

Worry. What a Waste!

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Nothing is so wretched or foolish
as to anticipate misfortunes. What
madness is it to be expecting evil
before it comes.

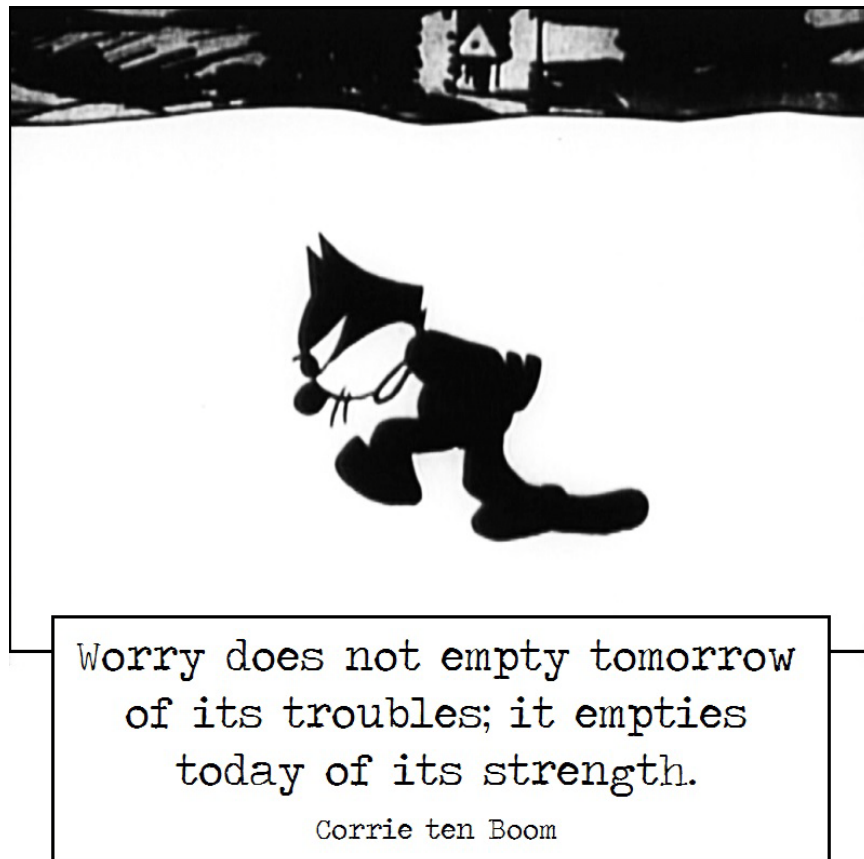
Seneca

Over the centuries, the verb “to worry” has gradually changed. It originally meant to strangle or choke someone. Yet even today I think it’s remained true to its roots. It never lost its suffocating connotation. Worry stifles constructive action and continues to shorten people’s lives.

A ninety-year-old man was once asked what he attributed his longevity to. “I reckon,” he said, with a twinkle in his eye, “it’s because most nights I went to bed and slept when I should have sat up and worried.” ~Dorothea Kent

When you worry, you dwell on the possibility of negative outcomes in the future, things that *could* happen but haven’t. Many of the scenarios never unfold. And if

they do, the time and energy we've spent worrying doesn't make them any less difficult or negative. The effort of worrying has been wasted.



Giving way to anxiety can be a tremendous drain on your energy. You kiss the present goodbye and embrace the prospect of a disturbing future. The imagination creates millions of situations and scenarios and prevents you from living in the now.

In addition, worry is self-centered. It seems to get worse the more you focus on yourself and spiral deeper and deeper inside. What if you could deflect and replace your own concerns with feelings of compassion for someone else?

So there you are, stressing yourself out. Why not redirect your worry? For example, there are many people in your life who have serious needs that aren't being met. When worry comes on strong, take that as a signal to call friends who need support and give them some of the time you're wasting. In other words, take the positive step of refocusing your worry.

Here's wishing you hope and optimism. Try to set aside your worries. You cannot be free while remaining attached to them. How can I be so sure, you ask? Well, putting it in a roundabout way, if they had paid me for all the time I've spent worrying, I'd be very, very rich by now.