



THE ART OF WORRYING

I'll bet that if I gave a signal, every reader would be able to come up with something to worry about in a millisecond. There is always something to worry about, isn't there? And I bet that if you think back to someone who had a great impact on your life, they probably had a tendency to worry as well. When they worried about you as a youngster and kept checking to see if you were ok, that may have made you angry. It felt like they didn't trust you. But they might have said something like "I trust you ... it's those others I don't trust". Saying that probably didn't make you feel any better.

Worry is like a rocking horse ... you go like hell but you don't get anywhere.

My simple definition of worrying is ***trying to control the uncontrollable***. Let's face it, if you've read the morning paper or listened to the news on TV, there are plenty of things going on that are beyond our control and I'm not sure it's just because we're better informed today than ever before. It's because **there just is!** But upon giving worry some solid thought, we might conclude that it doesn't have as much to do with ***what we're worried about*** as it does ***our need to be in control***. Then, of course, there are those who offer snide remarks like ***worrying must really work because most of what we worry about never happens!***

Should worry go to an extreme, I see it as taking on the form of becoming obsessed. Being obsessed with something is our need to continuously think about the same thing over and over again. To take it to another extreme, obsessiveness can move into an ***obsessive compulsive pattern*** which affects our behavior and functioning to the point of it affecting our thinking and functioning in harmful ways. For those suffering from this diagnosis, there is medication and a program of therapy that is recommended to help manage the compulsive disorder. But let's stay with the topic of worrying.

Worrying has its roots in ***guilt*** ... guilt about many things in life which does not need a rational basis. The pattern begins early-on and becomes more prevalent with time. However, I've tried to help people who have a worry problem by asking them to go through some exercise steps on a consistent basis. It usually takes some time for any benefits to be derived and so it is important that practicing this exercise be accomplished at least once a day. It will only take about five minutes of your time. Now, I'm going to outline those steps for you to try if you wish.

STEPS TO REDUCE WORRYING

- Initially I would recommend that you learn and master the relaxation response exercise that I've outlined toward the end of this book. Remember that feeling relaxed provides us with a feeling of control which is the basic problem with respect to worrying;
- You're going to need a stopwatch or similar device for this exercise;
- Now I want you to choose something to worry about that has happened or is about to happen;
- You now have five (5) minutes to worry about that issue. What I mean by that is that ***you must worry about it for five minutes*** ... no more but ***no less either***.
- You may find after practicing for some while that it will become more difficult to sustain your worrying for the full five minutes. Keep track of how much ***less time*** you can perform the exercise over a period of three consecutive practice sessions;
- Set your time limit for whatever that time might be and let that be your new minimum time that you need to spend worrying;
- The time should diminish even further with practice. Continue setting the new time limit down until you have reached "0" and have completed the exercise successfully;
- Now, choose another issue to worry about and go through the same routine noted above.

A Brief Biographical Sketch

After an over 40 year career as a professional psychotherapist and Director of The Sports Stress Clinic in Amherst, NY, Charles Bonasera came to Florida and decided to use the benefits of his previous professional experiences in his new roles of Consultant in Life Management and Business Coaching as well as his expertise as a Motivational Speaker. He once again became involved with athletes in different sports training them with his techniques to help them develop and maintain focus as well as staying in their zone. Much of his training methods are derived from the CD collection he developed under the heading of WIN-WIN SECRETS as the President of Personal Identity Controls. This collection consists of thirty-six programs dealing with vital issues in the management of stress.

Another role that he adopted to add to his professional career was that of Author. Early in the 1980's he wrote Guide to a Life Management Process which he has re-written as a workbook to successfully help people manage their stress which includes his own Working Model. As a result in his interest in golf and realizing that it was essentially a "mind game", he wrote The Mental Side of Golf which can benefit the beginner as well as professionals playing the game of golf.

He then compiled over five-hundred sayings that he had developed in the course of his professional career as stimuli to help people change patterns in their lives entitled How to Stay Well and Live Life to the Fullest. This was followed by a book

documenting case studies around disruptive life patterns including ways to change them under the name of How in the Hell Did This Happen to Me? Both his personal involvement in sports as a participant, coach, manager and in his role in officiating, inspired him to write a primer for parents and coaches entitled The Legend of Little League.

Charles invites you to view his website at www.charlesmbonasera.com as well as to write with your comments and questions to his e-mail address (charles@charlesmbonasera.com). He would also be very happy to communicate with his readers by telephone should they desire. His professional motto is “seeking alternative methods to happiness” and wishes those touched by his words to practice the three secrets to a happy life: “enjoy life and enjoy it thoroughly ... develop and maintain a sense of humor ... bring as much love into your life as possible.