they are actually ok.”

4. Evaluate how that new thought makes you feel and how it would change your actions

If the thought was “Maybe they are ok” then perhaps we would feel “normal” (whatever that means), and maybe we would simply go about our day.

Our thoughts truly impact how we feel, and sometimes our thoughts may not always be as true as we think they are. So next time you notice yourself getting anxious, upset, sad, etc - take time to write down the thoughts and ask yourself if there is another interpretation to the situation - you may just notice it changes your entire day by feeling better.