

Worry Less, Live More: Enhancing Your Quality of Life

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

Most people believe that worry is "normal." It certainly is commonplace. Everyone seems to experience it from time to time. However, the truth is that "worry" is not a harmless pastime. Worrying can cause many problems in your life beyond the things that you are over-rehearsing in your worrying. "Stress" has been so overused that it has almost been rendered useless. Stress is a build-up of challenges that can tax our resources to the point where we don't know if we can rise to the occasion to meet the challenges.

Worry is when we think a lot about things that might go wrong in the future and feel uneasy about them. It's not just having a thought or feeling but a cycle of thoughts, feelings, and actions that keep us focused on possible problems and their outcomes. Worry manifests in several ways. Some people "ruminate," going over something repeatedly. Others anticipate adverse outcomes habitually. Whether you are rehashing old conversations or events, dwelling on your fears of the unknown, or anticipating losing something dear to you, those willing to try something different may reduce worry. With the help of practical techniques, many people can eliminate many troubling worries.

Low self-esteem and insecurities can lead to over-concern about potentially making mistakes, and perfectionism can get in the way of taking action on some issues of concern. Anticipating poor performance, the insecure person may overthink it instead of problem-solving. Inaction as a response to a problem creates more stress, anxiety, worry, and immobilization in a circular pattern. Excessive and chronic worry help create self-feeding patterns, which worsens physical, emotional, and psychological health problems and creates more stress, anxiety, worry, and inertia.

Worry involves negative thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and often ineffective problem-solving. Chronic worry can contribute to poor self-esteem, self-efficacy, performance, and a world view of expecting the negative.

Let's look at the many benefits to your well-being by reducing worry. Minimizing worry can reduce stress and anxiety, improving overall mental health. The various physical health issues associated with chronic worry are reduced or eliminated, with improved sleep, digestion, and overall physical functioning. Your productivity increases as your worry decreases, allowing you to focus more on tasks. We make better decisions when we aren't worried about something. We can make more rational and thoughtful decisions without excessive anxiety. Our relationships are less strained, with better communication and more positive interactions. Emotional resilience improves, helping us cope better with life's challenges. We can enjoy and appreciate the current moment with less excessive focus on the future. We are better able to focus and concentrate on tasks with fewer distractions. Overcoming excessive worry can increase confidence and a more positive self-perception. Reducing worry improves quality of life by fostering a more positive and balanced mindset.



The Worry Workbook
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The Worry Workbook provides general information about stress and worry. It covers the potential impact of excessive, chronic over-concern. It can assist in sorting out the nagging distress that is worthy of your time and attention from the ones to "let go of." The Worry Workbook can guide you to appropriately let go of needless worry and long-standing beliefs that might be getting in the way of your effectiveness and happiness. The Worry Workbook includes The Worry Worksheet. **Digital Download PDF**

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