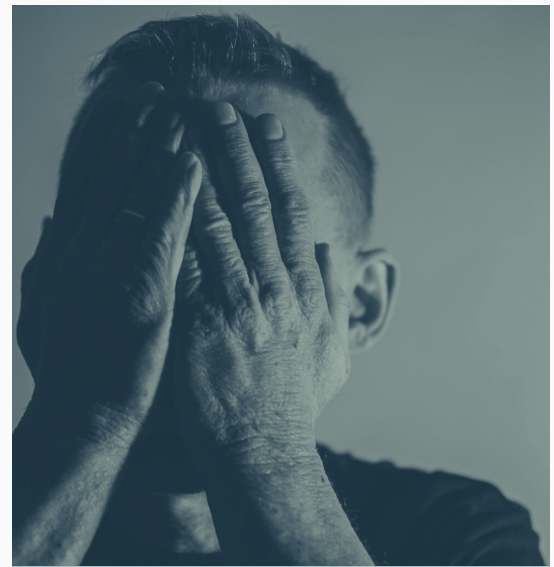


WORRY

Worry Factsheet

WHAT IS WORRY?

Worry refers to the thoughts, feelings, sensations, and actions that have a negative nature or tone to them. These are often repetitive, intrusive, pervasive and feel uncontrollable at times. Worry can lead to us feeling tense or afraid, particularly about things that have happened before, that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.



When and Why is Worry Problematic?

Everyone worries about things at one point or another, but when does worrying become problematic for us? There is no hard and fast rule here. Generally, worrying becomes problematic when it...

- Leads to marked distress
- Interferes in our everyday psychosocial functioning
- Results in social withdrawal
- Causes us to over-value certain ideas
- Causes sleep disturbances or difficulties
- Results in avoidance of situations/events/feelings/thoughts
- Results in a "racing mind"
- Leads to rumination
- Results in physical sensations e.g. heart racing, sweatiness, dizziness, nausea, headaches
- Feelings of anxiety or low mood.

Most importantly, excessive worry can result in feelings of being on edge, irritable or vulnerable. These feelings are also called anxiety.

ARE YOU FALLING INTO THESE THINKING TRAPS?

Worry can also result in seeing the world through a negative lens, leading to us engaging in thinking errors or traps. Some of the most common ones are shown here ->



<https://firefly255.wordpress.com/2016/05/19/cognitive-behavioural-therapy/>

How Can I Overcome or Deal with Excessive Worrying?

- Practice mindfulness at least once or twice a week. This includes activities like deep breathing - "4-3-8" breathing technique. As the name suggests, take a deep breath in through your nostrils for 4 seconds, hold that breath inside for 3 seconds, and slowly release that breath from your mouth over 8 seconds. Other mindfulness strategies include meditation, yoga, grounding techniques.
- Download apps: A great app to use for anxiety, sleep and guided meditation is called "Insight Timer". It's a free app!
- Subtly try to identify and challenge the content of your thoughts using the above diagram. Ask yourself: "Is this thought helping or hindering me?".
- Practice regular self-care. Do something that you enjoy and use for relaxation as a way of distressing and unwinding from the day. Not only is this form of self-care important for our mental and emotional health, but our physical self-care is equally important too! That includes things like exercising for 20-30 minutes at least 3 times a week, eating a well-balanced nutritious diet, and getting at least 6-8 hours of good quality sleep.
- Learn a new hobby or skill. Assert your mind onto different tasks that pushes you to learn something new.
- Surround yourself with friends and family for support. Regularly catch up with close friends and family as a way of getting out of your negative headspace when you notice yourself in a negative loophole.
- Journaling. Writing down thoughts and feelings is an incredibly useful way of getting things out of your mind and onto paper. It allows you to vent in an appropriate way if you're feeling frustrated or on edge, and has been found to be a helpful distressing activity!

