



Managing Worry



Worrying can take up a lot of our time.

Worrying about anything & everything is unhelpful & can cause anxiety & distress.



There are two types of worry



Worrying about "What If..." Situations

This type of worry is about things that may not happen.

We are imagining something terrible and a future where the 'worst case scenario' always happens.

Imagine you are stuck in a traffic jam on the way to an appointment. You may worry that you will be turned away if you are late, there is very little we can do about the situation.

This type of worrying can cause unnecessary anxiety and distress.

Worrying about Current Situations

These are worries where we *can* do something about the situation.

We can choose when and how to deal with the things making us worry in a helpful way, rather than just worrying and worrying.



Learning to Manage Worry

When you feel yourself worrying, if you can't do something about the things you are worrying about straight away, you could tell yourself that you will think about it later instead.

In this way you can make "worry free zones" in your day and then set aside a fixed time in your day to deal with your worries.



You can use the ideas above to create your worry free zones.

If a worry comes to mind in a "worry free zone", allow the worry to come & go.

Say to yourself: **"*This is my worry free zone*".**





Learning to Manage Worry

As well as worry free zones you can set yourself a short period of time to deal with your worries by creating a "dedicated time to worry".

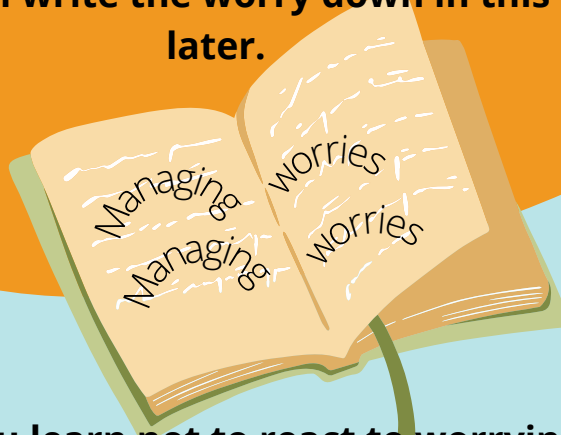
A 'dedicated time to worry'.

When you feel yourself worrying and you cannot do something to solve the situation right away or worry free zones don't help, make a fixed time in the day 'dedicated to worry'.

If a worry occurs during the day, tell yourself, 'I don't need to worry about this right now, I will deal with this worry when it is my dedicated time to worry'.

You can then let your attention turn back to what you were doing before the worry.

You can also create a 'worry book'. When the worry occurs, you can write the worry down in this book for later.



Setting these 'zones' helps you learn not to react to worrying thoughts and lets you start to manage the urge to worry.





Change your Focus of Attention

To help manage worry free zones and set dedicated times to worry, slowly changing the focus of your attention away from worry may help.

Instead of focusing on the worry, focus on what you can see, hear smell, touch & taste using the "NOW" skill .

The Now Skill

N – Notice, right NOW, focus your attention

O – Observe and notice what you are doing



W – Wise Mind – ‘where shall I focus my attention now?’



Choose an activity to focus on for one, two or five minutes.
Examples of activities to focus on:



Drinking a cup of tea – Notice taste and temperature of the tea.



Having a walk – Notice what you feel, see and the sounds you hear as you walk.



Having a shower – Notice the smells, the sound and the feeling of the water as you shower.

Whatever you chose to do, focus on it and try to be in that ‘right now’ moment. Notice and observe what you are doing, what you can see, hear, smell, taste and touch.

Whenever worries come into your mind at this time, return your focus to whatever it is you are trying to do 'right now'.

Remember to be patient with yourself during this time and rather than judging if something is good or bad, just try to describe the task to yourself.