

“Why Am I So Worried?”

The Situation

I'm worried about something and I can't stop thinking about it. It keeps playing on my mind, and I'm not sure whether I need to be as concerned as I feel..

Why this happens

Much of the worry we experience comes from our thoughts about a situation rather than the situation itself. These thoughts often happen unconsciously, meaning our rational thinking doesn't always get a chance to step in. When we're stressed, we're also more likely to fall into unhelpful thinking patterns, or thinking traps, which can make worries feel bigger and more convincing than they really are.

Try this

1. Talk it through with someone you trust, or write your thoughts down.
2. Ask yourself: What am I worried about, and why?
3. Challenge your assumptions by focusing on the facts.
4. Notice if you're catastrophising by focusing on the worst-case scenario.
5. Check if you're overgeneralising from one setback.
6. Ask if you're taking on responsibility that's not yours.
7. Watch out for all-or-nothing thinking and don't mistake imperfection for failure.
8. Don't let one detail become the whole story.

What the experts say

“There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.”

William Shakespeare, Hamlet



Remember

Our thoughts aren't always facts. Recognising unhelpful thinking patterns is often the first step towards seeing a situation more clearly.

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