



Date: 2 Sep 2022 06:55

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Client: Alan Ellis

Introduction

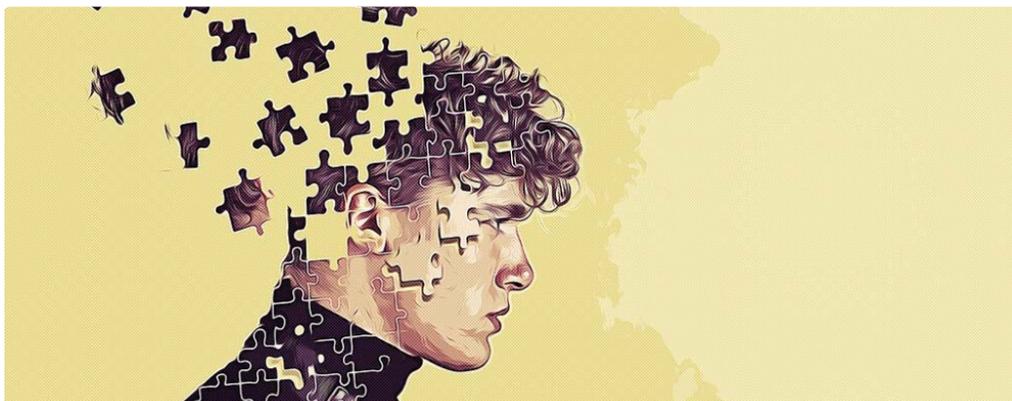
Dear Alan,

When we are struggling with anxious thoughts, it is easy to catastrophize. Catastrophizing is assuming the worst will happen. Often, it involves believing that your situation is worse than it is or exaggerating the difficulties you face.

For example, you might worry that you will fail an exam. From there, you might assume that failing an exam means you are a bad student and will never pass the class, get a degree, or find a job. You might conclude that this means you will never be financially stable.

When we catastrophize, we can behave irrationally in response to anxious thoughts. This often makes the situation unnecessarily worse for us. This exercise will help you cope with your unhelpful thoughts and de-catastrophize them.

Press “next” to start with this worksheet.



Exercise

Catastrophizing involves thinking that something will turn out in the worst possible way. What are you catastrophizing about, if anything? Describe this below:

Now please respond to these questions:

What is the worst that can happen?

What three events would have to take place for the worst to happen? Name them below.

The first event that would need to happen is:

The second event that would need to happen is:

The third event that would need to happen is:

How likely is it that *all three* of these events will take place?

Not likely at all

Very likely

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

What is a more likely outcome, given what you know about the situation?

Yes, the worst can happen, but it is not likely to escalate to the worst-case scenario. It is more likely that this will happen:

End of exercise

Thank you for your time, Alan.

Remember to not judge yourself too harshly for having catastrophizing thoughts; we all do from time to time. Just try to practice the techniques of de-catastrophizing the next time you find yourself falling into this thought pattern.

Press the “finish” button below to submit your answers.

Kind regards,
Catherine