

# Stress coping strategies

## ***Deal with the things you can do something about***

Everybody worries at some time – it's natural.

And worry does have a **positive** side – making us more cautious when we need to be; it may make us prepare ourselves better, so that we're more in control of situations and have considered more possibilities.

But too much worry has a negative effect on our lives, from slight unease, through concern and anxiousness; right through to making us fear the worst and becoming ill. Worry can stop you sleeping, ruin your waking and waste your energy.

We worry because the uncertainties in our lives make it difficult to accurately predict what's going to happen next; and our minds don't rest, they occupy themselves cycling through the options. We worry about the future, we worry about the past - things that have already happened, how we could have avoided something happening.

- Worry can make you uneasy.
- A worry may sit at the back of your mind ready to pop out as soon as your mind wanders.
- A worry may make you physically sick.
- Worry can be completely debilitating.
- Worry can become a habit.

Worry is usually based on –

1. Decisions you must make or have made.
2. Things you must do or have done.
3. Not knowing enough about the thing that's worrying you.
4. Events outside your control.

So you can only really deal with the first three, events that are outside of your control you can not do anything about, so push them right to the back of your mind or dismiss them completely.

Write down the things you are worried about, with the biggest worry at the top.

Then for each worry, think about the situation and decide to:

- Do something about it now.
- Do something about it later.
- Or do nothing.

Then write down what you intend to do and when. Make sure you consider all the possible solutions. If you make an active decision to do nothing, and you've good reasons for this decision, you'll relieve this worry straightaway.

Remember we all worry. You can't usually tell that someone else is worrying about something, so no one will be able to tell you are worrying about something if you look cool calm and collected. It might help to share your worry.