

How Can You Rethink Your Worries?



It's not helpful to just tell yourself, "Quit worrying!" It's much better to think carefully about **whether your worries are really helping you in the ways you think they are.**

Here are some questions that you can ask yourself:

Worry Beliefs	Questions to Help You Rethink Your Beliefs
Worrying shows I am a caring person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I know caring people who don't worry as much as I do?• What else besides worrying shows that I care?
Worrying helps me to be prepared and solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I just spinning my wheels by going over my problem again and again by worrying OR am I actually doing something to solve it? (For example, asking my boss for night off rather than worrying I will miss the party because I have to work.)• Do I know people who are organized and prepared, yet they don't worry as much as I do?
Worrying motivates me.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I confusing worrying in my head with actually doing something about my problem? (For example, actually getting started on my essay.)• Am I <i>really</i> more motivated when I worry?• Does my worrying get me so anxious I actually get very little done?• Has worrying ever actually prevented me from doing the things I want or need to do? (For example, worrying so much about school that I stay home.)

How Can You Rethink Your Worries?

Worry Beliefs	Questions to Help You Rethink Your Beliefs
Worrying protects me from feeling bad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If something bad did happen would I really not be as upset?• Has anything bad ever happened in my life? Did I <i>really</i> feel more prepared to deal with it because I worried about it beforehand?• Does worrying actually make me more emotional?
Worrying prevents bad things from happening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has anything bad ever happened in my life even though I worried about it?• Is there a way that I can test out my theory, such as by worrying one day and seeing what happens, and then not worrying another day and see what happens?

Another way you can rethink the usefulness of worrying is to ask yourself **how much you've lost because of worrying**. For example:

- Has it affected my relationships? Are people sometimes annoyed with me for worrying so much? Or concerned about me?
- How much time, effort, and energy have I spent worrying? Is it worth it?
- Has it affected me physically? Am I tense all the time often tired, or do I have trouble sleeping because of my worries?



How Can You Rethink Your Worries?

If you *STILL* believe your worries can be helpful from time to time, ask yourself: "Is it possible to get the same result some other way?" For example, can I be a caring sister and not worry? Can I be organized, prepared, and motivated without worrying all the time? If you think it is possible to get the same results without the worry, then you can choose to *learn new skills to manage your worrying*.

If you are convinced your worries are not helpful (that they are not doing what you think they are and have cost you a lot in your life), then you can choose to learn new skills to take charge of your constant worrying. You will find that the **Thinking Right Tools** (also available on the website) can help you manage your worries.

When you stop worrying you free the mental and emotional energy you need to be more creative, spontaneous, and flexible. And you are definitely **a LOT** more fun to hang out with. Trust us!