



How to Stop Overthinking: Questions to Get It Out of Your Head

How to use these questions

When a thought starts circling, pick one question from the first two groups and write the answer instead of thinking it. Give it five minutes, then stop, even if it does not feel finished. At night, keep a notebook by the bed and use the night questions to empty your head onto paper. You are not looking for a perfect answer, just a way to stop carrying the loop around.

Catch the loop

1 What are you overthinking right now, in one sentence?

2 How many times have you gone over it today?

3 What new information did the last round of thinking give you?

4 What usually starts the loop: a message, a silence, a look, a quiet moment?

5 What is the question your mind keeps trying to answer?

6 Is this something you can solve, or something you can only wait for?

Test the thoughts

7 What story are you telling about what happened, and what are the bare facts?

8 What are three other explanations for what that person said or did?



9 What are you assuming someone else is thinking about you?

10 Which worry from last month came true, and which did not?

11 Will this matter in a week? In a year?

12 What would you need to know to stop thinking about it, and can you actually find that out?

Decide or drop it

13 If you had to decide in the next ten minutes, what would you choose?

14 Honestly, what is the cost of choosing "wrong" here?

15 What is one action you can take today that would close this loop a little?

16 What part of this is outside your control, and can you write it down and leave it there?

17 What are you hoping more thinking will protect you from?

18 Who could you ask, so you can stop asking yourself?

At night

19 What is on your mind as you lie down tonight, written as a list?

20 Which item on that list can wait until a set time tomorrow?

21 What would you tell yourself if you woke at 3am with this thought?

22 What went fine today that your mind skipped over?

23 What is one thing you can let stay unfinished tonight?

24 What will you do first thing tomorrow about the thing keeping you up?

The pattern underneath

25 Where do you overthink most: work, relationships, health or money?

26 When did you start thinking this much before acting?

27 What does overthinking feel like it is doing for you?

28 What do you do instead of overthinking on your calmer days?

29 What would you do with the time if you thought about this half as much?

30 Which loop would you most like to be free of by next month?
