

# WHAT'S YOUR WORRY WEAK SPOT?

If you're ready to dial down the internal drama, take our test to identify the mindset keeping you on an emotional rollercoaster

**Circle the answers that most closely apply to you, then add up the symbols. Read the section, or sections, you circled most, to find your key to calmer living**

## 1 You feel most unsettled by what's going on

- In the world ..... ☐
- ♥ In the near future ..... ☐
- Around you ..... ☐
- ◆ In your head ..... ☐

## 2 You tend to get in your own way by

- Assuming it's not worth trying ..... ☐
- ♥ Setting your standards too high ..... ☐
- ◆ Procrastinating and over planning ..... ☐
- Assuming it's your fault when things are hard ..... ☐

## 3 You get a mood boost when you've made

- ♥ Changes ..... ☐
- ◆ People happy ..... ☐
- A difference ..... ☐
- Progress ..... ☐

## 4 At times you wonder whether you should

- Be more optimistic ..... ☐
- Lower your standards ..... ☐
- ◆ Give yourself a break ..... ☐
- ♥ Let things go more ..... ☐

## 5 You hope less drama will mean less

- ♥ Anxiety ..... ☐
- Uncertainty ..... ☐
- ◆ Overthinking ..... ☐
- Disruption ..... ☐

## 6 After a social event, you wonder

- ♥ Why you worried about it ..... ☐
- ◆ What everyone thought ..... ☐
- Who made the best impression ..... ☐
- Whether you really fit in ..... ☐

## 7 Dialling down the drama will help you

- ♥ Make the most of opportunities ..... ☐
- ◆ Rediscover your direction ..... ☐
- Get a better perspective ..... ☐
- Focus on what matters ..... ☐

## 8 When you make a big decision you

- ♥ Wonder if you've missed something ..... ☐
- ◆ Want everyone to approve ..... ☐
- Feel like no one can help ..... ☐
- Go into procrastination mode ..... ☐

## 9 When you're low you question your

- ◆ Choices ..... ☐
- ♥ Future ..... ☐
- Relationships ..... ☐
- Judgment ..... ☐

## 10 With less worry, it would be easier to

- Do the right thing ..... ☐
- Find the right path ..... ☐
- ♥ Make the right choices ..... ☐
- ◆ Say the right thing ..... ☐

**Turn the page to find out what thinking habit is undermining you**



# What keeps you on an emotional rollercoaster?

## IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♥

### *Catastrophising*

There's a fine line between being prepared and catastrophising, and it's easy to drift across it during times of anxiety or stress. You can also be vulnerable to getting stuck in a worst-case scenario mindset if you're a conscientious type, as catastrophising can masquerade as being mentally prepared. The downside is that catastrophising is rarely constructive and is always a drain on mental energy: you're spending precious emotional resources on something that hasn't happened and, in most cases, never will. When you mentally live in the future, you can miss what's going on in the here and now. Catastrophising can also become a habit, creating a stress response that we rely on to power us through the day, but it undermines resilience. The first step to breaking the cycle is identifying when you've lost perspective and a sure sign is suddenly feeling anxious or stressed. Try to resist the urge to get sucked into your thinking by distracting yourself — change your environment, get moving, do something engaging but relaxing. Your key to stepping off the emotional rollercoaster is to factor in moments of calm throughout the day. You might miss the drama, but you're creating the ideal conditions for more contentment, connections and creative thinking.

## IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♦

### *Ruminating*

You might be convinced you'll learn something from mentally re-running negative past events, but as rumination lowers mood, it rarely leads to useful insights or even a realistic perspective. Rumination can also churn up emotions yet the irony is it might be what you turn to for reassurance during times of uncertainty. At the heart of a ruminating habit is often concern to keep everyone happy, and worry about being liked and approved of. You might also feel stuck as it's hard to generate motivation for change when your default thinking revolves around moments that make you cringe. Over time, rumination can chip away at confidence, if after every social interaction you have a nagging sense that you've said or done the wrong thing. Breaking a rumination habit takes effort but it starts by acknowledging there is nothing new to be learned from re-hashing past events. If a moment pops into your mind, either let it go or limit your thinking to what you learned from it. Using mindfulness can help resist a ruminating cycle — rather than following your thoughts, try grounding yourself and instead tuning into the sights, sounds, smells and sensations around you. Even brief moments of paying attention to the here and now can create calm and turn down the internal drama.



IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ●

## *Personalising*

The thinking style that creates emotional drama in your life is your tendency to personalise by attributing every negative event to your personal faults and failings. There is such a thing as taking too much responsibility, and personalisation often has its roots in perfectionism, and setting different standards for yourself than for other people. Although it's good to be open to learning and to have the courage to take responsibility when you've made a mistake, underlying this tendency can be a critical mindset. Comparing yourself to others can dial up internal drama and keep you stuck on an emotional rollercoaster by instilling the message that you're not good enough or you need to change. Personalisation can also stop you tuning into what's really going on, and the true dynamics and context that are playing out. Crucially, it can also make you detached from what other people are going through. Changing your relationship with yourself is the key to making life feel less drama-filled for you — accepting that you're only human, and you're doing your best. When you let go of the need to constantly critically assess your behaviour and actions, you can connect more with the world around you, helping you keep a sense of perspective and not get emotionally hijacked when times are tough.

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ■

## *Overgeneralising*

Overgeneralisers often hyperfocus on isolated events and use them as evidence to confirm pattern or fear. But rather than soothing anxiety, overgeneralisation just feeds it, so everyday life can feel more disruptive and drama filled. An overgeneralising thinking habit can sneak up on you, often taking root when you're emotionally or physically vulnerable. Overgeneralisers often view the world through a negative lens, joining the dots between unrelated events to find patterns that confirm a sense that things never go right for them or that people let them down. Even on a seemingly trivial level, overgeneralisation can impact mood and undermine resilience so that life seems like a series of hurdles to be jumped over. It also can be undermining to relationships if one passing remark can make you question how much you have in common with someone or whether you like them. The end result is that you can end up feeling isolated and different from everyone else. As an antidote to jumping to conclusions or assuming something is true, ask yourself 'what's the evidence?' then challenge yourself to come up with at least three reasons that it might not be the case. Do it often enough and you could find that you naturally start to see events from a more rounded perspective.