

Coping with Worry

Feeling powerless or vulnerable often leads to worry. You may become focused on the anticipated negative result of an event or focus on “worst-case scenarios.”

While there is no way to predict the future or know how things may work out, there are many steps you can take to manage your reaction to worry. Try these tips:

- ▶ **Stay present.** Concentrate on what is actually within your control right now.
- ▶ **Gather information.** The unknown is a significant source of worry. Pull together as much documented, factual information as possible.
- ▶ **Make a to-do list.** Determine concrete actions that you can take to improve the situation or alleviate your worry. Methodically work through each step or task until you've done all you can.
- ▶ **Keep a journal.** Writing about your worries will help you work through them. It may also increase your sense of control or make your fears seem easier to manage.
- ▶ **Engage in physical activity.** Exercise, yoga, and performing household chores are all good ways to work off worry and tension. Actions that keep your hands busy, such as knitting or playing music, may also be helpful.



- ▶ **Talk to supportive people.** When you are feeling worried, it may be helpful to speak with someone who will listen without judgment or offer practical suggestions. Be cautious about speaking with people who have a tendency to either dismiss your worries or feed into them.
- ▶ **Focus on the positive.** This may be easier said than done when dealing with a difficult problem. However, positives may include your own resources, such as resilience, tenacity, or a network of supportive family and friends.
- ▶ **Accept that your worries may come true.** Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, things don't work out as we hope. Having a plan in place for if the worst happens may help you feel more in control.

LifeMatters offers emotional support and practical resources for managing worry and stress. Call 24/7/365.

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