

# Shrinking Your Problems Down to Size

## What to Know

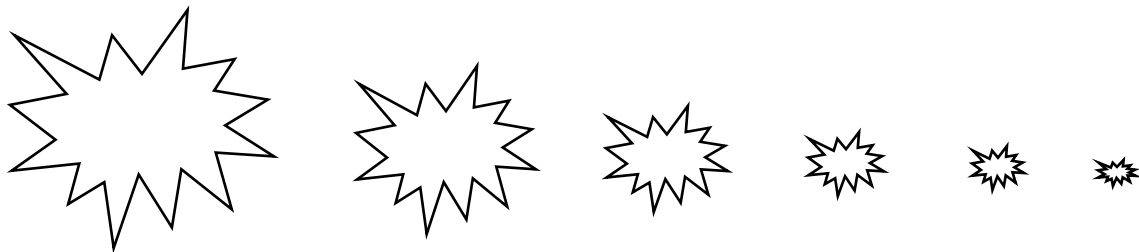
Sometimes, problems can feel overwhelming—like a giant shadow looming over you. But not every problem needs to feel so big. This doesn't mean ignoring real issues or pretending they don't exist. Instead, it's about making things more manageable, one step at a time.

It's also important to recognize when some problems are too big to handle alone—and that's okay! Asking for help is a sign of strength.

This worksheet will help you step back, look at your challenges from a new angle, and practice techniques to "shrink" your problems down to size.

## What to Do

First, circle how big your problem feels to you right now.



Write about this problem in the space below. Try to be as specific as possible.

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Use your five senses. If this problem had a smell, what would it smell like? If you touched it, how would it feel? What does it look like? What does it sound like? How does it taste?

What does it smell like? \_\_\_\_\_

Hold it in your hands. How does it feel? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how it looks. \_\_\_\_\_

Listen. What do you hear? \_\_\_\_\_

Taste it. Describe. \_\_\_\_\_

How does this problem make you feel right now? (Examples: anxious, frustrated, sad, scared)

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Not every problem deserves to feel huge. Some may only need a small solution or a change in your thoughts. Let's try to see your problem from a new perspective.

Questions you can ask to shrink the problem:

Is this problem temporary or permanent? Can this problem change over time, or is it something that will pass? Explain.

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How important will this problem feel in a week, month, or year?

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What's the worst that could happen?

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Is there something small you can do right now to make things a little better?

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Imagine your problem as a huge balloon that's making you feel pressured. Now, imagine slowly letting the air out of that balloon. Picture it getting smaller and smaller as it deflates.

What would your problem look like if it was smaller or less powerful? For example, instead of saying, "I fail at everything!" you might say, "I didn't do well on this test, but I can try to do better next time.")

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Some problems feel overwhelming because we try to solve them all at once. Let's break yours down into small, manageable steps.

**Example:**

Problem: "I'm behind on schoolwork."

Step 1: List out all assignments.

Step 2: Work on one subject for 30 minutes today.

Step 3: Ask a teacher for help with anything confusing or unclear.

Now try it with your problem:

**Problem:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

It's okay to feel like some problems are too big to manage alone. Knowing when to reach out is part of taking care of yourself. Who can you reach out to for support?

List a few trusted people you can talk to:

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If the problem feels too big to handle, remind yourself: "I don't have to do this alone."

Now, imagine a big glass jar. Inside, you place the biggest, most important things—like your health, relationships, and stuff you love. Then, add smaller things like school projects, activities, and responsibilities. Imagine pouring in tiny things, like minor inconveniences or bad days.

Ask yourself:

- Is my current problem one of the big things, or is it a small thing taking up too much space in my jar?
- What can I focus on that's more important to me?

Answer the questions below.

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Finally, circle how big your problem feels to you right now.

