

# Decatastrophizing

## What is the catastrophe that I am worried about?

Clearly state: What am I worried will happen? What am I predicting will happen?

Change any "what if..." statements into clear predictions about what you fear will happen

Rate how awful you believe  
this catastrophe will be  
(0-100%)

## How *likely* is this event to happen?

Has anything this bad ever happened to you before?

How often does this kind of thing happen to you?

Realistically, is this likely to happen now?

## How *awful* would it be if this did happen?

What is the worst case scenario?

What is the best case scenario?

What would a friend say to me about my worry?

## Just supposing the worst did happen, what would I do to *cope*?

Has anything similar happened before? How did I cope then?

Who or what could I call on to help me get through it?

What resources, skills, or abilities would be helpful to me if it did happen?

## What positive & reassuring thing do you want to say to yourself about the 'catastrophe' now?

What would I like to hear to reassure me?

What tone of voice would I want to hear that reassurance in?

Rate how awful you believe  
this catastrophe will be now  
(0-100%)

## Decatastrophizing

### What is the catastrophe that I am worried about?

Clearly state: What am I worried will happen? What am I predicting will happen?

Change any "what if...?" statements into clear predictions about what you fear will happen

*What if something bad happens?*

☹️ Too general

*What if my health never gets better?*

😐 "what if ...?"

*My health will never get better*

😊 Specific

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be (0-100%)

90%

### How likely is this event to happen?

Has anything this bad ever happened to you before?

How often does this kind of thing happen to you?

Realistically, is this likely to happen now?

*Unlikely - I've been ill before and got better*

*Unlikely - the doctor said most people recover fully from this condition*

### How awful would it be if this did happen?

What is the worst case scenario?

What is the best case scenario?

What would a friend say to me about my worry?

*It would be bad if it did happen - I would have to give up work, and would struggle to look after my family. My husband and I might be able to find a way to manage*

### Just supposing the worst did happen, what would I do to cope?

Has anything similar happened before? How did I cope then?

Who or what could I call on to help me get through it?

What resources, skills, or abilities would be helpful to me if it did happen?

*We coped when I was ill before. I could still do some things, and family helped us. We've got savings, and have made changes to our lifestyle before*

### What positive & reassuring thing do you want to say to yourself about the 'catastrophe' now?

What would I like to hear to reassure me?

What tone of voice would I want to hear that reassurance in?

*It's scary being ill, but what I'm afraid of is unlikely to happen. It's never happened before, and things never stay at their worst forever.*

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be now (0-100%)

30%

## Decatastrophizing

Specify the catastrophic consequence clearly

Change any “*what if... ?*” statements into concrete declarations of fact

Challenge the truth of this statement

Has anything this bad ever happened before?  
How often does this kind of thing happen?  
Is this likely to happen now?

What would a friend say if I told them this worry?  
Is this statement likely to be completely true?  
Are there any reasons to doubt this statement?

Come up with three positive alternative statements

## Decatastrophizing

Specify the catastrophic consequence clearly

*What if something bad happens?*

✗ Very general

*What if my health never gets better?*

✓ Specific

Change any "what if...?" statements into concrete declarations of fact

*My health will never get better*

Challenge the truth of this statement

Has anything this bad ever happened before?  
How often does this kind of thing happen?  
Is this likely to happen now?

What would a friend say if I told them this worry?  
Is this statement likely to be completely true?  
Are there any reasons to doubt this statement?

*My health is bad now, but I've been ill before and got better*

*The doctor said most people recover fully from this condition*

*My husband said he would help even if things stayed bad*

Come up with three positive alternative statements

*My health will probably get better*

*I'm at my worst now - even if I don't recover fully I'm likely to get better than this*

*Even while I'm ill I'm able to do some things I enjoy*