

Catastrophizing

Catastrophizing is when someone assumes that the worst will happen. Often, it involves believing that you are in a worse situation than you really are or exaggerating the difficulties you face. For example, someone might worry that they will fail an exam. From there, they might assume that failing an exam means they are a bad student and bound to never pass, get a degree, or find a job. They might conclude that this means they will never be financially stable.

It is easy to dismiss catastrophizing as over-exaggeration, but it is often not intentional or that simple. People who do it often don't realize they're doing it. They may feel they have no control over their worries, and it can even affect their health. Fortunately, effective treatments exist.

Catastrophic thinking can actually be a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you think negative thoughts, you spike your stress hormones such as cortisol, which affect your ability to think and act clearly. This means it is more likely things will go wrong.

Negative consequences include:

- never reaching goals
- constantly feeling like a failure or that you are 'stuck' in life
- wasting time and money trying to deal with so called 'emergencies'
- relationship troubles when you upset or over-rely on those around you
- low self-esteem
- cycles of low moods or even depression
- insomnia
- anxiety and anxiety disorders.

The **Decatastrophizing worksheets** includes prompts that will help you bring your thoughts into focus, and examine them for irrational thinking.

Resources:

Decatastrpohizing

Decatastrophizing worksheet

What is Catastrophizing?

<https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety/catastrophizing#causes>

How to stop catastrophizing

<https://happiful.com/how-to-stop-catastrophising/>