

Challenging Catastrophic Thinking Worksheet

Believing the worst will always happen, and magnifying its likely impact out of proportion, can be hugely damaging to an individual's mental well-being.

By working through the event with a client and completing the below worksheet, it is possible to gain insight into the fear and provide reassurance that the worst outcome is not inevitable.

Explain catastrophic thinking to the client and complete the following boxes to capture their thinking:

What event are you worried about?

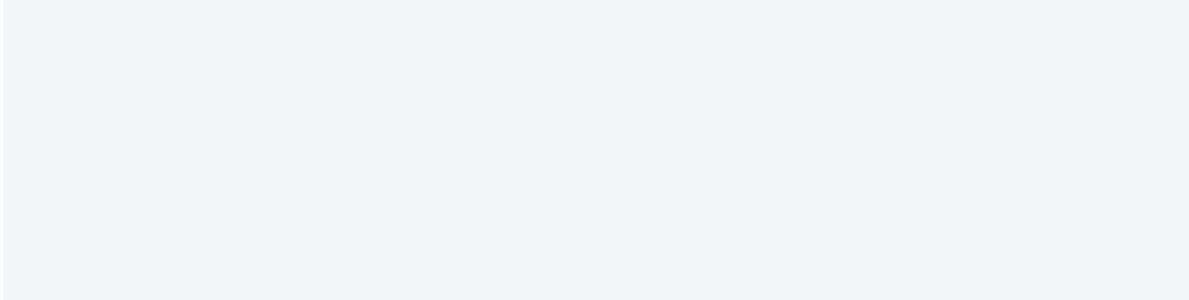
- Name the event
- What are you worried will happen?
- Rate how awful this will be 1-10 (10 being unbearable)

What is the likelihood that this will happen?

- Has something similar happened in the past?
- Does this happen frequently?
- If not, what are you basing this on?

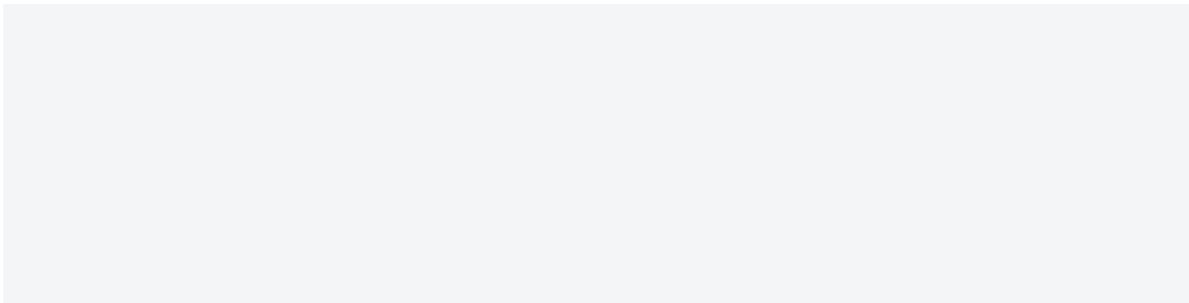
Understand the scenarios

- What is the best-case scenario? And why?
- What is the worst-case scenario? And why?



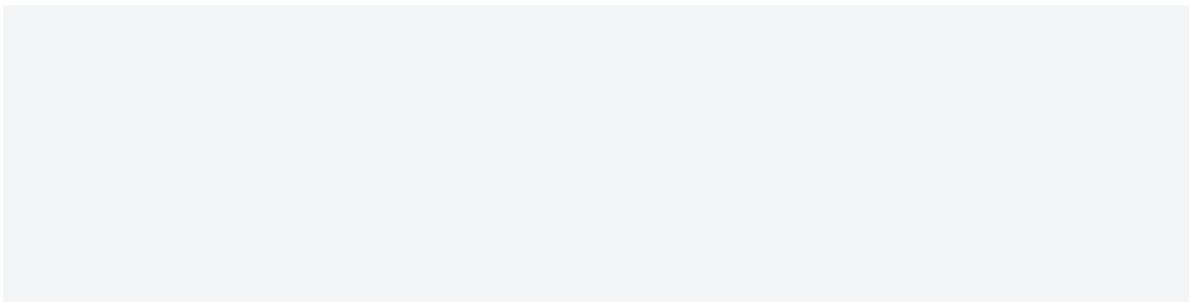
If the worst happens, what will you do?

- If it happened before, how did you cope?
- Who or what could help you?
- What could you do in advance to prepare you?
- What skills do you already have that can help you through it?



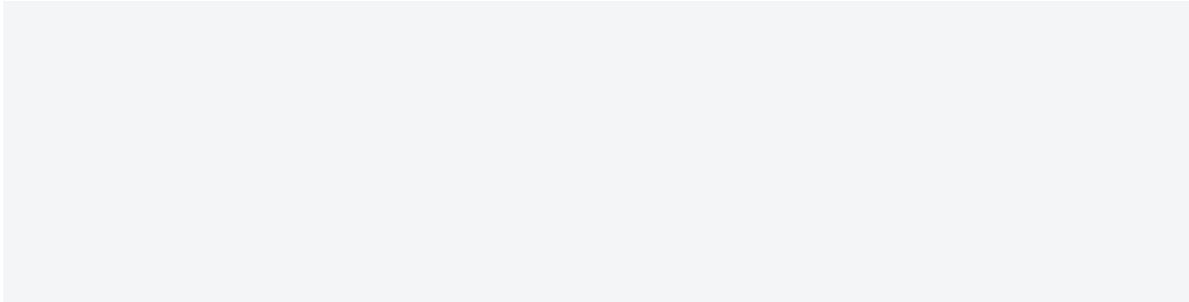
What would you say to a friend if they were in this situation?

- How might you reassure someone in a similar situation?
- Do you know of anyone who has faced anything similar?



How do you now feel about the event?

- What are your thoughts having reviewed the risk and your ability to cope?



Discuss each question and answer while guiding the client towards understanding that their negative thinking may be out of proportion, and if the worst happens, they have all the skills needed to cope.

Dr. Jeremy Sutton