



GIVE WORRY A TIME OUT



Carrying your worries around in your brain all day can be super tiring. The good news is, it's your brain so you get to decide when to spend time with your worries, and when it's time to take a break.



One way to practice giving yourself a break is to write your worries down (we like to use stones because they're heavy just

like worries) and put them away for awhile. That way your brain can spend time on more important and enjoyable things.



Step 1 of 10

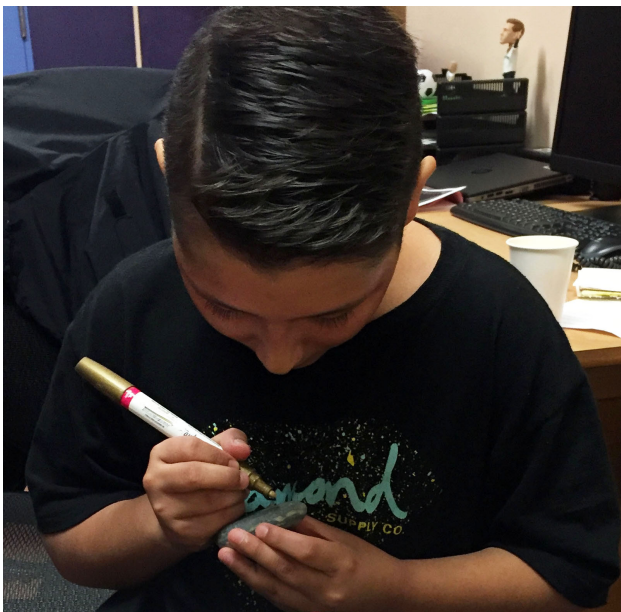
First, let's gather your supplies:

A stone (if you don't have a stone, you can use a piece of paper)

A marker for writing on your stone (paint pens and permanent markers work best but any marker will do)

A bag or box that's large enough to hold a dozen or so stones

Markers or fabric pens for decorating your bag or box



Step 2 of 10

Using a paint pen or permanent marker, write down on your stone (or you can draw a symbol instead) something you are worried about, thinking about or feeling right now.

It can be helpful to check in with your head, heart and body. What's going on in there? Maybe you're worried about a test. Maybe your stomach is hurting. Maybe your heart is hurting a little because of an argument with a friend. Or maybe you're feeling pretty good right now.



Step 3 of 10

If you're doing this project in a group or with family or friends, take turns sharing. You don't have to share if you don't want to, but it can be helpful to talk about how you're feeling.

Also, when you share, there's a very good chance someone will say, "That's how I feel too!"

Step 4 of 10

When everyone has had the chance to share or pass, it's time to decide what to do with your worry or feeling. (This is the important part!)

You can choose to give yourself a break by putting your stone away in your bag or box. Or maybe you want to hold onto your worry or feeling for awhile so you can think about it a bit longer. Maybe you want to give your stone to a friend to carry for awhile.

What you do with your feelings is up to you.



Step 5 of 10

Now you can move on to whatever is next in your group or day! One thing you might want to do is spend some time decorating your worry bag or box.

If it's a fabric bag you're decorating, markers, fabric paints, or paint pens will work great.

If you're using a box or other container for your worry stones, collage can be another great option.



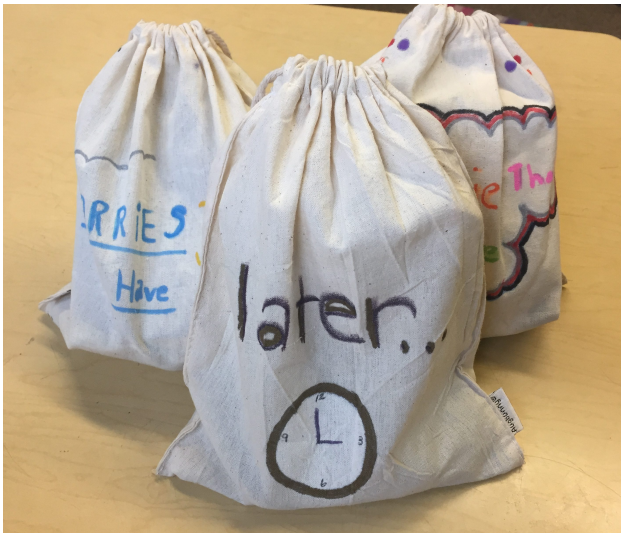
Step 6 of 10

If you're in a group and planning to do more projects together, we recommend starting every session with worry stones. If you're doing this project on your own, maybe you want to start your day with a worry stone (you can also use paper) and invite someone in your home to join you. That way you can share your

feelings with each other. Here are some questions to ask yourself each time:

Do I need to hold onto (think about) this worry right now? Do I want to share it with someone who can be a friend or help to me? Is this a worry I should talk to a trusted adult about?

And when you are ready to take a break from thinking about your worry, just put it away in your container.



Step 7 of 10

The important thing to remember is:

You are the boss of your feelings. You get to decide how much time to spend with them. You can say: “Sorry worry, I’m busy right now, but maybe I’ll spend time with you later.”



Step 8 of 10

And soon you will discover that most of the stones in your container — maybe *all* of them — are no longer worries at all.

When that happens, it might be time to return those worry stones to the great outdoors. Some people like to bury them, others like to toss them in a lake or river, and some like to create a special rock garden to pay tribute to their dearly departed worries.

You can also paint pictures over the words and keep the stones in a special place where they can remind you that worries never stick around for long.

What you do with your old worries is totally up to you.

Step 9 of 10

After a while, you'll also find that imaginary stones and containers work just as well. You can just close your eyes and imagine you are writing your worry on a stone and putting it away.

Step 10 of 10

If you want to, you can take a photo of your worry stone and add it to our gallery. That way someone else out there who shares your worry can see it and say: That's how I feel too!

