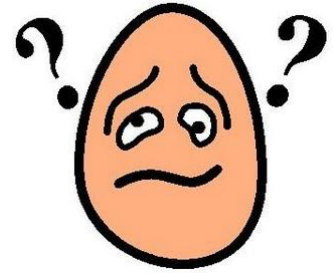


# Rumination & Worry

- **Worry**
  - Future focused – danger and our own inability to cope
  - Leads to: anxiety, stress, fear
    - What if?
    - Imagining the worst will happen
- **Rumination**
  - Past focused – loss and personal failings
  - Leads to: depression, sadness, shame
    - If only
    - Regret. I should have..., I shouldn't have...

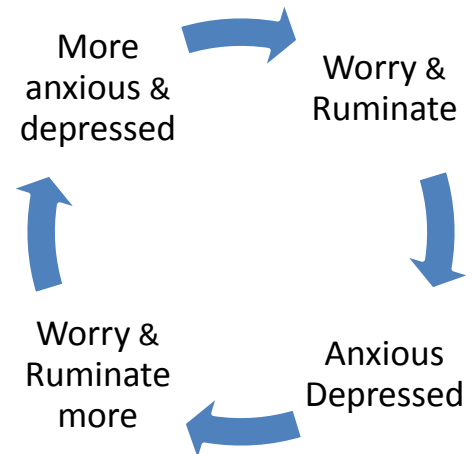


## Thinking style

- Similar to what we do in 'problem solving' – but in overdrive!
- Constantly chewing things over, regurgitating. Repeatedly thinking about the same thing. Circular thinking patterns.
- Thoughts keep returning - difficult to get out of the thinking habit.

## How does it affect us?

- In ruminating and worrying, we're trying to reduce the distress and overcome problems, but we end up increasing and prolonging our distress, and making the problem bigger.
- Interferes with clear thinking, daily activity, our ability to cope.
- Often leads to unhelpful behaviours to help us escape from our thoughts (self-harm, drinking, drugs, comfort eating etc)
- The more we ruminate or worry, the stronger the habit becomes, and the harder it is to change. The less we ruminate or worry, the weaker the habit becomes.



## What can I do?

- Notice that the mind is going down that rumination/worry route
- Tell yourself:
  - I don't have to think about that right now. It can wait until I feel stronger.
  - There's nothing I can do about my thoughts – I can't stop them, but I can choose not to focus on them.
- Do something that will take up your attention and help you feel better
  - What can I do right now, that will help me feel better, and be effective for this situation?
  - Right now, what can I do that will take me one step in the right direction?

