

# MAKE A DATE WITH WORRY

A Strategy for the Chronic  
Worrywart

# 10 STEPS TO FREEDOM

If you have fear of some pain or suffering, you should examine whether there is anything you can do about it. If you can, there is no need to worry about it; if you cannot do anything, then there is also no need to worry.

--the Dalai Lama

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## A Strategy for the Chronic Worrywart

**STEP 1:** Select a date and time to worry.

**STEP 2:** Commit to focusing on your daily tasks until the date and time arrives.

**STEP 3:** Once the date has arrived, set a timer for 10-15 minutes (more if needed).

**STEP 4:** During the allotted time, record your worries using your preferred method (journaling, voice memo, video diary).

**STEP 5:** Review the items that are concerning you and separate them into two categories:

WITHIN MY CONTROL	BEYOND MY CONTROL

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**NOTE:** If there is just one big issue occupying your thoughts, see if you can break down the issue into smaller digestible pieces. For example, maybe you are concerned that someone in your life is disappointed with one of your life choices. You might be able to break it down as follows:



WITHIN MY CONTROL	BEYOND MY CONTROL
How I Choose to Live My Life	The Reactions/Actions of Others
My Attitude Toward the Situation	The Attitudes of Others
My Attitude Toward the People Involved	
How I Respond/React to Conflict	
How I Respond to Unwanted Outcomes	

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### ♥ HEART HACK ♥

Choose to believe that you have control of your behavior, attitude, and perceptions. You are not utterly powerless. Apply this belief when you find yourself consumed with worry. So much time is wasted worrying or anticipating negative outcomes (and many of them never even materialize). Consider this, the amount of time you spend worrying is not going to impact the results. So, if worrying doesn't prevent what is meant to be from happening, why whittle away the precious minutes of your life with these potentially debilitating thoughts?

**STEP 6:** Once you have categorized your thoughts, draw a huge X across the “Beyond My Control” category. Do not waste any time worrying about this stuff anymore.

WITHIN MY CONTROL	BEYOND MY CONTROL
	The Reactions/Actions of Others
	The Attitudes of Others

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**STEP 7:** Pause for a moment and allow the “Within My Control” list to make you feel empowered. If you focus on these items, the details surrounding your circumstances will begin to feel more manageable.

**STEP 8:** Now, your remaining list has essentially become a new set of categories. Evaluate each item and identify actions that you are currently taking or will take to ensure that you are maximizing your autonomy.

How I Choose to Live My Life	My Attitude Toward the Situation	My Attitude Toward the People Involved	How I Respond/React to Conflict	How I Respond to Unwanted Outcomes
<i>What I Can Do</i>	<i>What I am already doing</i>			

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**STEP 9:** Put it into action. Review your list regularly as a reminder to yourself that you do not have to spiral out of control into a pit of despair because you have more control over your situations than you believe.

How I Choose to Live My Life	My Attitude Toward the Situation	My Attitude Toward the People Involved	How I Respond/React to Conflict	How I Respond to Unwanted Outcomes
<i>What I Can Do</i>	<i>What I am already doing</i>			

**STEP 10:** When you feel yourself inching toward the path of unproductive thought, pull out your list and review it as a reminder of what you have the ability to accomplish.

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## Additional Strategies for the Chronic Worrywart

- ♥ Meditate
- ♥ Adopt an Affirmation
  - My favorite affirmations for worry are:
    - Just because you think it, doesn't make it true.
    - Worrying does not change the outcome.
- ♥ Lose yourself in a hobby or a creative endeavor
  - Learn more about this at [www.theelatedheart.com](http://www.theelatedheart.com) (read: "Ignite Joy Through Creativity")
- ♥ Make a daily date with worry.
  - The key to making this work is committing to keeping all of your other time worry-free. There is comfort in knowing that you do not have to think about something right now because you are going to give yourself the time that you need later. During the rest of your day, you are training your brain to redirect your thoughts. Before you know it, you will rely less and less on your scheduled time because you won't need it.
- ♥ Stop being so hard on yourself.