



COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES COUNSELING



The Overthinking Check In

A place to slow the spiral and find one next step

Overthinking often tries to protect you by reviewing every detail, predicting every outcome, and searching for certainty. This check-in is not about forcing your thoughts to disappear. It is a way to notice the loop, sort what is known from what fear is adding, and decide what deserves your attention right now.

• Name the Loop

What thought or situation keeps replaying *Write it in one sentence*

How intense does this feel right now

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 less intense

more intense

• How the Loop Is Showing Up

☐ Replaying a conversation

☐ Predicting what could go wrong

☐ Second guessing a decision

☐ Trying to read someone else's mind

☐ Searching for the perfect answer

☐ Checking or asking for reassurance

☐ Avoiding a decision

☐ Feeling it in my body

☐ Other

What is this loop trying to protect me from

• Separate Facts From the Story

Facts are details you can directly observe or verify. The story includes predictions, assumptions, and feared meanings. Both may feel real, but they do not carry the same kind of evidence.

What I Know	What My Mind Is Adding

• Sort What Is in Your Control

Something I can control *My words actions boundaries effort or next step*

Something I can influence *I can contribute but I cannot control the outcome*

Something I may need to release for now

• Choose a More Balanced Response

The anxious prediction

A more balanced and honest thought *Not forced positivity just a fuller view*

What would I say to someone I care about in this situation

• Choose One Next Step

☐ Take one small action

☐ Ask one direct question

☐ Set a time to revisit this

☐ Practice grounding

☐ Write it down and pause

☐ Accept that I do not have every answer yet

My next step is

How intense does the thought feel now

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 less intense

more intense

• A Gentle Reminder

You do not need complete certainty before you move forward. Sometimes the next right step is simply the smallest honest action available to you.

This resource is for education and personal reflection. It does not provide diagnosis, treatment, medical advice, or crisis care. If you are in immediate danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. You may also call or text 988 for crisis support.

Created by Raven Thomas, MA, LPCC-S | Color Outside the Lines Counseling

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