As strange as it sounds, worrying can be good for you. When worries make you think ahead and solve a problem, they lead to something positive. But if you spend a lot of time imagining worst-case scenarios and telling yourself that every worry you have will become true, worries can start interfering with your daily life and affect your mental wellbeing. Fortunately, there are things you can do to break a worrying habit and adopt a more positive attitude.

**Top tip 1: Keep a worry diary**
A good way to come to terms with your worries is by starting a worry diary and logging your worries. Write down what you’re worrying about and what triggered the worry, then look at whether you can do something about it. Set aside any worries that you can’t do anything about, and try to find a way to accept them – whether that means admitting your own limitations or accepting that some things simply are uncertain.

For help with analysing and accepting your worries, download our worry diary from the Mindbuilding site.

**Top tip 2: Set aside worry time**
Another good way of dealing with your worries involves creating a worry period. Set aside ten minutes every day for worrying – during this time you’re allowed to worry about whatever’s on your mind. The rest of the day is worry-free. If a worry comes into your head during the day, make a note of it in a worry list, but put off thinking about it until your worry time.

Try to make your worry time the same time every day, but don’t choose a time just before going to bed. During that time, take a look at the worries on your worry list and reflect on them – you may find that some of your worries don’t seem as important any more.

**Top tip 3: Take the bull by the horns**
Some of your most common worries are probably about things you don’t want to do or things that make you uncomfortable. Worrying can become a way to avoid situations that make you feel uneasy. But if you force yourself to do the things that make you uncomfortable, like public speaking or meeting new people, you’ll rely less on worry as a coping strategy. You’ll often find the ‘what ifs’ that you worry about are worse than what actually happens.

Continued over page >
Top twenty biggest worries:

1. Being overweight
2. Getting old
3. Financial future
4. Overall fitness
5. Financial debts
6. Low energy levels
7. Credit card debt
8. Paying rent or mortgage
9. Job security
10. Diet
11. Keeping the house clean
12. Finding a new job
13. Sex life
14. General unhappiness
15. Wrinkles or aging appearance
16. Whether I’m still attractive
17. Physique
18. Meeting work targets or goals
19. Whether my partner still loves me
20. Finding the right partner

Source: www.onepoll.com, 2013

Top tip 4: Focus on the present moment

Worriers often feel a sense of urgency about their worries: they need to find a solution straight away or something terrible will happen. To help you break free from these types of worries, you’ll need to bring your attention back to the present moment. Taking a deep breath, and using other relaxation exercises can help to take your mind off your worries.

For help with relaxing, try our relaxation exercises on the Mindbuilding site.

Top tip 5: Talk about your worries

Talking to someone you trust – like a friend, a family member or a counsellor – can help you get to the root of your worries. Understanding what causes your worries or what they’re related to can help to ease them. If you have an employee assistance programme, call them when you need someone to talk to – they will keep your call completely confidential.

Mindbuilding

Related topics

When you’re mentally well, you’re better at making the most of life and dealing with difficult or stressful situations.

There are little things you can do to add up to big improvements in mental wellness. At Mindbuilding, you’ll find a range of tools, checklists and factsheets to help you.

- Better sleep
- Thinking positively
- Relaxing
- Accepting change
- Setting goals
- Easing your worries

Try them out for yourself at: axappphealthcare.co.uk/mindbuilding