

# What does it mean to worry (about something)?

I went along to my Vineyard meeting at the Methodist Church, Radstock. Today being the first Sunday of the month, time is spent on doing good works. This time we were asked to go round the streets giving a bunch of daffodils to passers-by and to appropriately ask them about their faith. We were to tell people that we were with the local church and that we would like to pray for them. I am quite good (in fact very good) at talking to strangers in the street but this one was a challenge to say the least.

However, not knowing that this was going to happen we had arranged to meet a good friend, Graham, in Dobbies Garden Centre in Shepton Mallet shortly after 12.00 so we did not feel able to take part in this. Also (perhaps an excuse) it was a cold Sunday morning with very few people around.

Anyway, during the breakfast I struck up a conversation with another attendee, John, and we started to talk about worry. I confessed to worrying too much even though I could see that it did no good neither in the short term nor the long term.



I decided there and then to write a piece for the diary. Here goes.

What is the purpose of worrying. 'He had a worried look on his face'. 'I was worried that they would not return home' or 'I was worried that I did not do enough to pass the exam'.

It is interesting that in these cases, nothing can be done to change the situation. It is out of our control. I found this diagram on the Internet which I find helpful as a starting point for thinking.



So we could be 'worrying needlessly'. Will my social security check arrive tomorrow? I have no evidence that the system has failed so on what am I basing my concern. Do I have a lack of faith in things working for me? Do I feel I am unworthy to receive certain things? Is the 'surface concern' an indication of other deeper matters that have not been resolved?

If I have no basis then I am a 'worrier' and a good purpose would be served by focusing my mind on other things. I must not let the worry control me for if I let worry loose on my system it will change the flow of blood, affect the secretion of enzymes and hormones and make me less than happy with my

lot. All this caused by something that has no base in fact.

However, think of the mother who has the strong intuitive feeling that her son, working in another country far away, has had an accident. Two days later she receives a knock on the door from two police who tell her that her son is deceased. You could say that she had every right to worry though she did not know the cause. This is the function of intuition or as we would call it 'quantum entanglement'. *'We are all members one of another'*, as it says in the New Testament.

The bible has a lot to say about worry or anxiety (a close relative).

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7

**This implies the need to keep our compass pointing in the right direction irrespective of what is currently going on:**

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

**This is about re-focusing**

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."

**This is about priorities**

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothes?"

**This is about context (of the worrying thing)**

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

### **This is about reassurance**

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

### **What’s the point in worrying?**

“Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?”

### **The blessings of trusting**

“When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.”

“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.”

### **About our responsibility to others**

“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.”  
– Proverbs 12:25

I found these most encouraging especially when read together. It could form the basis of a meditation or even a longer session or workshop.

Here are some more quotes from other sources:

**Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind.** If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained." "Worry often gives a small thing a big shadow." "What else does anxiety about the future bring you but sorrow upon sorrow?"



"Chronic anxiety is a state more undesirable than any other, and we will try almost any maneuver to eliminate it. Modern man is living in anxious anticipation of destruction. Such anxiety can be easily eliminated by self-destruction. As a German saying puts it: 'Better an end with terror than a terror without end.'"

– Robert E. Neale, "The Art of Dying"

"Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future."

– Deepak Chopra



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All the above I find very challenging to broaden my mind, to remind myself of the immortal spirit that I am and will return to when I pass...

We can justify many actions which may be cruel. This is more true if we do not face the source of our own anxiety. Would a happy person chastise and hurt others? What string of justifications would they use to explain their behavior. Are they mimicking what hurt was done to them or is this just an excuse?

It may be that our anxiety causes us to strike out inappropriately against others when the matters has nothing to do with them but with our inner resource and maturity. The actions, word, or even the sight of another is enough of a catalyst to spark us off and cause undignified behavior.

This anxiety question looks more and more like the need for self discipline and self forgiveness and accepting the Love of God plus a good dose of self examination.

In my own case on a daily basis in order to minimize my anxiety about what might happen, I always arrange a 'plan B' for what if... the car breaks down... I lose my tickets ... I fall ill... and this does enable me to start a new journey with a more peaceful heart. Emergencies cannot be foreseen. We live in a physical world so we must be prepared.