

# WHAT IS WORRY?

'A DAY OF WORRY IS MORE EXHAUSTING THAN A DAY OF WORK'

## WHY PEOPLE WORRY ...

Most of us can foresee problems that might happen in our lives and spend at least some time thinking about what we could do to manage them. To the extent that this helps us to solve future problems worry is normal and useful.

Psychologists think that worry is an attempt to manage and reduce uncertainty. Some people are more sensitive to (bothered by) uncertainty and they tend to do more worrying.

## IS IT A PROBLEM?

To worry means to think about problems that might happen in a way that leaves you feeling anxious or apprehensive. Worry is experienced as a chain of thoughts and images which can progress in increasingly catastrophic and unlikely directions.

It is often experienced as uncontrollable and seems to take on a life of its own.



## TYPES OF WORRY

Real event worries are about actual problems affecting you right now and which you can act on now.

Hypothetical worries are about things that do not currently exist, but which might happen in the future.

# EXAMPLES OF WORRY

'WORRY IS LIKE PRAYING FOR SOMETHING YOU DON'T WANT TO HAPPEN'



## REAL EVENT

“My toddler is reaching for something dangerous”, “I need to call my friend or she will think I have forgotten her birthday” “I can’t find my keys”, “I can’t afford to pay this electricity bill”, “My boyfriend isn’t speaking to me”.

## HYPOTHETICAL

“What if my husband crashes the car when he drives to his parents?”, “Maybe this worrying is making me crazy” “I couldn’t stand if it my son liked playing dangerous sports when he’s older”.

Everyone worries to some degree. Worry can become a problem when it stops you from living the life you want to live, or if it leaves you feeling exhausted and demoralised.



Relationships, health, work, finances, family, school	Content	Relationships, health, work, finances family, school
Usually about more likely and relatively here-and-now events (real event worry).	Likelihood & timescale	Usually more about unlikely or remote future events (hypothetical event worry).
Worry often starts in response to a specific trigger.	Timing	Worry may be more habitual.
Feels like there is some control over the worry process.	Control	Feels like the worry is not controllable.
Spend less time worrying.	Duration	Spend more time worrying.

# MANAGING WORRY

'IF YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT,  
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT'

## CALM YOUR BODY AND MIND

Take a slow breath in through the nose, breathing into your lower belly so you feel it inflate like a balloon (for the count of 4).

Hold your breath for 1 or 2 seconds.

Exhale slowly through the mouth so that you are pushing out the air in the "balloon" and you feel your belly suck in (for the count of 5).

Make sure the exhale breath is one or two counts longer than the inhale breath as this activates a greater relaxation response.

Wait a few seconds before taking another breath.



## TOP TIPS

There are various strategies that you could utilise in managing your worries.

It is about exploring different strategies and finding one that works for you!

When you are stressed, adrenaline runs through your body. Your heart beats fast, your body tenses up and one very important effect is that your thoughts race. Racing thoughts make thinking clearly difficult and that is when you get overwhelmed and stressed.

## POSTPONEMENT

People who are bothered by worry often experience it as uncontrollable, time consuming, and believe that it is beneficial to engage in worry when it occurs.

Experimenting with postponing your worries – deliberately setting aside some time in your day to do nothing but worry – is a helpful way of exploring your relationship with worry.

# PRACTICE WORRY TIME

FOLLOW THE 3 SIMPLE STEPS BELOW FOR AT LEAST A WEEK!

## STEP 1

Preparation (Decide when your worry time will be, and for how long it will be for)

Worry time is time you set aside every day for the specific purpose of worrying.

What time of day do you think you will be in the best frame of mind to attend to your worries?

When are you unlikely to be disturbed?

If you are unsure, 15 to 30 minutes every day at 7:00pm is often a good starting point.

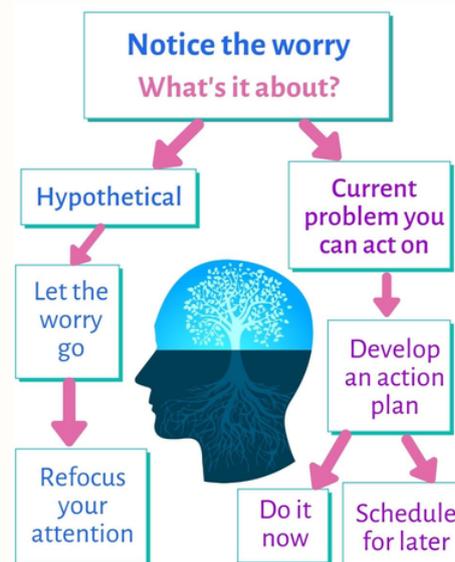


## STEP 2

During the day, decide whether worries that surface are real event worries you can act on now, or whether they are hypothetical worries that need to be postponed

## STEP 3

Use your dedicated worry time for worrying. Consider writing down any of the hypothetical worries that you remember having had throughout the day. How concerning are they to you now? Are any of them the kinds of worries that can lead you to take practical actions?



# WORRY

**'IT IS A BIT LIKE WALKING ABOUT WITH AN UMBRELLA WAITING FOR IT TO RAIN'**

At Wellbeing Services we offer a variety of self-help materials and interventions for all sorts of problems that you may be facing.



[www.wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk](http://www.wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk)



## TOP TIPS

Try to use all of your allocated worry time, even if you do not feel that you have much to worry about, or even if worries do not seem as pressing at this time

Reflect upon your worries now – do they give you the same emotional 'kick' when you think about them now as they did when you first thought of them?

Can any of your worries be converted into a practical problem to which you can look for a solution?

## REFERRING TO WELLBEING SERVICES

If you have a G.P. in the Southside of Glasgow you can refer to us for treatment. You can do this yourself by visiting our "Virtual Courses" webpage or by phoning us. We also accept written referrals from G.P.'s, CMHT's and external/internal agencies.

If your G.P. is not registered within the Southside of Glasgow don't worry as anyone can download the self-help materials. If you feel you need further support please get in touch with your G.P.