

RUMINATING THOUGHTS WORKSHEET



Dealing with chronic rumination can be challenging, but with the right tools, you can ease the dysregulation of your nervous system and regain control over your thought patterns.

Obsessive rumination often involves repetitive and distressing thoughts about past events or future worries, which can take a toll on your mental well-being.

This worksheet is designed to provide you with 10 engaging exercises that will help you identify and break patterns of chronic rumination. By practicing these techniques, you'll gradually learn to redirect your focus, promote mindfulness, and cultivate a more positive thought process.

Exercise 1: Journaling Your Thoughts

- Find a quiet and comfortable space to sit down with a notebook and pen.
- Set a timer for 10-15 minutes.
- Write down any thoughts that come to mind without judgment. Let your thoughts flow freely onto the paper.
- After the timer goes off, review what you've written. Identify any recurring thought patterns or themes.

Exercise 2: Thought Awareness

- Throughout the day, pause for a moment whenever you notice yourself ruminating.
- Mentally label the thought as either a past event or a future worry.
- Redirect your focus to the present moment by taking a deep breath and observing your surroundings.

Exercise 3: Gratitude Practice

- At the beginning or end of each day, list three things you're grateful for.
- This exercise helps shift your focus from negative rumination to positive aspects of your life.

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Exercise 4: Mindful Breathing

- Find a quiet space to sit or lie down.
- Close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose, counting to four. Hold for a count of four, then exhale for a count of six.
- Focus your attention on the sensation of your breath entering and leaving your body.

Exercise 5: Engaging the Senses

- When you catch yourself ruminating, engage your senses by noticing five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.

Exercise 6: Thought Replacement

- Identify a common negative thought that you often ruminate on.
- Write down a positive and realistic replacement thought. For example: replace 'I'm so annoyed I didn't complete that project today', with 'I really did my best today with that project. I'll finish it tomorrow'.
- Whenever the negative thought arises, consciously replace it with the positive one.

Exercise 7: Creative Outlet

- Engage in a creative activity you enjoy, such as drawing, painting, writing, or playing a musical instrument. Make it a consistent habit.
- Focusing on a creative task can divert your mind from ruminative thoughts.

Exercise 8: Breathing Visualization

- Close your eyes and imagine each inhale bringing in calm and positive energy.
- As you exhale, visualize releasing tension and negative thoughts from your body.

Exercise 9: Time-Bound Rumination

- Set aside a specific time (e.g., 10 minutes) each day for ruminative thinking.
- When negative thoughts arise outside of this time, remind yourself that you have a designated time to address them.

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Exercise 10: Future Planning

- Write down your goals and aspirations.
- Break them down into small, actionable steps.
- Focusing on achievable goals can help shift your thoughts away from rumination.

Notes

Use this space to note down any recurring thought patterns.

Remember, breaking the cycle of chronic rumination takes time and practice. Be patient with yourself, celebrate your progress along the way, and feel free to tailor these exercises to your preferences and needs.

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