



What Can I Do About This - Worksheet

Sometimes we get caught up in a thought pattern, ruminating on a subject until we feel like we might pop a screw and leak out all of our sanity. This can be incapacitating and paralyzing to a point that we give up, ignore something or avoid making a decision...which is actually making a decision in itself and will leave us at the mercy of whatever happens.

In the case of getting stuck on a ruminating thought, it can be helpful to ask a handful of questions about it in order to find out what we can do about it...if anything. Once we get unstuck, it frees up mental space to think about other things that need our attention and unbinds our energy so it can be used for our best interest.

Print this sheet out as many times as you like for each subject you are stuck on to help you navigate through it in a more productive way.

Disclaimer: This is not meant as a substitute for a medical or mental health emergency. Please dial 911 or other emergency helplines if you need immediate attention.

Alter it

1. Is there something that can be done to change the situation?
If no, skip to #4. If yes, continue to #2.

2. If you or someone you know can do something about the situation, do you want to spend the time, energy, resources or money trying to do it or trying to get someone else to do it? If no, skip to #4. If yes, continue to #3.

3. Go ahead and take the necessary steps to alter the situation. It might be helpful to break it all down into the smallest steps possible in order to feel like you can handle it more easily. List the steps out here if you wish.

Avoid it

4. If you can't or don't want to use your resources to change the situation, is it possible to just not have anything to do with it? Can you let it go without any detrimental consequences? If no, continue to #5. If yes, what can you do to remind yourself to let it go?

Accept it/Adapt to it

5. If you can't change or avoid the situation, can you learn to accept it or adapt to it? If no, skip to #7. If yes or maybe, continue to #6.

6. Write out some things you could remind yourself as you accept it, or things you can do to adapt to it. If you are still unsure, continue with the remaining questions.

Other Questions

When the above questions don't do the job, here are some more open-ended questions to ask yourself.

7. If you can't adapt to it, accept it, alter it or avoid it, is there really any point to thinking about it?

8. What are you going to solve or gain by thinking about it?

9. Is thinking about this making you happier, more peaceful, feeling freer?

10. Are you trying to figure something out?

11. Does it need to be figured out right now? If yes, skip to #13. If no, continue to #12.

12. It might be helpful to set aside a specific time/day to think about this or figure it out so that it doesn't take up all your mental/emotional energy at random times. Pick a time/day that this might work and write it down, put it in your planner or on your calendar.

13. Is it an emergency? Is there a deadline? Does yours or someone else's life or well-being depend on you figuring it out? If no, skip to #15. If yes, continue to #14.

14. Call emergency services if you need to. If it's not an emergency, who can you contact if you need help figuring something out or making a deadline? What are some steps you can take in order to figure this out or see it through?

If you still cannot stop ruminating on the subject, maybe dig a little deeper as to why you feel so hung up on it. I have another worksheet called, "Many Layers Deep" that might be helpful. On aprilannroy.com, navigate to the bottom of any page, click on Search and type in the key words to find the worksheet.

Please seek professional mental help if you feel like the ruminating/thinking/figuring is disrupting your life. Sometimes what we are dealing with in our minds is beyond the scope, resources and tools that we have available. This is completely normal. Everyone needs outside help from time to time and it's nothing to be ashamed of.