

Changing Worried Thoughts

Directions: Under the first column, write down what happened when you started to feel worried. Next, write down your main fear or what you worried would happen. In the next column, write down other less scary thoughts that talk back to your worries. In the last column, rate how likely you think it is that you first worried thought will come true. 0% means there is no chance that the thought will happen and 100% means it will definitely happen. See below for examples.

Changing Worried Thoughts Examples

EVENT	WORRIED THOUGHT	TALKING BACK THOUGHTS	CHANCES THE WORRY WILL COME TRUE 0–100%
I failed my math test.	I'm going to fail this class and will have to repeat it. My parents are going to kill me. I'll be grounded for a year.	While it's not great that I failed this test, there are 3 more tests that I can do better on so I probably won't fail. My parents may be disappointed in me, but I know they won't kill me. I'll tell them what my plan is for studying for the next test.	10%
I was invited to my friend's house who lives on the other side of town. I'll have to drive across a bridge to get there.	I'm not going to be able to go to my friends because I can't go across the bridge. I'll have a panic attack and wreck the car before I get there.	I need to remember that bridges are very sturdy and well built. The chances of the bridge falling down are very small especially if you think of all of the cars that cross the bridge. Why would the bridge fall down at the very moment that I'm about to cross it. That seems sort of silly. I'll just try to remember that the worst that will happen is that I might feel a little nervous.	5%
I have to give a report in front of my class.	I'm sure that I will get so scared that I'll mess the whole thing up and then everyone will laugh at me. I might even faint or throw up in front of the class.	Most people get a little nervous when they talk in front of other people so they will understand if I seem a little nervous. No one that I'm talking to knows as much about this as I do, since I have studied up on the subject. I will practice ahead of time in front of my family to help me be more confident. The worst that will happen is that I'll feel nervous which won't kill me.	50%

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Compiled from the following sources:

Burns, D. D. (1980). *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy* (preface by Aaron T. Beck). New York: Wm. Morrow and Co (hardbound); New American Library, 1981 (paperback). Revised and updated, 1999.

<http://www.get.gg/freedownloads2.htm>