



STUDYING SUCCESSFULLY

How do you stop worrying?

You have already been sitting in front of your study books for 30 minutes. You're staring at the pages, but your head is preoccupied by totally different things. You've fallen prey to annoying worries. "What if, and then if..." is running through your head persistently. The negative thoughts keep turning in circles through your head, without leading to a solution to something. You notice that you're not able to stop them anymore and you're even worrying about that now. This is tiring, it stops you from concentrating or makes you extremely restless. **How do you calm that storm in your head?**

Plan your worrying

Worrying can occur very subconsciously and the thoughts can run riot without you noticing it. You can suppress your worries by writing down every annoying thought or worry as a keyword on a (worry) notepad. You then park, as it were, the worries. You subsequently plan a fixed moment per day to dedicate attention to the list of worries that have you have written down. Therefore, you plan **one fixed worrying moment per day**, which lasts no more than 30 minutes. In this way, you're not busy with your worries the whole day. Plan the worrying moment daily at a fixed time and at a fixed place. Don't do this just before going to bed.

Clear your mind of worries

By writing down your worries, during your fixed worry moment for example, you will clear your mind of worries. In addition, they are less likely to lead a life of their own in your mind if they are black on white on paper. You can then look at them from a distance and ask yourself:

- *Is the thought real?*
- *Is this thought helping me?*
- *What would I advise a good friend if he would tell me this?*
- *What is the worst that could happen and how would I deal with that?*

You will subsequently transform the negative thought into a more supportive thought and you repeat that regularly.

Move

You will notice that when your body is relaxed, you are much less inclined to worry. Playing sport helps to empty your head and is, therefore, a good medicine against worrying. Above all, choose an activity that you gain pleasure from!

Focus your attention on the here and now

Worries are mostly about things from the past and things that still need to happen. You are, therefore, no longer busy with the present. Focusing your attention on the NOW is a good medicine against worrying. Focus your attention on your breathing and on how your feet are on the ground. Or try to really taste what you are eating. Meditating a few minutes per day can, for example, help to make your mind calmer.

Share your worries

Talking with someone about your worries can be a great relief. A good friend may be able to help you look at a problem from a fresh or more positive perspective. In addition, you will find out that you are really not the only one who worries.

Above all, look for people who are good at putting things into perspective

Most important points

- Plan in a fixed 'Worry moment' every day
- Clear your mind of worries
- Play sports or move to empty your mind.
- Focus on the now
- Share your worries with someone.

Questions?

If you have questions about worrying, please contact the Student Psychologists' Office: www.uva.nl/studentpsychologists

Student Services

Student Psychologists' Office - Student Careers Centre - Student Counsellors
Student Service Desk - Office of International Student Affairs

www.uva.nl/studyingsuccessfully