



Neutralise The 'What If's' Fact Sheet

How to Neutralise the 'What Ifs' in Life

1. Understand the 'What If' Mindset

****Definition:**** "What if" thoughts are hypothetical worries about future scenarios - often negative or unlikely.

****Common examples:****

- What if I fail?
- What if they don't like me?
- What if I lose everything?

****Impact:**** Leads to anxiety, decision paralysis, and rumination.

2. 5-Step Process to Neutralise 'What Ifs'

- Step 1: Name It

Recognise you're having a "What if" thought. Say to yourself: "This is a worry, not a fact."

- Step 2: Challenge It

Ask:

- Is this scenario likely?
- Do I have evidence it will happen?
- Have I handled similar things before?

- Step 3: Flip It

Try a "What if UP":

- What if this goes better than I expect?
- What if I grow from this experience?

- Step 4: Bring It to the Present

Use grounding tools:

- Deep breathing
- Body scan
- 5-4-3-2-1 sensory technique

Remind yourself: "Right now, I am safe."

- Step 5: Plan, Then Let Go
 - If the fear is valid, make a practical plan.
 - Then shift focus: engage in something that brings you peace or purpose.

3. Helpful Reframes

Negative "What If"	Neutral Reframe
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| What if I fail? | Then I'll learn and try again. |

| What if I'm not good enough? | I'm growing and improving every day. |

| What if everything goes wrong? | I'll deal with it step by step, like I always have. |

4. Long-Term Practices

- ****Journaling****: Write out "What if" worries and challenge them.
- ****Mindfulness & Meditation****: Train the brain to stay in the present.
- ****Affirmations****: Use statements like "I trust myself to handle whatever comes."
- ****Therapy/Coaching****: Support can help rewire chronic "what if" thinking.

5. Reminder Mantra

"The future is unknown, but I am capable."