WORKSHEET 14 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

What does worrying do for me?

Beliefs about worry and rumination

AIM

Identify what the person believes about their worries, whether “useful” (“they prepare me”) or “dangerous” (“I’ll go mad, I can’t stop”), because these beliefs keep the loop going.

WHO IT IS FOR

Generalised anxiety, persistent rumination, people who say they can’t “stop thinking”.

DURATION

20 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Ask: “What advantages do you see in worrying?” Then: “What could happen if you worried too much?”
2. Note both types of belief and the degree of conviction (0-100%).
3. Examine the positive beliefs: has worrying really prepared for or prevented anything? At what cost?
4. Examine the belief in uncontrollability with an experiment: deliberately postpone worrying (worksheet 02) and observe what happens.
5. Rate the conviction again.

POINTS TO WATCH

> First welcome the beliefs without arguing with them: they often have a history. Don’t let the person conclude that they are “to blame” for worrying.

REFERENCES

Wells, A. (2009). Metacognitive Therapy for Anxiety and Depression. Guilford.

Freeston, M. H., Rhéaume, J., Letarte, H., Dugas, M. J. & Ladouceur, R. (1994). Why do people worry? Personality and Individual Differences, 17(6), 791-802.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 14 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

What I believe about my worries

We often believe that worrying helps (“it prepares me”) or that it is dangerous (“I can’t stop”). These ideas keep thoughts looping. Take time to look at them.

1. What I think worrying gives me (advantages).
2. What I fear about my worries (dangers, loss of control).
3. How much I believe it, from 0 to 100%.
4. What my real experience shows, when I look closely.

What I believe about my worries	I believe it %	What experience shows	I believe it % (after)

What could I test to check one of these beliefs?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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