

Treatment Suggestions for the Pessimism and Worry Schema

1. **Track and list** of how infrequently your negative expectations come true.
2. **Notice and list** how often you have negative or pessimistic thinking. Ask a trusted friend or spouse to help with this list. Then practice looking objectively at your life and notice its positives.
3. As you stop exaggerating the negatives in your life and focus instead on the positives, notice how this change impacts how you feel.
4. If a past negative experience was within your control, problem solve how to correct the problem so it will not happen again.
5. Notice and experience that there is no basis for pessimism about a future event even if you have experienced uncontrollable negative events in the past.
6. Challenge the idea that it is okay to assume a pessimistic perspective about a future event, so you avoid being disappointed. Recognize that if you expect something to go wrong and it does go wrong then you do not necessarily feel better having worried about it. Also, recognize that if you expect something to go right and it goes wrong that you do not feel that much worse.
7. Notice that whatever you gain by anticipating negative outcomes does not outweigh the cost of living day to day with chronic worry and tension.
8. **List** the advantages and disadvantages of assuming the worst. Then experiment with both positions, observing how each position effects how you feel.
9. Have an imaginary dialogue between your negative pessimistic side and your positive optimistic side. Notice the benefits of taking a more positive stance toward life.

10. Watch yourself to see if you engage in unnecessary behaviors designed to prevent mistakes. Decrease those behaviors and notice how it impacts how you feel.

11. Challenge yourself to not complain. Have a friend or trusted spouse agree to confront you if you do complain.

12. Ask directly to get your needs met. Then assess if complaining is an indirect way to attempt to get your needs met.

13. Schedule activities just for fun. While doing these fun things notice that life is not about preventing "bad things" but is about getting "good things."