My Overthinking Map

Catch the loop, name what kind it is, and check whether it is helping.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 What I keep thinking about

In a few words, the topic my mind keeps going back to

The topic:

Roughly how long today: _____ minutes

How stirred up do I feel (0 to 10)? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Which kind of overthinking is it?

Tick one or more. Most loops are a mix.

☐ **Replaying the past**

"Why did I say that?"
"What is wrong with me?"
(rumination)

Mine:

☐ **What ifs about the future**

"What if it goes wrong?"
"What if they are upset?"
(worry)

Mine:

☐ **Stuck on a decision**

"Which one is best?"
"What if I pick wrong?"
(analysis paralysis)

Mine:

3 Is it helping?

Answer honestly about the last 20 minutes of thinking

	Yes	No
Have I had a new idea or made a decision?	☐	☐
Is any part of this something I can act on today?	☐	☐
Am I asking "how" rather than "why" or "what if"?	☐	☐
Has my mood got better rather than worse?	☐	☐
Would a fair friend say I am solving, not spinning?	☐	☐

Mostly no? It is a loop, not problem solving. Go to page 2.

4 Signs I am spinning

Tick any that fit. These are habits of thinking, not facts about you.

- ☐ Same question, no new answer
- ☐ Researching long past the point it helps
- ☐ Putting off a choice again
- ☐ Replaying a conversation word for word
- ☐ Checking or asking for reassurance
- ☐ Lying awake going over it
- ☐ Comparing every option over and over
- ☐ Other:

5 What overthinking costs me

Time, sleep, mood, people, chances I let pass

- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Time
- ☐ Mood
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Work or study
- ☐ Decisions put off

The biggest cost this week:

What I would rather spend that time and energy on:

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My Overthinking Plan

Turn the loop into one step, make the call, or park it for later.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 From "why" and "what if" to "how"

Rewrite the loop as a concrete question, then pick one small step

The loop question: _____

The how question: _____

One step in 24 hours: _____

When and where: _____

2 If I am stuck on a decision

Good enough beats perfect. Set the bar, then set a deadline.

The decision: _____

Good enough means: _____

Option	Clears my good enough bar?	Main downside
	☐	
	☐	
	☐	

Info I truly still need: _____

I will decide by: _____ **My choice:** _____

3 Park it and switch

If there is nothing to do right now, give it a time and move my attention

My thinking time (15 min): _____

Where: _____

If it comes back early, I will: _____

Absorbing thing to switch to: _____

4 My weekly overthinking log

Write the loop, what I did instead and whether it helped

Date	What I overthought	Minutes	What I did instead	Helped? 0 to 10

Good to know

1. Not a test or a diagnosis, and not a published questionnaire. It gives no score.
2. Some thinking ahead is useful. The aim is to notice when it stops leading anywhere.
3. If it fills most days, ruins sleep or comes with low mood, talk to a doctor or therapist.

In the US: call or text 988 in a crisis. In immediate danger, call 911.

Someone I can talk it through with: _____

I will review this plan on: _____

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