

WORRY POSTPONEMENT

We all worry. It is a fact of life that most of us will worry about something at some point or another. Worry can be productive or unproductive. Unproductive worry in particular can very interfering in our daily lives, making it difficult to concentrate & focus on what we both need & want to do. **Worry postponement** is a useful strategy that involves minimising this interfering effect of worry by training our minds to defer worry to a set time period in the day.

Create a worry period:

- Start by choosing a set time, place & duration to worry each day. For example: 5pm, in the laundry for 20 minutes
- Make sure you adhere to these parameters each day
- Don't schedule your worry period to close to bedtime
- Don't conduct your worry period in a place where you normally engage in pleasant activities e.g. bedroom, lounge room

Worry during your set worry period:

- At your designated worry period, reflect on the worries you noted down during the day
- Only worry about those worries that are still bothering you
- Try & worry about one topic at a time. Exhaust all thoughts about this topic before moving on to the next
- Consider writing down your worries, saying them out loud, &/or recording them on your phone rather than just worrying in your head
- Try not to distract yourself during your worry period
- If all or some of the worries have passed or no longer seem relevant, then let them be
- If you still feel as though you need to worry about some of things then do so only for your allocated period of worry
- Once you have worried for your allocated time period, get up & leave your designated worry place & refocus your attention on other activities
- Thank your worries & tell them you will see them again at the same time tomorrow

Postpone worry:

- As soon as you become aware of worry defer it to your designated worry period
- Write down your worries briefly on a piece of paper or in your phone
- Tell yourself you will come back to the worry at the allocated time
- Remind yourself you have better things to do right now than focus on your worries
- You may like to have a sense of humour about the worry by saying "Thank you for reminding me of these concerns, but I will get back to you at our scheduled appointment"
- Bring your focus back to the present & focus on what you are doing in the moment
- Commit yourself to engaging in activity that is pleasant, productive, satisfying & rewarding

- ✓ Don't underestimate your ability to postpone your worry
- ✓ Don't skip any days. Be consistent & disciplined with your practice
- ✓ Break your worry period into two shorter time frames if you find one longer period too difficult
- ✓ Don't focus on worries that relate to traumatic memories as this is likely to be too distressing