

Chapter 32 — Nature and Cause of Worry

of *The Physiology of Faith and Fear:*
or, *The Mind in Health and Disease* (1912)
by William S. Sadler, M.D.

© 2020 Matthew Block

Sources for Chapter 32, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) William S. Sadler, M.D., *The Science of Living*, or *The Art of Keeping Well* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1910)
- (2) “Can We Really Stop Worrying?,” by William S. Sadler, M.D., *The Ladies’ Home Journal* (September 1911, pp. 21-22)
- (3) Oliver Huckel, S.T.D., *Mental Medicine* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1909)
- (4) George Lincoln Walton, M.D., *Those Nerves* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1909)
- (5) Ernst von Feuchtersleben, *Health and Suggestion: The Dietetics of the Mind* (Translated and Edited by Ludwig Lewisohn, M.A.) (New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1910)

Note: Sadler wrote the first half of “Can We Stop Worrying?” by drawing from Chapter 19 (“The Cause of Worry”) of *The Science of Living*, and adding material, some apparently original to himself and a portion derived from Walton’s *Those Nerves*. The chart presents only those passages from “Can We Stop Worrying?” which are original to Sadler.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author (or a previous Sadler book) first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.

- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and Sadler pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Pink** indicates passages where Sadler specifically shares his own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (f) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.

Work-in-progress Version 4 Sept. 2020
© 2020 Matthew Block

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd] In all ages the human race has suffered from the evil influences of worry, grief, and fear;

but it has fallen to the lot of our present-day civilization, with its intensity and strenuousness,

to suffer in unusual degree, the direful consequences of mental strain and worry. (*SoL* 278)

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

[contd] It is not easy to say just what “worry” is.

A patient once described her mental state to me by saying that her “mind took tight hold of an idea and just would not let it go.”

So worry might truthfully be called

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd from four rows up] This condition has been aptly termed a “spasm of the attention.”

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF WORRY

32:0.1 IN every age, the human race has suffered from the disastrous consequences of fear and worry,

but it has fallen to the lot of our present-day civilization, with its intensity and complexity,

to suffer in an unusual degree, the direful consequences of mental strain and social anxiety.

WORRY DEFINED

32:1.1 It is exceedingly difficult to frame an acceptable definition for worry.

A patient once described her mental state to the author by saying that her “mind took tight hold of an idea, and just would not let go.”

It would seem that worry might truthfully be called

“a spasm of the attention,”

SOURCE

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

[contd from two rows up] a continued fit of mental concentration.

Of course we must concentrate our mental energies to do first-class brain work,

and the danger of worry is ever present with a high degree of mental concentration.

The mind takes fast hold upon a group of ideas in order to perform efficient mental work.

That is right.

Where the wrong comes in is when this intellectual concentration is too long continued

and the mind fails to release its grasp:

then we have worry.

So worry is really a sort of “one-sided mental action.”

It may be defined as fear-thought in contradistinction to fore-thought.

Fore-thought is highly necessary to the smooth running of our daily affairs, while fear-thought is wholly unnecessary and highly injurious (*LHJ* 21).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

or a continued fit of mental concentration.

Concentration of the mental energies is highly essential to the performance of first-class brain work,

and it would seem that the danger of worry is ever associated with a high degree of mental concentration.

It is very necessary that the mind should take fast hold upon a group of ideas in order to perform efficient mental work;

on the other hand, if this intellectual concentration is too long continued;

if the mind fails to release its grasp;

if the psychic focus becomes continuous,

then we have reached the border lands of anxiety, fear, and worry.

32:1.2 And so we find worry to be a sort of “one-sided mental action.”

Worry may be defined as fear thought in contra-distinction to forethought.

Forethought is highly necessary to the smooth running of our daily affairs, while fear thought is wholly unnecessary and even highly injurious;

SOURCE

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

It might be called “chronic fear.”

Any single fear or group of fears, long entertained in the mind, crystallize themselves into definite worry,

which continually harasses the soul and everlastingly preys upon the mind (*SoL* 278).

IV, III: THE CAUSE AND CURE OF THE WORRY-HABIT. (Huckel 146)

Says a discriminating thinker: “Worry is not to be confounded with forethought, which is the general director of our mental forces.

Forethought borrows wisdom from past failures and successes,

with which to lay plans for the future.

True, it considers obstacles and difficulties, as a good general should, but only as hindrances which may be overcome...” (H 147).

A clever magazine writer defines it well in the words: “Worry is discounting possible future sorrows so that the individual may have present misery.

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

indeed, worry has been called “chronic fear.”

It is a well-known fact that

any single fear or group of fears, when long entertained in the mind, tend to crystallize themselves into definite worry,

which incessantly harasses the soul and everlastingly dissipates the mental energies.

32:1.3 Forethought is a wise general of the intellectual forces,

making an intelligent comparison between the past and the present,

while discriminatingly planning for the future.

Forethought is never unmindful of our present difficulties,

neither is it blind to those which may be encountered in the future.

Fear thought is nothing more or less than a process of borrowing trouble from the future for the purpose of augmenting our present sorrows.

SOURCE

“ ... Worry is the **traitor** in our camp that dampens our powder, weakens our aim. Under the guise of helping us to bear the present and to be ready for the future, worry

multiplies enemies within our own mind to sap our strength” (H 148).

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1911)

Man Is the Only Animal That Worries

[contd] Now it is a curious fact that man is the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worry (*LHJ* 21)

III: ASSOCIATIVE MEMORIES (Walton2 26)

According to the brain-physiology of Loeb, which offers an excellent working basis,

intelligence exists only in **animals high enough in the scale to possess associative memories** (W2 30-31).

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Worry, while ever posing as solicitous for our welfare, is a false friend—a dangerous **traitor** to the natural laws governing the realm of mind and morals.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORRY

32:2.1 Man is the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worry.¹

The biologists teach us that

intelligence (the liability to worry) exists only in those **animals high enough up in the biologic scale to possess associative memories**.

Man possesses a high degree of memory association;

SOURCE

Shakespeare has written, “Man is made with such large discourse, looking before and after.”

III: ASSOCIATIVE MEMORIES
(Walton 26)

[T]he polyp known as the sea-anemone will, with its antennæ, accept meat and reject paper, an action certainly suggesting intelligence.

But if the antennæ are attached to its side, where there is no orifice, the polyp will continue indefinitely to accept meat and reject paper,

showing that it neither recognizes the absence of a mouth at that point, nor profits by experience—

it has no associative memories (W2 31).

In ascending the scale through the animal kingdom, ...

we must pass through a borderland in which it is difficult to decide which of the apparently purposeful movements are merely the result of a natural tendency (instinct), and which of them imply the power of associating the memories and of drawing conclusions, in other words *thinking*....

The ant offers an interesting debatable ground (W2 32-33).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

as Shakespeare says, Man is made “with such large discourse, looking before and after.”

Numerous experiments made upon lower animals serve to prove that

much of their apparently intelligent action

is purely instinctive—hereditary.

They do not reason intelligently.

The lower forms of life seem utterly unable to profit by experience—

they have no associative memories,

and, of course, they are not addicted to worry.

In ascending the scale of animal life,

interesting problems are encountered when we reach the ant tribes;

SOURCE

The wasp undoubtedly possesses associative memories (W2 34).

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

Man Is the Only Animal That Worries

And so the higher we ascend in the scale of animal life the greater the tendency to worry, that is, to borrow trouble,

to look with fear and misgiving upon that which the future holds in store, or to be unduly apprehensive concerning the difficulties and problems of the present (*LHJ* 21).

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd] The uncertainties and vicissitudes of life upon our planet are such as to make more or less worry inevitable.

A certain degree of mild worry or mental anxiety, it would seem, is ever attached to the living state,

and only death can bring a permanent relief from the liability of fear and worry.

The fact that man is the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worrying,

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

and it seems highly probable that wasps do possess certain powers of associative memory.

32:2.2 And so the higher we ascend in the scale of animal life, the greater the tendency to worry—

to look with fear and misgiving upon that which the future holds in store, or to be unduly apprehensive concerning the difficulties and problems of the present.

THE GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY

32:3.1 The uncertainties and vicissitudes of life upon our planet are such as to render more or less worry inevitable.

A certain degree of mild worry, a certain amount of mental anxiety, it would seem, is ever attached to the living state.

Life is the one great source of worry.

Death alone affords perfect and permanent relief from the liability to fear and worry.

32:3.2 The fact that man is the only animal that worries

SOURCE

is due to the superiority of his mind over that of the lower animals.

The animals are not given to looking backward and, as a rule, they do not look very far into the future.

On the other hand, the mind of man sweeps back over the past

and from its history, as well as from the perplexing incidents of the present,

forms those conclusions which cause him to look with fear and foreboding into the future (*SoL*. 278-79).

[Source?]

III: ASSOCIATIVE MEMORIES
(Walton2 26)

Without doubt even the wet hen could keep her temper if she would only cease to insist on being dry! (W2 28)

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

is but a demonstration of the superiority of the human mind over that of the lower animals.

Animals are not given to looking backward, and, as a rule, they do not look very far into the future;

on the other hand, the mind of man sweeps back over past ages,

and, from the page of history, as well as from the perplexing incidents of the present,

forms those conclusions which cause him to look with fear and trembling into the future.

32:3.3 The causes of human worry are indeed varied, but in the last analysis, they are usually found to consist in some form of irritation, anxiety, or fear. It not infrequently develops that numerous habits of life and physical practices are contributory to the worry habit. The use of alcohol, and other forms of psychic and physical transgression, are often discovered to be the handmaidens of worry and sorrow. Lack of self-control is another great cause of worry. A strong will would cure nine-tenths of this unnecessary form of grief.

Even the proverbial “wet hen” could undoubtedly overcome her anger if she would but become indifferent to the matter of always keeping dry.

We stand other people’s troubles, and, by vigorously making up our minds, we ought to be able to stand our own.

HAPPINESS-HUNGER**XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY** (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

Desire for happiness. Whatever the immediate cause of worry, a solicitude for our general welfare and happiness or that of our loved ones,

must be recognized as the real cause of all worry.

We worry lest we may lose or fail to obtain those things which will make us or our friends happy.

The desire for happiness, then, is the fundamental cause of worry,

but it should ever be borne in mind that under no circumstances can worry ever contribute to our happiness;

on the other hand, it never fails to detract from the enjoyment of life,

and frequently stores up for the future that which will effectually destroy the very happiness for the love of which we are wont to worry (*SoL* 279).

32:4.1 Whatever the immediate cause of worry, a solicitude for our own general welfare, material prosperity, and mental happiness, or that of our loved ones,

must be recognized as the real cause of all our worry.

We worry lest we may lose or fail to obtain those material blessings which will make us and our friends happy.

32:4.2 The desire for happiness, then, is found to be the real, fundamental cause of worry,

but it should ever be borne in mind that under no circumstances can worry ever contribute to our happiness;

on the other hand, it should be remembered that worry and anxiety never fail to detract from the enjoyment of life,

to destroy mental peace,

and not infrequently they store up for the future that which will everlastingly destroy the very happiness for the love of which we are wont to worry.

SOURCE

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

Man Is the Only Animal That Worries

Many good people entertain the false notion that the possession of material riches can bestow happiness upon the soul.

They are fully possessed of the idea that riches are essential to the joy of living.

Accordingly they toil in anxiety, endure happiness and experience much mental torture in their efforts to provide themselves with these supposed essentials to life and happiness (*LHJ* 21).

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

Temperamental worry. Certain causes of worry may be said to be temperamental, embracing the cases of those who worry because they are *criticised* either justly or unjustly,

[IV. THE HUMAN SENSITIVE-PLANT (Walton 240).]

or because they are *neglected* or *slighted* by their friends.

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:4.3 Many good people entertain the false notion that the possession of material riches can bestow happiness upon the soul.

They are fully possessed of the idea that riches are essential to the joy of living.

Accordingly, they toil in anxiety, endure hardships, and experience much mental torture, in their efforts to provide themselves with these supposed essentials to life and happiness;

but all this is a mistake.

True happiness is rather derived from the blessings of sound, physical health, mental peace, and spiritual rest.

TEMPERAMENTAL PECULIARITIES

32:5.1 Some good people constantly worry because they are “criticised” either justly or unjustly.

Some folks are veritable **human sensitive-plants**;

they are always being “neglected” or “slighted,” even by their best friends.

SOURCE

Still others are depressed and dejected because they feel they are not appreciated by their associates;

others fret and worry because they resent some supposed or real injury or injustice that has been done them.

Worry of this kind frequently gives rise to outbursts of temper and manifestations of actual anger,

which are exceedingly injurious to the health of the nervous, digestive, and circulatory systems (*SoL* 279).

Timidity worry. This might be named as another general cause of mental uneasiness.

Many earnest souls constantly

fear that they will make some blunder;

that they will fail at the task they have in hand,

or that they will be unable to meet the demands which their position makes upon them.

This unnatural timidity results in producing a mental state of discouragement, brooding, and despondency (*SoL* 280).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Other good people are depressed and dejected because they are sure that their great worth is not fully appreciated by their associates or employers.

Still others fret and fume and worry because they feel it is their duty to resent some supposed or real injury or injustice which has been done them.

32:5.2 This temperamental sort of worry frequently gives rise to violent outbursts of temper and extraordinary manifestations of anger,

all of which are exceedingly injurious to the health of the nervous, digestive, and circulatory systems,

while they are highly destructive to every form of happiness and spiritual peace.

32:5.3 Other people worry because they are inordinately timid—backward.

Many earnest souls constantly

fear imaginary difficulties,

fear they will make some awful blunder,

or that they will utterly fail to “make good” with the task they have in hand.

Some persons always feel that after they have done their best they will still be unable to meet the demands which their position makes upon them.

This abnormal timidity necessarily results in producing an unnatural state of discouragement, brooding, and despondency.

SOURCE

[contd] Others worry over their responsibilities.

They are fearful that they will fail to “make good” in the matter entrusted to them. Such individuals are found to be over-anxious concerning details and matters

for which they are not responsible and over which they exercise no control;

still they constantly worry over such things to the point of losing both appetite and sleep (*SoL* 280).

Weather worry. Still others are found constantly worrying over the weather.

They are never quite satisfied with what Nature provides—the sun either shines too much or it rains too much.

They are like the grumbling farmer whose fault-finding was proverbial for miles around.

In the midst of one ideal summer—so far as weather conditions were concerned—a delegation of neighbors called on him

and expressed the thought that he must be for once satisfied with the fine weather.

The farmer replied:

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:5.4 Still others worry over their grave responsibilities.

As a rule, these anxious individuals are found to be altogether too anxious about certain minute details and other matters

for which they are not at all personally responsible, and over which they exercise little or no control;

and yet they constantly worry over these things to the point where they lose both appetite and sleep.

WEATHER-WORRY

32:6.1 Every time you meet some people you will find that they are worrying over the weather.

They are not quite satisfied with what nature provides: the sun shines too much, or else it rains too much.

They are something like the grumbling farmer whose fault-finding and complaining were proverbial for miles around.

In the midst of one ideal summer (so far as weather conditions and crops were concerned) a delegation of neighbors called on him one afternoon

and expressed the thought that he must for once be satisfied with the fine weather and the excellent crops.

The old farmer knitted his brow, scratched his head for a moment, and then replied:

SOURCE

“Yes, the crops are good and the weather is fine, but I want to tell you it is mighty hard on the land.”

Some men and women are literally human barometers and thermometers.

As a result of a rheumatic tendency, coupled with constant thought of the weather,

they are able to detect a storm almost before the weather bureau is aware it has appeared on the horizon.

Such persons are able to keep themselves on the border of nervous prostration by their constant worry over the weather

and fear that all their plans will be upset by rain, storm, or drought (*SoL* 280).

Science worry. Another class of mental sufferers might be classified as “scientific worriers.”

They are more or less bothered over some great problem of the universe—

for fear the sun will sometime burn out;

while others fear a collision of our earth with some stray comet;

[*Note:* Halley’s comet appeared on May 10, 1910.]

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

“Yes, neighbors, the crops are good, and the weather is fine, but I want to tell you it is mighty hard on the land.”

32:6.2 Some men and women are literally human barometers.

As the result of their rheumatic tendency, coupled with constant thought of the weather,

they are able to detect a storm long before the weather bureau is aware that it has appeared on the horizon.

Such unfortunates are able to keep themselves on the border of nervous prostration by their constant worry over the weather,

and from fear that all their plans will be upset by rain, storm, or drouth.

32:6.3 Another class of mental sufferers might be classified as “science worriers.”

They are more or less bothered over the great problems of the universe.

Some are afraid the sun will some time burn out,

and that our old world will gradually freeze up.

Others live in constant fear lest our planet will collide with some stray comet.

Several frightened people committed suicide during the recent visit of Halley’s comet to the neighborhood of our world.

SOURCE

still others are possessed with a constant fear of being struck by lightning—they are terror-stricken by loud thunder (*S&L* 279-80).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Still others are possessed with the constant fear of being struck by lightning; they are always terror-stricken by loud thunder.

THE MAGNIFICATION OF TRIFLES

32:7.1 It is something terrible the way intelligent human beings will make a mountain out of a molehill, how they persist in magnifying trifles beyond all measure and reason. A discouraged and downcast fellow, struggling with obstacles and fighting with failures, will often deliberately attribute all his misfortunes and difficulties to some trifling mistake in his youth, or to some insignificant blunder or transgression of later life.

32:7.2 There recently came to our clinic a young man whose life was a perfect failure; he had contemplated suicide, but a friend urged him to come and see us. This patient had made a certain mistake in his youth, which he later greatly magnified, and so led himself to believe that he could not succeed in life, that he was doomed to certain failure. For seven years he had lived in this slough of despond, and now he seriously thought of taking his life. He had been looking through the glass of life from the wrong end, and it was only necessary to reverse his telescope, as it were, to give him a new viewpoint in life. After an hour's talk he was ready to go to work and he has continued to make rapid and satisfactory improvement.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:7.3 We are all subject to the little ills of life. Other people are not free from these vexing trifles; why should we expect to be? In times of trouble and harassment let us swell out our chests, breathe deeply, and face these trifling difficulties like men. Let obstacles breed the spirit of conquest, the determination to conquer, instead of causing us to wilt and surrender.

THE CHRONIC “KICKING” HABIT

Chronic dissatisfaction. Another cause of worry or state of mental dissatisfaction is found in

the disposition of some people to find fault with everything and everybody.

They have literally acquired the “kicking” habit.

It seems impossible for such persons to see good in anybody or to be satisfied with anything (*SoL* 281).

[contd] It should be remembered that worry grows by what it feeds on.

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

How Worry Can Produce Poor Health

When we nurse and nourish this spirit of dissatisfaction it acts and reacts upon ourselves until the very soul is filled with discontent and the mind is permeated with complaining (*LHJ* 22).

32:8.1 Another great cause of worry and kindred mental dissatisfaction is to be found in

the disposition of some grouchy dyspeptics to find fault with everything and everybody.

They have literally acquired the “kicking” habit. (See Fig. 29.)

Such unfortunate creatures seem utterly unable to see good in anybody or to be satisfied with anything.

32:8.2 It should be remembered that worry grows by what it feeds on.

When we nurse and nourish this spirit of dissatisfaction, it acts and reacts upon ourselves until the very soul is filled with discontent, and the mind is permeated with complaining.

SOURCE

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd from two rows up] However small the matter over which we begin to worry,

the cause of our worry will be found entirely sufficient to

feed our mental uneasiness to the point where it gains possession of our minds,

threatens to wreck our career, and constantly harasses the soul to the point where life is unbearable (*SoL* 281).

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Worry* 287)

The worry habit. But after all that can be said of the causes of worry,

we cannot overlook the fact that some people have come to the place where they enjoy poor health.

They would not be happy if they could not complain of headache, backache, stomach-ache, or something of the kind;

their complaints have become chronic;

they enjoy enlisting the sympathy of their fellows, having delight in describing their sufferings and explaining their miseries;

they are constantly consulting the almanac and the patent medicine advertisements to find some new cause for physical complaint, and they usually find what they are looking for (*SoL* 288).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

However small and trifling the matter over which we begin to worry,

the insignificant cause of our mental dissatisfaction will be found entirely sufficient to

feed and nourish the spirit of uneasiness to the point where it gains possession of our minds,

threatens to wreck our career, and constantly harasses the soul to the point where life is unbearable.

32:8.3 But after all that can be said of the causes of worry,

we cannot overlook the fact that some people have come to the place where they enjoy poor health.

They would not be happy if they could not complain of headache, backache, stomach-ache, or something of the kind;

their complaints have become chronic;

they enjoy enlisting the sympathy of their fellows, having delight in describing their sufferings and explaining their miseries;

they are constantly consulting the almanac and the patent medicine advertisements to find some new cause for physical complaint, and they usually find what they are looking for.

PERVERTED PROVERBS

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

Perverted proverbs. Many an old saying proverbial for its truthfulness when properly understood,

has resulted in destroying the peace and happiness of those who have come to worry over its literal fulfilment.

Take such a proverb as “Look before you leap.”

This old saying certainly contains good advice,

but we have known of earnest men and women who remained stationary in their life plans for years,

looking with such care and scrutiny over the present and future plans, that they have never taken advance steps.

They have been too fearful to leap; they would not take a chance.

Old age has crept upon them and their career was ruined by

a too literal interpretation and over-regard for such a good proverb as “Look before you leap” (*S&L* 281)

[contd] Another proverb causing much worry is that old saying,

“What is worth doing at all is worth doing well.”

32:9.1 Many a good old saying, proverbial for its truthfulness when properly understood,

has destroyed the peace and happiness of those who have come to worry over its too literal fulfilment.

Take such a proverb as “Look before you leap.”

This old saying certainly contains good advice;

but we have known a number of earnest men and women who have long remained stationary in their life plans,

looking with such care and scrutiny over the present and the future, that they have failed to take advance steps;

they have been altogether too fearful to leap; they would not dare take a chance,

they were afraid of the risk.

Old age is creeping upon them, and their careers have been ruined by

a too literal interpretation and over-regard for such a good proverb as “Look before you leap.”

32:9.2 Another of the old proverbs, responsible for causing much worry, is the oft-repeated saying,

“What is worth doing at all is worth doing well.”

SOURCE

While that proverb contains good advice for every young man and woman,

it must be remembered that every day of our lives we have to perform a large number of *unessential* tasks—

tasks which are but temporary scaffolding, as it were,

to the real character structure we are building.

These minor things must be done with sufficient care, so as not to endanger the real structure we are creating;

nevertheless, it would be a waste of energy to try carefully to square, polish, and paint the scaffolding which stands but to-day and to-morrow is torn away.

This is true of much of our work.

Each day's effort must be wisely divided into the *essential* and the *unessential*,

and it should be no occasion of worry that some trifling thing has had to be slighted or altogether neglected, as you review the events of the day in its closing hours (*SoL* 281-82).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

While this proverb contains sound and wholesome advice for every young man and woman,

it must also be remembered that every day of our lives we are called upon to perform a large number of wholly unessential tasks,

tasks which are but temporary scaffolding, as it were,

compared to the more important character-structure we are building.

It is true that these minor tasks must be done with sufficient care so as not to endanger the real structure we are erecting,

nevertheless, it would be a great waste of energy to try carefully to square, polish, and paint the scaffolding which stands but to-day, and to-morrow is torn away.

32:9.3 And this is true of much of our common work.

Each day's efforts should be wisely divided up into the *essential* and the *unessential*;

and as we review the events of the day in its closing hours, it should be no occasion for worry and self-reproach that some trifle has had to be slighted or altogether neglected.

SOURCE

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1911)

How Certain Proverbs Have Actually Done Harm

If the brick and mortar you have put into the real character structure are sound and good, if your wall has been raised up true to the plumb, the miscarriage of some detail should not distress nor worry you (*LHJ* 21).

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd from two rows up] Still others have worried too much over such teaching as

“Be sure you are right, then go ahead.”

Owing to their peculiar mental make-up,

they could never be quite sure they were absolutely right, and so they never went ahead;

and then they began to worry because they had not gone ahead (*SoL* 282).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

If the brick and mortar you have put into the real character structure are sound and good, if your wall has been raised up true to the plumb, let not the miscarriage of some detail either distress or worry you.

32:9.4 Many conscientious young people have worried altogether too much over such teaching as,

“Be sure you are right, then go ahead.”

Owing to their peculiar mental make-up,

their naturally diffident and hesitating disposition,

they could never be quite sure that they were absolutely right; and so they never went ahead.

For years they remain stationary in their life plans, first contemplating one thing, then another,

and then pretty soon they begin seriously to worry because they have not gone ahead.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:9.5 “Haste makes waste” is usually found to be true; but there are times in life when it is absolutely necessary that one should make haste; when decisions must be quickly formed and speedily executed; delay would be fatal. Now, if in the sober after moments it should develop that the highest wisdom had not characterized the formation of these hasty conclusions, it should be no cause for life-long worry and everlasting regret. Perhaps no one else could have done better under the circumstances; after all, you did the best you could. If there is anything to learn from your apparent mistakes, learn it cheerfully, and then let the matter forever rest.

[contd] And so we see that the misunderstanding of even good and true teaching

may lead to such a one-sided regard of truth and duty as to create a condition of mental uneasiness

leading eventually to worry, with all its evil effects upon mind, soul, and body (*SoL* 282).

32:9.6 And so we see that the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of even good and true teaching

may lead to such a one-sided and extreme regard for truth and duty as to create a condition of mental uneasiness and dissatisfaction,

eventually leading to chronic worry, with all its evil effects upon mind, soul, and body.

THE WORRY CIRCLE

MENTAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 282)

[contd] Let us now briefly consider certain mental states which directly lead to worry. The attention of the mind concentrated upon any part of the body

has a tendency to magnify the sensations of that part.

32:10.1 When the attention is directly concentrated upon any part of the body,

there is a definite tendency to magnify the sensations arising in that part.

SOURCE

Special, peculiar, or unusual sensations of the body, always have a tendency to engender more or less fear on the part of the mind,

and it is a well-known fact of psychology that fear increases and focalizes the attention (*SoL* 282).

[contd] *The worry circle*. Now, it will be remembered that we have stated as one of the definitions of worry that it is a “spasm of the attention”;

therefore, we have here the factors for the health-destroying, mind-ruining circle of worry,

which has been aptly called the “vicious worry circle”—

the attention magnifying the sensations,

the sensations increasing the fear or worry,

and the fear further increasing the attention.

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Special, peculiar, or unusual physical sensations always have a tendency to engender more or less fear;

and it is a well-known and generally recognized fact of psychology that fear unfailingly increases and focalizes the attention.

32:10.2 Sensation, fear, and attention constitute the elements which enter into the formation of that wicked and destructive mischief maker, the “vicious worry circle.”

It will be recalled that one of the definitions of worry was, “a spasm of the attention.”

This health-destroying and mind-ruining “circle of worry”

starts with some extraordinary conscious impression, upon which the attention is forthwith focussed.

The vividness of the impression is thereby greatly increased

and fear is aroused, perhaps worry is born.

Then all this fear and worry reacts by increasing and focalizing the attention anew

upon those impressions which were the original source and cause of all this mischief.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

In this manner, concentration of the thoughts upon any organ of the body or upon any local pain therein, is usually found to make matters worse or indefinitely to perpetuate the ailment.

It would thus appear that worry is seldom likely to cure itself by being allowed to run its course (*SøL* 282).

32:10.3 It would thus appear that worry is seldom likely to cure itself by being allowed to run its natural course.

It soon wears for itself definite grooves in the brain and nervous system, and ever tends to perpetuate itself after the manner of this “vicious circle,” and in almost every case slowly but surely increases its intensity, thereby becoming more and more destructive to mental peace and physical health.

We would not dispute the fact that the soul-eyed, hollow-cheeked woman may be on the road to heaven,

32:10.4 We would not dispute the fact that the meek and humble, soul-eyed, hollow-cheeked woman may be on the certain road to heaven,

but we are quite certain she has a stop-over ticket for some sanitarium or hospital,

but we are quite certain that she must have a “stop-over ticket for some sanitarium” or hospital

and that she will have to be treated for the results of her constant worry,

where she will have to be long treated for the mental and material results of her constant worry,

as well as for the indigestion and nervous prostration that are so surely produced by this unnatural and unhealthful mental state (*SøL* 282-83).

as well as for the indigestion, dyspepsia, and nervous prostration, that are so surely produced by this unnatural, unhealthful, and downcast mental state.

And so, the “vicious worry circle” is found to consist of the following factors—attention magnifies sensation; sensation produces fear and worry; and worry further increases and focalizes the attention.

EXCESSIVE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Self-consciousness. Among other mental causes of worry should be mentioned the exaggerated self-consciousness found especially in young people—

stage fright being an acute exhibition of this form of mental uneasiness and discomfort.

Many persons find it almost impossible to get away from these insistent thoughts.

They have a specialized concentration of the attention,

and it is certainly a demonstration of the fact that our thoughts are a real part of ourselves (*SoL* 283).

[contd] We remember very well of hearing some one once say,

“An imaginary worry may be unreal, but a worried imagination is very real”; and this is really true.

The basis of our worry may lie entirely false and unreal, but the results of the worry upon the health of mind, soul, and body are in every sense real (*SoL* 283).

32:11.1 Among the everyday mental causes of fear and worry should be mentioned the exaggerated self-consciousness found especially in the case of certain young people.

Stage-fright is an acute exhibition of this form of mental uneasiness and physical discomfort.

Many sensitive persons find it almost impossible to get away from these insistent feelings of self-consciousness.

Their minds are peculiarly concentrated on the thought

that other people are thinking about them,

and it is certainly a demonstration of the fact that our thoughts are a real part of ourselves.

32:11.2 We well remember hearing some one say,

“An imaginary worry may be unreal, but a worried imagination is very real”; and this is true.

The basis of our worry may be entirely false and unreal, but the final results of the worry upon the mind, soul, and health are in every sense real and highly injurious.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

MENTAL WORK AND REST

Work vs. rust. We have got to strike an intelligent balance

32:12.1 We must learn to strike an intelligent balance

between the dangers which threaten us on the one hand from too much work and the friction attendant thereon;

between the dangers which threaten us on the one hand from too much work and the friction attendant thereon;

and on the other hand, from too much rest and the rust of character which is sure to follow.

and, on the other hand, from too much rest and the rust of character which is sure to follow.

We do not want either to worry out or rust out,

We do not want either to “worry out” or “rust out,”

but to lead the normal, rational life

but to possess that wisdom which will enable us to lead the normal, rational life

which promises deliverance from the threatened dangers of both (*SoL* 283).

which promises deliverance from the threatened dangers of both these unnecessary extremes.

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

To Say “Worry Not” Does Not Mean “Rust Out”

We must be able to strike a practical balance between friction and rust.

We must be able to strike a practical balance between friction and rest (*LHJ* 22).

[contd] Both mental idleness and physical inactivity predispose people to worry (*LHJ* 22).

32:12.2 Both mental idleness and physical inactivity predispose people to worry.

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

MENTAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 282)

Mental idleness. Those who would cease from worry must guard against mental inactivity,

Those who would cease from worry must constantly guard against intellectual inactivity;

for if Satan finds mischief for idle hands,

for, if it is true that Satan finds mischief for idle hands,

SOURCE

he is sure to find worry for idle minds.

Worry obscures our outlook on life, both in this world and the next;

it throttles the higher faculties of the mind;

it beclouds our view of life and all its duties (SoL 283).

Obsession. ... Mental work never kills.

Mental work plus worry is highly destructive to the health of brain and the life of the body;

while heavy mental work coupled with unusual worry,

carried to the point of producing a state of sleeplessness,

presents conditions that will more quickly ruin the health and break down the mind

than any other possible combination (SoL 284).

Special fears, hoodoos, etc. Among the more grave mental causes of worry may be mentioned the various “phobias” or fears.

Men and women, otherwise intelligent and sound of mind,

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

it is even more true that he is sure to find worry for idle minds;

and worry obscures our outlook on life, both for this world and the next;

it throttles the higher powers of the mind;

it beclouds our view of life and distorts our appreciation of the duties thereof.

Worry is the smoke on the field-glass of life, and quite effectively it paralyzes all the creative faculties of the intellect.

32:12.3 Mental work never kills.

Mental work plus worry is highly destructive to strength of brain and health of body;

while heavy and taxing mental work coupled with unusual worry

and its resultant insomnia,

presents conditions which will more quickly destroy the physical health and break down the mind

than any other possible combination of mental vices and physical sins.

SPECIAL FEARS AND HOODOOS

32:13.1 Among the more grave mental causes of worry should be mentioned the various “phobias” or specialized fears.

Men and women, otherwise intelligent and sound of mind,

SOURCE

are found to be horribly afraid of certain foods or the drinking water of a certain locality;

still others fear numbers such as thirteen, twenty-three, etc.

This form of fear commonly passes under the name of superstition.

Others fear disease.

They live through a long life constantly brooding over the fear that they will die from cancer or some other malignant disease (*SoL* 284).

Fretting. We have long heard the old proverb “Nothing kills so sure as care,”

and it is literally true.

Fretting is found to do more harm to mind and body than fatigue.

Indecision, anxiety, hesitancy, doubt, and regret,

unduly entertained, all serve to produce fear and worry (*SoL* 283-84).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

are frequently found to be horribly afraid of certain foods or the drinking-water of certain localities;

still others are possessed with a great fear of such numbers as thirteen, twenty-three, etc.

Of course, much of this popular fear passes under the name of common, everyday superstition.

Others live in constant fear of some particular disease;

they live through a long life constantly nursing the fear that they will eventually die from cancer or some other malignant disorder.

32:13.2 We have all along heard the old proverb, “Nothing kills so sure as care”;

and it is literally true.

Constant fretting and worrying over our special fears are bound to do more harm to mind and body than physical fatigue and muscular weariness.

The health of mind or body is greatly hindered by all this

uncertainty, indecision, anxiety, hesitancy, and doubt;

and any of these abnormal and indefinite mental states when long continued,

when unduly entertained, are sure to give birth to fear and chronic worry.

SOURCE

[contd from 32:13.1] *Special fears, hoodoos, etc...*
Others fear disaster;

they are sure they will be killed in an earthquake or be swept off by a cyclone.

Some fear great heights and will not go up in a high office building if they can possibly avoid it.

Others fear animals, and during the summer season carefully avoid all dogs, for fear of being bitten by a mad dog,

not knowing that mad dogs are just as plentiful during the winter as during so-called "dog-days" (*SoL* 284).

"Can We Really Stop Worrying?" (*The Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1911)

When Hoodoos Take Hold of People

There seems to be no end to these special worries, and, when long continued, they often crystallize themselves into definite obsessions (*LHJ* 21).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:13.3 Intelligent people live all their lives in everlasting dread of some great disaster, some terrible catastrophe.

They are positive they will eventually be killed in an earthquake, struck by lightning, or be swept off the earth by a cyclone.

Still other people are possessed with an unnatural gravity fear:

they fear great heights, and will not even go up in a high office-building, if they can possibly avoid it.

Others fear animals during the summer season, carefully avoiding all dogs for fear of being bitten by a mad dog,

not knowing that mad dogs are just as plentiful during the winter season as during the so-called dog days.

THE SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY

32:14.1 "And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.” (Luke XIII:11-13.) (See Fig. 30.) Here was an unfortunate sufferer who had been held in bondage by an imaginary spirit of infirmity for almost a score of years. The Master broke light into her darkened mind by announcing that she was free from her infirmity. She had never really been bound. She was bowed together as a result of her long worry and sorrow. So long had she assumed this physical attitude that her body had become permanently deformed—another illustration of a physical disorder resulting from purely mental causes.

[contd] Thousands of suffering souls are held today by the chains of imaginary bondage.

32:14.2 Thousands of suffering souls are held to-day by the chains of imaginary bondage.

They have no real physical disease.

They have no real physical disease.

Their ailment is in reality a spiritual infirmity.

Their ailment is in reality a spiritual infirmity.

They might go free at any time, but they do not know it; they will not believe it.

They might go free at any time, but they do not know it; they will not believe it.

These prisoners of despair are held securely in their prison house of doubt, by force of habit.

They are very much like the elephant in Central Park, New York City, which had stood in one spot for many years, manacled with heavy chains.

They are very much like the elephant in Central Park, New York City, which had stood in one spot for many years, shackled with heavy chains.

He had never left his tracks except when he had been unfastened and led away by his keepers.

He had never left his tracks except when he had been unfastened and led away by his keepers.

One day it occurred to his overseers to remove the manacles from his legs to see if the elephant would leave his place.

One day it occurred to them to remove the fetters from his legs and see if he would leave his place.

SOURCE

After the beast was free from his shackles
he steadfastly refused to move;

even after he was allowed to become
exceedingly hungry, and when food was
placed within a few inches of his reach

he stood in his tracks swaying from side to
side and trumpeting loudly, but not a step
did the huge beast take toward the food.

The elephant was free, but he did not know
it.

He stood in his old place just as securely
bound by chains of his as if the steel bands
were about him as of old (*LHJ* 21).

[contd] Altogether too many of us are
like the elephant.

We are absolutely free today, but we won't
realize nor believe it.

We cannot be surprised when an elephant
behaves in this way, but it ought to be a
cause for amazement when intelligent men
and women

will allow themselves to be held down by
fictitious bondage (*LHJ* 21).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

After the beast was free from his
shackles, he steadfastly refused to move;

even after he was allowed to become
exceedingly hungry, and when food was
placed within a few inches of his reach,

he stood in his tracks swaying from side
to side and trumpeting loudly, but not a
step did the huge beast take toward the
food.

32:14.3 The elephant was free, but he
did not know it;

therefore, he stood there in his old place
just as securely bound by the chains of his
own mind as if the steel bands were about
him as of old.

And so it is with humanity;

altogether too many of us are like unto
the elephant.

We are absolutely free to-day, but not
realizing or not believing the glorious
fact—

not having faith and courage enough to
step out into our mental freedom and
begin to enjoy our spiritual liberty—like
the elephant, we stand in the place of
habit-bondage and bitterly mourn our
terrible fate.

We are not surprised when an elephant
behaves in this way; but it ought to be a
cause for great astonishment that
intelligent men and women,

sons and daughters of God,

will allow themselves to be held down by
fictitious bondage

SOURCE

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

MENTAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 282)

Unreal troubles. We recently saw a picture which greatly impressed us concerning the uselessness of worry.

It was a picture of an old man, bent in form, sad of expression, suggestive of a life filled with perplexities and anxiety,

and underneath the picture was this statement:

“I am an old man and have had many troubles—most of which never happened” (*SoL* 285).

[contd] A recent writer, in discussing the question of worry and the weakened condition of the mind which permits the “worry circle” to go on forever revolving, getting worse and worse,

in describing this mental state, put it very aptly as follows:

“You say you cannot; your friends say you will not; the truth is you cannot will.”

There is need of a determined effort to strengthen the will, to control the mind,

and the methods for the accomplishment of this will be discussed in connection with the treatment of worry (*SoL* 285).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

and bound down by a mere “spirit of infirmity.”

FICTITIOUS WORRIES

32:15.1 We recently saw a picture which greatly impressed us concerning the uselessness of worry.

It was a picture of an old man, bent in form, sad of expression, suggestive of a life filled with perplexities and anxiety;

and underneath the picture was this statement:

“I am an old man and have had many troubles—most of which never happened.”

32:15.2 A recent writer, in discussing the question of worry and the weakened condition of the mind which permits the “worry circle” to go on forever revolving, getting worse and worse,

put it very aptly as follows:

“You say you cannot; your friends say you will not; the truth is, you cannot will.”

There is need of a determined effort to strengthen the will, to control the mind.

The methods for the accomplishment of this will be discussed in connection with the treatment of worry.

SOURCE

[contd] *Worry diseases*. Certain nervous diseases are caused by worry.

Most important among these is the condition known as “neurasthenia,” or commonly called “nervous prostration.”

Patients suffering from this condition are usually spoken of as all “run down.”

The truth is that they are patients who have been all “wound up,”

and as a result of high tension, coupled with mental anxiety, they have broken down—collapsed (*SøL* 285).

[contd] Hypochondria is another disease which owes its origin and perpetuation largely to worry.

Hypochondria is simply a condition in which one worries about having other diseases (*SøL* 285).

IX: HYPOCHONDRIA (Feuchtersleben 133)

When Wieland died, a venerable voice, speaking at his bier, said: “When man begins to examine his physical or moral being, he usually finds himself to be ill.

“We are all afflicted with a disease called life.”

There was a true definition of hypochondria, of that species, at least, against which the healing of the soul can prevail.

There is another kind which the physician must treat (F 133-34).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:15.3 Certain nervous diseases are caused by worry.

Most important among these is the condition known as neurasthenia, commonly called “nervous prostration.”

Patients suffering from this condition are usually spoken of as “all run down.”

The truth is that they are patients who have been “all wound up,”

and, as a result of high tension, coupled with mental anxiety, they have broken down, collapsed.

32:15.4 Hypochondria is another disease which owes its origin and perpetuation largely to worry.

Hypochondria is simply a condition in which one worries about having other diseases.

Whenever the most intelligent of men begin to examine their mental or physical life, they usually discover themselves to be sick.

Some one has truthfully said:

“We are all afflicted with a disease called life.”

This is a form of hypochondria which it is entirely possible to cure by mental means.

There is another kind of hypochondria which usually requires the coöperation of the physician for its permanent removal.

SOURCE

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

MENTAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 282)

[contd from six rows up] A third form of nervous complaint largely due to worry and anxiety is hysteria,

and hysteria it should be remembered, is the impersonator of almost every known disease (*SoL* 285).

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 285)

[contd] "Religion" may be either a cause of worry, or it may play the role of a cure.

We are speaking of "religion" in the sense of some form of theological belief (*SoL* 285).

Religious uncertainty. Worry is frequently generated by false ideas and arbitrary views of the Creator.

Doctrinal and interpretative errors of religious belief are responsible for much of the downcast, sad, and despondent experience of many professed Christians;

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

A third form of nervous complaint largely due to worry and anxiety is hysteria;

and hysteria, it should be remembered, is the impersonator of almost every known disease.

MORAL CAUSES OF WORRY

32:16.1 The moral habits and spiritual state of the individual not infrequently contribute much toward the production of worry. Sin is not only a cause of physical sickness, but it also lies at the bottom of many a mental malady. Immorality, dishonesty, and infidelity, all operate to destroy the peace of mind and give rise to that prick of conscience which is altogether incompatible with a tranquil mental state.

32:16.2 Religion may be either a cause of worry, or it may play the role of a cure.

We speak of "religion" in the sense of some particular form of theological belief.

32:16.3 Worry is frequently generated by false ideas and arbitrary views of the Supreme Being.

Doctrinal and interpretative errors of religious beliefs are responsible for much of the downcast, sad, and despondent experience of many professed Christians,

SOURCE

as well as for the unsatisfactory and miserable experience of thousands who do not profess to be followers of Christ.

Many earnest and honest souls have such wrestlings with the doubt of the forgiveness of their sins,

or the fear of eternal damnation,

that the mind is held in constant bondage to these insistent and oppressive thoughts,

which finally result in the production of chronic worry (*SoL* 286).

[contd from 32:16.2] Every now and then we hear of some one “going crazy over religion.”

These individuals are usually hyper-conscientious, over-scrupulous, as a rule, with a nervous system already weakened,

perhaps with a strain of insanity in the family, and perhaps having ancestors who were alcoholic, syphilitic, etc.

The combination of such physical soil, taken together with unusual mental strain, excitement, etc., connected with religious enthusiasm,

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

as well as for the unsatisfactory and miserable experience of thousands who do not profess to be followers of Christ.

Many earnest and honest souls have such constant wrestlings with the doubt of the forgiveness of their sins,

or they live in such incessant fear of death and eternal damnation,

that the mind is held in constant bondage to these insistent and oppressive thoughts,

and all this must inevitably result in the production of a chronic state of worry.

RELIGIOUS FANATICISM

32:17.1 Religious devotion and faith, while they may prove the quick and certain cure for worry, may also be perverted—carried to such fanatical extremes as to produce serious mental worry and even spiritual despondency.

Every now and then, we hear of some one “going crazy over religion.”

Such a one usually belongs to that class of morbidly conscientious and over-scrupulous people who possess a nervous system already greatly weakened;

or perhaps they have a strain of insanity in their family, and probably some of their ancestors were alcoholic or syphilitic.

The combination of such physical soil, taken together with the unusual mental strain or excitement, connected with extraordinary religious enthusiasm,

SOURCE

is frequently able to overturn the mind suddenly or else to produce such an unnatural condition of anxiety and worry

as gradually to undermine the mental vigor.

Fanaticism is either one-sided moral reasoning

or overwork of the spiritual faculties (*SoL* 385-86).

Misguided zeal. Still others

possess themselves of such an extraordinary burden for the salvation of the souls of their fellow-men,

that they in a measure assume the work of the world's Saviour,

and, as a result, their brains are overburdened

and their souls are crushed with a constant worry and anxiety for the welfare of their fellows (*SoL* 286).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

is frequently able suddenly to overturn the mind or else to produce such an unnatural condition of anxiety and worry

as gradually to undermine the mental vigor

and result in producing some form of insanity.

Religious fanaticism is one-sided moral reasoning,

simply the extreme over-emphasis of one aspect of religious or moral life.

It sometimes results from an apparent exhaustion of the mental energies

and overwork of the spiritual faculties.

32:17.2 Still other sincere persons

are suffering from the results of their own misguided zeal.

They voluntarily possess themselves of such extraordinary burdens for the salvation of the souls of their fellow men,

that they, in a measure, actually assume the worry and responsibility of the world's Saviour;

and, as a result, their brains are overburdened,

and their souls are crushed beneath the weight of this constant worry and anxiety for the welfare of their fellows.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:17.3 Religious hope of the right sort, when sincerely cherished, undoubtedly exercises a positive power toward the prevention of worry.

[contd] It is an important observation which the writer is not alone in making, that

It is an important observation which the author is not alone in making, that,

as the so-called old-fashioned religion declines, worry increases.

as the so-called old-fashioned religion declines, worry increases.

As men and women depart from the simple faith and trust in the fundamental principles of the Christian religion,

As men and women depart from the simple faith and trust in the fundamental principles of the Christian religion,

there is a growing tendency—an increasing manifestation—to worry (*SoL* 286).

there is a growing tendency to worry.

[contd] The writer sincerely believes that the religion of the soul should be as a bright light shining in a dark place—our guiding star—

We sincerely believe that the religion of the soul should be as a bright light shining in a dark place, our guiding star,

instead of being perverted into a source of worry, grief, and despondency (*SoL* 286-87).

instead of being perverted into a source of worry, grief, and despondency.

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF WORRY

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 287)

32:18.1 Many sensitive souls are caused more or less worry throughout life by

[contd] Many a human being is caused more or less worry throughout life by

the hereditary legacies handed down to him by father and mother in the shape of physical weakness and bodily deformity.

the legacies handed down by father and mother in the shape of physical weaknesses and bodily deformities.

Still others, owing to a weakened nervous system or overstrain,

Still others, owing to a weakened nervous system and overstrain,

SOURCE

have fallen into a condition of nervous irritability that renders them liable to anxiety and worry upon the least provocation.

Such persons—in fact all of us—are greatly predisposed to worry by sleeplessness.

Sound sleep is a great preventive of the mental state that borders on worry (*SoL* 287).

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

We are Predisposed to Worry by Sleeplessness

The state of the physical health is not an infrequent occasion for worry (*LHJ* 21).

XIX: THE CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 278)

[contd from two rows up] Many worry because of lingering diseases, unusual afflictions, or they grieve because of the sickness of their loved ones (*SoL* 287).

[contd] *Mind diseases*. There is no doubt that nine-tenths of all ordinary diseases originate in the mind,

and it is worry that produces the soil from which these infant diseases spring.

The seeds of mental disease and physical affliction may fall upon us thick and fast,

but if they fail to find the soil of worry and depression in which to grow, we are not likely to be seriously affected by their presence.

It requires not only a germ to produce disease, but also a favorable soil in which it may grow.

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

have fallen into a condition of nervous irritability that renders them very liable to anxiety and worry upon the least provocation.

Such persons—in fact all of us—are greatly predisposed to worry by sleeplessness.

Sound sleep is a great preventive of the mental state that borders on worry.

32:18.2 The state of the physical health is not an infrequent occasion for worry.

Many worry because of lingering illness or unusual affliction, while others grieve because of the sickness and suffering of their loved ones.

32:18.3 There is little doubt that nine-tenths of all the ordinary diseases of the body originate in the mind,

and it is worry that produces the soil from which these infant diseases spring.

The seeds of mental disease and physical affliction may fall upon us thick and fast,

but if they fail to find the soil of worry and depression in which to develop and grow, we are not likely to be seriously affected by their presence.

It requires not only a germ to produce disease, but also a favorable soil in which it may grow.

SOURCE

Worry produces that condition of mind and body favorable to the growth and development of all the vicious diseases which prey upon the mind and destroy the body (*SøL 287*).

[contd] *Childish worries*. There is a group of worry causes which might be termed childhood worries.

The worries of childhood are just as real as those of adult life.

The little girl who is made to wear short dresses above her knees when she has outgrown them,

or the little boy who is made to wear the clothes of an infant when he regards himself a young man—

their worries are all real;

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Worry produces just that condition of mind and body most favorable to the growth and development of all the vicious diseases which prey upon the mind and destroy the body.

WORRY DEPENDENT ON AGE

32:19.1 Many of the worries which afflict the human mind are incident to some particular time of life—they are more or less dependent on age.

For example, we have certain worries belonging to the period of childhood,

others to adolescence.

Certain difficulties are more likely to harass the soul during the adult period of life, whereas other troubles are more likely to give birth to worry and anxiety during old age.

32:19.2 The worries of childhood are just as real as those of later life.

The little girl who is made to wear short dresses which come considerably above her knees, when she has long outgrown them;

or the small boy who is compelled to wear clothes which he regards as suited only to infants—

both have their worries;

and it should be remembered that their childish grievances are to them very real.

SOURCE

they grieve over these things.

Likewise their griefs and sorrows resulting from ridicule, teasing, etc.—

these all serve to start the mind acting in unhealthy channels and to warp the nervous system in its development (*SoL* 287-88).

[contd] *Old age worry*. Another form of worry which may be properly classified as among the physical causes, is the worry of “old age.”

As the years pass over us, the arteries harden, the memory fails, the skin becomes wrinkled and leathery.

[and old age brings its peculiar worries to the majority of people (*LHJ* 21).]

There is a tendency to worry on the part of the aged that is born both of the retrospective view of life and anticipation as to what the future holds in store.

Especially is this true in the case of those who do not have sufficient means laid up properly to care for them to a good old age (*SoL* 288).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

They take these little troubles of childhood very seriously.

Likewise their griefs and sorrows resulting from ridicule and teasing

tend to induce unhealthy mental activity, and seriously to warp the nervous system in its early development.

32:19.3 Another form of worry which may be very properly classified among this group, is the fear and worry of old age.

As the years pass over us, the arteries begin to harden, the memory gradually fails, the skin becomes visibly wrinkled and leathery,

and old age brings its peculiar worries to the majority of people.

There is a tendency to undue anxiety on the part of the aged that is born both of the retrospective view of life and anticipation as to what the future holds in store.

Especially is this true in the case of those who do not have sufficient means laid up properly and comfortably to care for them to a good old age.

PERNICIOUS HEALTH FADS

32:20.1 Some newfangled health fad may set the whole country worrying about indigestion and dietetics.

SOURCE

Fads and delusions. Newspaper articles and fads are liable to set a whole nation worrying over some article of diet.

Some editorial novice, who cannot earn his living in a better way, sends out an article to the newspaper syndicate

that some scientist has discovered that strawberries are poisonous,

and ten thousand people immediately begin to have stomach trouble from eating strawberries,

or begin to worry over their liability to disagree with them.

It is proverbial that medical students are prone to have, or at least think they have, the diseases they are studying (*SoL* 288).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Newspaper articles and health literature are able so to alarm the people as markedly to upset the nerves and digestion of thousands of susceptible persons.

Some editorial novice, who cannot earn his living in a better way, sends out an article to the newspaper syndicate

proclaiming that some scientist has discovered that strawberries are poisonous;

and forthwith ten thousand people begin to have stomach trouble from eating strawberries,

or begin seriously to worry over their liability to disagree with them.

Some persons cannot read a book on health and hygiene without immediately acquiring a new disease.

It is proverbial that medical students are prone to have, or at least to think they have, the numerous diseases which they study from time to time.

32:20.2 The author would not have it understood that he in any way decries the good that has been and is being accomplished by the great hygienic awakening which is making its way over the land; we believe that human beings should be capable of studying about themselves for the purpose of gaining needed instruction without allowing their minds to become morbid, faddish, and filled with worry concerning their physical health.

SOURCE

[contd] *Results of worry.* Some of the physical results of chronic worry may be briefly summed up as follows:

Insomnia, loss of weight, anaemia, rise in blood-pressure, hardening of the arteries, pre-mature old age and apoplexy, headaches, dyspepsia and constipation, pale skin and poor circulation, predisposition to the “catching” of contagious diseases and colds (*SoL* 288-89).

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Science of Living* 289)

[contd] Among the social causes of worry, family trouble, either real or false, probably comes first.

Divorces, desertions, and social dissipations result in a vast amount of human worry, sorrow, sickness, and death (*SoL* 289).

[contd] *Household problems.* These are other causes of worry.

The proper rearing of the boy, the successful training of the girl, the usual petty cares of the home to which all women are subject, together with the modern servant problem—

all serve to create anxiety and worry, together with the useless and unnecessary toil connected with the family life.

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:20.3 Not only are numerous physical conditions responsible for worry, but it should be remembered that numerous physical disorders may directly result from chronic worry.

Among the common physical ailments which may directly result from long-continued worry may be mentioned,

insomnia, loss of weight, anæmia, rise of blood-pressure, hardening of the arteries, premature old age, apoplexy, headaches, dyspepsia, constipation, pale skin, poor circulation, and predisposition to catching all contagious diseases and colds.

SOCIAL SOURCES OF WORRY

32:21.1 Among the social causes of worry, family trouble, either real or false, probably comes first.

Divorces, desertions, and social dissipations result in a vast amount of human worry, sorrow, and sickness.

32:21.2 Household problems are another cause of worry.

The proper rearing of the boy, the successful training of the girl, the usual petty cares of the home, to which all women are subject, together with the modern servant problem—

all serve to create anxiety and worry, together with the useless and unnecessary toil connected with the family life.

SOURCE

Housewives are constantly worried over the proper performance of little things that would in no way affect the family happiness if they were left undone (*SoL* 289).

“Can We Really Stop Worrying?” (*The Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1911)

When Worry Enters the Home

Many a mother, when she wakes up in the morning, begins the day in a state of anxious and nervous agitation;

she feels herself already crushed under the weight of all the burdens she will have to bear.

The little household cares and domestic trials which every mother has to bear are not to her simple annoyances;

they are actual catastrophes, and she suffers every one of these calamities a score of times before they come.

By noon her life is swarming with apprehensions, difficulties and troubles; worry reigns supreme on the throne of her mind, and distraction has come to possess the soul.

At the close of the day this unhappy mother has borne a hundred sorrows which were wholly imaginary, produced entirely by abnormal emotion.

[contd] *Society worry*. Among social causes of worry are those of jealousy and distrust—

the social rivalry and ambition found among the “smart sets” of our metropolitan centres (*SoL* 289).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Housewives are constantly worried over the proper performance of little things that would in no way affect the family happiness if they were left undone.

32:21.3 Many a mother, when she wakes up in the morning, begins the day in a state of anxious and nervous agitation;

she feels herself already crushed under the weight of all the burdens she will have to bear.

The little household cares and domestic trials which every mother experiences are not to her simple annoyances;

they are actual catastrophes, and she suffers every one of these calamities a score of times before it comes.

By noon her life is swarming with apprehensions, difficulties, and troubles, worry reigns supreme on the throne of her mind, and distraction has come to possess the soul.

At the close of the day this unhappy mother has borne a hundred sorrows which were wholly imaginary, produced entirely by abnormal emotion.

32:21.4 Among social causes of worry are those of jealousy and distrust,

the social rivalry and ambition found among the “smart sets” of our metropolitan centres.

SOURCE

[contd] Undue sympathy for friends may be set down as another cause of mental uneasiness (*SoL* 289).

[contd] Social and family friction may cause worry to the point of producing such high blood-pressure as to lead its victims to the use of alcohol, in an effort to secure relief from mental and nervous tension.

Intemperance may be set down as both a cause and a result of worry (*SoL* 289).

[contd] *Labor-saving inventions.* Every product of modern inventive genius which tends to decrease the physical work of the body is bound to increase the tendency toward mental worry.

The less we use the body, the more likely we are to over-use (abuse) the mind by worrying (*SoL* 289).

[contd] An inordinate worldly ambition may generate worry on the one hand, while there can be no denying the fact that poverty is a provoker of worry on the other hand.

Financial difficulties and business reverses must be set down as among the industrial causes of an uneasy mind (*SoL* 289-90).

[contd] *Labor troubles.* Industrial disputes and labor difficulties, the constant friction between combinations of money and those of muscle,

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

Undue sympathy for friends may be set down as another cause of mental uneasiness.

32:21.5 Social and family friction may cause worry to the point of producing such high blood pressure as to lead its victims to the use of alcohol, in an effort to secure relief from mental nervous tension.

Intemperance may be set down as both a cause and a result of worry.

INDUSTRIAL CAUSES OF WORRY

32:22.1 Every product of modern inventive genius which tends to decrease the physical work of the body is bound to increase the tendency toward worry.

The less we use the body, the more likely we are to over-use (abuse) the mind by worrying.

32:22.2 An inordinate worldly ambition may generate worry on the one hand, while there can be no denying the fact that poverty is a provoker of worry on the other hand.

Financial difficulties and business reverses must be set down as among the industrial causes of an uneasy mind.

32:22.3 Industrial disputes and labor difficulties, the constant friction between combinations of money and those of muscle,

SOURCE

produce conditions which are ever provocative of industrial uncertainty, and, therefore, result in generating mental anxiety and worry (*SoL* 290).

[contd] Accidents incident to our modern industrial life produce worry both in those who fear them and those who are compelled to suffer because of them;

in fact, the complexity of the demands of our modern social and industrial organization, is such as to constantly entoil us in the meshes of anxiety and worry (*SoL* 290).

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

produce conditions which are ever provocative of industrial uncertainty, and therefore result in generating mental anxiety and worry.

32:22.4 Accidents incident to our modern industrial life produce worry both in those who fear them and those who are compelled to suffer because of them;

in fact, the complexity of the demands of our modern social and industrial organization is such as constantly entoil us in the meshes of anxiety and worry.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

32:23.1 1. Worry may be defined as “a spasm of the attention”—too long continued concentration of the mental powers. Worry is fear thought in contradistinction to forethought. It is chronic fear, one-sided thinking. Worry is a process of borrowing trouble from the future to augment our present sorrows.

32:23.2 2. The liability to worry exists only in those animals high enough up in the biologic scale to possess associative memories. Man possesses a high degree of the power of memory association, and, therefore, is most liable of all animals to worry.

32:23.3 3. The general cause of worry is the universal desire for happiness, and the quest for those things and conditions which are generally supposed to confer happiness on their possessor.

32:23.4 4. In the last analysis, much worry has its origin in some form of irritation, anxiety, or fear. The use of alcohol, and other forms of physical transgression, are not infrequently the handmaidens of worry and sorrow.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:23.5 5. Many people constantly worry because of their temperamental peculiarities. They feel that they are always being “neglected,” “slighted,” or “criticised.” Others are inordinately timid, fearful, and backward.

32:23.6 6. Some people are literally human barometers. They can detect a storm almost before the weather bureau knows of its existence. They constantly worry over the weather, lest their plans be upset by rain, storm, or drouth.

32:23.7 7. Some men persist in magnifying trifles beyond all measure and reason. They insist on making mountains out of molehills. Other people are not free from the little vexing trifles of life; why should we expect to be?

32:23.8 8. Some people have acquired the chronic “kicking” habit; they are utterly unable to see good in anybody or to be satisfied with anything. Some folks have come to the place where they actually enjoy poor health, taking great delight in recounting their numerous complaints.

32:23.9 9. “Look before you leap,” and numerous other good proverbs may be so perverted as to lead to much worry and inaction. Other proverbs commonly perverted are, “What is worth doing at all is worth doing well”; and “Be sure you are right, then go ahead.”

32:23.10 10. Each day’s efforts should be wisely divided into the essential and the unessential; and it should be no occasion for worry if some trifle has been slighted or neglected, as we review the events of the day.

32:23.11 11. Sensation, fear, and focalized attention are the elements destructive “worry circle,” by which means anxiety is perpetuated and chronic worry tends ever to grow worse and worse, fed by the very elements of its own creation.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:23.12 12. Exaggerated self-consciousness is a common cause of worry. An imaginary worry may be unreal, but a worried imagination is very real.

32:23.13 13. We must strike an intelligent balance between too much work on one hand, and friction attendant thereon; and on the other hand, too much rest and the rust of character which is sure to follow.

32:23.14 14. Mental work never kills. Mental work plus worry is highly injurious, while mental work plus worry plus insomnia represents a combination which will quickly destroy the health of mind and body.

32:23.15 15. "Nothing kills so sure as care." Thousands are made miserable by special fears, "phobias," and hoodoos. Intelligent people live all their lives in everlasting dread of some great disaster, some terrible catastrophe.

32:23.16 16. Thousands of souls are held in perpetual bondage by imaginary fetters. They are victims of a "spirit of infirmity." A discouraged and downcast mental attitude may so habitually bow down the body as to produce permanent physical deformity.

32:23.17 17. When tempted to borrow trouble, when harassed by fictitious worries, remember the old man who had passed through "many troubles—most of which never happened."

32:23.18 18. The moral habits and spiritual state not infrequently contribute much toward the production of worry. Religion may be either a cause or a cure of worry. As the old-fashioned religion declines, worry increases.

SOURCE

32: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

32:23.19 19. Physical weakness, bodily deformity, and numerous diseases all figure as causes of worry. Nine-tenths of ordinary diseases originate in the mind as a result of worry. Every age has its peculiar worries; there are childhood worries, as well as old age worries.

32:23.20 20. Some newfangled health fad may set the whole country worrying about indigestion and dyspepsia. Magazine articles and health books are often able to give their nervous readers a set of new diseases.

32:23.21 21. Common physical ailments which may be traced to worry are insomnia, loss of weight, anæmia, rise of blood-pressure, hardening of the arteries, premature old age, apoplexy, head aches, dyspepsia, constipation, poor circulation, and predisposition to catching disease.

32:23.22 22. Among the social causes of worry may be mentioned divorces, family cares, household problems, and servant difficulties, as well as business difficulties, industrial disputes, and labor troubles.

1. The fact that man is the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worrying, is due to the superiority of his mind over that of the lower animals (*SoL* 279).