

# So What Then?

Imagining the worst of a situation is a survival mechanism—it's essentially our brains preparing us to handle the worst life has to throw at us. Instead of fighting your brain's ability think up the worst-case scenario, embrace it! It's much easier to handle negative thoughts when we allow ourselves to acknowledge them. Therefore, when you feel like you're spiraling, ask yourself "so what then?" 5 times to help rationalize the seemingly irrational. You can practice it here so you are ready when it happens in real life. :)



THOUGHT:

**I'm going to fail my quiz.**

SO WHAT THEN?

**I'll have to study extra hard on the final.**

SO WHAT THEN?

**I'll probably have to pull an all-nighter.**

SO WHAT THEN?

**I won't be able to stay up.**

SO WHAT THEN?

**Maybe I'll ask my friend to come to the library with me. We'll bring study snacks.**

SO WHAT THEN?

**That could be fun.**



# So What Then?

## Materials

A Friend or a Mirror (preferably a friend!)

This PDF

*\*Take as much time with it as you need! Try and see how many different solutions you can find.*

## Group Leader Instructions

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Go through the Individual Instructions first.

**LEAD THE TROOPS:** Lead the group through the steps (noting anything that helped you along the way). Then encourage them to use it whenever they feel weighed down by negative thoughts.

## Individual Instructions

1

### TAKE A STEP BACK

When you find your brain spiraling from a negative thought, take a moment to stop what you're doing and breathe (see Three Breaths & Three Wishes).

2

### ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge the negative thought. What is it? Is there a big test coming up? Is there a school dance or big game or play? Whatever it is, write it down and look at it, or say it out loud.

3

### ASK "SO WHAT THEN?"

Once you've determined the negative thought, ask yourself "So What Then?" and allow yourself to actually come up with a realistic answer. Write it down or say it out loud. Look at/hear it objectively.

4

### REPEAT X4

Repeat this process 4 more times. Doing so will help you rationalize those worst case scenario/slippery slope thoughts and regroup yourself.

**The Goal** The goal is to reach one of the following conclusions:

### I'LL BE OKAY

i.e. the likelihood of what you're thinking about occurring or standing true is extremely low

### I'LL LEARN SOMETHING

i.e. perhaps this will be hard, but there is something to learn and grow from

### I BELIEVE IN MYSELF

i.e. it seems impossible right now, but I believe in myself, my abilities, and those of the people around me