

Managing Anxiety and Worry During Uncertain Times

Anxiety and worry - feeling uneasy or being overly focused or preoccupied about a situation or problem.

Physical Effects of Chronic Anxiety and Worry

- Constipation
- Difficulty swallowing
- Dizziness
- Diarrhea
- Dry mouth
- Feeling weak & tired
- Headaches
- Heartburn
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Irritability
- Muscle aches & pains
- Muscle tension
- Nausea
- Nervous energy
- Poor concentration
- Racing heart
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Trembling and twitching
- Suppression of the immune system
- Trouble sleeping

When Should I Consider Seeking Help?

If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms on most days:

- Worry a great deal about everyday things or things out of your control
- Have trouble controlling your constant worries
- Know you worry much more than you or others think you should
- Unable to relax
- Have a hard time concentrating
- Easily startled
- Have trouble falling or staying asleep
- Feel tired all or most of the time
- Have headaches, muscle aches, stomachaches, or unexplained pains
- Tremble or twitch
- Irritable, sweat excessively, and/or feel light-headed or out of breath

Coach Yourself Out of Worry

Step One: Analyze the Situation

“What am I worried about and why?” (First, on the back of your handout write all the things that worry you the most. Next, choose the three things you worry about the most and write them in the space below. Last, write down the reasons you are worried about these things.)

Rate and document your level of anxiety and worry about each of these issues on a scale of 1-10.
(1 = I feel mildly anxious and worried; 10 = I feel extremely anxious and worried)

Step Two: Evaluate the Accuracy of Your Thoughts

Part 1: “What evidence do I have that these things are true?” (Focus on the issue in which you feel the most worried—the one you ranked the highest. Below, write down all the evidence you have that your worries are accurate.)

Consider the following questions:

- “Am I blowing this out of proportion from the facts?”
- “Am I focusing on the negative and minimizing the positive?”
- “Am I jumping to conclusions?”
- “Am I taking this too personal?”
- “Am I putting unrealistic expectations on myself and others?”

Part 2: “If these things are true, what can I do about it?” (First, write a “how” or “what” statement for what you are worried about. Then, brainstorm and write down one or two words about the different options you have.)

Step Three: Improve upon what you can control

“What do I have control over?” (Write down specific action steps you can take over the things you can control.)

Again, rate and document your level of worry about these issues on scale of 1-10.

(1 = I feel mildly worried; 10 = I feel extremely worried)

Final Thoughts

How did your level of worry change after you developed a plan?

What is something that you learned about yourself as you completed this activity?

Supporting Others

- Educate yourself.
- Reinforce positive behavior.
- When measuring success, don’t compare.
- Help to set realistic goals.
- Ask how you can help.
- Encourage him/her to seek help if needed.

Resources

- Your Magellan Employee Assistance Program. Call your company toll-free number or log onto your website.
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America: www.adaa.org
- National Institute of Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov