

“Rule number one is, don’t sweat the small stuff. Rule number two is, it’s all small stuff.”

- **Robert Eliot**

This is a great quote because it’s a fantastic reminder that we really shouldn’t worry about anything. Most of the things we worry about are not in our control. It reminds me of the serenity prayer, which states: *“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.”* We shouldn’t worry about things that are out of our control....and most things are. If we continue to worry about things that are out of our control, we can’t enjoy today. All we have is today, so we need to live each day and each moment to its fullest. None of us is promised tomorrow, so we truly need to cherish today. So stop worrying about the things that are out of your control and enjoy the current moment.

Break Free From Worry



I don’t know about you, but I want to live every moment to its fullest....with love, peace and joy. I’ve suffered enough loss to understand that it’s important to live every day as if it’s my last.....because one day, it truly will be. I don’t want to die with regrets. I want to love with all my heart and live my life to its fullest. I’ve truly been blessed in so many ways, yet it’s easy to get caught up in the negative and focus on who and what I’ve lost or those things on which I’ve missed out. I can’t and I don’t want to worry about what could have been, because I’d rather focus on what could be. Last month, I wrote about how yesterday is history. We need to let it go. Otherwise, we worry about what tomorrow will bring. So this month, I’m going to talk to you about how to let go of worrying about tomorrow.

The COVID nonsense is finally over, but I never worried about it, because I eat healthy, I exercise and I have strong immune system. Throughout the plandemic, I continued to live my life and I didn’t listen to the fear the fake news was using to try to scare me. The VERY best thing I did for myself was to turn off the tv and to stop reading the paper. I did my own research and stopped listening to those who wanted to do me harm. For some of you, that’s a pretty big step to take, but I ask you to take it. Ask questions. Demand answers. Please stop listening to everything you see and everything you hear because all it will do is cause you worry and fear. Do your own research and stop relying on others to do it for you.

As my dad would say, *“worry is a negative emotion”* and we need to get negative emotions out of our lives. Negative emotions can have a detrimental impact on our physical health. Stress is another example of a negative emotion that can impact us physically. But I digress. I want to focus on worry, but I think you get the picture about negative emotions.

Unfortunately, chronic worry can really do a number on us over time. It can truly lead to depression, anxiety and even a nervous breakdown, in addition to impacting our physical health. Some people may say that worry is a good thing, but I respectfully disagree. They may think that if you’re a smoker and you’re worried about getting lung cancer, it’ll motivate you to quit smoking. But if that was your concern, you wouldn’t have started smoking in the first place. So clearly, you’re not concerned that your bad habit could ultimately kill you.

You may wonder how worry (and even fear) can impact you physically. Here are just a few examples of how this negative emotion can be detrimental to your health. It can cause the following:

- Increased heart rate
- Increased sweating
- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Headaches

- Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)
- Dry mouth
- Stomach problems
- Muscle tension
- Inability to focus or concentrate
- Confusion

Think about it. We all have that one friend who's a "worry wort." It's that friend who's always telling you about his or her latest concern. You know who that person is and it's the reason why you're hesitant to pick up the phone when he or she calls. Then you feel guilty for ignoring the call, which is another negative emotion.

But again, I digress. Here's the problem. That friend has most likely programmed his or her mind to stay in what I like to call the "worry loop." That friend will continue that behavior until he or she is able to deprogram those negative thoughts. They may take those negative feelings out on the people closest to them or they may self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. Each person has his or her own way of dealing with the worry. So the question is: How can those people break free from the worry cycle? Here are a few suggestions.

- **Recognize it:** Be willing to recognize that you're living in fear or worry. Do friends tell you that you're a "worry wort"? Do you think about and worry about the future rather than focus on the present moment? If you can actually recognize you're doing it, you can begin to take steps to change it.
- **Write down your Worries:** If something concerns you during the day, make a note of it, but continue with your day. Here's the thing, taking the time to write it down is harder than just thinking about what's worrying you. That will ultimately cause your worries to lose their power over you.
- **Break the Cycle:** Rather than worry about the future, focus on living in the present. Some people call this "Mindfulness." Get out of your own head and get into your body, which is existing in the moment. In the present, no worry is allowed. Make the CHOICE that you aren't going to worry about the future or things that truly aren't in your control.
- **Pray:** Some people would prefer to call this meditation. I find that when I start to go to a dark place, I have a conversation with God. It's a good reminder to "*Let go and Let God.*" He is there to take away all our troubles and all of our pain. I know that I need to be more mindful of this as I sometimes focus on all my loss rather than the gifts I have now. God's mission is to take away the negativity of worry. We just need to give it to Him. Remember, God has the night shift, so let your worries go and just go to sleep. He's got it and things will look completely different when you wake up in the morning.
- **Face Your Fears:** It's completely normal to be fearful and to worry when you come across a situation that causes you anxiety and/or worry. The best thing you can do is face it. Don't run from it! If you can't do it on your own, ask a friend or someone else you trust for help. Always remember that you're not alone. You have people in your life who love you and care about you and want to help. Don't suffer in silence. Talk about it. People who love you can't help if they don't know you're hurting.
- **Think about Whether Your Worry is Solvable or Unsolvable:** When you actually think about the problem with which you're presented, it distracts you. When you're problem-solving, you're actually trying to come up with concrete steps to try to solve it. When you just worry, you're usually unable to come up with a solution. Most problems are in fact solvable. You just have to take a step back and actually think about practical steps that will help. This is where talking to a good friend can come into play. That person can provide you with an objective opinion of your situation and help you come to a resolution.

Do whatever you need to do to release the worry in your heart and to instill more peace in your life. Find your happy place. I used to say that hiking was my happy place. But since I left the swamp of Northern Virginia for a more peaceful place, now my home also is also my happy place and that is truly a gift. I'm constantly surrounded by peace and quiet and it centers me. I look at the stars before I go to bed and it helps me release any stress that may have built up inside of me during the day. Find YOUR happy place and let go of the worry that ails you. Remember, worry saps today of its joy and it's a down payment on a problem you may never actually have. You can truly destroy your now by worrying about tomorrow.

Please stop worrying, be joyful and have a wonderful month!