

Breaking the Worry Loop

Objective: Understanding how excessive worrying becomes a cycle and developing techniques to interrupt it.

Introduction (5 min)

- "Let's check in. What's one thing that has made you feel anxious this week?"
- "Today, we'll talk about the 'worry loop' and how to break free from it."

Psychoeducation (15 min) – Understanding the Worry Cycle

- "Anxiety tricks us into thinking that worrying helps us prepare, but excessive worry actually keeps us stuck."
- Explain **The Worry Cycle**:
 - Trigger → Worry Thought → Anxiety → More Worry → Avoidance or Reassurance-Seeking → Temporary Relief → Cycle Continues
- "When we repeatedly worry, our brain strengthens this habit, making it harder to stop. The key is to break the loop at any point."

Skill-Building (15 min) – Worry Delay Technique

- Teach **"Scheduled Worry Time"**: "Instead of letting worries run your day, schedule 10-15 minutes for worry time."
- Guide clients in choosing a **daily worry time** and writing worries down for later.
- "The more we postpone worrying, the weaker its grip becomes."

Reflection & Discussion (10 min)

- "What's one worry you can delay until later?"
- "How did it feel to postpone worrying?"

Homework (Choose One)

1. Write down worries throughout the day and address them only during scheduled worry time.
2. Track how anxiety levels change when delaying worries.

© Next Phase Learning | For licensed member use only. Redistribution or resale is prohibited. This template is provided for therapist adaptation and client use only.

3. Practice shifting focus from worries to an engaging task.

Breaking the Worry Loop

Describe a worry that keeps coming up for you:

What time of day or situation does this worry usually show up?

What happens in your body when you start to worry?

What thoughts go through your mind during this worry loop?

What have you tried in the past to stop this worry? Did it help?

Practice a worry-breaker: Schedule a 10-minute 'Worry Time' later today. Write when you will do it:

During today's Worry Time, reflect: Did the worry still feel as intense? Did anything change?

What is one healthy distraction or grounding technique you can use when the worry loop starts?