Worry Time

Anxiety: Putting Worry in Its Place

Worry time is a set slot each day when you let yourself worry on purpose, so worry takes up less of the rest of your day. Psychologist Thomas Borkovec and his colleagues tested the idea in the early 1980s, and it is now a common part of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for anxiety. During the day, you notice a worry, write it down, and save it for later. Then, at worry time, you give it your full attention.

1 Set your worry time

Pick a time and place you can keep most days. Choose somewhere other than your bed, and a time at least a couple of hours before you go to sleep.

My worry time each day:

Example: 5:30 pm, after I get home from work

Where I will sit:

Example: The kitchen table

How long (15 to 30 minutes):

2 During the day: notice and save

- When you catch yourself worrying, write the worry down in a few words on the list on page 2.
- Tell yourself, *"I will think about this at worry time."*
- Bring your attention back to what you were doing. Using your senses, like noticing what you can see and hear, can help.
- If the same worry comes back, that is normal. Note it again and return to the present.

Why does this work? *Worry can show up anywhere, so over time almost any place or moment can set it off. Keeping worry to one time and place weakens those links and gives the rest of your day more room. Putting a worry off also shows you that you can choose when to deal with it. Many people find that a worry feels smaller by the time worry time comes around.*

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

© 2026 Choosing Therapy, Inc. All rights reserved.

Scan or click here to learn more about how to stop worrying:

Worry Time

Anxiety: Putting Worry in Its Place

3 My worry list

Time	The worry, in a few words	Still a worry at worry time?
10:15 am	*What if my report has mistakes and my boss notices?*	*A little*

4 At worry time

Read through your list and cross off anything that no longer bothers you. For each worry that is left, ask yourself whether there is something you can do about it.

I can act on it: my next step

I cannot act on it now: I will let it be

When your time is up, stop, even if you have not finished. Then do something that pulls your attention elsewhere, like a walk, a chat, or a chore. If worry still fills most of your day after a few weeks of practice, a therapist can help.

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

© 2026 Choosing Therapy, Inc. All rights reserved.

Scan or click here to learn more about how to stop worrying: