Anxiety Journal

Anxiety: A Daily Log for Worries

This anxiety journal is a short daily log where you write down your worries, save them for a set time, and later check what really happened. It brings together three tools from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for worry: worry postponement, tested by psychologist Thomas Borkovec, sorting worries the way psychologist Michel Dugas teaches, and checking whether worries came true, studied by psychologists Lucas LaFreniere and Michelle Newman.

1 How to use this journal

- **Catch it.** When a worry shows up during the day, write it down in a few words. Tell yourself you will come back to it later.
- **Save it.** Set a worry time of 15 to 30 minutes, at the same time and place each day, and not right before bed. Go through your list then.
- **Sort it.** At worry time, ask whether each worry is about a problem you face now or a what-if that may never happen.
- **Act on it or let it be.** For a problem you face now, write one step you can take. For a what-if, notice that you cannot know for sure, and gently bring your attention back to what you are doing.
- **Check it.** A few days later, write down what really happened.

Why does this work? *When worry can happen anywhere, it gets linked to many places and moments. Saving it for one set time weakens those links. Sorting worries shows you which ones you can act on. In one small study of people with generalized anxiety disorder who kept a worry log like this, about 91% of their worries did not come true, and people whose worries more often turned out untrue tended to improve more in treatment.*

2 Example and your worry time

Date and anxiety (0-10)	What I worried about	Problem now or what-if?	What I did at worry time	What really happened
Tue, 7	*My boss wants to meet. Am I in trouble?*	*What-if*	*Noticed I can't know yet. Went back to my work.*	*She wanted my ideas for a new project.*

My daily worry time (when and where):

Example: 5:30 pm, at the kitchen table

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

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3 My anxiety journal

Date and anxiety (0-10)	What I worried about	Problem now or what-if?	What I did at worry time	What really happened

4 Look back after a week

How many of my worries came true? Were the ones that did as bad as I expected?

What is one thing I learned about my worries this week?

If anxiety makes it hard to work, sleep, or enjoy your days, a therapist trained in CBT for anxiety can help. If you are in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, call or text 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

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