

Cut Your Worries in Half

What would you say if I told you I know of a method that can cut your worries in half, or even by 75%? I've been using this method for years for both myself and the clients I counsel. It is based on **Biblical truth** and *it works*; not only to reduce **worry**, but **anger** and **depression** as well.



Martin Miller, LPC

There are **5 steps** I will walk you through and then give you a real life example. The first step is: **Step 1. Recognize that you are worrying or upset**

What happens to your body when you are upset? A churning or butterflies in your stomach, palms sweaty, muscle tension, restlessness, heart racing, imagining awful things happening?

Step 2. What is the situation?

Step two is to ask yourself what is happening now or just before you started feeling upset. Are you experiencing or thinking about a stressful event?

Step 3. Capture your thoughts and identify lies

Next, what were you thinking or saying to yourself about the situation? This is called self talk and it is very important. When you capture and scrutinize these thoughts you will find they are often unrealistic and based on lies. Underneath our every day thoughts are deeper beliefs that we were programmed with growing up. The two most common of these beliefs are lies that distort our thinking and emotions:

Lie #1. *"I must meet certain standards in order to be loved and in order to feel good about myself."*

Lie #2. *"I must have the approval of certain others in order to be loved and to feel good about myself."*

These lies cause us to believe we must perform perfectly and please everyone in order to feel lovable and worthwhile. The next step follows naturally.

Step 4: Reject the lies and replace them with God's truth

Truth to replace Lie #1: *As a Christian I am completely forgiven and fully pleasing to God. His love for me is not based on my performance. I no longer have to fear failure.*

(Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.)

Truth to replace Lie #2: *As a Christian I am totally accepted by God. I no longer have to fear rejection.*

(Colossians 1:21-22 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation...)

Step 5. Act on the truth

At first the truth may not feel completely true, it may be hard to believe. But we must act on anyway. Acting on the truth will help us to believe it more strongly and it will reduce our painful emotions significantly. As we act in faith our feelings will follow. Obedience is fundamental to obtaining wisdom.

EXAMPLE:

Let's look at an example. Let's say Elizabeth is feeling worried and depressed. She must first recognize these feelings (**Step 1**), and then ask herself "What is the situation or event that I was thinking about when I started feeling this way (**Step 2**)?" She realizes that she is worrying about a situation at work in which a co-worker acted coldly towards her.

She then captures her thoughts about this situation (**Step 3**). She was thinking that her co-worker dislikes her and may be talking badly about her behind her back. She thinks "That would be awful because I would feel like an outcast. How could I endure work if I feel rejected there? I can't stand it when someone doesn't like me! What is wrong with me anyway? I feel like I'm defective."

This causes her to worry and feel down. On a scale from **1 to 10** (10 being the worst), she rates her worry at a **9**. Then, she traces these thoughts to **Lie #2** that says she must have the approval of certain others in order to be loved and to feel good about herself.

She rejects this lie and reminds herself that she is totally accepted by God, that He loves her unconditionally even if others disapprove; that she no longer has to fear rejection (**Step 4**). Focusing on this truth then causes her to think "I know I'm valuable even if someone doesn't like me. Others opinions of me do not have to determine how I feel about myself. It may be uncomfortable, but I can stand it if someone dislikes me. Just because someone is upset with me doesn't mean they don't like me."

She then acts on this truth (**Step 5**) and begins to plan what she might say to her co-worker to resolve the situation. She prays about how God might use this situation for good, and perhaps make her relationship with this person even better as a result of their discussion. This gives her confidence that even if her co-worker refuses to reconcile, she knows she is valuable and has much to offer. She rates her worry again on a scale from **1 to 10** and it is no longer a **9** but now it's a **4**. **THIS IS A 50% REDUCTION IN HER WORRY!**

Identifying and replacing lies with Biblical truth renews the mind, reduces painful emotions dramatically, improves interpersonal relationships and releases our greatest potential for Christ. **Repetition of God's truth** is the bread and butter of reprogramming your mind and cutting you're worries in half.

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If you have questions about this article or would like to know more about the counseling services we offer, you may contact our office by phone: **(318) 222-6800**, through our website: HealingHeartCounseling.Org or by email: MartinLPC@bellsouth.net.

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