

Understanding your thought patterns

Our minds create patterns to help us make sense of the world and stay safe. With anxiety, these thought patterns often become overprotective, making us see danger where there is not any. Understanding these patterns helps us notice when our thoughts are trying too hard to protect us

PROTECTIVE PATTERNS

- Expecting the worst
- Needing to be certain
- Mind reading others
- Overthinking everything
- Focusing only on risks
- Doubting your judgment

These patterns developed to keep you safe. Understanding where they came from helps us see when they are being overprotective.

THOUGHTS FEED ANXIETY

- Quick worries lead to more worries
- Avoiding feeds uncertainty
- Checking gives brief relief
- Relief makes you check more
- Overthinking drains energy
- Doubt grows stronger

Your brain uses these patterns because they worked once. When you notice them, you can pause and choose if they are still helpful.

COMMON TRAPS

- Trying to think your way out
- Fighting with your thoughts
- Searching for perfect answers
- Asking others to decide
- Waiting to feel ready
- Seeking constant reassurance

These responses are natural but often keep thought patterns going. Small steps forward are possible even with uncertain thoughts.

CHECK THE FACTS

F	A	C	T	S
Feelings getting in the way?	Actual evidence?	Catastrophizing?	Take others views?	Solutions possible?
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What am I feeling right now? Are my emotions making things seem worse?	What facts do I have? What is my mind adding to the story?	Am I assuming the worst? What else might happen?	How might someone else see this? What would I tell a friend?	What can I do right now? What is the next small step?