

Decatastrophizing Worksheet

Use this Decatastrophizing Worksheet to help cognitively restructure when you feel that you are becoming overwhelmed by catastrophic thinking.

'Decatastrophizing' is about exploring the reality and facts of a situation rather than letting yourself be carried away by thoughts of "What If...?"

This worksheet has 5 boxes to fill out:

- Begin at the top, where you will find a space to clearly identify the catastrophe that is bothering you. State exactly what is on your mind, before rating precisely how distressing the hypothetical scenario would be on a scale of 0% (not so bad) to 100% (absolutely awful).
- The second box asks you to consider the likelihood of the catastrophe taking place. To make this judgment as rational as possible, objectively consider whether the dreaded scenario has ever occurred before and, if so, how frequently it does tend to occur in real life.
- The next question asks you to assess how terrible things would be if your catastrophe really occurred. Imagining that it has taken place, you are invited to consider the best- and worst-case scenarios. Then, you will step outside your own thought processes for a minute and imagine what a friend might say to you regarding your concerns.
- With these considerations in mind, move on to the fourth box, where you can note down what you would do if the catastrophe occurred. Use your past experiences of similar events and consider what resources you could draw on to deal with the consequences. *What social support system can you draw on? What strategies, techniques, or approaches have worked for you in the past?*
- The last part is a space for you to create a narrative about this catastrophe using all the information you've filled in. *What would you want to hear in order to feel better? What would put your mind at rest, and how would it sound? Write this down, then reassess how terrible the catastrophe would be with fresh eyes.*

1. What 'catastrophe' is bothering you?

*Specify what you imagine will occur, avoiding "What if?" statements.
Instead, rephrase these as precise predictions, e.g. "I won't get the job."*

Rate how terrible you believe it would be out of 100%:

2. What is the likelihood of the catastrophe occurring?

In the past, has this ever happened before?

How frequently does this occur in real life?

3. How terrible would it be if your catastrophe really occurred?

What would the worst possible outcomes look like?

What would the best possible outcomes look like?

How would a friend talk to you about your concern?

4. If the worst possible scenario occurred, how would you cope?

What have you done in similar past situations?

What techniques, strategies, or people could you turn to?

5. What is the most reassuring or positive thing you would like to hear?

What kind of thing would you like to hear to feel better?



What would put your mind at rest, and how would it sound?

Rate how terrible you believe it would be out of 100%: