



Four Problems With Worry

By "worry" I mean the debilitating, nagging sense of doom that (a) goes further than concern and sympathy, (b) does not involve any remedial activity to solve a real problem, and (c) is characterized by habitual, constant churning thoughts of despair. It is often unreasonable and a prelude to depression.

Webster's Dictionary says: "to feel or express undue care and anxiety; to manifest disquietude or pain; to be fretful ..."

1. Worry is often out of proportion with reality. It becomes an emotion that is difficult to contain in proper, reasonable bounds. Illustration: Your teenage son is ten minutes later than the usual arrival time from school. Your first thoughts may be well within the range of possibility: traffic, he had some necessary task at school or someone needed a ride home. But as the clock ticks your thoughts move away from the probable toward the tragic or bizarre. A traffic accident ... he wrecked the car and it was his fault ... there is serious injury ... several are dead ... And as the delay goes on for a few more minutes, our imagination develops other images, even darker. This seems to be the nature of worry; it is so difficult to contain these negative thoughts of dread. A man once said, "Don't tell me that worry doesn't do any good. I know better. The things I worry about don't ever happen!" Isn't it so. A Swedish proverb says, "Worry gives a small thing a big shadow."

2. Worry is distracting. It is so hard to concentrate when you are worrying; it is troublesome to deal with people in a kind and friendly manner. Illustration: You are at a crisis point in your financial condition; bills are soon due, and the money isn't in the bank. As the due dates approaches, you are less productive in your job and it is increasingly harder for your loved ones to deal with your negative mood. (Have you considered - worry over finances can lead to less responsibility; therefore, less money and more worry!!) Worry robs us of the energy we need to apply to all our life's responsibilities. Continued on page 3

