

Scheduling Worry Time

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



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■ PURPOSE / EFFECTS

For many chronic worriers an endless stream of worries can consume the entire day, causing both mental and physical exhaustion. In this method, designating a daily worry time can actually help decrease the amount of time spent worrying. It can also help reduce the pull of your worries and increase your control over where you direct your attention.

■ METHOD

Summary

Set a specific time each day that you will allow yourself to worry as much as you want for a certain amount of time. Afterwards, postpone all future worrying until your next designated worry time.

Long Version

1. Choose a specific time each day to be your daily worry time.
2. It is best to pick a time that works with your schedule when you have at least 30 minutes.

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3. Throughout the day identify when you are worrying. If you notice you are worrying before your designated worry time, gently but firmly postpone your worrying and return to the task at hand.

- It can be helpful to keep a sense of humor during the practice and perhaps say to your worry something along the lines of, “Thank you for your concern but I will see you later at (certain time) today.”

4. When your worry time arrives, designate 30 minutes to dive deeply into your worries and let yourself think and worry as much as you can.

- Try to worry about one topic at a time and when you have exhausted all thoughts and concerns about it you can choose another topic.
- If you wish you can write your worries down, say them out loud, or record them.
- Try not to distract yourself from worrying. If you get bored, notice that and ask yourself if there is anything else you would like to worry about. Getting bored during worry time can loosen the grip and seriousness of your worries.

5. After your 30 minutes is done bring yourself back to the next task in your day.

- You can thank your worries for sharing and tell them that you will see them tomorrow.

6. After your worry time, if worries arise tell yourself that you have already had your worry time for the day and will see to that thought tomorrow.

- If you find yourself gripped by a particularly scary thought, you can write it down to remind yourself of it during your next worry time.

7. Try to practice every day for at least one week without skipping your worry time. This will make it easier for you to detach from worrying when it is not your worry time.

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■ HISTORY

Setting up a worry time is a practice used in cognitive behavioral therapy to treat various anxiety disorders.

■ CAUTIONS

During your worry time it is not recommended to delve into traumatic events or relive extremely stressful situations. If you find yourself becoming highly anxious, fearful, or uncomfortable please discontinue the practice.

■ NOTES

In general, and especially if you have trouble falling asleep, do not schedule your worry time right before bedtime.

Also, some people prefer to have two shorter worry times instead of one long worry time. The duration of your worry time can also be adjusted. Some prefer to only take 10-15 minutes each day for their worry time.