

During Worry Time

Sorting each worry, one at a time

Choose a worry from your list and ask the question below. Then follow the path it points to. When your time is up, close the page, even if the list isn't finished.

Is this about a real problem, happening now,
that I can do something about?

YES

NO · IT'S A "WHAT IF"

SOLVABLE

Take a small step

A real, current problem you have some influence over.

The problem, stated plainly...

Options I could try without judging them yet

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

The option I'll try first...

My next small step, and when...

Who or what could help?

HYPOTHETICAL

Practise letting it go

A "what if" about something that might happen, or that you can't control.

The "what if"...

The feeling underneath

fear

dread

uncertainty

guilt

sadness

helplessness

other

☐ **Name it:** "This is a what-if thought."

☐ **Allow uncertainty:** "I can't know for sure, and I can cope with not knowing."

☐ **Come back to now:** notice five things you can see, and your feet on the floor.

☐ **Turn toward what matters:** choose something absorbing to do next.

What I noticed as I let it be...

Closing worry time When the time is up, close the page and move into something that absorbs you. If a worry returns later, it can simply join tomorrow's list.

04 My worry themes

Tick the ones that visited this week

☐ health

☐ money

☐ work or study

☐ relationships

☐ family

☐ safety

☐ the future

☐ how others see me

☐ getting things wrong

☐ other

The worry that visited most often: _____

05 Looking back after a week

Bring this to your next session

How often had a worry faded by worry time?

What happened to the things I worried about?

What I'm learning about my worry...

Why this helps

Setting aside a daily worry period reduced how much people worried in early trials (Borkovec et al., 1983). A later randomised study found it also reduced anxiety and insomnia symptoms compared with a control condition (McGowan & Behar, 2013). Sorting current problems from hypothetical ones reflects cognitive-behavioural treatment for generalised anxiety (Dugas & Robichaud, 2007).

SOURCES

Borkovec, T. D., Wilkinson, L., Folensbee, R., & Lerman, C. (1983). Stimulus control applications to the treatment of worry. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 21(3), 247-251.
Dugas, M. J., & Robichaud, M. (2007). *Cognitive-behavioral treatment for generalized anxiety disorder: From science to practice*. Routledge.
McGowan, S. K., & Behar, E. (2013). A preliminary investigation of stimulus control training for worry: Effects on anxiety and insomnia. *Behavior Modification*, 37(1), 90-112.