

GAD Worry — Thought Record Sheet

Understand your worries. Find a calmer, more balanced perspective.

Generalised anxiety can make worry feel almost continuous. Your mind may move quickly from one concern to another — work, health, relationships, family, money, mistakes, appointments, the future or things that have not happened.

Worry often begins as an attempt to prepare, prevent problems or gain certainty. But when it becomes repetitive, it can leave you feeling less prepared and more exhausted.

What this thought record does

This worksheet helps you slow a worry down and look at it more clearly. You will identify the trigger, separate possibility from probability, decide whether the worry is practical or hypothetical, notice behaviours that keep worry going and choose a proportionate next step.

Practical and hypothetical worry

Practical worry concerns a real problem that can be acted on now or soon: “I have a bill due and need to make a plan.”

Hypothetical worry is usually built around “what if?” questions about uncertain future events: “What if everything goes wrong?”

Both can feel equally urgent. The helpful response, however, is different: practical worries may need problem-solving; hypothetical worries often need us to tolerate uncertainty and return attention to the present.

My GAD Worry Thought Record

Date: _____ Time: _____

1. What triggered the worry?

What happened just before I noticed myself worrying?

2. What is the worry?

Write the main "what if?" thought or prediction:

3. What am I feeling?

Emotion(s): _____

Anxiety intensity: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What is happening in my body?

☐ Tension ☐ Restlessness ☐ Racing heart ☐ Stomach discomfort
☐ Headache / pressure ☐ Shallow breathing ☐ Tiredness ☐ Other: _____

5. Is this practical or hypothetical?

- ☐ There is a real problem I can take action on now / soon.
- ☐ This is mainly a "what if?" about something that may happen.
- ☐ It contains elements of both.

6. How much do I believe the feared prediction?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100%

Possibility Is Not the Same as Probability

An anxious mind can treat anything that is possible as though it is likely. This page helps you widen the view without demanding absolute certainty.

What am I predicting?

What evidence supports this prediction?

What evidence or information does not fit it?

What are other possible outcomes?

1.

2.

3.

What is the most likely outcome based on what I know?

If the difficult outcome happened, what resources could help me cope?

A balanced thought

Example: *"This is possible, but I do not know that it will happen. I can deal with what is actually happening and respond if more information becomes available."*

My balanced thought:

What Keeps My Worry Going?

Worry can be maintained by behaviours that feel helpful in the short term but keep attention focused on threat and uncertainty.

Worry behaviour	Do I do this?	What happens afterwards?
Repeatedly ask for reassurance	■	
Search online for answers	■	
Mentally rehearse every possible outcome	■	
Make repeated lists / plans	■	
Check messages, dates or information repeatedly	■	
Avoid decisions until I feel certain	■	
Procrastinate because I fear making a mistake	■	
Replay conversations	■	
Try to eliminate every possible risk	■	

What does worry promise me?

- It will prepare me ■ It will stop bad things happening
■ It proves I care ■ It helps me avoid mistakes ■ It gives me control
■ Other: _____

Does worry actually deliver that?

Choose the Right Response

If it is a practical worry

What is the problem? _____

What options do I have? _____

What is one realistic action? _____

When will I do it? _____

Once you have made a reasonable plan, notice if your mind keeps asking you to solve the same problem again.

If it is a hypothetical worry

Try acknowledging the uncertainty without continuing the debate:

"I notice I am having another what-if worry. I cannot solve an uncertain future by thinking about it repeatedly. I can return to what is happening now."

Quick GAD Worry Record

Trigger	_____
My worry	_____
Practical or hypothetical?	_____
Most likely outcome	_____
Balanced response	_____
Action if needed	_____
What I will return to now	_____

A Message From Me

Worry can make you feel as though you must keep thinking until you finally reach certainty.

The problem is that many of the things we worry about do not have a completely certain answer. The future contains unknowns, other people's choices are outside our control, and even the best plan cannot remove every possibility.

That is why managing GAD is not simply about finding better answers to every worry. It is also about learning when a problem genuinely needs action and when anxiety is asking you to keep solving something that cannot be solved right now.

Try to notice the difference.

If there is something practical you can do, make a realistic plan and take the next step. If the worry is hypothetical, see whether you can allow the uncertainty to exist without giving it the rest of your day.

You may not feel instantly calm. That is okay. Progress can be returning your attention even while some anxiety remains.

One worry does not have to become an hour of worrying. One uncertain thought does not need a perfect answer.

If worry feels difficult to control, happens across many areas of life and is affecting sleep, concentration, relationships or daily functioning, consider seeking professional support.

Space to Breathe Therapy

This worksheet is intended for psychoeducation and self-reflection and is not a diagnostic tool or a substitute for individual mental-health assessment or treatment.