



The Overthinking vs. Problem-Solving

A personal reflection worksheet

STEP 1: THE THOUGHT DUMP

Before you can process your thoughts, you need to get them out of your head. Write down exactly what is causing your mind to loop right now. Don't think about it, just write it.

STEP 2: THE FILTER

Review what you just wrote and run your thoughts through the three-question filter below to identify if your brain is constructively problem-solving or spinning in place.

FILTER QUESTION	YOUR RESPONSE
1. Is this thought actively helping me solve a current, real-world problem?	☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Is there an actual, realistic solution to what I am thinking about?	☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Am I searching for answers that don't exist or trying to control something uncontrollable?	☐ Yes ☐ No

** Note: If you answered "No" to questions 1 and 2, or "Yes" to question 3, you are likely overthinking. It's time to pause and release.*

STEP 3: THE RELEASE EXERCISE

A Mindfulness Pause

1. **Pause & Breathe:** Close your eyes and take one slow, intentional deep breath.



2. **Visualize:** Imagine your overthinking thoughts written on a soft cloud floating across a clear sky, or a wave rolling across the shore.
3. **Acknowledge without Judgment:** Silently say, *"I notice this thought is here, and that is okay."*
4. **Let it Pass:** Avoid arguing with or analyzing the thought. Simply watch it gently drift out of your mind's view.

STEP 4: THE NEXT STEP

Redirect your mental energy away from what you can't control, and focus strictly on an immediate, actionable step. What is **ONE micro-step** you can take right now?

"The goal isn't to eliminate overthinking completely, but to recognize when it is happening and gently redirect your energy toward what you can control."