

Breaking the Worry Cycle

Dr. Chris Sopa | Industrial-Organizational Psychologist, Speaker & Writer

The Core Truth About Worry

Worrying never leads to a solution; it only revs up your emotions. Because emotions overwhelm logic, telling yourself to "just stop worrying" never works. Instead, you have to actively interrupt the loop and give your mind the structure it needs.

4 Strategies to Tame the Worry Loop

- **1. Identify What Lies Beneath:** Worry is usually a mask for deeper emotions like fear or vulnerability. Gather facts to calm the unknown, but know when to stop before research triggers panic.
- **2. Plan for the Worst-Case Scenario:** Mapping out the absolute worst outcome, along with listing the people, resources, and steps you would use to handle it, gives your brain the predictability it craves.
- **3. Use Visual Compartmentalization:** Your subconscious thinks in pictures. Visualize packing your worry away into a wooden chest, locking it, and telling yourself you will only return to it if necessary.
- **4. Flip the What If?:** Stop obsessing over negative outcomes (such as wondering if it fails) and deliberately challenge your mind with the positive: *What if it goes right?*

The Framework: Pause, Question, Choose

When you feel a worry spiral starting, run through this simple three-step process:

Step	Action to Take
1. Pause	Stop what you are doing, take a deep breath, and ground yourself in the present moment.
2. Question	Ask yourself: <i>Is what I am worrying about happening right now, or am I future-izing my anxiety?</i>
3. Choose	Determine what is within your control today. Take one small action step , or deliberately redirect your focus if nothing can be changed right now.

For more episodes, tools, and resources, visit ChrisSopa.com

© Dr. Chris Sopa International, Inc. All rights reserved.