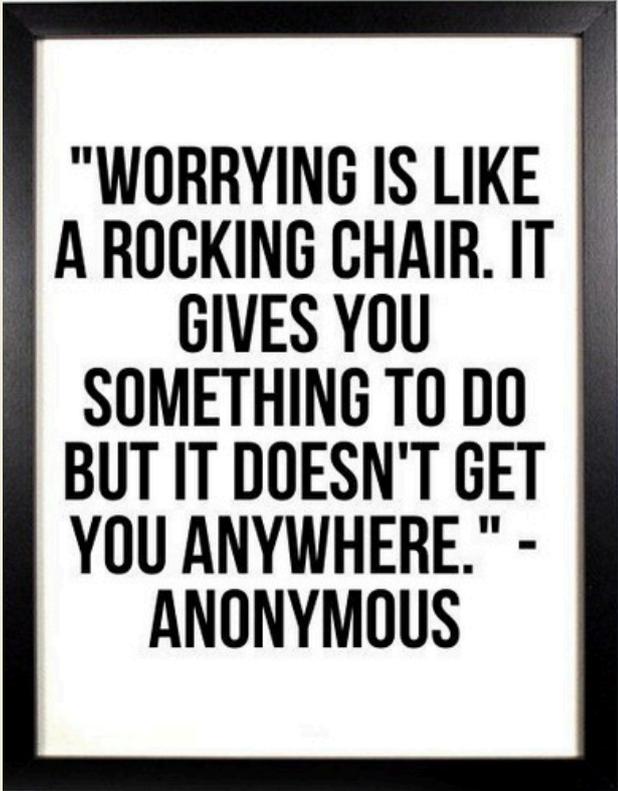


## Counsellor's Newsletter



"WORRYING IS LIKE  
A ROCKING CHAIR. IT  
GIVES YOU  
SOMETHING TO DO  
BUT IT DOESN'T GET  
YOU ANYWHERE." -  
ANONYMOUS

<https://in.pinterest.com>

Worry is a common emotional experience that begins to develop even in early childhood. As children grow and become more aware of their surroundings, responsibilities, and relationships, they may start to think about possible challenges or uncertainties in their lives. These thoughts can lead to worries about schoolwork, friendships, family expectations, health, or upcoming events. In many ways, worry is the mind's way of trying to prepare for the future or solve potential problems. However, when worries become frequent or overwhelming, they can sometimes affect a child's ability to concentrate, enjoy daily activities, or feel confident in their abilities.

Children and adolescents today often navigate a variety of academic, social, and personal expectations. As they learn to balance school responsibilities, friendships, extracurricular activities, and personal goals, they may occasionally feel anxious or uncertain. This makes it especially important for educators and parents to help children recognize their worries and develop healthy coping strategies.

When children understand that worries are a normal part of life and that there are ways to manage them, they begin to build emotional resilience and stronger self-awareness.

Research in child psychology suggests that when children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and are taught simple coping strategies such as relaxation techniques, positive self-talk, and problem-solving they become better equipped to regulate their emotions. These skills not only support their mental wellbeing but also help them approach challenges with a calmer and more balanced mindset.

As Corrie ten Boom wisely said: “Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.” Keeping this in mind, our recent sessions focused on helping students identify their worries and explore simple yet effective ways to manage them.

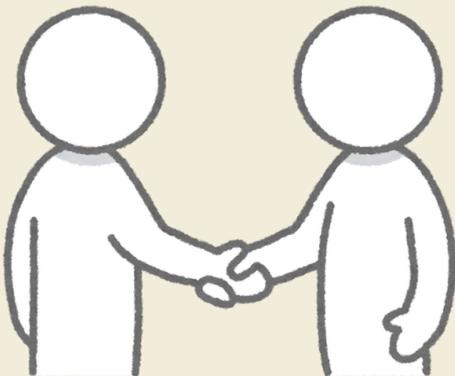
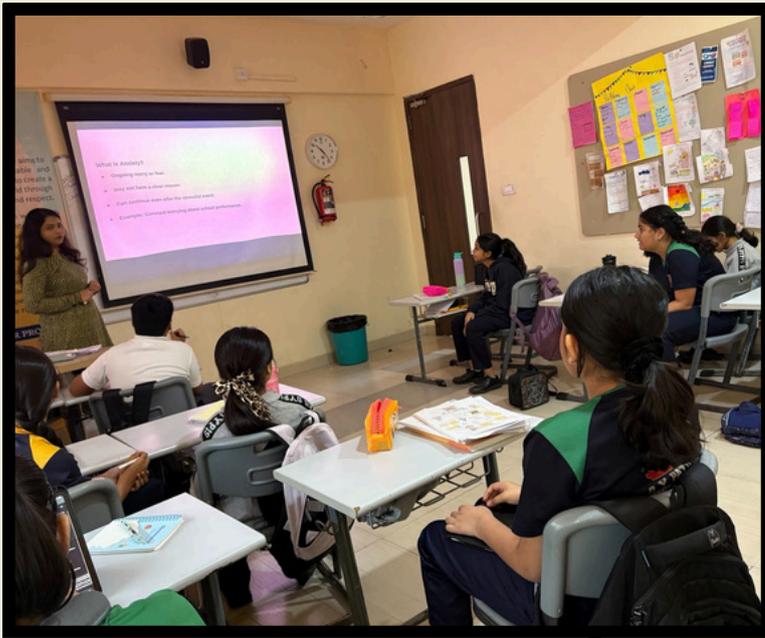


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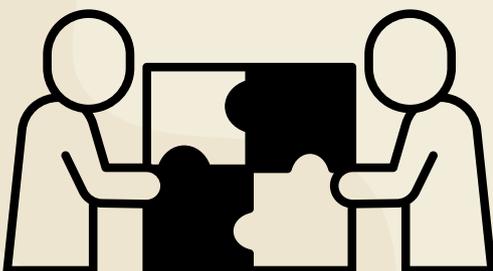
# Identifying Our Worries

In a session, Grade 6 students were asked to reflect on their thoughts and write down their five main worries on a worksheet. This activity encouraged them to slow down and notice what was occupying their minds, helping them to better understand the sources of stress or concern in their daily lives. By putting their worries on paper, students could see them more clearly and separate them from the constant stream of thoughts in their heads. Following this, we explored healthy strategies for managing worries. Students learned that worries can feel less overwhelming when approached constructively, such as by focusing on what they can control, talking to someone they trust, or practicing calming techniques like deep breathing. They also discussed the importance of breaking large worries into smaller, manageable steps, and using creative expression or journaling to process their feelings.



## The Worry Jar

For our younger learners, we introduced a creative and engaging activity called the “Worry Jar.” Each student was given small pieces of paper and asked to write down a worry that was on their mind, big or small and place it inside the jar. This hands-on approach allowed students to externalize their thoughts, making abstract feelings more concrete and easier to manage. The activity served as a visual reminder that worries do not need to stay bottled up inside the mind. By writing down their concerns and “placing” them in the jar, students could symbolically release some of the tension or pressure associated with their worries. This process often made worries feel smaller and more manageable, helping children understand that it’s okay to acknowledge what they are feeling.



## Worry Management Techniques discussed with the students:

Helping children manage worry involves teaching them simple and practical strategies that they can use in their daily lives.

### 1. Deep Breathing and Relaxation

When children feel worried, their bodies often become tense, and their breathing may become fast or shallow. Practicing slow, deep breathing helps calm the nervous system and reduces the physical symptoms of worry, allowing children to feel more relaxed and in control. One helpful strategy introduced is Square Breathing (also called Box Breathing). In this technique, children imagine drawing a square while breathing, inhale slowly for four counts, hold the breath for four counts, exhale for four counts, and pause for four counts before breathing in again. Repeating this cycle a few times helps slow the heart rate, relax the body, and bring attention back to the present moment. Simple breathing practices like these can be used anytime children feel overwhelmed or anxious.

### 2. Talking to Someone They Trust

Sometimes worries can feel much bigger when they stay inside our heads. A helpful reminder we discussed with students is that “worries often feel bigger in your head, and talking about them can make them feel smaller.” Encouraging children to share their worries with a trusted adult, teacher, parent, or friend can make a significant difference. Talking about worries helps children process their thoughts, feel supported, and gain new perspectives. Often, simply expressing the worry out loud can reduce its intensity and help children realize that they are not alone in what they are feeling.

### 3. Focusing on What They Can Control – Circle of Control

Children sometimes worry about situations that are beyond their control, such as what others think, unexpected outcomes, or future events. A helpful way to manage these worries is through the Circle of Control activity. In this activity, children learn to sort their worries into two categories: things they can control and things they cannot control. For example, they cannot control the questions that appear on a test, but they can control how much they study or prepare. By focusing on the actions they can take such as preparing for a test, organizing their time, or asking for help, children begin to shift their attention from feeling helpless to actively problem-solving.

#### 4. Positive Self-Talk

Children were guided to challenge negative thoughts and replace them with more helpful ones. For example, instead of thinking “I will fail this test,” they can learn to say “I will try my best and prepare well.” Positive self-talk helps build confidence and reduces anxious thinking.

#### 5. Expressing Feelings Creatively

Writing, drawing, or journaling about worries can help children release emotions and organize their thoughts. Creative expression allows children to process feelings in a safe and constructive way.

#### 6. Breaking Problems into Small Steps

Large worries can feel overwhelming. Helping children break a problem into smaller, manageable steps makes the situation feel more achievable and less stressful.

### Takeaways for Parents

Parents play an important role in helping children learn how to cope with worries. A supportive and understanding environment can make children feel safe to share their thoughts and feelings. When children feel heard and reassured, they are more likely to talk about what is bothering them rather than keeping their worries to themselves.

Here are a few ways parents can support their children:

#### Encourage open conversations

- Create opportunities for your child to talk about their day and their feelings. Let them know that it is okay to share worries without fear of being judged or dismissed. Simple questions such as “Is anything on your mind today?” can encourage children to open up.

#### Listen patiently

- Sometimes children are not looking for immediate solutions, they simply want someone to listen. Giving them your full attention and acknowledging their feelings helps them feel understood and valued.

## Normalize worries

- Remind children that everyone experiences worries from time to time. Letting them know that worries are a normal part of life can help reduce feelings of embarrassment or anxiety about having them.

## Help them solve problems

- Instead of solving the problem for them, guide children to think about possible solutions. Asking questions like “What do you think could help?” or “What is one small step you could take?” encourages independence and confidence in handling challenges.

## Model calm behaviour

- Children often learn how to handle emotions by observing adults. Demonstrating calm ways of dealing with stress such as taking a pause, talking things through, or practicing relaxation can teach children healthy coping habits.

## Remind them they are not alone

- Reassure children that they always have trusted adults they can turn to—whether it is a parent, teacher, or school counsellor. Knowing that support is available helps children feel safer and more confident.

By teaching children to recognize their worries and equipping them with healthy coping strategies, we empower them to face challenges with resilience and confidence. Creating spaces where children feel supported, heard, and understood is one of the most effective ways to help them manage their emotional wellbeing.

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