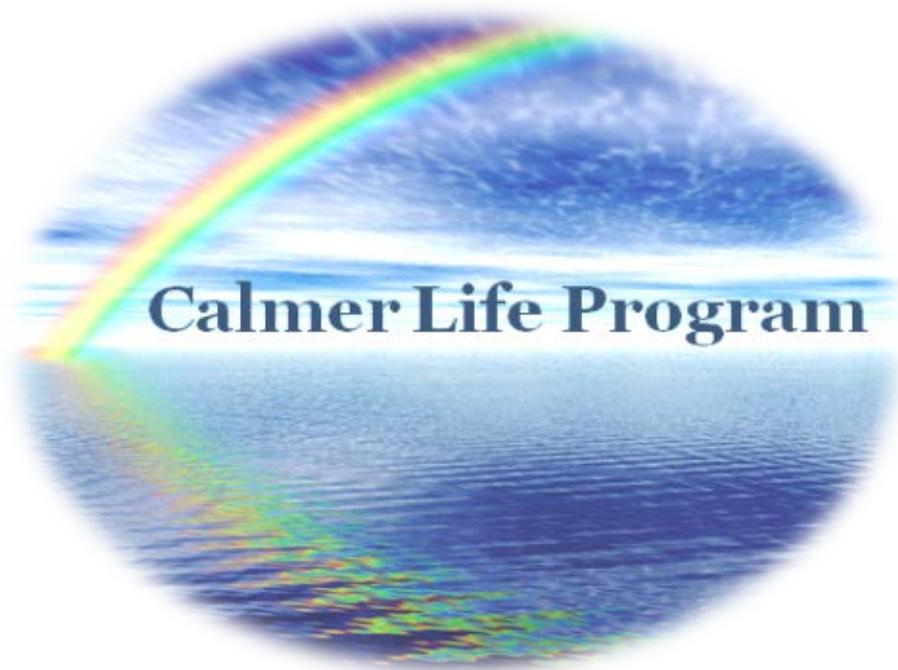


Calmer Life Program



Self-Help Workbook

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INTRODUCTION

Calmer Life Self-Help Workbook

This workbook is designed for older adults who find it hard to manage their worry/stress. It includes information from the Calmer Life program. This workbook is intended as a self-help tool to help you learn skills to manage worry/stress on your own. Below is some information about worry, as well as the skills described in this workbook, to help you decide whether it may be useful for you.

What Is Worry?

There are many different types of anxiety. For example, some people have anxiety about giving a speech in public, while others may have anxiety about flying. Worry is one type of anxiety. Individuals who worry tend to be concerned or fret about a lot of different things in their lives. For example, they may frequently have concerns that something bad might happen to themselves or others. They may worry about many different things, including finances, employment, children, health of loved ones or their own health. People who worry too much often have trouble controlling their worrying, and it can cause problems in their lives.

To help you understand what worrying too much may look like for others, here are a few examples of older adults who experience problems with worry:

Geraldo is 68 years old and has had a lot of stressful things happen to him recently. His wife left him, his mother passed away, and he has a lot of concerns about his health and finances. He has been retired for about five years and, although he can live on his savings, he constantly thinks about things that might go wrong in the future. He worries what will happen if his health gets worse, and how he will be able to afford treatment. He worries about where he will live if he can no longer afford his house payments. He finds it difficult to stop thinking about all these problems, and these thoughts often keep him up at night. Even though he is very worried about his finances, he cannot bring himself to open bills when he receives them in the mail, and they are beginning to pile up. He notices that, since he has been worrying, he often feels sick to his stomach.

Mariella is 72 years old. She has a daughter who has three children. Her daughter recently experienced a difficult divorce and is in danger of losing custody of Marielle's grandchildren due to her problems with alcohol use. Mariella often cares for her three grandchildren, whom she enjoys; but she is finding it difficult to keep up with the demands of caring for young children. She has back pain, which gets worse with frequent movement and doesn't seem to be responding to the medication she gets from the doctor. Her muscles are tense, and she feels like she can never relax. She worries that, if her back pain gets worse, she will be unable to care for the grandchildren. She worries what will happen to them, and if her daughter will ever stop

drinking. When she starts worrying about her family and her health, she finds that she is unable to stop. She notices that she is smoking and eating more junk food lately to try to get her mind off her worries.

Geraldo and Mariella both experience worry that is causing problems in their lives. Though their lives are very different, they have many similarities in their worrying. They both worry about a number of different topics or issues. Both experience physical feelings because of their worry – Geraldo feels sick to his stomach, and Mariella feels tension in her muscles. Their worrying affects not only their mood, but also their behaviors. While Geraldo tends to avoid things that he is worried about, Mariella tends to use unhealthy behaviors like smoking and eating too much.

Do you worry a lot about a lot of different things? Does your worrying cause unpleasant physical symptoms? Does it change your behavior in ways that may not be helpful? If so, you may be worrying too much.

Note: We use the terms *worry/stress* throughout this workbook. Some people may have other words to describe their worrying: anxiety, nervousness, fears, concerns...feel free to mentally substitute *worry/stress* with whatever term makes most sense to you.

Connection Between Worry and Stress

Worry and stress often go together. People tend to experience stress in response to a threat – for example, if someone experiences a stressful event, like, coming face-to-face with a wild animal, his/her body will get into a “fight or flight” mode so that he/she can fight off the animal or flee from the situation, both of which might help him or her survive. Similarly, when faced with other stressful experiences, such as not being able to pay the mortgage and facing the threat of losing one’s home, people may experience the same stress response reaction.

Individuals can also experience stress when they have worrisome thoughts. For example, just the thought of not being able to pay the mortgage can cause stress. Therefore, people experiencing a lot of stressful events in their life can experience increased worry. Due to this overlap, we use the words *worry* and *stress* together throughout this workbook.

CONSEQUENCES OF WORRY/STRESS

Too much worry/stress can not only affect mood, but also physical health. Worry/stress are linked with many negative health problems, including sleep difficulties, depression, lower quality of life, problems with thinking and memory, and increased pain. Worry/stress have also been linked to increased disability, use of medical services, and mortality. So reducing your worry/stress is also important for your physical health.

Treatment Options for Worry/Stress

Worry/stress (as well as depression) are often treated with medication. Though this workbook does not include information about using medication for reducing worry/stress, it does include information about how to talk with your doctor about worry symptoms and what you are learning in this workbook. This is an important way to learn whether additional treatment may be necessary. At the end of this introduction (pages 16 and 17), you will find a worksheet you can fill out and bring to your next doctor's visit to help guide a discussion about your worry/stress.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is another way to manage worry/stress that involves two steps: learning 1) how to better understand and recognize worry/stress, and 2) how to use coping skills to manage them. CBT is effective for reducing worry and depression, and improving quality of life, in older adults. This program is designed to help you learn coping skills on your own, though some people benefit from seeing a therapist or counselor individually. Again, your doctor can help you decide if you may need more support than this workbook can provide.

The Calmer Life Workbook

This is a self-help workbook to help you manage worry by learning coping skills. You can choose from a selection of modules, each describing different skills that may be helpful for reducing your worry/stress. The workbook includes a brief description of each coping skill and worksheets to help you practice the skills so that you can start to work the skills into your daily life.

Option to Include Religion/Spirituality

Some people find their religious/spiritual (R/S) beliefs to be a comfort that helps them manage worry/stress. Throughout this program, you can work any R/S beliefs you may have into the skills you are learning. In the first module, we describe how including R/S beliefs may be useful for some. The choice is yours, and you can choose to include, or not include, R/S in any skill. Throughout this workbook, text for incorporating optional R/S elements is presented in *italics*. If you do not want to incorporate R/S beliefs, simply skip text in *italics*.

Module Overview

This workbook includes different modules, each of which involves learning coping skills to manage your worry/stress. Most people find the first three modules, as well as the final module ("Maintaining a Calmer Life"), to be helpful, so we recommend that everyone complete these modules. All other modules are optional and may be more helpful for some people than others. Below are descriptions of each of the modules:

1. “Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress”

The first module includes an exercise designed to help you better understand your reason for wanting to reduce worry/stress, as well as information about the different symptoms of worry/stress. You will learn how to become more aware of when you have these symptoms. You will also learn how using calming skills (like the ones described in this workbook) can help with worry/stress. You’ll begin using a practice exercise designed to help you increase your awareness of worry/stress symptoms, which you can use throughout this workbook. We recommend that everyone complete this module.

2. “Learn How to Relax”

The second module teaches you the first calming skill – learning how to relax with deep breathing. When you worry or are stressed, your breathing tends to become quick and shallow. This can cause you to feel more anxious. Learning how to breathe slowly and deeply is a coping-based skill that helps with worry/stress. We recommend that everyone complete this module.

3. “Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress”

The third module involves learning another calming skill to manage anxiety, calming thoughts. Worrying thoughts tend to be negative and can lead you to feel more worried and stressed. On the other hand, thoughts that are calming or soothing can decrease worry/stress. When you find yourself worrying, using a calming statement such as, “Everything is going to be okay,” or “I know I can handle this” can be a good coping strategy. We recommend that everyone complete this module.

4. “Changing Your Behavior to Manage Depression”

Worry and depression often occur together. This module involves learning how your behaviors relate to your mood, and how to change your behavior to improve your mood. If you are experiencing a depressed mood in addition to worrying, this module may be helpful.

5. “Changing Your Behavior to Manage Worry/Stress”

Many people with worry/stress tend to change their behavior to try to manage their worry/stress: for example, they may avoid situations that cause them anxiety (for example, by putting things off, like Geraldo), or they may do things too much or too frequently to try to manage anxiety (for example, smoking too much, like Linda). Both behaviors serve as

ways to try to avoid worry/stress but aren't very helpful. This module may be useful for you if you tend to avoid things or notice yourself repeating anxiety-related behaviors.

6. "Problem-Solving"

Problem-solving is a skill that helps you to learn how to think through a problem and come up with solutions. It may be useful if you are facing significant problems in your life that you are unsure how to manage (for example, you may have problems in communicating in your relationships or managing your finances).

7. "Progressive Muscle Relaxation"

Progressive muscle relaxation is a skill that helps you learn how to relax your body. You will learn to pay attention to tension that builds up in your body and learn tools to relax. You will tense and relax different muscle groups and learn how your body feels when it is tense and when it is relaxed.

8. "Thought Stopping"

Thought stopping helps with repeated negative thinking. You will learn to focus on your environment and experiences to distract you from worry thoughts. This simple skill helps quickly and may be useful if you notice yourself getting "stuck" in worrisome thinking patterns.

9. "Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress"

This module helps you to identify unrealistic thoughts that increase or cause worry/stress and change them to more realistic thoughts. This skill may be useful if you have serious problems with worry/stress, or if you notice that your thinking may be unrealistic.

10. "Maintain a Calmer Life"

The final module reviews the skills learned throughout the Calmer Life workbook, describing how you can maintain the skills throughout your life. We recommend that everyone complete this module.

You can use page 11 to design the Calmer Life Program in a way that works best for you by selecting modules you would like to complete.

Skills Practice Exercises

At the end of every module are worksheets to help you practice the new skill. The more you practice the skills you learn in this workbook, the more you will benefit from them. Remember when you first learned how to ride a bike or make sweet potato pie? Once you learned how to ride the bike or how to make the pie, practicing the skill over and over again helped you get better at it. The repeated practice helped you learn the material and remember it better. This is similar to the benefit of using the worksheets in this workbook – the more you use them, the more you will learn and remember what you’ve learned. Throughout the workbook, you will see recommendations on how often you should practice each skill to become comfortable with it, and how to best practice it.

Developing Your Calmer Life Program

In the following week, think about which topics could help you achieve your goals and experience a calmer life. Modules 1, 2, 3, and 10 are useful for most. The other modules cover other topics. Read the descriptions of the topics in the remaining modules and choose those that may be most helpful to you, based on your most important problems and current goals.

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	MY MODULES
1. Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress	Learn about worry/stress. Become aware of your own physical signs, thoughts, and actions.	✓
2. Learn How to Relax	Reduce worry/stress with slow, deep breathing.	✓
3. Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress	Manage your worry/stress by using calming statements.	✓
4. Changing Your Behavior to Manage Depression	Get involved in activities you may avoid because of sad mood.	
5. Changing Your Behavior to Manage Worry/Stress	Stop engaging in repetitive behaviors. Get involved in activities you may avoid because of worry/stress.	
6. Problem Solving	Solve problems through effective steps. This is useful for times when worry/stress gets in the way of finding solutions.	
7. Progressive Muscle Relaxation	Pinpoint and release muscle tension. Learn progressive muscle relaxation.	
8. Thought Stopping	Stop dwelling on worry/stress thoughts.	
9. Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress	Identify negative and unrealistic thoughts and replace them with more realistic thoughts.	
10. Maintaining a Calmer Life	Review your progress, and develop a plan to continue living more calmly.	✓

MODULE 1: Becoming Aware of Your Worry/Stress

Becoming Aware of Your Worry/Stress

Orientation to the Calmer Life Workbook

The Calmer Life Self-Help Workbook has two goals. First, you will become more aware of your worry/stress symptoms. Second, you will learn new skills to cope with worry/stress. Each module will deal with different calming skills you can learn to help manage your worry/stress. To benefit from this workbook, you will need to practice the new skills each day. At the end of each module, you will be given practice exercises to complete during the week to practice the new skill.

Assessing Your Motivation for Change

Worry/stress is natural. Everyone experiences it, and it is part of being human. It can even be a good thing, in certain situations. For example, when planning an event, packing for a trip, getting ready for guests to come over, etc., a little worry can be helpful for getting things done. However, worry/stress can become a problem when it is experienced:

- Too frequently (for example, spending several hours a day worrying)
- Too intensely (for example, becoming extremely upset or distressed when worrying)
- Long past a frightening situation
- When you can't control it (or can't stop it once it starts)
- In a way that prevents you from accomplishing desired behaviors or life goals.

In your own words, why do you need help with worry/stress?

❖ _____

❖ _____

❖ _____

When trying to change your worry/stress, it can be important to think about what is involved with making changes in life. There are good things and not-so-good things about staying the same. And there are usually good things and less good things about change as well. Sometimes it can be helpful to look at the pluses and minuses of not only changing but also of staying the same.

What are some good things about staying the same? When we stay the same and don't change, we don't have to try very hard. We are used to behaving and thinking in a certain

way, and we don't have to spend extra time thinking about changing our approach to deal with worry/stress in a new way.

What are some not-so-good things about staying the same? Though it may appear to be easier to behave and think in the same way we always have, the way we are handling things currently may really be less helpful in dealing with worry/stress. If we don't try to change anything, we will never know if we can reduce worry/stress in our lives. Worry/stress may be having a negative impact on our health, relationships, and overall well-being.

Are there short-term versus long-term pluses/minuses? For example, sometimes a strategy may seem helpful because it allows you to avoid more worry/stress in the short term but is actually not helpful because it just creates more worry/stress in the long term.

Below, take some time to list some benefits and obstacles you may experience when trying to change your worry/stress.



Benefits and Obstacles



BENEFITS	OBSTACLES
1. <i>No need to spend time thinking about how to change my situation</i>	1. <i>I need to find time in my busy schedule to practice new coping skills</i>
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

How to Reduce Worry/Stress

There are two steps in reducing your worry and stress. The first step is becoming more aware of situations that create worry/stress and symptoms that indicate for you when worry/stress is present (for example, physical symptoms, thoughts, and behaviors).

The second step in reducing worry/stress is to learn new coping skills to use when you're about to face a worry/stress-producing situation. You'll learn some skills in this workbook that will give you a "toolbox" of skills that you can pull from whenever you see worry/stress coming your way. You may choose to use the same skills most of the time; or you may choose different skills, depending on the situation or the symptoms you're experiencing at the time.

Let's focus on the first step: understanding how you experience worry. This may be something new that you haven't really thought about. Take time now to think about how worry/stress can express themselves.

Worry/Stress consists of three types of symptoms:

Physical (how the body reacts)....

When we worry or feel stressed, our bodies respond in certain ways. Common physical symptoms associated with worry/stress are muscle tension, fast pulse, shortness of breath, shaking/trembling, sweating, and butterflies in the stomach. You may experience other physical sensations associated with worry/stress aside from these.

It's important to get better at recognizing the difference between physical, bodily sensations (for example, tightness in the chest) and feelings (for example, emotions like anger or stress). Geraldo, from the previous module, felt sick to the stomach; and Mariella experienced muscle tightness, which are examples of physical symptoms of worry/stress.

Thoughts (what's going on in the mind, or concerns)....

Worry/stress is often accompanied by thoughts, often negative thoughts. These thoughts tend to be based in the future and include fears that something negative might happen. If you have trouble identifying a thought, it may help to ask questions, such as "Why was I stressed (or angry/worried, etc.) about this situation?" or "What was I concerned might happen?" The answers are usually thoughts.

Behaviors (avoiding situations or doing something time consuming to reduce worry/stress)....

Behaviors are actions you take that are driven by worry/stress. These behaviors can become habits but are more than that – you do them to reduce worry and stress. Some people avoid certain actions to manage worry/stress (for example, putting off opening mail, or not attending social events), while others may carry out behaviors repetitively? to manage

worry/stress (for example, checking something over and over again to make sure it is correct, or “stress eating”). Remember Geraldo and Mariella from the introduction of this workbook? Geraldo avoided opening bills because of his worries about finances. Mariella used smoking and eating too much to avoid thinking her worrisome thoughts.

People sometimes have trouble telling the differences between physical symptoms, thoughts and feelings. Physical symptoms are sensations we have in the body, such as tightness in the chest, or sweaty palms. Thoughts are negative beliefs, expectations, or concerns about a situation or event. Feelings are emotions, such as happiness, sadness or anxiety. Although these are separate, they often go together. For example, imagine you are about to give a speech in front of a crowd. If you have the thought, “Oh no, I am going to say something wrong, and everyone will laugh at me,” you will likely have the feeling of anxiety, and feel physical sensations of heart racing and palms sweating. If you have the thought, “I’m not worried about this; I’ve done it a million times,” you will likely feel calm, which may lead to a physical sensation of relaxed muscles.

How to Talk to a Doctor about Worry/Stress

Talking to your doctor about your worry/stress can be very helpful. Asking people for help can be hard, so talking to your doctor about worry/stress is a courageous step toward getting well.

Preparing for the Appointment with the Doctor

Below is a form to help you plan your talk with your doctor. The form will help you document your symptoms and feelings related to worry/stress. You can also choose to take a list of all the medications you are taking so that the doctor can make necessary recommendations. Consider completing this form and taking it with you, or ask a family member or someone to help you.

I will let my doctor know I am experiencing these symptoms and feelings of worry/stress and/or depression and how long I have felt this way.

Symptoms/Feelings	How Long These Symptoms Have Been Experienced

Because I know worry and stress can be caused by medication, I have prepared a list of medicines I take, including medicines I buy with a prescription, medicine I buy without a prescription, vitamins, and herbal remedies.

Name of Medicine, Over-the-Counter Drug, Vitamin, or Remedy	Dose	Times Taken per Day

I will ask my doctor if he/she has additional recommendations to help me manage my worry/stress and/or depression.

Doctor's Recommendations	Duration (hours, days, months)

Use the worksheet on the next page to check any of the physical symptoms, thoughts, and behaviors you experience as part of your worry/stress. Although everyone experiences some physical symptoms, thoughts, and behaviors when they are worrying, the types of physical symptoms, thoughts, and behaviors can be unique and different for everyone – think of the differences between Geraldo and Mariella. Understanding your own symptoms of worry/stress is the first step in learning how to change them.

My Experience with Worry/Stress

Physical Signs:

How your body reacts to worry/stress

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach | |

Thoughts:

What is running through your mind, including areas of concern

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health (own and others') | <input type="checkbox"/> Daily events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finances | <input type="checkbox"/> Work/volunteer/place of worship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Issues related to aging | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/friends | |

Behaviors:

Actions you take to reduce worry/stress, such as avoiding feared situations or doing something over and over

Avoidance

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not making decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> Ignoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoidance of activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Putting things off | |

Doing too much

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Checking | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking | <input type="checkbox"/> Asking for reassurance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snacking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Use of Religion/Spirituality:
Optional Preparation for Next Skills Modules

Many people who have religious/spiritual (R/S) beliefs may benefit from working their own beliefs into the skills described in this workbook. While use of R/S is not required to benefit from these skills, we have included instructions throughout this workbook for how to work your R/S beliefs into each skill, should you choose to do so. Throughout this workbook, when you see words in italics, this will indicate areas where you may be able to use or incorporate your R/S beliefs in a particular skill. This is optional. The questions below may help you think about what your R/S beliefs are, if any, and how to best use them in the skills, if you choose to.

Many people use the terms religion and spirituality to mean the same thing, but others see them as quite different. What do you think? Do you use the terms religious and spiritual, or do you prefer one term more than the other?

Throughout this workbook, we use the terms religion and spirituality (or R/S) – feel free to substitute this with whatever terms you prefer. To help personalize this optional part of the workbook, it may be helpful to think a bit about your R/S background. Think through the following questions:

- Do you currently see yourself as a religious or spiritual person? If so, in what ways?

- Do your R/S beliefs include the existence of a higher power? If yes, what term do you use to refer to your higher power?

- What are some current R/S practices that you engage in (for example, prayer, meditation)?

- When you encounter problems, who do you turn them over to?

- Do you currently identify yourself with a particular R/S group? If so, with whom do you identify?

- How long have you identified with that particular group?

Becoming Aware of Your Worry/Stress Skills Practice

Instructions for Practice

To help you become more aware of situations that cause worry/stress and the kinds of worry/stress symptoms you have, record at least once a day some experience with worry/stress. It doesn't have to be serious worry/stress but can be something that even slightly increases stress. For example, the slight increase in stress you might experience when you cannot find your cell phone is adequate for the purpose of this exercise. The goal is to describe the situation, noting any physical signs, thoughts, and actions or behaviors that you avoid or those you do too much. An example of how to complete these forms is on the next page. This will be followed by Skills Practice workbook pages, which you should try to complete once daily over the next week.

It helps to pick a certain time when you plan to fill them out each day, so that it's easier to remember. It might be a good idea to plan on filling one out every night right before bed, while you're thinking about the day you just had.

Remember: the more you practice the skills you learn in this workbook, the more helpful they will be. Try to complete a worksheet each day.

Awareness Skills Practice Exercise Example

What situation caused worry/stress today?

I had an argument with a friend.

Where were you? Who was with you or who were you talking to?

I was at church talking to my friend Tina.

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

Muscle tension

Rapid pulse

Shortness of breath

Shaking/trembling

Sweating

Butterflies in stomach

Other: _____

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

I don't want to lose her as a friend, and I'm afraid she won't want to spend time with me anymore. I am a bad friend.

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

I left church early and did not go to the lunch that was planned afterwards because I didn't want to run into Tina.

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

When I got home, I sat in front of the TV and did not get up for three full hours to distract myself.

In this example, we have identified the situation that caused worry/stress (an argument), the physical sensations of worry/stress (muscle tension, butterflies in the stomach), the thoughts associated with worry/stress (worries about negative effects of the argument), and behaviors associated with worry/stress (avoiding activities and watching TV instead of doing tasks that needed to get done). Use this as an example for how to become more aware of your own unique worry/stress symptoms.

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 1**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 2**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 3**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 4**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 5**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 6**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

**Becoming Aware of Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 7**

Remember, the more you practice, the better you'll be at managing your worry/stress.

Practice times: Choose a time to practice: _____

Instructions for Practice: Think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid pulse | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking/trembling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterflies in stomach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

MODULE 2: Learning How to Relax I
Deep Breathing

Learning How to Relax

In the previous module, you learned the first step in reducing worry/stress: becoming more aware of your unique symptoms (that is, your thoughts, behaviors, and physical feelings) of worry/stress. Hopefully, you learned something about your “style” of worry/stress from the awareness practice exercise. Keep practicing this awareness exercise until it becomes easy for you.

The second step to reducing worry/stress is learning new skills to manage the worry/stress. Throughout this workbook, you will learn multiple new skills/tools to help you manage symptoms of worry/stress. The first skill is deep breathing.

Deep Breathing

As you already learned, physical signs of worry/stress include things like muscle tension, sweating, and trembling. These signs can be reduced with relaxation. Relaxation can also slow down racing thoughts and decrease feelings of fear and worry/stress. Relaxation “teaches” your body to be calm. Can your heart beat fast and slow at the same time? No. Likewise, you can’t be worried and relaxed at the same time.

One way to make your entire body more relaxed is deep breathing. Often when you’re worried, your breathing gets rapid and shallow. Rapid, shallow breaths can make you feel dizzy and lightheaded. Experiencing these physical signs is stressful and can cause you to feel worried, which can increase the physical signs of worry/stress. Changing the way you breathe can make your entire body more “relaxed.” This skill will help you learn to breathe from your diaphragm, a thin muscle that separates your chest cavity from your stomach. When you breathe from your diaphragm, you can breathe more deeply and take in more oxygen, which is calming.



Two Key Features of Deep Breathing

1. Take slow, even, deep breaths. Inhale through your nose to the count of 4, and exhale through your mouth to the count of 4. Do not pause after each inhale. If you stop between inhalation and exhalation, you will build tension, the opposite of relaxation.
2. Breathe through your diaphragm, not your chest. Place one hand on your stomach, with your little finger about one inch above your navel. Place the other hand on your chest. Make sure the hand on your stomach is moving in and out (or up and down) as you breathe – this means you are breathing from your diaphragm. Keep the hand on your chest still.

At the beginning, you may find that the hand on your chest also moves with the hand on your stomach. If you continue to focus on breathing from your diaphragm, you will find that the hand on your stomach will move more, while the hand on your chest will move less and less. If the hand on your chest is the only hand moving, you are not breathing from your diaphragm.

Using Religious/Spiritual Images to Relax

You can think about R/S images and words during your deep breathing practice. This is called spiritual relaxation. Do you have an R/S image or word that helps you relax? If yes, what image or word comes to mind? Some people think about a god they worship or name of a higher power they look up to. Others may imagine a natural beauty, like a waterfall or a sunrise, as being spiritual. Please write down the R/S image or word that you want to use while you practice deep breathing. _____

Learning How to Relax I: Deep Breathing Skills Practice

Instructions for Practice

Changing your experience of worry/stress is like learning any new skill. Just like learning to ride a bike or play an instrument, it gets easier with practice!

Practice deep breathing for a few minutes. Think about a time recently when you were worried/stressed. You may refer to practice worksheets you have already completed as a good source of information for this. The situation does not have to be serious. It can be something as routine as misplacing your keys or being late to a doctor's appointment. Try to remember how you felt in that situation; then practice deep breathing...breathe in through your nose to the count of 4 (inhale....2....3....4....) and exhale to the count of 4 (exhale....2....3....4....). Remember to take slow, even, deep breaths; and try not to pause after each inhale. Breathe through your diaphragm, not your chest. Do you feel calmer?

If you want to include your R/S image or word, just like before, take slow, even, and deep breaths. While you are breathing, think about or see in your mind your word or image over and over again.

Choose regular practice times. Choosing a regular practice time can help you remember to practice this new skill. Some people prefer to practice every morning, or right before bed. Choose a regular time to practice each day for 10-15 minutes. When could your practice time be? _____

Using Deep Breathing in a Worry/Stress Situation

Try to use deep breathing in worry/stress situations throughout the week to help you relax. Record on the Skills Practice form whether your new skill was helpful. Remember, the more you practice, the easier it will be to use this tool.

Continue awareness training. It will help to continue practicing becoming aware of your worry/stress, just like you did in the earlier module. Continue to think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form at the end of this module to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Practice relaxation training. Practice deep breathing during your practice time to learn this new skill. *While practicing, think of your R/S image or word.*

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 1**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 2**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 3**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 4**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 5**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 6**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

**Learn How to Relax I: Deep Breathing
Skills Practice Form
Day 7**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you, or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do too much?

Relaxation – Practice

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Did you practice deep breathing today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did you use deep breathing in a real-life situation today? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>If so, did you include religious/spiritual images or words?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |
| Did deep breathing help you to relax? | [] YES | [] NO |
| <i>Did thinking of religious/spiritual images or words help you relax?</i> | [] YES | [] NO |

MODULE 3: Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress

Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress

The second skill for managing worry/stress is calming thoughts. Remember, the more aware you are of your worry/stress symptoms, the easier it is to remember to use your new skills as you learn them. Keep practicing being aware of the thoughts, behaviors, and physical symptoms you experience when you are worried/stressed.

Calming Thoughts

A calming thought is a sentence that you say to yourself that helps to decrease worry/stress. It is a way to provide “instructions” to yourself about how to manage worry/stress. It will reduce how much worry/stress gets in the way. These statements can help you realize that some situations aren’t as bad as you expect them to be.

Examples of Calming Thoughts

- I can do what I need to do.
- If I take it one step at a time, I can meet this challenge.
- Even if I make mistakes, it will be okay.
- It’s not the worst thing in the world.
- This is an opportunity to cope with my worry/stress.
- I can do what I have to do in spite of my worry/stress.
- My worry/stress won’t hurt me.

Some people include R/S in their calming thoughts to help them through worried situations. For example:

- *I can do what I need to do, with ___’s help.*
- *I am thankful for this opportunity to grow.*
- *___ will never give me more than I can handle.*
- *This, too, shall pass.*
- *Everything happens for a reason.*

Calming Thoughts That I Can Use

In the space below, please jot down some calming thoughts that mean something to you and that you find helpful:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Using Calming Thoughts

Think about a time recently when you were worried/stressed. You may refer to practice worksheets you have completed for earlier modules as a good source of information for this. The situation does not have to be serious. It can be something as routine as misplacing your keys or being late to a doctor's appointment.

Try to think of a calming thought that may have helped in that situation. Did you need to give yourself words that remind you of your ability to get through this or support yourself? What would you have said to a friend in that same situation to help him/her feel better? Could you say them to yourself? There may be calming thoughts that are more helpful in certain situations than others. Think of a few different calming thoughts, using examples of times you were worried/stressed recently and thoughts that may have been comforting to you in the moment.

Tips for Use of Self-Statements

- Don't be afraid to say these out loud! Say calming thoughts to yourself instead of just reading them. This makes the thoughts more convincing.
- It can sometimes help to record the thoughts on tape. Listen to the tape when you need to.
- Write your favorite one on a small note card. Carry it in your wallet or post it some place where you can see it, such as on a mirror or refrigerator. Say it often!

Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress Skills Practice

Instructions for Practice

Continue awareness training. Again, it will help to continue practicing becoming aware of your worry/stress, just like you did in the earlier module. Continue to think of a recent situation that made you worried. Use the Skills Practice form at the end of this module to record the situation. Record any physical signs, thoughts, and actions.

Continue to use breathing skills. Keep practicing the skills you have learned previously, deep breathing, along with this new skill. Record “yes” or “no” at the bottom of the Skills Practice form to show whether you used breathing skills. Record whether these skills were helpful.

Practice using calming thoughts. Select a calming thought that could be helpful in the situation, and write it down on the Skills Practice form provided.



**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 1**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 2**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 3**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 4**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 5**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 6**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

Write your calming thought here: _____

**Using Calming Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 7**

Date _____ Time _____ Day _____

What situation caused worry/stress today?

Where were you? Who was with you or to whom were you talking?

What physical signs of worry/stress did you have?

What worry/stress thoughts did you have?

Did you avoid anything because of worry/stress? If so, what did you avoid?

Did you do anything too much to try to reduce worry/stress? If so, what did you do?

Relaxation – Practice

Did you use breathing skills today? [] YES [] NO
If so, were they helpful? [] YES [] NO

Calming Thoughts – Practice

Did you use calming thoughts in a real-life situation today? [] YES [] NO
Was the calming thought helpful? [] YES [] NO
Did the calming thought include a religious/spiritual theme? [] YES [] NO

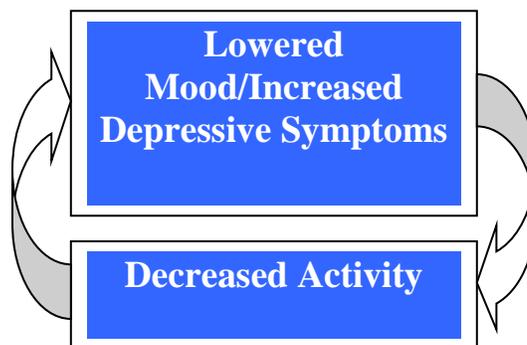
Write your calming thought here: _____

MODULE 4: Changing Your Behavior to Manage Depression

Changing Your Behavior to Manage Depression

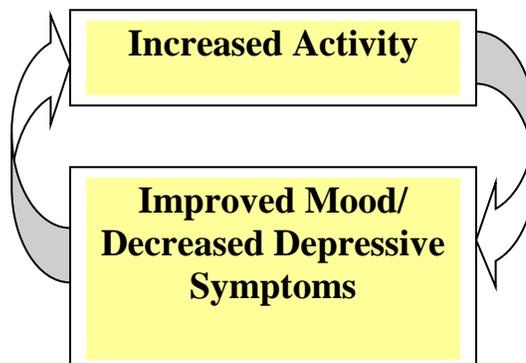
Sometimes people who are worried/stressed also feel depression – sad mood, or feeling down or blue. When you feel down or a life change happens (for example, if an upsetting event happens at your place of worship, or a friend moves or passes away), you may stop doing many activities that you used to enjoy. When you stop or decrease pleasant activities, you can actually begin to feel worse. One way that you can help yourself is by taking time regularly to engage in activities that you enjoy and that fit within your life goals and values. Even if you don't want to or don't think you really have the energy, adding these activities back into your life can help improve your mood and thoughts (for example, you are less sad or blue). This figure below shows how mood and behavior are connected through a cycle.

Depressed Mood and Symptoms



The next figure shows that increasing pleasant activities or doing things that give you a sense of accomplishment can help to improve your mood and decrease symptoms of depression.

Better Mood and Fewer Depressive Symptoms



Recording Daily Activities and Rating Your Mood

The first step toward making useful changes is to look at how you currently spend your time and how you feel about doing certain activities.

It's important to remember when completing this exercise to try to focus on a single day as it is more difficult if you focus on a broader amount of time. Complete the form based on a typical day, such as today or yesterday.

Rate your mood for each time, using the five-point scale. If you felt happy, use four (good) or five (very good). If you felt low or blue, mark two (bad) or one (very bad). Mark three (so-so) if your mood was somewhere in the middle. For each rating, indicate a possible reason you may have felt the way you did.

An example is provided below, followed by a blank form for you to complete.

☹	Very Bad 1	Bad 2	So-So 3	Good 4	Very Good 5	☺
---	-----------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------	---

Activities	Mood	Reasons I Felt the Way I Did
Morning Activities		
1. Eat breakfast	5	Breakfast is my favorite meal
2. Walk the dog		It was nice to be outside
Afternoon Activities		
3. Take a nap	2	I felt guilty for sleeping so much
4. Watch TV		I felt lonely
Evening Activities		
5. Fold laundry	4	I felt productive
6. Call my sister		I enjoy talking to others

Now, complete your own form, thinking about one day in the last week. Try to pick a typical day.

☹	Very Bad 1	Bad 2	So-So 3	Good 4	Very Good 5	☺
---	----------------------	-----------------	-------------------	------------------	-----------------------	---

Activities	Mood	Reasons I Felt the Way I Did
Morning Activities		
1.		
2.		
Afternoon Activities		
3.		
4.		
Evening Activities		
5.		
6.		

Identifying Pleasant Events and Meaningful Activities

When we get used to not doing things, it is sometimes hard to start them again. Sometimes we have to find new ways to do things that we used to enjoy if we're having physical problems or have less money. However, if we work hard at putting some rewarding activities back into our lives, our mood and quality of life (and sometimes even physical symptoms) get better.

“Can you think of things that you enjoy doing? Or things that give you a sense of satisfaction or meaning?”

What about things that you are interested in, but don't do or may have stopped, or stopped doing as much, because of feeling sad or depressed?

Are there any R/S activities that you have stopped doing or do less (for example, going to church, reading religious literature, praying, going for a walk in nature, or meditating)?

Remember to think about your life values and what is important to you.

Some people like to visit with friends or family. Others may like to do tasks or hobbies. Are there two to three things you are currently doing that give you pleasure? What about a feeling of satisfaction? Are there other activities you would like to do that you are not doing now?

If you are having trouble thinking of pleasant or meaningful activities, look at the suggestions in the table below.

Types of Activities		Interested Activities √	Current Activities √
Social Activities	Get together with family/friends		
	Visit a neighbor		
	Go to a local community center		
	Other:		
Outings	Go to park/library/bookstore		
	Go to the movies/shopping		
	Go out to dinner		
	Other:		
Physical Activity	Walk for exercise or pleasure		
	Light housekeeping		
	Work in garden		
	Other:		
Health and Wellness	Eat healthier		
	Meditate or do yoga		
	Put on makeup or perfume		
	Other:		
Leisure Activities	Knit, sew or do needlework		
	Do crafts/ Keep a diary		
	Listen to radio/ Watch TV/Read the newspaper		
	Other:		
Spiritual and Religious	Go to a place of worship		
	Attend a Bible study group		
	Meditate/Pray		
	Other:		
Kind Acts	Do favors for others/Volunteer		
	Help someone in need		
	Other:		

Adapted, with permission, from Lejuez, C.W., Hopko, D. R., & Hopko, S. D. (2001). A brief behavioral activation treatment for depression. *Behavior Modification* 25:255–286.

Changing Your Behavior to Manage Depression Gratitude Skills (Optional)

One positive activity might involve keeping a gratitude list (*some people call this a blessings list*). Here is a space to keep track of all the things you are grateful for (*or for your blessings*). It is important to look at this list, and add to it daily. Anytime you think of something that you appreciate or are thankful for, add it to the list. For example, you might be thankful for having a warm meal, transportation, or a loving family member. Try to make time to write down at least one thing every day that you are grateful for.

Things for Which I Am Grateful:

You can also write a prayer of gratitude in the space below.

My Prayer of Gratitude

Changing Your Behavior for Managing Depression Skills Practice Form Example



Instructions for Practice: In the coming week, complete one to two pleasurable or meaningful activities. Choose activities based on your own ideas, the checklist you created, or the gratitude activity – and stay focused on activities that are not too hard and can be broken down into small steps. Use the **SMART** guidelines, think about support you will need to be successful, and list any R/S tools that will be helpful.

Here is an example to help you get started:

	Activity 1	Activity 2 (Optional)
Type of Activity	Replant flowers in a bigger pot	Go to a movie with a friend
Step 1	Ask daughter to take me shopping	Figure out which friend to ask
Step 2	Buy a new pot and soil	Look up the movie times
Step 3	Replant the flowers	Buy a ticket
Completion Date:	Next Tuesday	This weekend
Activity Completed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT
Was the activity helpful in improving your mood?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT

Changing Your Behavior for Managing Depression Skills Practice Form



In the coming week, complete one to two pleasurable or meaningful activities.

	Activity 1	Activity 2 (Optional)
Type of Activity		
Step 1		
Step 2		
Step 3		
Completion Date:		
Activity Completed:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT
Was the activity helpful in improving your mood?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT

MODULE 5: Changing Your Behavior to Manage Worry/Stress

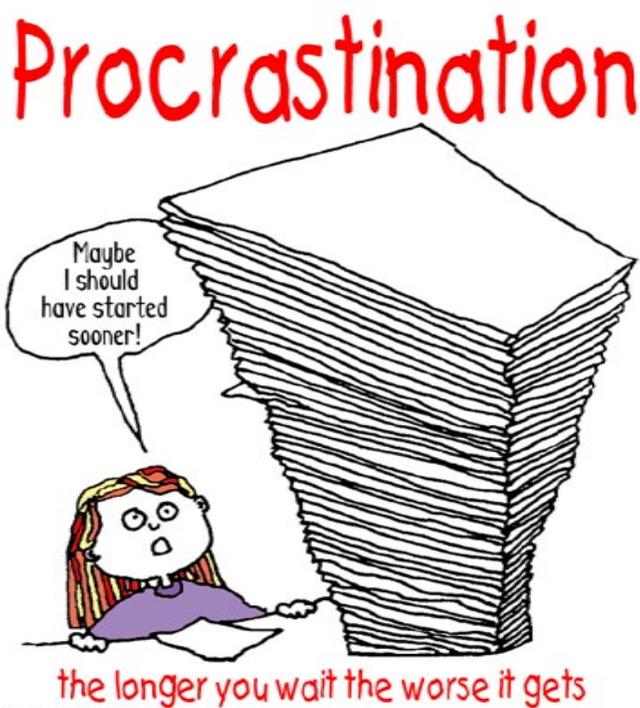
Changing Your Behavior to Manage Worry/Stress Overview

As we described in Module 1, worry/stress can lead to certain behaviors. Remember Geraldo and Mariella? Geraldo put off opening his bills because he was worried about money. Mariella smoked and ate too much junk food whenever she was worried/stressed. Avoiding things and repeating behaviors are related to worry/stress. Though both may work to reduce worry/stress for a short time, in the long run, they are not effective. Geraldo still has unpaid bills, and Mariella's worry/stress has not gone away because of her eating and smoking – in fact, she may worry even more about her health in the future. Avoiding things and doing too much both keep you from facing a situation and learning to cope with what is causing you worry/stress. This module describes how to change your behavior to better manage worry/stress. Below is some more information on avoiding things and doing too much, the most common types of worry/stress behaviors.

AVOIDANCE

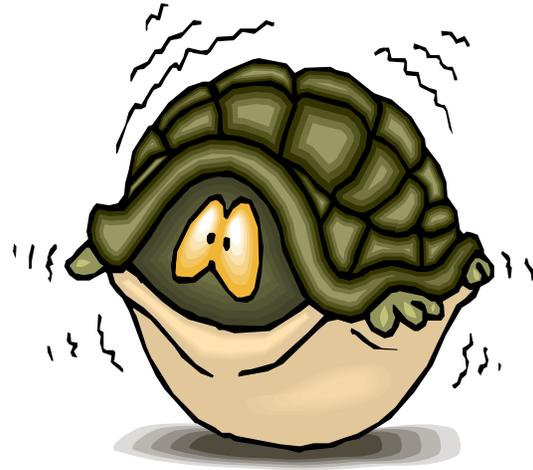
1. PUTTING THINGS OFF

When there is something you need to do or a decision you need to make that worries you or creates stress, you may put it off or procrastinate. Geraldo did this by not opening his bills. Other examples may include waiting a long time to schedule a doctor's appointment because you are afraid of receiving bad news, waiting until the very last minute to complete your taxes, or putting off sorting through mail until it has piled up to a very big stack. For a short time, putting things off helps you avoid worry/stress. However, the problems don't go away on their own; and putting them off doesn't keep you from having to face them eventually. Is there anything you are currently putting off?



2. AVOIDING PLACES, PEOPLE, OR ACTIVITIES

You may try not to put yourself in situations that cause you to worry. For example, if you argued with a friend at the senior center, you may avoid going there as often. Some people avoid ever going to the doctor's office because they have anxiety about their health. Can you think of any places, people, or activities you are currently avoiding?



DOING TOO MUCH

1. REPETITIVE BEHAVIORS

Behaviors that you do repeatedly, even though the repetition is unnecessary or offers no new solution, may be a sign of worry. Examples include smoking, pacing, snacking too much, or reading the same information over and over. Mariella smokes and eats junk food to manage her stress. However, repetitive behaviors aren't always unhealthy. You may repeatedly tap your foot when you are anxious, or watch TV for lengthy periods of time. These repetitive behaviors only become a problem when they are unhealthy, when they keep you from doing other things you need to do, or when they distract you from facing your problems. Do you have any repetitive worry/stress behaviors?

2. CHECKING

Worry can cause you to check on things to tell yourself they are okay. Some people find themselves checking paperwork several times to make sure they completed it correctly, or checking the oven several times to make sure they turned it off. Others may seek support by checking in with others to make sure they've done the right thing. Do you do any checking behaviors to manage your worry/stress?

The goals of all the behaviors described above (putting things off, avoiding things, repetitive behaviors, and checking) are to reduce worry/stress. For a short time, these behaviors take you away from situations that disturb or bother you and help you feel better. For example, putting things off keeps you from facing things you worry/stress about. However, in the long run, these behaviors can make things worse. If you avoid checking your mail and paying your bills, you may have to pay late fees or the services (water, electricity) may be cut off. If you smoke or eat junk food, these can cause health problems in the future. **When you use these behaviors, you don't learn how to handle worry/stress.**

One way to decrease worry/stress might be surprising. The solution is to face your worry/stress. It is useful to stop putting things off or doing too much. For example, if you are afraid of speaking in public, try to talk during a group discussion. You may learn that you can handle this anxiety by facing your fear. If you are afraid that you haven't balanced your checkbook perfectly, stop over-checking it. Check it once, and be done with it. Then use one of your new skills to help manage the worry/stress, instead of your old checking behaviors, which have not worked very well for you in the past to reduce your worry/stress.

You may feel more worry/stress when you first start doing things you have previously avoided. So, it will be very helpful to use your new tools to manage worry/stress. For example, use deep breathing or calming thoughts to practice managing your worry/stress in these situations.

On the next page is an exercise that will describe how setting goals can motivate you to get things done. Think of some of the worry/stress behaviors you are currently using that you would like to change. We'll create some goals to help you overcome these behaviors by practicing new behaviors.

Setting Goals for Changing Your Behavior

Changing behavior is not easy. Setting goals, or thinking of things you want to do, can help you to keep an eye on how you are changing and doing better. You want to make sure to set goals that match your life goals and values. A guideline for setting goals is **SMART**.

Specific:

What is the target for the goal? What do you want to accomplish? Who is involved in achieving this goal? Where will it take place?

Measurable:

How are you going to measure your success? Will you keep track of your weight? Count how many cigarettes you are smoking? Keep track of how often you avoid a certain situation?

Achievable:

Is this a goal you feel comfortable you can achieve? How likely is it that you can get to where you want? If it's too hard, it may help to break it into smaller steps that are easier for you (for example, rather than never eating ice cream at night again, setting the goal to only eat ice cream two nights a week).

Relevant:

How does this goal get you closer to a life goal, value or important consideration in your life? How important is the goal to you? Is it going to make a difference in your life?

Timed:

When is the goal to be completed? A week? A month? When will you start?

Below is an example of a practice exercise you will complete later in this module. In the first row, record one or two worry/stress behaviors you would like to change: this may include facing situations you have been avoiding or procrastinating, or choosing repetitive behaviors you would like to stop. For this example, we've chosen "avoiding opening bills" (a putting off/avoiding worry/stress behavior) and "chain-smoking cigarettes" (a repetitive worry/stress behavior).

Changing Your Behavior to Manage Your Worry/Stress

Skills Practice

Instructions for Practice

Identify 1 to 2 worry/stress behaviors you want to change. If you are unable to identify anxiety-related behavior, go back to Skills Practice form from Module 1, and complete an anxiety awareness form.

List steps needed to change these behaviors. Use the **SMART** guidelines to make sure these steps are manageable. For example, if the worry/stress behavior you want to change is avoiding church, your activity may be to begin attending church regularly each Sunday. Some small steps might be finding a new church by asking friends for suggestions, locating the address of the church and the start time, and figuring out a way to get there. Think about calming skills or other support you will need to be successful, and *list any R/S tools that will be helpful*. Note whether you were able to complete the scheduled activity.

An example of how to plan for an activity to change worry/stress behavior is provided next. Then, you can write down for plan for the next week.

You may have to complete the activity several times before you feel less worried. You might temporarily feel more worried/stressed. This will be less with practice.

Changing Your Behavior to Manage Worry/Stress Skills Practice Form Example

	Activity 1	Activity 2
Activity	Avoiding opening bills	Chain-smoking cigarettes
Step 1	At 10 am on Saturday this week, I will spend 30 minutes to open the mail that has piled up on my kitchen table.	For the next 3 days, I will reduce my smoking from 8 cigarettes a day to 7.
Step 2	I will make a list of bills to be paid.	For the 3 days after that, I will reduce to 6 cigarettes a day
Step 3	On Monday, I will pay electricity, gas and water bills	
Completion Date:	Monday	Next Friday
Calming skills that I can use or help that I may need from someone else:	I will use deep breathing for five minutes both before and after I open the bill.	I will use my calming statement, "This, too, shall pass," when I begin to crave a cigarette.
<i>Is there an R/S tool that I can use with these calming skills?</i>	I will imagine a cross while practicing deep breathing.	I will read the Bible when I start craving an extra cigarette.

Changing Your Behavior to Manage Your Worry/Stress Skills Practice Form

Complete the steps you have outlined for the next week.

	Activity 1	Activity 2 (Optional)
Activity		
Step 1		
Step 2		
Step 3		
Completion Date:		
Calming skills that I can use or help that I may need from someone else:		
<i>Is there an R/S tool that I can use with these calming skills?</i>		
Activity Completed:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> SOMEWHAT <input type="checkbox"/> NO

MODULE 6: Problem Solving

Problem Solving

Many people who are worried believe that worrying/stressing about problems will help them control what happens or avoid a particular problem. Others believe that worry/stress helps to identify or solve problems. However, identifying and thinking about possible problems is not the same as identifying solutions to problems.

Trying to solve problems when you are feeling worried or stressed can be hard. Sometimes people have trouble thinking of solutions because they get stuck thinking about the same things over and over. Or they may think that nothing can be done when, really, it can. Other times, people have good ideas about how to solve problems, but they never actually take the steps needed to make it happen because they are afraid of making the “wrong decision.” Has your worry/stress ever gotten in the way of solving problems?

The “SOLVED” Technique for Problem Solving

The “SOLVED” technique involves six easy steps that will help you identify and solve problems in your life.

S = SELECT A PROBLEM

First, select the problem to be solved. Be very specific, and pick a problem that you can really solve. This is very important because people often have a hard time thinking of a specific problem. We tend to focus on big problems, and that can cause us to feel overwhelmed. This can make it hard to find a solution when you are trying to solve more than one thing at once. Instead of focusing on solving a complicated problem, focus on one task at a time. In this step, it might be necessary to break down the problem into smaller tasks. For example, think about what the first step to solving a problem might be; and have this be your new problem to solve.

What are some problems that you are finding hard to solve? What is a goal of yours that you are finding hard to complete?

O = OPEN YOUR MIND TO ALL POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

When opening your mind to all possible solutions, be very broad. Do what is called “brainstorming.” Write down every possible solution that comes to mind, even those you think are silly or not ideal. Don’t worry about the possible consequences of these solutions right now. For example, if your problem is not having enough money to pay your bills, one of the possible solutions may be to borrow from your family. Another potential solution may be to go and rob a bank. In this step, you will write all the potential solutions regardless of the consequences of those options. You will address the pluses and minuses of each solution in the next step.

When trying to come up with different strategies or solutions, it can be helpful to think about what advice you would give someone else with this problem.

Look at the ways you and others have handled similar situations. It might also be helpful to talk with a close friend or relative who might be able to offer possible solutions.

Sometimes solutions to our problems can also be found through R/S means. Could you talk with your R/S leader? Do you think there may be solutions in the Bible or other R/S literature? Do you feel you can find solutions to problems through prayer? Can you think of any R/S solutions to your problem?

Remember that, at this stage, it is important to think of a large, broad list of possible solutions – without considering the consequences of these solutions right now.

L = LIST THE PLUSES AND MINUSES OF EACH POSSIBLE SOLUTION

For each possible solution that you have listed, consider the consequences or end results of what will happen if you do it. Evaluating the pluses/minuses of each and putting them on paper are helpful, easy ways to reduce the time spent going over it again and again in your mind, unproductively.

V = VERIFY THE BEST SOLUTION

By looking at the end result of each solution and weighing the pluses/minuses, it is often fairly simple to put the solutions in order. Which are most practical and/or desirable? Based on your pluses and minuses, put a check next to the best solution.

E = ENACT THE PLAN

Identify steps needed to carry out the solution you have chosen. Make each step small so that you can easily achieve your goal. Next, carry out the plan. *Think of any R/S skills that can help you carry out the plan.*

D = DECIDE IF THE PLAN WORKED

Now you can decide how well your solution worked. If your goal was achieved, congratulate yourself! If your plan was not effective, go back to step *S*, and select a new problem, Or move to *L* to identify other possible solutions for the same problem.

Problem Solving

Skills Practice Form Example

Instructions for Practice: Identify one to two problems you are facing that may be causing worry/anxiety. Use the SOLVED steps to identify potential solutions to the problem, pros and cons of each of the solution and identify and enact a plan to solve the problem.

Here is an example to help you get started:

SELECT A SPECIFIC PROBLEM: *I don't have a ride to my doctor's appointment next week*

OPEN your MIND to <u>ALL</u> possible SOLUTIONS (are any R/S?)	List the PROS	List the CONS
1. Ask someone at church to drive me. ✓	<i>Free</i>	<i>They might be annoyed or say no.</i>
2. Take the bus.	<i>Inexpensive</i>	<i>I don't have the schedule.</i>
3. Ask God to help me.	<i>God always helps me.</i>	<i>Sometimes God takes time to answer my prayers.</i>
4. Reschedule my appointment.	<i>My daughter can take me the following week.</i>	<i>I would rather go sooner.</i>
5. Call a cab.	<i>I won't have to rely on someone else to help me.</i>	<i>Expensive</i>

VERIFY THE BEST SOLUTION: put a check by the solution you think will work best.
Ask someone at church to drive me

ENACT THE PLAN (LIST THE STEPS BELOW):

1. Ask Frida from church if she can give me a ride.

2.

TIME FRAME FOR COMPLETION: *wednesday*

DECIDE IF YOUR SOLUTION WORKED: YES NO

Problem Solving Skills Practice Form

In the coming week, identify one to two problems you are facing that may be causing worry/anxiety. Use the SOLVED steps to identify potential solutions to your problem(s)

SELECT A SPECIFIC PROBLEM: _____

OPEN your MIND to <u>ALL</u> possible SOLUTIONS <i>(are any R/S?)</i>	List the PLUSES	List the MINUSES
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

VERIFY THE BEST SOLUTION: put a check by the solution you think will work best.

ENACT THE PLAN (LIST THE STEPS BELOW)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

TIME FRAME FOR COMPLETION: _____

DECIDE IF YOUR SOLUTION WORKED: YES NO

MODULE 7: Learning how to Relax II
(Progressive Muscle Relaxation)

Learn How to Relax II

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

The goal of progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is to reduce the physical symptoms of worry/stress. Sometimes when one experiences worry/stress, tension builds gradually without our being aware of it, especially around the neck and shoulder areas. The tension in our body can build up so much that some people may experience tension headache due to worry/stress.

In this chapter, you will learn to notice early signs of tension and use relaxation skills earlier, when tension is less severe. PMR involves tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in sequence to help relax our body. It may sound odd that you are asked to first tense the muscles before you relax them if the final goal is to relax the body. For people who worry a lot or experience chronic stress, they may not realize that tension is creeping in their bodies until it is too late and they are in pain. Tensing and then relaxing muscles will help you discriminate the feelings in your body when muscles are tense and when they are relaxed. The ability to feel the difference between tension and relaxation will help you identify the first signs of tension building in your body, which can be a sign for you to start using relaxation techniques.

Remember that the tensing part of the exercise is not intended to produce pain. In fact, if you experience chronic pain in any part of your body, it is best to avoid the tensing component for the muscles in that area; just do the relaxing component when you get to those muscle groups.

Practicing PMR will help you learn to find the tension in your body as soon as it occurs.

Instruction on how to tense the seven muscle groups:

Right arm: Make a fist and tense your biceps; pull your wrist upward while pushing your elbows down against the chair or bed.

Left arm: Same as right arm.

Face: Lift your eyebrows as high as possible, clench your jaws, and pull the corners of your mouth back tightly.

Neck and throat: Pull your chin down toward your chest; and at the same time, try to prevent it from actually touching your chest.

Torso: Take a deep breath, hold it, and at the same time, pull your shoulder blades together, trying to make them touch, and make your stomach hard, as if someone were going to hit you.

Right leg: Lift your foot off the floor, and push down on the chair with your thigh.

Left leg: Same as the left leg.

The goal is to relax all the muscles in your body one muscle group at a time. Therefore, when you are tensing one muscle group, make sure that the rest of your body is relaxed. For example, if you are tensing your right arm, check if you might be clenching your jaw or tensing your right leg. The goal is to focus on each muscle group separately so that you can experience what it is like to tense and relax that muscle group. Focus on learning how to differentiate between when your muscles are tense and when they are relaxed. Practicing this skill will help you become better at noticing tension during the day.

This skill can be used with deep breathing for further relaxation. Inhale through your nose to the count of 4, and exhale through your mouth to the count of 4. Do not pause after each inhale. Make sure you are breathing through your diaphragm.

If you choose, you can use a R/S word or image to help you relax. You can think of a R/S word or image as you relax your muscles.

The entire routine of doing PMR will take about 20 minutes. An audio recording of instruction for one full round of PMR is included with this workbook. You can listen to the audiotape and practice PMR.

Learn How to Relax II Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Instructions for Practice

Set aside time each day when you can practice PMR for approximately 20 minutes. Choose a non-distracting place. Use the media file (included in the website) to follow along the audio instruction. It is helpful to use a high-backed chair to support your neck. Lying on a bed is also okay, as long as you don't fall asleep. Loosen tight clothing, remove shoes, belts, and glasses, and do not cross your arms or legs.

Throughout the exercise, try to concentrate on the sensations in your body. Other thoughts may wander into your mind, including worries. Try to stay focused on the audio instruction. Notice the difference between feeling tense and feeling relaxed.

Focusing on the sensations in your body helps in two ways. First, you will learn a method to calm negative thoughts. Second, you will develop a mental picture of how deep relaxation feels. Sometimes it is not practical to use the full PMR exercise. Having a mental picture will help you decrease muscle tension.

Record “yes” or “no” on the Skills Practice form whether or not you used PMR. Record whether or not this skill helped you to relax. *Note whether you included a religious/spiritual word or image. Notice whether it helped.*



Learn How to Relax II
Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)
Skills Practice

Day of the Week	Did you practice PMR today?	Was this skill helpful?	Did you use PMR in a worry/stress situation today?	If so, was it helpful?	Describe any ways that you included religion/spirituality in your practice of the skills:
Day 1: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 2: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 3: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 4: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 5: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 6: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 7: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	

MODULE 8: Thought Stopping

Thought Stopping

Thought stopping is a skill that helps to reduce worry/stress by stopping worry/stress thoughts. For this skill to work, you need to be aware when you are having a hard time controlling worry/stress thoughts. Remember from Module 1 that these thoughts tend to be negative and future-oriented and run through your mind over and over. Thought stopping involves using words or images as cues to stop worry/stress thoughts and then redirecting or changing your attention from your worrisome thoughts to activities that involve various senses (for example, the sights and sounds in your environment). Here are the steps for thought stopping:

1. Be aware of worry/stress thoughts.
2. Disrupt the worry/stress thoughts by telling yourself (silently or out loud) “STOP!” Try to picture a big, red stop sign or a big pink eraser).
3. Direct your attention to other things going on around you, right away.
 - a. Focus on the people around you, traffic nearby, or objects in the room. Pay attention to details. For example, look around in the room and make note of the color of the walls, pictures that are hanging in the wall, details of the pictures and contrast of the colors in the pictures with the color of the wall. Count how many windows are in the room. Look outside the window and pay attention to details of what you see outside.
 - b. Or do something that heightens your senses; for example, try smelling a scented candle to enhance your sense of smell, or touching a soft blanket to enhance your sense of touch.
 - c. *You can also meditate or pray.*



Thought Stopping Skill Practice

Instructions for Practice

Picture yourself in a worry/stress situation. Your awareness worksheets may be a good source of information for this exercise. Remember, even routine circumstances can slightly increase your stress, like when you realized that you forgot to send a birthday card to your childhood friend. Imagine where you were, who you were with, and what was going on around you. Try to put yourself back in the situation, and see if you can bring up some of the worry/stress thoughts that ran through your mind at that time. Once you are remembering these worry/stress thoughts, tell yourself to “STOP!” and picture a big, red stop sign, or a big, pink eraser. Then focus on the details of what is going on around you. Or, focus on activities you may be in the middle of doing. For example, notice what you are doing with your hands. Let’s say if you are cooking, notice how the spatula feels in your hand, smell the aroma coming from the dish you are making, notice the heat coming from the stove, check to see how the food taste in your mouth. Or, if you are sitting in the living room watching TV, notice how the sofa feels on your body, notice cushion next to your back, run your hands on the sofa and notice how it feels. *You can even meditate or pray.*

Try practicing this skill several times in the way described above. Then, try practicing the skill in an anxiety-producing situation – the next time you feel worried/stressed. Remember that the more you practice the skill, the more you will get out of it. The Skills Practice form on the next page will help you keep track of your practice of this new skill.



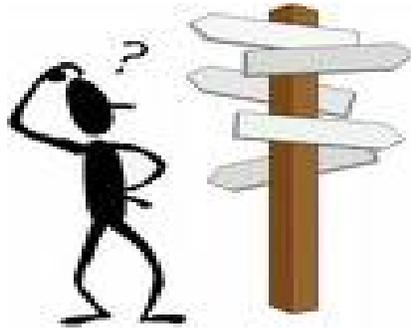
Thought Stopping Skills Practice Form

Day of the Week	Did you practice thought stopping today?	Was this skill helpful?	Did you practice this skill in anxiety-producing situation?	Was this skill helpful?	<i>Describe any ways that you included R/S in your practice of the skills:</i>
Day 1: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 2: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 3: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 4: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 5: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 6: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	
Day 7: _____	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	___ YES ___ NO	

MODULE 9: Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress

Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress

The way we think about, interpret, or view things influences how we feel and what we do. For example, if someone goes to a social event with the thought, “I will have nobody to talk to because nobody likes me,” he/she will likely have very different feelings and behaviors than someone who attends a social event with the thought, “I am so excited to make new friends!” The person with the more negative thought is likely to feel down or anxious and behave accordingly – maybe he/she won’t try to speak to new people or will leave the event early. Not talking to people or leaving an event early are both anxiety-related avoidance behavior. The person who is excited about making new friends will likely feel better and may have fun at the event and may actively seek new people to meet. Sometimes we have unrealistic worry/stress thoughts that make us more upset than we need to be. We may think that something will be worse than it is or that something bad will happen.



1. Identify Worry/Stress Thoughts.

The first step is to identify thoughts associated with worry/stress. This is part of becoming more aware, which you have been working on since Module 1. Try to notice when you have thoughts that are overly negative, or thoughts that “predict” the future – for example, “I’m sure that things will not go well when...”

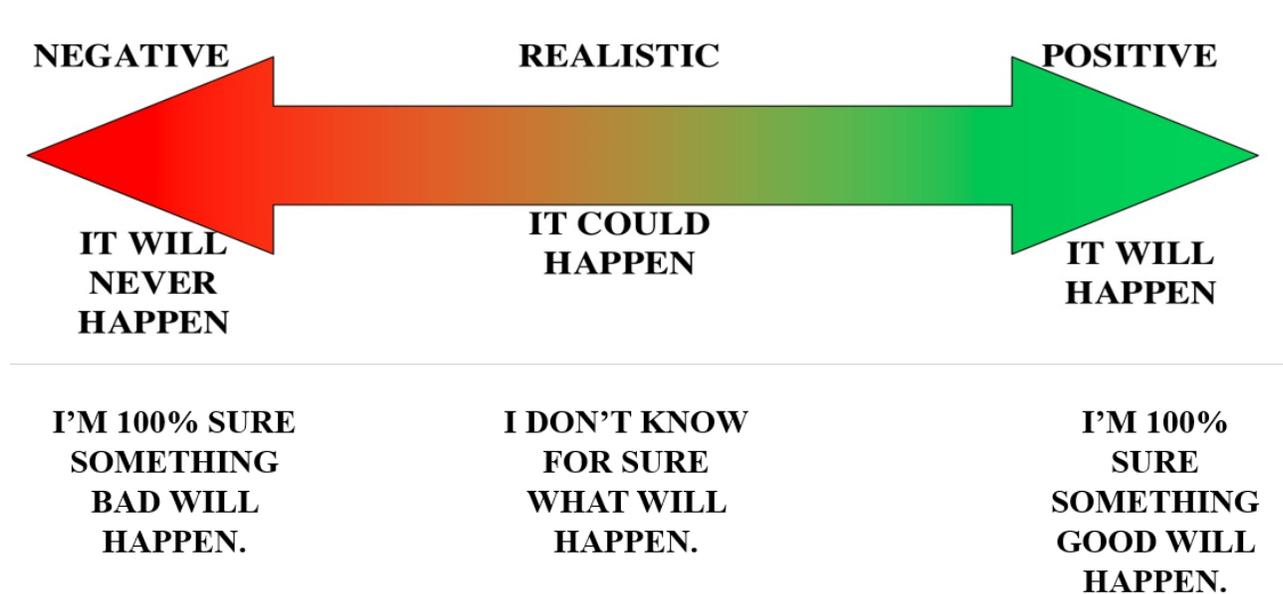
2. Evaluate Your Thoughts.

The next step is to think very carefully about how realistic these thoughts are. Begin to think of your thoughts as guesses or possibilities, not facts. Sometimes your thoughts will be realistic, and sometimes they won’t. The next few pages describe examples of unrealistic thoughts. See if any of your thoughts are unrealistic. Ask yourself the key questions that follow.

3. Replace Worry/Stress Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

When thoughts are not realistic, replace them with more realistic ones. More realistic thinking will lead to less stress. We don’t want to just replace all negative thoughts with positive ones – for example, going from thinking “it’s going to be a terrible time” to “it will be a wonderful time.” Instead, we want to change the

thought to something less negative and more rational or ‘true’; for example, changing “it’s going to be a terrible time” to “I’m not sure how it will go; I will have to wait and see to find out.” We tend to assume that any thought that comes into our head is the “truth.” Try to open your mind to ALL other possibilities.



Examples of Unrealistic Thoughts

For Sure Thoughts: When we believe that something bad is going to happen for sure, our worry/stress increases. This type of thinking focuses on the extremes. It allows no room for the “middle ground.” If you are thinking something bad will absolutely happen, you may be overestimating how likely it is. This could lead you to feel more worried or stressed than you would otherwise.

Examples: “If I disagree with someone, he/she will never want to speak to me again.”

“I made a mistake at work - I will definitely get fired!”

Should Thoughts: We sometimes set strict rules about how we or other people should behave. Unrealistic rules can create a lot of stress or lead you to feel responsible for events out of your control. Or you might believe that things should turn out a certain way. If you have unrealistically high expectations, you will probably be disappointed often.

Examples: “I should always be able to stop what I am doing to help a friend.”

“People should always return phone calls immediately.”

Big Deal Thoughts: Sometimes people worry/stress about things that, even if they did occur, would not be a big deal. Do you often “make a mountain out of a molehill?” If so, you may be creating unnecessary worry/stress for yourself.

Examples: “It would be absolutely horrible if I arrived late for this appointment!”

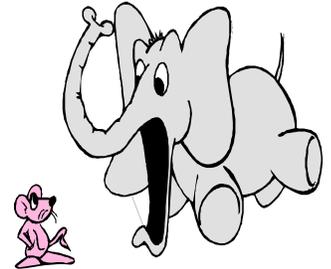
“I couldn’t stand it if I did something embarrassing in front of others!”

Have you noticed yourself having any of these types of unrealistic thoughts? Your awareness practice exercise forms may have good examples of the types of thoughts you have when you are worried/stressed. See if any of these thoughts resemble those in the examples above.

Evaluating Thoughts

Once you have identified a thought that is making you feel worried/stressed, it is important to examine how realistic the thought is. You can do this by asking yourself some key questions.

- “Am I thinking that something negative will happen?”
- “Are there other possible ways this situation could turn out?”
- “Are my expectations reasonable?”
- “Is my thought about a rule someone else ‘should’ follow?”
- “If this happened, would it really be the worst thing in the world?”



Many people also examine whether their thoughts fit with their R/S beliefs. You might want to ask yourself the following questions. (NOTE: You may fill in the blanks with whatever words fit best for you, such as God, the Bible, “my religion, my spirituality.”)

- “Does ___ say that I can know 100% what will happen?”
- “Have I been protected or spared in difficult situations like this one?”
- “Does ___ say I must always (or never) [fill in the blank with the expectation]?”
- “According to ___, am I responsible for controlling what others do?”
- “Would ___ want me to get so upset about this?”
- “Is it possible that there is a bigger purpose for this situation?”

Finding Realistic Thoughts

If asking the questions above shows you that your thought is unrealistic, you can come up with a more realistic thought that will help you feel less worried/stressed.

For Sure Thoughts: With For Sure Thoughts, it is important to try to think realistically about how likely it is that the negative event will occur. You can also think about other ways the situation might turn out. If you are making an extreme prediction about what will happen, try to seek some middle ground. Phrases to help make For Sure thoughts more realistic are, “It’s more likely that...” and “The chance of ___ really happening is....”

Example: “I don’t know that I will get fired for sure. It’s more likely that I will just get in a little trouble and have to fix the mistake.”

Should Thoughts: With Should Thoughts, it is important to think about the exceptions to the rule and to decide whether your rule is really just a personal preference. People have

their own ways of doing things that work for them. Phrases to help make Should Thoughts more realistic are “It would be nice if...but...” and “Unfortunately ... but thankfully...”

Example: “It would be nice if I could always stop what I am doing to help my friends, but sometimes I have to take care of myself.”

Big Deal Thoughts: Remember that many times even the worst thing that could happen is something you could cope with. Try to avoid making a mountain out of a molehill. Phrases to make Big Deal thoughts more realistic are “It won’t be the end of the world if...” and “Even if the worst case happens, I can handle it.”

Example: “It is not the end of the world if I am late for this appointment.”

On the next page is an example of a completed thought record, followed by a blank form for you to practice filling out on your own.

Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress Skills Practice Form Example

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for Unrealistic Thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) once a day for three to five days.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

Step 1: Identify Your Worry/Stress Thought.

My daughter-in-law is furious with me because she did not answer my phone call.

Step 2: Evaluate Your Thought.

Take a moment to think about each question individually before you answer it.

Am I thinking that something negative will happen? YES NO
Are there other possible ways this situation could turn out? YES NO
Are my expectations reasonable in this situation? YES NO
Is my thought about a rule someone else “should” follow? YES NO
If this happened, would it really be the worst thing in the world? YES NO
Does this thought fit with my R/S beliefs or faith? YES NO

Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

It is possible that my daughter-in-law is angry with me and that is why she didn't answer the phone, but it could also have nothing to do with me – she could be busy or not at home.

**Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 1**

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for unrealistic thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) as often as possible over the next week.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

Step 1: Identify Your Worry/Stress Thought.

Step 2: Evaluate Your Thought.

Take a moment to think about each question individually before you answer it.

- Am I thinking that something negative will happen? YES NO
Are there other possible ways this situation could turn out? YES NO
Are my expectations reasonable in this situation? YES NO
Is my thought about a rule someone else “should” follow? YES NO
If this happened, would it really be the worst thing in the world? YES NO
Does this thought fit with my R/S beliefs or faith? YES NO

Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

**Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 2**

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for unrealistic thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) as often as possible over the next week.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

Step 1: Identify Your Worry/Stress Thought.

Step 2: Evaluate Your Thought.

Take a moment to think about each question individually before you answer it.

- Am I thinking that something negative will happen? YES NO
Are there other possible ways this situation could turn out? YES NO
Are my expectations reasonable in this situation? YES NO
Is my thought about a rule someone else “should” follow? YES NO
If this happened, would it really be the worst thing in the world? YES NO
Does this thought fit with my R/S beliefs or faith? YES NO

Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

**Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 3**

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for unrealistic thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) as often as possible over the next week.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

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Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

**Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 4 (Optional)**

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for unrealistic thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) as often as possible over the next week.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

Step 1: Identify Your Worry/Stress Thought.

Step 2: Evaluate Your Thought.

Take a moment to think about each question individually before you answer it.

- Am I thinking that something negative will happen? YES NO
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Does this thought fit with my R/S beliefs or faith? YES NO

Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

**Changing Your Thoughts to Manage Worry/Stress
Skills Practice Form
Day 5 (Optional)**

Instructions for Practice: Change your worry/stress thoughts by first identifying them. Then evaluate how realistic they are. Watch out for unrealistic thoughts: For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals. Think carefully about the questions on the Skills Practice (Thought Record). Check “yes” or “no” to indicate whether your thoughts are logical. Then identify a more realistic thought, and record it on your form. Complete the Skills Practice (Thought Record) as often as possible over the next week.

Remember: This is not an easy skill to learn, especially if you have thought a certain way for a long time. For Sures, Shoulds, and Big Deals are thought habits that may have formed over a long time. It takes time to break these habits. Just like the other skills you’ve learned, changing your thoughts to manage worry/stress requires lots of practice!

Step 1: Identify Your Worry/Stress Thought.

Step 2: Evaluate Your Thought.

Take a moment to think about each question individually before you answer it.

- Am I thinking that something negative will happen? YES NO
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Does this thought fit with my R/S beliefs or faith? YES NO

Step 3: Replace Worry/Stress-Producing Thoughts with Realistic Thoughts.

Provide a more realistic thought or thoughts. *Include R/S thoughts, if applicable.*

MODULE 10: Maintaining a Calmer Life

Maintaining a Calmer Life

Take some time to go back through this workbook, and briefly review all the new skills you have learned to cope with worry/stress. Now you have a “tool box” of calming skills. You can use these skills when you find yourself in a worry-/stress-producing situation. Some calming skills may become your “favorites,” and you will use them more frequently than others. You may find that some skills work best in certain situations, while others work best in different situations.

Now it is your job to continue practicing the skills and incorporating them into your daily life.

With practice most people continue to decrease their worry/stress. You may find that your worry/stress and your ability to manage it continue to improve. You may want to set aside a certain time each day to review what you learned during the program. Or you may find it helpful to keep note cards with cues or reminders to use certain skills. The important thing is to come up with a plan that works for you.



In the next section, you will be able to identify common situations that cause you to be worried/stressed and coping skills you have found to be helpful, and come up with a plan on how to deal with worry/stress in the future.

Maintaining a Calmer Life Skills Practice Form Example

Instructions for Practice

You have now completed the Calmer Life Workbook. You have learned many new skills to decrease your worry/stress. At this point, it is very important that you continue to practice your skills to make them part of your daily life. One way to maintain the progress you have made is to plan ahead for situations that have made you worried in the past.

Here is an example to get you started:

How do you know if you are getting worried?

Situations	Thoughts, physical symptoms, behaviors	Calming Skills
<i>Conflict with family</i>	<i>“This will never end,” chest tightness, avoiding family members</i>	<i>Calming thoughts, deep breathing, changing behavior</i>
<i>Unpaid bills</i>	<i>“I can’t handle this,” butterflies in stomach, avoid opening bills</i>	<i>Make a SMART plan to face my fear and tackle the unpaid bills</i>

What are some signs that you might need additional help?

<i>I start avoiding necessary tasks, like, paying bills or making a doctor’s appointment.</i>
<i>I start feeling shortness of breath, muscle tightness and feel tired.</i>
<i>I start getting into arguments with my daughter frequently.</i>

If you do need additional help, what are some resources that you can contact?

Name of Resource	Contact Information
<i>Health Care Provider</i>	
<i>Church friends</i>	

Maintaining a Calmer Life Skills Practice Form

At this point, it is very important that you continue to practice your skills to make them part of your daily life. One way to maintain the progress you have made is to plan ahead for situations that have made you worried in the past.

How do you know if you are getting worried?

Situations	Thoughts, physical symptoms, behaviors	Calming skills

What are some signs that you might need additional help?

If you do need additional help, what are some resources that you can contact?

Name of Resource	Contact Information