



Put Your Anxiety on Trial

Anxiety, worry, overwhelm and even panic are emotional experiences that are often fueled by paralyzing thoughts. If you find yourself unable to regulate these emotions, try putting them on trial by asking yourself these questions and writing out your answers:



1. **Question 1:** What am I dealing with? Describe the situation as if you are observing yourself from a distance (e.g., "When I look at myself, I see someone who is experiencing...") and rate your anxiety from 0 (no anxiety) to 100 (incapacitating panic).
2. **Question 2:** What is the hot thought that is driving my anxiety? For example: "I am failing." or "No one likes me." or "I am going to mess it up." Now put that thought on trial...
3. **Question 3: Prosecutor**—What is the evidence that this thought is true?
4. **Question 4: Defendant**—What is the evidence that this thought is false?
5. **Question 5: Judge**—Can you come up with a more flexible thought that takes both sides into account?

After writing your answers to all five questions, how would you rate your anxiety level?



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