

Does Your Worrying Help or Hurt You?

Objective: To determine whether worrying really helps you function better in your life.

Some people who consider themselves “worriers” think that their worrying serves a purpose.

For example:

Allan, a 40-year old businessman, worried constantly about his health. His father had died from a heart attack at 45, and Allan knew that heredity played a big role in heart disease. Even though Allan lived a healthy lifestyle, with low blood pressure and low cholesterol, he constantly worried about his health. He went to see his doctor or the Urgent Care clinic every time he had an unexplained pain. Allan believed that his worrying kept him fit and healthy. However, his wife felt he was obsessed about his health and wasn't paying enough attention to his family. Allan's friends told him that he worried too much about his health, but Allan replied that he really couldn't keep himself from worrying.

Do you think that your worrying has become a problem? Use the questionnaire on the next page to help you decide whether this is something you want to change.

Thinking About Your Worries

Look at the statements below and check the ones you agree with.

- I worry most days.
- Even when my life seems fine, I find something to worry about.
- I feel that I worry excessively.
- I can't stop worrying, even when I'm trying to do something else.
- Sometimes I think my worrying is making me sick.
- My worry makes me tense and restless most of the time.
- My worry is affecting my relationships with my family and friends.
- My worrying keeps me on edge and often makes it hard to me to concentrate.
- My worrying keeps me awake at night.
- My worrying is exhausting.
- My worrying frequently makes me irritable.
- My worrying sometimes keeps me from doing activities I need to do, like going to the store.
- My worrying keeps me from doing things I want to do, like taking a vacation.
- I find myself worrying about things I know are very unlikely to happen.

If you check even one of these statements, you might consider doing something to stop worrying so much. If you have check three or more statements, you may have a diagnosis of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, a common psychological problem, but one that is highly treatable.

Answer these questions to gain some more insight into your worrying.

How motivated are you to do something about your worrying?

Do other people comment about your worrying?

Do you think that your worrying is affecting other parts of your life?

How would your life be different if you stopped worrying so much?
