

Keeping Track of your worries

It can be useful to help us to notice whether there are any patterns to what might trigger our worrying and whether there are any common themes to what we are worrying about. If we learn to see patterns and themes, we are more likely to notice them when they start to happen in the future. A worry diary can be useful to help us capture our worries down on paper, but you could also use a notebook or write your worries on your phone, whatever works best for you.

WORRY DIARY

Is it a Hypothetical (H) or a Current (C) worry?

.....

Anxiety (0 - 10)
0 = Not anxious
10 = Very anxious

.....

What is the worry?

.....

What was happening at the time?

.....

Date and Time



Types of Worries

Once we can notice our worries, we need to think about whether they are a current worry or a worry about something in the future that hasn't happened yet.

A '**Current worry**' is a worry about something that has happened that you are concerned about and that you can do something about. For example: *Harrison's mobile phone is not working and he is worried that he can't contact his parents to let them know what time to pick him up from town – or that you don't have enough time to complete your homework.*



My homework is due in but I don't have enough time to do it.

My mobile phone is broken.

A '**Hypothetical worry**' is a worry about things in the future that haven't actually happened yet, or might never happen. These worries are about things that we do not currently have control over and therefore cannot do anything about. They can usually begin with "what if" statements. For example: *Alex's mum is travelling to London and he is worried that she might have an accident on the way ("what if my mum has an accident?").*



I've fallen over, what if I've broken my leg?

What if my mum has an accident?

It is important for you to know whether your worries are current or hypothetical as there are different ways of dealing with each type of worry. The worry sorting activity on the next page can help to increase your understanding of the different types of worries.



Worry Sorting Activity

To increase your understanding of the two different types of worries, try and sort the worries below into 'Current' and 'Hypothetical' worries in the table. Once you are able to identify the current worries you can try find a solution to them using the 7 steps to problem solving!



Current worries

Hypothetical worries



I have an exam, what if I fail?



What if I get really ill?

I have been invited to a party and I don't know many people. What if no one likes me?

Danish is getting bullied at school by a group of boys in his year. He hasn't told anyone about it yet and doesn't know what to do.



Evie is unsure whether she switched off her hair straighteners and she is worried that the house might catch fire. There is a safety mechanism on her straighteners but she has never tested it out before.

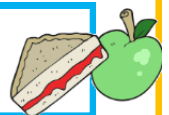


Jay is worried that no one will speak to him when he goes to his friend's party at the weekend. He thinks he will look stupid and everyone will be staring at him.



Chloe has recently struggled with her English homework. She is worried that she is going to fail her GCSEs and not be able to get onto the college course she wants.

I have forgotten my lunch



Answers: Current worries in blue boxes all other boxes are hypothetical worries.

Worry Time



Why don't you have a go at going through your worry diary/record and see if you can decide what types of worries you are having.

This will help you to notice what types of worries you are getting, whether they are 'current' or 'hypothetical' worries, and then you can start to think about what you might be able to do to manage these worries.

If your worries are **hypothetical**, then the technique to use is **Worry Time** to learn to let go of worries that you cannot do anything about. There are four steps to worry time...



Step One: Plan your time to worry

Pick a time of the day that you will let yourself worry. Make sure you won't be distracted during this time! 15-20 minutes is a good amount of time.

Step Two: Write down your worries

Keep a track of the things you are worrying about during the day by writing them down so you can think about them later.



Step Three: Distract yourself

Once you have written down your worry it is important to try not to think about it. Try to distract yourself by doing something you enjoy or something that will keep you busy.

Step Four: Your time to worry!

Now you can let yourself worry! Read your list of worries and see how you feel about them now. Are you as worried about them as you were when you wrote them down?



It is important to stop worrying when the time is over! If this is difficult then you can try to distract yourself by doing something you enjoy!



Re-focusing Your Mind

When your mind wanders to negative thoughts and worries, it is important to bring yourself back to the present. Accept that you are having bad thoughts, try to challenge them and then concentrate on other things. You can do this by distracting yourself. One way to do this is to focus on your senses ... can you name five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can feel, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste?



Other things you can try...

- ⇒ Try doing some exercise; go for a walk, go to the gym or walk your dog.
- ⇒ Try doodling or scribbling on paper.
- ⇒ Listen to music.
- ⇒ Write in a journal or write a letter.
- ⇒ Have a relaxing bath.
- ⇒ Watch your favourite movie or TV show.
- ⇒ Try cooking or baking.

Things I can do to distract myself...

Below create a list of things you can do to distract yourself and bring you back to the here and now following your allocated time to worry...



7 Steps to Problem Solving

If you notice in your worry diary that you have a lot of current worries the best technique to use might be Problem Solving. Problem Solving can help us to create a manageable action plan to start solving the worries.

There are 7 steps you can follow to find a solution to your worry...

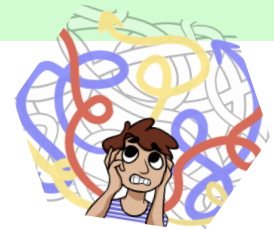
Step 1: Identify the worry you want to focus on

Choose one of the Here and Now worries that you would like to try and problem solve.



Step 2: Identify Solutions

Identify as many potential solutions as possible. At this stage nothing should be rejected, no matter how ridiculous some solutions may seem.



Step 3: Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of each solution

Make a note of the main advantages and disadvantages of each solution. This may include the possibility of being able to undertake the solution, the resources you have and how you feel about carrying it out.



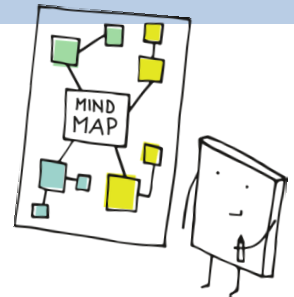
Step 4: Select a solution

Now choose one of your solutions to try out.



Step 5: Develop a plan

The solution you have chosen may require careful planning. Try to stick to the 'Four Ws' – what, where, when, with whom.



Step 6: Put your plan into action

Now that you have developed your plan, it is all about putting it into action.



Step 7: Review your plan

Maybe it worked a little or not at all. The advantage of problem solving is that other options always exist. If the plan worked then continue to use it, if not then pick another solution to try.

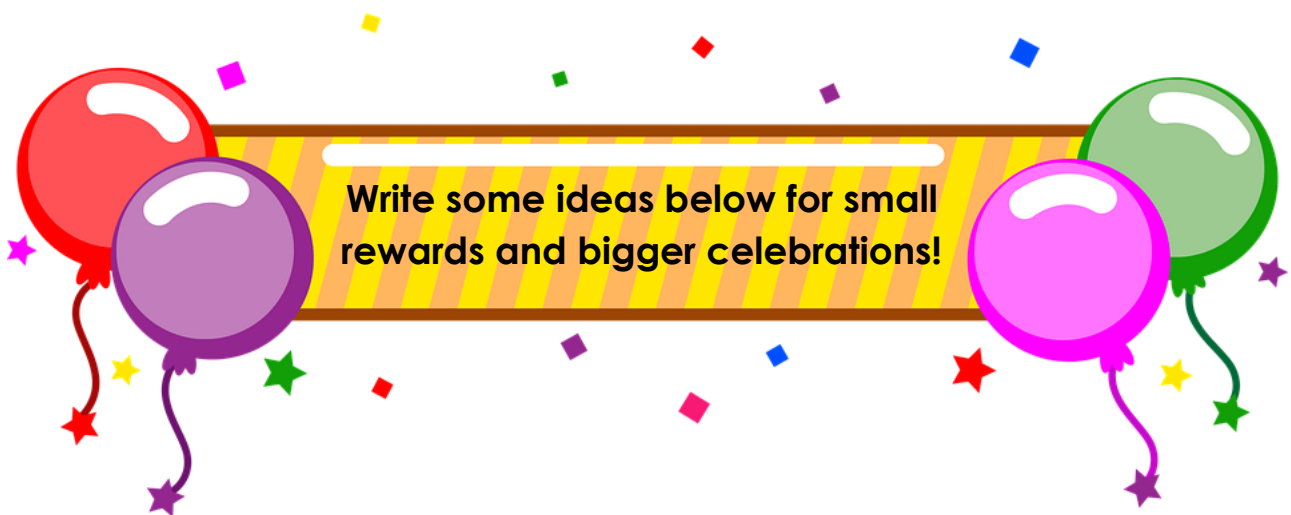


Celebrate



As you learn to manage your worries, remember to celebrate your success. Do something nice for yourself, give yourself a treat or just a proverbial pat on the back. Rewards don't have to be very big, just something that is meaningful to you!

You could plan a bigger celebration with others ready for when you have reached a goal or solves a problem such as a nice meal with friends and/or family or a day out. Why not speak to your family/carers to discuss how they could support you through the process, they may be able to help you plan a celebration!



Useful Websites & Numbers

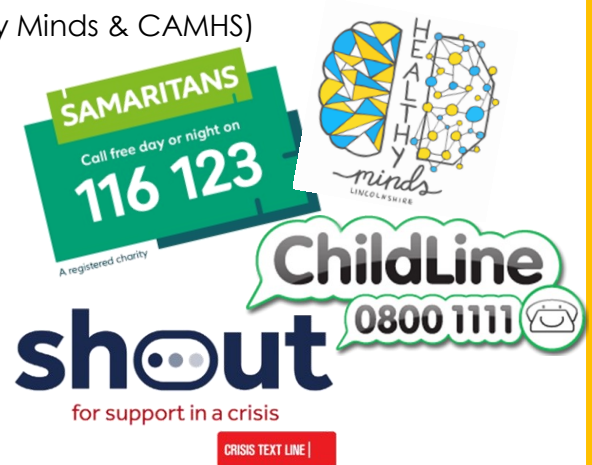
Websites:

- **Get self-help**—www.getselfhelp.co.uk
- **Young Minds**—www.youngminds.org.uk
- **KOOTH** - www.kooth.com
- **LCC Emotional Wellbeing Pathway**— www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/emotionalwellbeing
- **Mood Juice**—<http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/>

Numbers:

- **Here4You Advice Line:** 0800 234 63 42 (Healthy Minds & CAMHS)
- **ChildLine:** 0800 1111
- **Samaritans:** 116 123
- **Young Minds Crisis Messenger** (Shout);

SHOUT to 85258



Don't forget to check out our website, for lots of other useful information; such as our relaxation videos and our useful apps booklet!

<https://www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people>

