



# Overcoming Daily Anxiety

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I know I've done it, and I'm sure you have to! What's this 'it' I'm talking about? 'It's' the seemingly endless loop of thoughts, conversations, questions, and 'what-if's' that never seems to resolve. The 'it' I'm talking about is overthinking, that almost compulsive need to fixate on something, some thought or some event.

Sometimes we can recognize that we're overthinking...but there are so many times when we get caught up in this pattern and we don't see that we're doing it!

## Why do we have this strange behavior?

Believe it or not, the reason we do this is to protect ourselves!

During evolution, man developed a mind being alert on external distractors. This was essential to survival. Otherwise one will be caught by predators or killed by rivals. In our modern world threats are more psychological/emotional than physical.

Now we watch for, and anticipate, situations where we could experience embarrassment, humiliation, feeling inadequate and being socially excluded. Our mind believes the solution is to be prepared, and that means thinking of every possible situation that could come up and evaluate the risk factor associated with it.

## Is it Overthinking or Problem Solving?

Great question!

The illusion of overthinking is that we're doing something good for ourselves, that all this 'thinking' is going to lead us to solutions and somehow prevents bad things from happening. The difference between the two is that problem-solving involves thinking about a solution, whereas, habitual overthinking involves dwelling on the problem.



Overthinking is also different from self-reflection. Healthy self-reflection is about learning something about yourself or gaining a new perspective about a situation. It's purposeful.

The difference between problem-solving, self-reflection, and overthinking isn't about the amount of time you spend in deep thought. The truth to embrace is that chronic overthinking feeds anxiety, depletes energy, keeps the body in high stress and does nothing to enhance our lives.

## Recognizing the signs of Overthinking

Let's take a look at the ways overthinking shows up and where and how tapping will shift this pattern.

Overthinking comes in two forms;

Ruminating about the past, and worrying about the future.

Excessive thoughts about something that causes one anxiety, stress, fear

### It shows up as...

- repeatedly reliving embarrassing moments
- trouble sleeping because it feels like your brain won't shut off
- spending a lot of time thinking about the hidden meaning in things people say or events that happen
- reliving a failure or conflict, again and again, to see how it could have gone better

Here's the excellent news....you can change these old patterns and with just a little bit of awareness, you'll soon find that relief is right at your fingertips!

## Breaking Free From Overthinking - 3 Step Process

### Step 1 - AWARENESS

It's hard to change a habit you aren't even aware is happening, so the first step is to become aware of the signs that you are in an overthinking cycle. During the learning phase you will need to remind yourself to watch for certain signs, but with a little practice you'll quickly recognize when you're in the pattern and take the steps to break it up.

**Become Aware:** Feelings in the body,



How does it feel in your body when overthinking?

- Take a moment and bring to mind a person, or event, or situation that brings up strong feelings.
- Visualize that situation and notice how it feels.

**Where do you feel it in the body?**

**What would you call this feeling?**

**On a scale of 0-10 (with 10 being strong), what number would you give it? \_\_\_\_\_**

The first thing you may notice is a 'pull' to want to think about it, to figure it out, to relive it in order to understand it. Let's tap on that 'pull' (to customize the tapping feel free to plug in the word that fits best for you)

## **Step 2 – TAP**

Now you have the awareness, and you've got the feeling ramped up in the body, so the next perfect step is to tap!

Starting at the side of the hand:

Even though I am aware of the pull to think about this person/ this event  
I choose to accept myself and these feelings  
Even though I feel the desire to think about this – to figure it out  
I acknowledge how this feels and that I'm still okay  
Even though I feel the pull to sort this out – and feel safe  
I'm accepting myself where I am now



Now through the points:

Eye Brow: I am totally aware of this feeling in my body  
Side of Eye: Just thinking about this thing  
Under Eye: I can feel the pull to replay it over and over  
Under Nose: I should be thinking about it  
Chin: I feel the need to sort it out  
Collar Bone: It feels urgent to think about it  
Under Arm: I should be thinking about it  
Top of Head: I never realized how strong this feeling is

EB: There is a part of me  
SE: That wants to protect me  
UE: From getting hurt  
UN: From making mistakes  
CH: And it is so convinced  
CB: That by reliving this thing over and over again  
UA: That it's keeping me safe  
TH: But perhaps there is a way to do this

EB: What if I approach this with softer eyes  
SE: And give myself room to step back  
UE: To recognize that this desire to overthink about this  
UN: Is a pattern I'm willing to break right now  
CH: So I can be my most resourceful self  
CB: So I can decide where to put my attention  
UA: To decide who or what gets my attention  
TH: This is me directing my life

Take a breath. Visualize the person or event again and check your body. Measure it again. The value of recognizing how your body feels before or during an overthinking cycle means that you can disrupt the pattern with tapping.

But that's not the end! You want to replace that old pattern with something new, which takes us to step 3...

### **Step 3 – MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION**

The beauty of this process is now that you're no longer stuck in the repetitive pattern of overthinking you have the space to install new beliefs and these new beliefs will lead to new feelings and new behaviors.



Sometimes this feels like the harder step because it's something we haven't really given much thought to and probably haven't practiced it much up till now. No worries! It's easy to learn and after you've played with it a couple of times you'll have the hang of it.

Here are your two key questions to move in a new direction:

### **1. How do I want to feel?**

Example: It might be...

I want to feel peaceful

I want to feel ease

### **2. What would I have to believe to feel that way?**

Example: It might be....

I would believe that I'm always okay no matter what

I would believe it's all working out

Here are some other questions you can ask yourself that will help you to install this new belief:

- Where have you felt like that before...even if it's only a little bit?
- Where do you feel it in your body when you have this feeling?
- Put your attention on it...MAGNIFY IT...make it twice as big.
- Now SAVOR it – notice the texture of it, where and how it feels in your body. Hold your attention there for a minute or two if you can.

Be prepared to be pleasantly surprised to find that the more you do this last step, the longer you'll be able to hold it, and you'll be able to bring the feeling back up quicker!

## **Let's do it again!**

Let's go through this process again with a different awareness, this time it will be on ruminating thoughts. Rumination refers to the tendency to repetitively think about the causes, situational factors, and consequences of one's negative emotional experience



(Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). Basically, rumination means that you continuously think about the various aspects of situations that are upsetting.

### **Step 1 - Become Aware: Ruminating Thoughts**

Ruminating thoughts can come in the form of questions – which of these do you find yourself asking

1. Why am I doing this?
2. Why did I do that?
3. Why does this bother me so much?
4. How come...
5. Why don't they...
6. Why didn't they...
7. I don't get why...

**Which one of these to you recognize as one you find yourself asking?**

**How does it feel in your body when asking this question?**

**On a scale of 0-10 (with 10 being strong), what number would you give it? \_\_\_\_\_**

### **Step 2 – TAP**

Now you have the awareness, and you've got the feeling ramped up in the body so the next perfect step is to tap!

Starting at the side of the hand:

Even though I keep asking the same question over and over  
I accept myself even when I do this  
Even though this question gets stuck in my head and I can't stop  
I acknowledge this pattern – and I'm open to something new  
Even though I keep asking this question  
I'm ready and willing to do something new



Now through the points:

Eye Brow: This question keeps playing over and over in my head

Side of Eye: I can't turn it off

Under Eye: It screams to be answered

Under Nose: I'm sure once I can find the answer

Chin: I will be at peace

Collar Bone: But there is no answer

Under Arm: And it never ends

Top of Head: And I'm beginning to see a pattern

EB: I'm beginning to see that this question

SE: Keeps me in this cycle that drives me crazy

UE: There's a part of me

UN: That thinks if I can answer this question

CH: Then all will be well

CB: But what if I'm starting to see that it's the question

UA: That keeps me in this loop

TH: My awareness about this is my greatest power

EB: This is the key to moving out of this ruminating thought

SE: This is where my peace is possible

UE: What if I can allow myself to have that peace?

UN: Would I be willing to ask myself a better question?

CH: What do I want to feel right now?

CB: What if I can start to feel that way now?

UA: I love having the awareness to change these patterns

TH: How blessed am I that I can change these patterns

Take a breath.

**Ask the questions again....what do you notice?**

### **Step 3 – MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION**

Did you notice that at the end of that tapping that I inserted the questions that will move you in a new direction? Were you able to go there and try on some new ideas?



If you could, YAY! And if not, no worries! Perhaps something came up that you need to explore...that's okay, give yourself permission to tap on whatever came up and then revisit the moving forward questions. Small steps are acceptable – celebrate the progress!

Here are those two key questions again:

### **3. How do I want to feel?**

Example: It might be...

That I just let it go

Peaceful

### **4. What would I have to believe to feel that way?**

Example: It might be....

That I matter

It's all working out

Remember the steps to install the new beliefs:

- Where have I felt like that before...even if it's only a little bit?
- Where do I feel it in my body when I have this feeling?
- Put your attention on it...MAGNIFY IT...make it twice as big.
- Now SAVOR it – notice the texture of it, where and how it feels in your body. Hold your attention there for a minute or two if you can.

It's time to celebrate because you now have a three-step process that will set you free from overthinking! Imagine how much smoother and easier your life will feel now that you are living these three steps. What will you notice that's different? Will you be smiling more? Laughing more? Walking with a lift in your step? Be aware – notice it – and SAVOR all those wonderful feelings! You deserve them!





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## EASY PRINT – TAPPING SCRIPTS

### Overthinking the tapping

Side of Hand Even though I'm thinking too much right now  
I'm okay  
Even though my mind is all over the place  
That's okay  
I'm accepting myself right now, where I am  
Even though I have all these thoughts in my head  
And I can't relax  
I acknowledge how I feel

Now we're just going to speak what we're feeling.

Eyebrow This busy mind  
Side of Eye Feels the need to keep thinking about this  
Under Eye To stress about this  
Under Nose To figure it out  
Under Mouth This need to figure it out  
Collarbone To know what is going to happen  
Under arm All this stress  
Top of Head I'm ready to release this stress

EB Willing to let this stress go  
SE Willing to let it be softer  
UE Willing to trust that I am handling it  
UN That I will be okay  
UM That it's okay to feel calm  
CB That I am capable far more than I give myself credit for  
UA That I am never alone and I'm always being supported  
TH And that it's all working out



## **I'm not allowed to feel relaxed until I have solved this problem**

Side of Hand Even though my mind is busy trying to fix this problem  
And I can't rest until I figure it out  
I acknowledge the way I see this  
And I'm open to feeling softer about this  
Even though I've got all my attention on this problem - This situation  
I'm sure if I just keep thinking about it  
That I'll come up with answers  
There's a part of me that recognizes  
That this way of doing things is very stressful  
And not as productive as I had hoped  
So I'm willing to be gentle with myself  
And be open to something different  
Even though I know I'm overthinking this situation  
I don't think I can rest until I figure it out  
I am willing to accept myself right now

Eyebrow My mind is so busy thinking about this situation  
Side of Eye It's looking for an answer  
Under Eye So all this overthinking is really necessary  
Under Nose Because I need to find the answer  
Under Mouth And I shouldn't rest until I do  
Collarbone But all of this thinking  
Under arm And rehashing  
Top of Head Isn't giving me the answers I had hoped for

EB But I don't know what else to do  
SE I know I'm stressing myself out  
UE And I thought that was the best way to find answers  
UN I wonder if it's possible that all this this overthinking  
UM Is actually working against me  
CB All this stress is keeping me from getting answers  
UA What if I give myself permission  
TH For me to relax about this just a little bit



EB Releasing some of this tension about this  
SE Allowing myself the space to be softer  
UE To trust that solutions are finding their way to me in the calm  
UN When my mind is soft and open  
UM I connect to my higher self, my higher source  
CB I am never alone in this  
UA I breathe in and collect my thoughts  
TH From a calm and relaxed mind  
Take a breath.

## Replaying an old event

Side of Hand Even though I keep replaying this event in my head  
I acknowledge how I feel  
And I'm okay right now  
Even though I keep thinking about this thing that happened  
I just can't seem to move past it  
I'm choosing to accept myself right now  
Even though my mind keeps playing back the same old story  
Looking for something  
I'm ready to find some relief  
I'm open to something new

Let's just talk about those feelings as we go through the points.

Eyebrow My mind is stuck on this event  
Side of Eye It overthinks what happened  
Under Eye It replays what I said  
Under Nose What I did  
Under Mouth What I should have said  
Collarbone All of this worry  
Under arm This fear  
Top of Head This part of me that feels the need to replay it

EB To keep me safe  
SE So I don't make the same mistakes  
UE But the truth is  
UN What it really does is keep me from moving forward



UM I will make mistakes again  
CB That's okay  
UA And I will learn from those mistakes  
TH That's called experience

EB I choose to live in the present  
SE I choose to trust that I learned from the past  
UE I give myself permission to move forward  
UN Knowing that mistakes do not define me  
UM I can handle it  
CB I have got what it takes to move forward  
UA I'm allowed to be happy  
TH I'm allowed to move forward.

Take a breath

## Playing A Better 'What if' Game

Side of Hand Even though I'm afraid to take this action because I have so many what ifs  
I'm accepting myself right now  
Even though my mind feels the need to think about all the things that could  
go wrong  
What if it all falls apart?  
What if I get rejected?  
What if I'm humiliated?  
All of these what ifs  
I truly accept myself  
Even this part of me that's trying to protect me  
Even though I have this huge what if  
And all I can see is horrific effects  
Of taking this action  
Or making this decision  
I'm choosing to accept all of me now

Eyebrow I'm really scared to move forward  
Side of Eye Because there are so many things that could go wrong  
Under Eye What if I fail?  
Under Nose What if I get rejected?



Under Mouth What if it doesn't work out?  
Collarbone My mind is going crazy with all of these what ifs  
Under arm And it paralyzes me  
Top of Head These what ifs feel endless

EB I can't do it  
SE Because I don't know what will happen  
UE I can already feel it  
UN I can already see it  
UM And it's not good  
CB No way am I doing that  
UA Because I'm certain of what will happen  
TH I have evidence about what can happen

EB I'm remembering the time when that did happen  
SE The humiliation  
UE The judgment  
UN The failure  
UM I have a history that tells me  
CB That I better play it safe  
UA These old memories  
TH Just trying to keep me safe

EB But I wonder if it's possible  
SE That I could have a different outcome  
UE Because what if it was true  
UN That the past didn't equal the future?  
UM What if it was true  
CB That I am a creator?  
UA What if it was true  
TH That it is possible to create something different?

EB What if it was possible?  
SE What if I matter?  
UE What if it was easier than I thought?  
UN What if it was fun?  
UM What if it's already started to happen?  
CB What if it's all working out?  
UA What if life is on my side?



TH    What if I've got this?  
All these new what ifs

Take a big breath.