

Getting a Good Night's Sleep with Constructive Worrying

When things are bothering us, we use our problem solving skills to figure out how to solve the issue. This is useful, but sometimes our worries pop up when we're trying to fall asleep and our active mind keeps us up longer than we'd like. During the early evening (at least 2 hours before bed) take about fifteen minutes to do this Constructive Worrying exercise. Here's how it is done:

1. Write down a problem that tends to come to mind at bedtime, and list it in the "Concerns" column.
2. Think of the first step you could take to help fix it. Write the step down in the "Solutions" column. If you know how to completely solve the problem, write down the solution. If you decide that the issue is minor and you will just deal with it when the time comes, then write that down. If you are stumped by the problem and want to get someone's help, write that down.
3. Repeat this for any other worries you have that might come to mind at bedtime.
4. Put the completed Constructive Worry sheet beside your bed and forget about it.
5. At bedtime, if you begin to worry, remind yourself that you have dealt with the problems. Remind yourself that you will be working on them again tomorrow evening.
6. The next evening, revisit your Constructive Worry list in the early evening and see if you can add any additional solutions or if there are any concerns you can remove.
7. An additional benefit of this exercise may be less worrying during the daytime.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Concern: | Solution: 1. 2. 3. |
| Concern: | Solution: 1. 2. 3. |
| Concern: | Solution: 1. 2. 3. |

(adapted from Carney & Waters, 2006)

If you would like to have a confidential, supportive conversation, feel free to schedule an appointment with a personal counselor at the Health & Counseling Centre by calling 905-828-5255. You may also call Good2Talk at 1-866-925-5454 for professional counselling, mental health information and connections to local resources.