

How to stop worrying and start living

I am approached regularly by people who live with worries/stress and in fear and so I have been thinking about offering a simple guide on worry. But then I remembered a book I read 30 years ago, and recently re-read this and remarkably this book is still relevant today. It was Dale Carnegie's book, 'How to stop worrying and start living'; its brilliant, concise, funny and engaging. So, instead of trying to reinvent a poor imitation of this marvelous wheel, here is a summary of his book, from 1948:

Fundamental facts you should know about worry

1. One day at a time. Don't stew about the futures. Just live each day until bedtime.
2. The next time Trouble--with a Capital T--backs you up in a corner, try this magic formula,
 - Ask yourself, "What is the worst that can possibly happen if I can't solve my problem?"
 - Prepare yourself mentally to accept the worst - if necessary.
 - Then calmly try to improve upon the worst - which you have already mentally agreed to accept.
3. Remind yourself of the exorbitant price you can pay for worry in terms of your health. "Those who do not know how to fight worry die young."

Basic techniques in analyzing worry

1. Get the facts. Remember that "half the worry in the world is caused by people trying to make decisions before they have sufficient knowledge on which to base a decision."
2. After carefully weighing all the facts, come to a decision.
3. Once a decision is carefully reached, ACT! Get busy carrying out your decision - and dismiss all anxiety about the outcome.
4. When you, or any of your associates/friends/family, are tempted to worry about a problem, write out and answer the following questions:
 - What is the problem?
 - What is the cause of the problem?
 - What are all possible solutions?
 - What is the best solution?

How to break the worry habit before it breaks you

1. Crowd worry out of your mind by keeping busy. Plenty of action is one of the best therapies.
2. Don't fuss about trifles. Don't permit little things - the mere termites of life - to ruin your happiness.
3. Use the law of averages to eliminate your worries. Ask yourself: "What are the odds against this thing's happening at all?"
4. Co-operate with the inevitable. If you know a circumstance is beyond your power to change or revise, say to yourself: "It is so; it cannot be otherwise."
5. Put a 'stop' order on your worries. Decide just how much anxiety a thing may be worth - and refuse to give it anymore.
6. Let the past bury its dead. Don't saw sawdust.

Seven ways to cultivate a mental attitude that will bring you peace and happiness

1. Let's fill our minds with thoughts of peace, courage, health, and hope, for "our life is what our thoughts make it."
2. Let's never try to get even with our enemies, because if we do we will hurt ourselves far more than we hurt them. Never waste a minute thinking about people we don't like.
3. Instead of worrying about ingratitude, let's expect it.
4. Remember that the only way to find happiness is not to expect gratitude - but to give for the joy of giving.
5. Remember that gratitude is a "cultivated" trait; so, if we want our children to be grateful, we must train them to be grateful.
6. Here's a golden oldie, 'Count your blessings - not your troubles!'
7. Let's not imitate others. Let's find ourselves and be ourselves, for "envy is ignorance" and "imitation is suicide."
8. When fate hands us a lemon, make a lemonade :)
9. Forget our own unhappiness - by trying to create a little happiness for others. "When you are good to others, you are best to yourself."

The perfect way to conquer worry

1. Meditate

How to keep from worrying about criticism

1. Unjust criticism is often a disguised compliment. It often means that you have aroused jealousy and envy. Remember that no one ever kicks a dead dog.

2. Do the very best you can; and then put up your old umbrella and keep the rain of criticism from running down the back of your neck.
3. Let's keep a record of the foolish things we have done and criticize ourselves. Ask for unbiased, helpful, constructive criticism.

Six ways to prevent fatigue and worry and keep your energy and spirits high

1. Rest before you get tired.
2. Learn to relax at your work.
3. Learn to relax at home.
4. Apply these four good workings habits:
 - Clear your desk of all papers except those relating to the immediate problem at hand.
 - Do things in the order of their importance.
 - When you face a problem, solve it then and there if you have the facts to make a decision.
 - Learn to organize, deputize, and supervise.
5. To prevent worry and fatigue, put enthusiasm into your work.
6. Remember, no one was ever killed by lack of sleep. It is worrying about insomnia that does the damage - not the insomnia.