

My New Year's resolution: quit thinking

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(<http://>)

Techwit

If you are still looking for New Years resolutions for yourself, check the Web. There's plenty of them out there, and a lot of them make good sense, like:

- I vow never to wear metal pants in an electric storm.
- I promise to always focus on the faults of others before thinking negatively of myself.
- I hereby commit myself to doing everything in my power to bring back disco.



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And for a lot of folks, there's the perennial promise to quit drinking. But for me, in 2005 I resolve to stop thinking.

I guess what I'm doing is admitting publicly that I have a thinking problem. I take comfort in the fact that I'm not the only one. When I read the following testimonial on the Internet, I felt I'd met my spiritual brother. The writer identified himself only as Frank:

"It started out innocently enough. I began to think at parties now and then to loosen up. Inevitably though, one thought led to another, and soon I was more than just a social thinker. I began to think alone. I did it 'just to relax,' I told myself, but I knew it wasn't true."

"Thinking became more and more important to me, and finally I was thinking all the time. I began to think on the job. I knew that thinking and employment don't mix, but I couldn't stop myself. Soon I became a heavy thinker, and began to avoid friends at lunchtime so I could go off and think. I would return to the office dizzied and confused, asking, 'What exactly are we doing here?'"

Frank goes on to tell about how his attempts to hide his thinking became futile. Same for me. At parties I would duck into the bathroom for a quick think when no one was looking. But I couldn't keep up the appearance of being a nonthinker and eventually my thinking became uncontrollable. I started saying things in public like, "You know, I've been thinking about whether the whole Iraq thing makes much sense" People would smile politely and move away from me as if I'd said the F word in church. (The F word is "freedom.")

But I couldn't leave it there. I had to go and tell some folks at work that I thought we ought to have a national holiday devoted to thinking about our government's foreign policy. I suppose I'm like other problem thinkers in that I don't like to think alone. That's when a large rectangular man in a dark Armani suit and sunglasses pulled me aside and put his arm around me in mock friendly fashion. In a low, serious voice he told me that if I watched any news shows other than Fox News my family could be in danger. Then he squeezed me so hard that I could hear my bones crunch as he whispered in my ear, "And no more listening to NPR, got it?"

Finally my friends ran an intervention on me. They pretended to be taking me out for an evening of heavy thinking and good-natured fun. Instead, they led me into a basement full of friends and family members

Trending this week:

sitting somberly in a circle. Many were crying. One by one, everyone said basically the same thing:

"Please stop thinking. Can't you see what it's doing to your family?"

Like Frank, I too have entered Thinker's Anonymous. Yes, I'm a recovering thinker. I promise never to question the government on anything again, especially waging war to find nonexistent weapons of mass destruction. It's not my job to think. That's what we elect politicians for. I'm just here to vote. Besides, not thinking helps me prepare for the day when politicians either outlaw thinking altogether or monitor it so closely that it isn't worth the trouble.

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