

BODHI LIFE BALANCE
Mental Health Workbooks

Stop Overthinking Workbook

A practical guide for stepping out of mental loops and returning to the next right action.

Part One: Learn the method
Part Two: Write-through worksheets

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Part One: A Simple Explanation

The Stop Overthinking Workbook is designed to help you notice mental loops, calm your body, separate facts from fear, and take one grounded step forward. The goal is not to force your mind to be blank. The goal is to stop wrestling with every thought as if every thought deserves a full trial.

Important safety note

This workbook is for education and skill practice. It is not a substitute for emergency care, therapy, or medical advice. If you may hurt yourself or someone else, call 911, call or text 988, or go to the nearest emergency room.

What Overthinking Usually Looks Like

Overthinking is not just thinking too much. It is thinking in circles without reaching a useful action. It often feels responsible, but it can quietly turn into mental exhaustion.

☐ Replaying a conversation again and again.

☐ Imagining the worst possible outcome.

☐ Trying to solve a problem before you have enough information.

☐ Needing certainty before taking even a small step.

☐ Reading into small details and treating them like proof.

☐ Feeling stuck between too many choices.

The Key Idea

Overthinking is usually an attempt to feel safe. Your brain is trying to predict danger, prevent pain, avoid embarrassment, or control uncertainty. That means the answer is not to shame yourself for thinking. The answer is to interrupt the loop with a repeatable skill.

A helpful phrase

I do not have to solve my whole life right now. I only have to find the next grounded step.

The STOP Overthinking Method

Use this method when your thoughts are speeding up, repeating themselves, or pulling you away from the present moment.

S

See the Loop

Name what is happening. Say to yourself, I am overthinking. I am in a loop. Naming the loop gives you a little distance from it.

T

Take a Breath and Slow the Body

Overthinking is easier to interrupt when the body slows down. Take a few slow breaths, relax your jaw, drop your shoulders, and let your feet feel the floor.

O

Observe Facts, Feelings, and Stories

Separate what you know from what your mind is guessing. Feelings matter, but feelings are not the same as facts. Stories may be possible, but possible does not mean proven.

P

Proceed with One Grounded Action

Choose one small action that fits the real situation. The action does not have to fix everything. It only has to move you out of the loop and back into your life.

A Quick Example

Situation	A friend does not text back.
Loop	They are mad at me. I did something wrong. I need to figure this out now.
Facts	They have not replied yet. I do not know why.
Grounded thought	My anxiety is filling in the blanks. I can wait before reacting.
Next action	Put the phone down for 20 minutes and return to what I was doing.

Practice principle

You get better at this by practicing when the loop is small. Do not wait until the thought storm is at full strength.

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook is built for writing by hand. Print the pages or make copies of the worksheet pages. Use plain language. You do not need perfect answers. You only need honest ones.

Use It In Three Ways

- [] In the moment, when your thoughts are looping.
- [] After the moment, to learn what triggered the loop.
- [] Before a stressful event, to make a plan for staying grounded.

The Stop Overthinking Rules

These rules keep the method simple and realistic.

Rule 1

Do not argue with every thought. Notice it, label it, and return to the worksheet.

Rule 2

Do not demand certainty. Most real life decisions happen with incomplete information.

Rule 3

Do not make the next step too big. The next step should be small enough to do today.

Rule 4

Do not confuse urgency with importance. Anxiety can make everything feel immediate.

Part Two: Fillable Worksheet Section

The following pages guide you through the STOP Overthinking Method. Write your answers by hand. Use short phrases, circles, checkmarks, or simple sentences. The more practical you make the worksheet, the more useful it becomes.

Before You Begin: Your Overthinking Map

Use this page to identify your common loops. This helps you recognize patterns sooner.

My common trigger	What my mind usually does

- ☐ I replay the past.
- ☐ I assume people are upset with me.
- ☐ I avoid decisions.
- ☐ I imagine worst case outcomes.
- ☐ I predict the future.
- ☐ I search for perfect answers.
- ☐ I look for reassurance.
- ☐ I criticize myself.

The overthinking pattern I most want to work on is:

S: See the Loop

Purpose

This page helps you stop blending with the thought and start observing it.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

What situation started the loop?

What exact thought keeps repeating?

How intense is the thought right now?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

☐ This is a worry loop.

☐ This is a regret loop.

☐ This is a mind reading loop.

☐ This is a shame loop.

☐ This is a worst case loop.

☐ This is a perfection loop.

Name the loop in one simple sentence:

Example

I am stuck in a worst case loop about tomorrow. I do not have to solve it all right now.

T: Take a Breath and Slow the Body

Purpose

This page helps your nervous system settle enough for clearer thinking.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

Circle the body signs you notice.

☐ Tight chest

☐ Tense jaw

☐ Restless legs

☐ Hot face

☐ Headache

☐ Fast heart

☐ Tight shoulders

☐ Upset stomach

☐ Shallow breathing

☐ Numb or shut down

Choose one calming action and do it for one minute before writing more.

☐ Slow breathing

☐ Relax jaw and shoulders

☐ Step outside

☐ Feet on the floor

☐ Drink water

☐ Stretch hands and neck

What changed in my body after slowing down?

How intense is the thought after slowing the body?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

One sentence my body needs to hear right now:

O: Observe Facts, Feelings, and Stories

Purpose
This page helps you separate what is real from what anxiety is adding.

Date: _____ Time or situation: _____

Facts I know	Stories my mind is adding

What feeling is underneath the overthinking?

- ☐ Fear

☐ Shame

☐ Loneliness

☐ Guilt
- ☐ Sadness

☐ Anger

☐ Embarrassment

☐ Uncertainty

What would I tell a friend who was thinking this?

A more balanced thought is:

P: Proceed with One Grounded Action

Purpose

This page helps you move from mental noise into a small action you can actually take.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

Choose the action category that fits the situation.

☐ I need to wait.

☐ I need to complete one task.

☐ I need support.

☐ I need to accept uncertainty.

☐ I need to ask one clear question.

☐ I need to rest.

☐ I need to set a boundary.

☐ I need to return to my routine.

The smallest useful action I can take is:

When I will do it:

What I will do if the loop comes back:

Reminder

A grounded action is not always a dramatic action. Sometimes the grounded action is to wait, eat, sleep, shower, breathe, or stop checking your phone.

Thought Loop Breaker

Purpose

Use this page when you need a quick reset and do not have time for a long worksheet.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

My repeating thought is:

The fact I know is:

The fear my mind is adding is:

The part I cannot control is:

The part I can control is:

My next right action is:

Before using this page, my intensity was:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

After using this page, my intensity is:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

Worry Time Plan

Purpose

This page helps you stop letting worry take over the whole day.

Worry time means you give your brain a scheduled place to think about problems. When worry appears outside that time, you write it down and return to the present.

My daily worry time will be at:

It will last this many minutes:

Worries I will save for worry time:

What I will say to myself when worry shows up early:

What I will do when worry time ends:

Reality Check Questions

Purpose

Use this page when your mind is treating a possibility like a certainty.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

What evidence supports this thought?

What evidence does not support this thought?

Am I confusing a feeling with a fact?

Am I trying to get certainty that does not exist?

What is the most realistic middle ground?

What would be useful to do next?

Let It Be Unfinished

Purpose

This page helps you practice leaving a thought unresolved without chasing it all day.

Some thoughts cannot be solved right now. Some thoughts do not need to be solved at all. This page helps you practice tolerating unfinished thoughts.

The thought I am practicing leaving unfinished is:

Why my mind wants certainty:

What I can safely leave unresolved for now:

My phrase for letting it be unfinished:

☐ I can return to this later.

☐ Unfinished does not mean unsafe.

☐ I do not have to chase this thought.

☐ I can live my day while this is uncertain.

After Action Review

Purpose

Use this after an overthinking episode to learn what helped and what made it worse.

Date: _____

Time or situation: _____

What started the overthinking?

What did I do that made the loop stronger?

What helped me slow it down?

What will I try earlier next time?

At its strongest, the loop was:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

At the end, the loop was:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle one number. Low means quiet. High means intense.

One thing I did well was:

Seven Day STOP Practice Tracker

Purpose
Use this page to build the habit of catching overthinking earlier.

Day	Trigger	S: Saw loop	T: Slowed body	O: Checked facts	P: Next action
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					
Day 6					
Day 7					

At the end of seven days, I noticed:

One small improvement I will keep practicing:

My Personal Stop Overthinking Plan

Purpose

Use this page to create a short plan you can reuse when your mind starts looping.

My top warning signs are:

The thought loops I am most likely to have are:

The grounding skill that works best for me is:

The person or support I can reach out to is:

The phrase I want to remember is:

Closing reminder

You are not trying to become a person who never overthinks. You are becoming a person who can notice the loop, slow the body, check the facts, and return to life one step at a time.