

EXERCISE 12.1: STARTING TO SPOT YOUR WORRY RULES

This exercise will help you work out and spot your worry rules. You will need your notebook to make a record of your answers. In the blank space insert the name of a loved one, child, family member, colleague or friend, or an event like an exam, a meeting at work, work or money. Think of what you worry about most and answer the questions focused on that. In Block 1, there are two versions of each question, a general version (a) and a more focused version (b). Think about two or three different things with which to fill in the blanks. It will feel a little repetitive, but that's OK; we are looking for themes and links to emerge and this will help.

Block 1

- 1a. Supposing you didn't worry, what would that say about you?
- 1b. Supposing you didn't worry about _____, what would that say about you?
- 2a. Supposing you worried less, what would that say about you?
- 2b. Supposing you worried less about _____, what would that say about you?

The cradle of worry

- 3a. Supposing you stopped worrying tomorrow, would you be bothered by this? If so, why?
- 3b. Supposing you stopped worrying tomorrow about _____, would you be bothered by this? If so, why?
- 4a. Supposing you worried less, would anything happen?
- 4b. Supposing you worried less about _____, would anything happen?
- 5a. What are the advantages of worrying?
- 5b. What are the advantages of worrying about _____?
- 6a. What are the disadvantages of worrying?
- 6b. What are the disadvantages of worrying about _____?
- 7a. Does worrying help you in any way? If so, how?
- 7b. Does worrying about _____ help you in any way? If so, how?

Block 2

- 1. If I didn't worry (about _____) so much, then

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2. If I didn't worry (about _____), then
3. I should worry (about _____) because
4. Worrying (about _____) helps
5. Worrying (about _____) stops or prevents
6. I ought to worry (about _____) because
7. I should worry (about _____) or may happen.
8. I worry (about _____) to
9. I worry to stop or prevent

Review what you have discovered in this exercise. Does it help you to understand why you worry in certain situations? Or does it help you to understand what motivates you to worry? What comes to mind? Write it down and return to it once you have read more. What rules have you discovered? Write them down.