



# MoodNews

UPDATES FROM THE MOOD TREATMENT CENTER | SPRING 2017

## How to Worry

Dwelling, worrying, over-analyzing, obsessing, brooding. Most people with mood problems have a lot of experience with this type of thinking. Psychologists call it *ruminating*, and it's a habit that can get in the way of recovery.

Mental habits are tricky business, because you can't just say "no" to them. When you tell yourself, "I need to stop thinking about my divorce," you're actually reminding your brain about that divorce; it's a vicious cycle.

Nor is becoming worry-free a reasonable option. Worry is like the sun. It's good to spend some time under it, but too much exposure can damage the skin.

One way out of this Chinese finger-trap is to recognize the good side of worry and cultivate its more effective forms. Here are some tips:

*Effective worry:* Thinking about a problem in specific terms, with details about what actually happened. Who was involved? What was said? What led to the problem?

*Unhelpful worry:* Thinking in general or global terms, such as "Everything was a mess."

*Effective worry:* Asking answerable questions, like "Where are some

good places to meet people my age?" Questions that start with *How?* tend to work better than *Why?* questions.

*Unhelpful worry:* Asking unanswerable questions, like worrying about the future or analyzing other people's intentions.

*Effective worry:* Leads to a decision or plan.

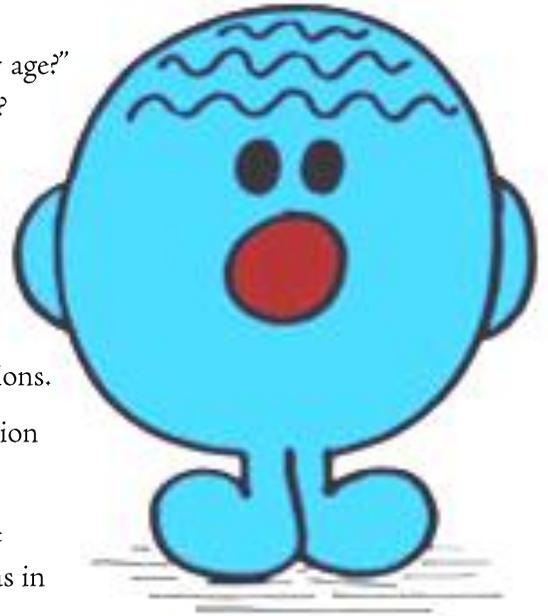
*Unhelpful worry:* Leads to more worry (or worry about worry, as in "Why do I worry so much?").

Effective worry is usually done on purpose, while unhelpful worry feels out of control. There's a simple, but paradoxical, way to gain control of your worry: *Worry on purpose*. Schedule a regular time to fret about everything you need to for 20-30 minutes each day. Make it a routine, and write the worries down. Remember, the goal is to learn how to worry, not to stop worrying. This exercise will give you practice with intentional worry, and gradually the uncontrollable worries will lessen. Meanwhile, let those unscheduled worries come and go. Don't try to control them, but do look for signs of effective worry as you see them passing by.

*Read more at:*

[moodtreatmentcenter.com/rumination.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/rumination.pdf)

[moodtreatmentcenter.com/worrytime.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/worrytime.pdf)



**Mr. Worry** went to great lengths to break his habit in Roger Hargreaves' famous book.

## Preventing Bipolar

### *In Children and Young Adults*

There's good news and bad news for parents with bipolar disorder. The chance that your child will develop bipolar is relatively low (10-25%), but the chance that they'll develop other psychiatric problems, like depression, anxiety, and ADHD, is high (50%).

A national study is underway to help identify the early signs of bipolar. If you have bipolar and your child is 15-25, they may be eligible to participate (they can have other diagnoses, but not bipolar). Participants will rate their mood through a smartphone app and at office visits every six months in Raleigh, NC.

The study does not involve active treatment, though participants can engage in mental health treatment while enrolled. Participants will be reimbursed for their time (up to \$4,000). Ask us if you'd like to enroll or inquire online at:

[moodtreatmentcenter.com/study.htm](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/study.htm)

The hope is that early recognition can lead to better prevention. We already know a few things about preventing bipolar, such as:

- A diet rich in omega-3's, such as salmon, walnuts, and green leafy vegetables ([moodtreatmentcenter.com/omega3.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/omega3.pdf)).
- Total darkness at night. Avoid electronics before bed ([moodtreatmentcenter.com/bluelight.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/bluelight.pdf)).
- Regular wake times ([moodtreatmentcenter.com/briskawakening.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/briskawakening.pdf)).
- Physical exercise ([moodtreatmentcenter.com/exercise.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/exercise.pdf)).
- Supportive friends and family. Parenting styles that use positive discipline and balance love and warmth with rules and structure ([parentingstrategies.net](http://parentingstrategies.net), [triple-p-parenting.net](http://triple-p-parenting.net)).

## Food for the Mind

*Caution.* This research update might be too good to be true. There's a new diet plan designed to improve memory, and following it over five years lowered the risk of dementia by 53%. It doesn't involve calorie-counting or major restrictions. You don't even have to follow it strictly to see benefits (casual observers had a 35% reduction in dementia risk). What's the catch? *You can only have five sweets a week (including sodas).* Here it is, the *MIND Diet*:

[www.moodtreatmentcenter.com](http://www.moodtreatmentcenter.com)



### Foods to eat more of

- Green leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, lettuce, arugula): At least six servings a week
- Other vegetables: At least one a day
- Nuts and seeds: Five servings a week
- Berries: Two or more servings a week
- Beans: At least three servings a week
- Whole grains: Three or more servings a day
- Fish: Once a week
- Poultry (like chicken or turkey): Two times a week
- Olive oil: Use it as your main cooking oil.
- Wine: One small glass a day (about 1/3-2/3 metric cup; avoid if taking sedatives or sleep medicines. People with past addictions, sleep or mood problems may need to avoid wine)

### Foods to eat less of

- Red meat: Less than four servings a week
- Butter and margarine: Less than a tablespoon daily
- Cheese: Less than one serving a week
- Desserts, sodas and sweets: Less than five servings a week
- Fried or fast food: Less than one serving a week

Read more at:

[moodtreatmentcenter.com/minddiet.pdf](http://moodtreatmentcenter.com/minddiet.pdf)

## Practice News

**Our Clemmons Office** is open at the corner of Lewisville-Clemmons and Peace Haven roads.

**Treatment Breakthroughs.** Ask us about: *Magnesium* for bipolar, teeth-grinding, and muscle tics. *L-methyl-folate* for bipolar depression. *Citicoline* for depression, bipolar, memory, and substance abuse.

**Our New therapists** share something in common: both graduated with honors from UNC-Greensboro (little known fact: *US News* ranked this local counseling program #2 in the nation). We are honored to have them join:

**Sara Hepler, LPC.** Sara has worked as a therapist in the Triad for over ten years. She works with families, adolescents, and adults. Among the specialized therapies she has training in are EMDR for trauma and DBT for mood swings, impulsivity, and borderline personality.

**HM Humphrey, LPCA.** HM works with individuals and couples and brings experience with Emotionally-Focused Therapy (EFT). In the words of *GoodTherapy.org*, EFT helps people improve relationships by "understanding both their own emotional responses and those of significant people in their lives." A North Carolina native, HM enjoys travel and once lived abroad in Africa. She spends her free time enjoying the outdoors, reading, cooking, and exercising.

**New Psychiatric NP.** Teresa Francis provides medication treatment in Greensboro and Winston-Salem. She also works with natural approaches and has a strong interest in how the environment affects the mind.

**Educational Seminars.** Our small groups teach stress-reduction skills to prevent mood and anxiety problems. Future offerings include Mindfulness, Mindfulness for Teens, Aging Mindfully, and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). To reserve your spot, contact [maddie@moodtreatmentcenter.com](mailto:maddie@moodtreatmentcenter.com).

(336) 722-7266