



# Wellbeing

## Anxiety

### Identifying and Managing Anxiety Part 3

As part of this series on anxiety, we've talked about identifying the signs of anxiety and what that might mean on an individual basis - whether you notice more physical, cognitive or behavioural symptoms - and also touched upon a few ways to understand situations or triggers for anxiety, and start to manage it through balancing and rationalising negative biased thinking.

In this resource, we will be sharing two more tools to help support with the management of anxious thoughts. The first, a set of questions we can ask ourselves when we find ourselves stuck in the depths of worry, and the latter a helpful diagram to use when we need to collect our thoughts.

#### Thought Challenging - The 4 'U's

Worry can hinder our progress and enjoyment in life. It can be helpful to us at times, getting us to pay close attention to things, or if turned into a plan or problem solved it can help us feel more prepared. But worry without action is energy draining and pointless. Sometimes, we need to visit the 4 'U's; is my worry Unimportant, Unlikely, Uncertain or Uncontrollable?

To find out whether what you're worrying about is worth your time or indeed pointless, ask yourself the following things:

##### 1. How important is it?

- Will the thing I am worried about right now matter in 5-years-time?
- Where would I put this worry on a scale of actual negative real experiences I have had in my life?
- How much is this worry worth? Is it really, honestly, worth the energy I'm putting in?

##### 2. How unlikely is it?

- A lot of worries start with 'what if....?' But really how likely is this thing to happen? Don't waste your time, energy and happiness on something that is unlikely to happen, or that you have little control over.

##### 3. Is it an uncertainty?

- We don't know how things will turn out at the end of the day; many things we worry about haven't happened yet. We can only take action on things we know are happening. It is only once we have the results of an event, that we can take action and accept/move on from it. Spending time planning for eventualities will also drain our energy and since we really don't know what the outcome might be, it can lead us down a rabbit hole we don't want to be in.

##### 4. Can I control this?

- We have no control over many of the things we worry about, and worrying won't change this, or the outcome! Worry about the uncontrollable is pointless, although hard to let go at times.

Try using the worry tree on the next page to sort your worries into actionable or energy drainers.



# The Worry Tree

