Declutter Your Mind

Tools to Tame Your Anxiety and Overthinking

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POLL QUESTION #1

Do you experience any of the following?

- Trouble sleeping
- Feeling nervous
- Feeling irritable
- Increased heartrate
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling helpless
- Obsessively thinking

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POLL QUESTION #2

With which of the following do you identify?

- Dwell on the past
- Second-guess decisions
- Replaying mistakes
- Fixate on situations
- Imagine the worst-case scenario
- Lose sleep because you can't turn off your thoughts
- Always questioning – Never deciding
ANXIETY, WHAT IS?
OCCASIONAL ANXIETY

- Emotion
- Feeling of...
  - Fear
  - Worry
  - Stress

Image by: The Center for Treatment of Anxiety and Mood Disorders
ANXIETY DISORDER

• A condition in which anxiety does not go away

• Gets worse over time

• Interferes with daily activities

• Difficult to control

• Last a long time
WHAT IS OVERTHINKING?

Rumination (n.)

— "obsessional thinking involving excessive, repetitive thoughts or themes that interfere with other forms of mental activity."

- American Psychological Association Dictionary
OVERTHINKING vs PROBLEM-SOLVING

Problēm-Solving

Overthinking
ANXIETY & OVERTHINKING: ARE THEY RELATED?

Everyone overthinks at times.

Overthinking can be linked to anxiety and/or depression.

Some people overthink AND have anxiety,

Not everyone who overthinks has anxiety.
SIGNS & SYMPTOMS
SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

• Lack of focus
• Feeling nervous
• Feeling irritable
• Restless
• Increased heartrate
• Difficulty concentrating
• Feeling helpless
• Obsessively thinking
SIGNS OF OVERTHINKING

- Dwelling on past events or situations
- Second-guessing decisions
- Replaying your mistakes
- Rehashing uncomfortable conversations
- Fixating on things you can't control, change, or improve
- Imagining the worst-case scenario
- Chasing worries out of the present into past or future
- Inability to sleep because rerunning things in your brain
- Always questioning – Never deciding

Image by Dema Biofani from Pixabay
TAME THE ANXIETY & OVERTHINKING
MAINTAIN PHYSICAL HEALTH

• Sleep

• Nutrition

• Physical Activity

• Stress and Cortisol Levels
Deep Breathing or Belly Breathing:

1. Sit comfortably and relax your shoulders
2. Put one hand on your stomach and one on your chest
3. Breathe slowly and deeply through your nose so that the hand on your stomach rises, not the one on your chest
4. Purse your lips gently, as if you were going to whistle
5. Now breathe out slowly through your pursed lips, while at the same time you gently contract your abdominal muscles.
6. Let the air flow out slowly, DO NOT Force it out.
7. It should take you twice as long to exhale as it does to inhale.
8. If you feel lightheaded, you are breathing out too fast.
5-4-3-2-1 Exercise

5 – Things you can see
4 – Things you can physically feel
3 – Things you can hear
2 – Things you can smell
1 – Thing you can taste
OTHER TOOLS FOR ANXIETY

• Write down thoughts and feelings

• Forgive someone

• Listen to calming music

Image by Experience Life by Life Time

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CATCH YOURSELF OVERTHINKING

- Overthinking is a habit – it has become mental muscle memory
- Work to pay attention to your thoughts – it will take time
- When you are aware that you are overthinking, you can put one of the tools into practice.

Image by Gordon Johnson from Pixabay
SUPPORT SYSTEM CHECKUP

• PEOPLE you trust
• PLACES you feel safe or free
• THINGS you find comfort in
• BELIEFS that ground and give you meaning
• ACTIVITIES that calm or reenergize you
Question your negative thoughts

• What proof do you have that the thought is true?

• What proof do you have that the thought isn't true?
REWRITE THE SCRIPT

• How would you respond to a friend?
• Consider all the proof
• Remember your successes
• Find a more balanced thought

ORIGINAL THOUGHT:
"I'm going to mess this up!"

IMPROVED THOUGHT:
"I've done this before, and it worked out."

PRACTICE & BE PREPARED!

"I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggone it, people like me."
OVERTHINKING BREAK

- Validate your feelings
- Make it a specific time
- Put it on your calendar
- Limit it to 20-30 minutes
- Set a timer
- Think about whatever you want during this time
- Move on when time is up
- Interrupt the overthinking by refocusing
PROFESSIONAL HELP
PROFESSIONAL HELP

When should you seek professional help?

• Symptoms are chronic
• Interferes with daily activities
• Personal and professional relationships suffer
• Sleep issue – too much or too little
• Stop doing things you enjoy
• Feeling worthless or self-loathing
• Isolate yourself from others
• Decline in physical health
• Suicidal thoughts

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Through your employer for benefit-eligible employees and their family members.

The EAP provides:
• Information
• Short-term counseling
• Advice
• Referrals from licensed professionals.

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS OF KANSAS

[Map of Kansas showing locations of mental health centers]
IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Call or text 988

Crisis Text Line
Text a trained crisis counselor, 24/7.
Always CONFIDENTIAL.
Always FREE.

Need Help Now?
TEXT “START” TO 741-741

Crisis Text Line has processed over 20 million texts to date!

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QUESTIONS?

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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!