

Chapter 5 — Chronic Fear or Common Worry

from *Worry and Nervousness: Or, The Science of Self-Mastery* (1914)

by William S. Sadler, M.D.

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Sources for Chapter 5, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) William S. Sadler, M.D., *The Physiology of Faith and Fear: Or, The Mind in Health and Disease* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1912)
- (2) Orison Swett Marden, *Peace, Power, and Plenty* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1909)
- (3) Dr. Paul Dubois, *The Influence of the Mind on the Body* (Translated from the Fifth French Edition by L. B. Gallatin) (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1911)

Note: This source is coded **Dubois1**.

- (4) Dr. Paul Dubois, *Reason and Sentiment* (Authorized Translation by Edward G. Richards) (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1911)

Note: This source is coded **Dubois2**.

- (5) **Anonymous**, "Worry," in *The Living Age*, No. 3284, June 15, 1907, pp. 63-64.

Note: The article first appeared in *The Nation*, May 4, 1907, pp. 375-76.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author (or earlier 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) **Bold type indicates passages which Sadler copied verbatim, or nearly verbatim, from an uncited source.**
- (f) **Pink** indicates passages where Sadler specifically shares his own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF
 WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear*
 349)

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 349).

WORRY DEFINED (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear*
 349)

[contd] 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,” or a continued fit of mental concentration.

V: CHRONIC FEAR OR COMMON WORRY

5:0.1 IN EVERY age, the human race has suffered tremendously from the disastrous consequences of chronic fear or common worry,

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

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

WHAT IS WORRY?

5:1.1 It is exceedingly difficult to frame an acceptable definition for worry.

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

It would seem that worry might truthfully be called a “spasm of the attention,” a sort of continued fit of mental concentration.

Worry is a diseased self-consciousness— an undue and exaggerated solicitude on any subject.

SOURCE

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 borderlands of anxiety, fear, and worry (*PF&F* 349-50).

[contd] 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;

indeed, worry has been called “chronic fear.”

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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

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

5:1.2 It is very necessary that the mind should take fast hold upon an idea or 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 borderland of anxiety, the realms of fear—actual worry.

Worry is a simple functional disorder of the mind—a chronic process of “making mountains out of mole hills.”

FORETHOUGHT VERSUS FEARTHUGHT

5:2.1 And so we find that worry turns out to be a sort of a “one sided mental action.”

Worry may be defined as “fearthought” in contradistinction to “forethought.”

Forethought is highly necessary to the smooth running of our daily affairs, while *fearthought* is wholly unnecessary and even highly injurious.

Worry is nothing more or less than “chronic fear.”

SOURCE

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 (*PF&F* 350).

[contd] Forethought is a wise general of the intellectual forces, making an intelligent comparison between the past and the present, while discriminately 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 (*PF&F* 350).

XIII: WORRY, THE DISEASE OF THE AGE (Marden 223)

[contd] Some people bear three kinds of trouble—all they ever had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.—EDWARD EVERETT HALE. (M 223)

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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 immediately begins its corroding process of incessantly harassing the mind, torturing the soul,

while it so effectively dissipates the mental energies and weakens the nervous forces.

Worry is nothing more nor less than a sort of mental indigestion—psychic dyspepsia.

5:2.2 Forethought is a wise general of the intellectual forces, making an intelligent comparison between the experiences of the past and the present while discriminately 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.

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

Edward Everett Hale once said: “Some people have three kinds of trouble—all they ever had, all they now have, and all they ever expect to have.”

SOURCE

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 349)

WORRY DEFINED (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 349)

[contd from two rows up] 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 (*PF&F* 350).

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 350)

[contd] Man is the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worry.

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;

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,

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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

5:3.1 Man is truly the only animal that makes himself ridiculous by worry.

The biologists teach us that intelligence (the liability to worry) exists only in those animals high enough up in the biological scale to possess associative memories.

Man possesses a high degree of memory association.

As Shakespeare has said, man is made “with such a 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 little or no associative memory,

SOURCE

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;

and it seems highly probable that wasps do possess certain powers of associative memory (*PF&F* 350).

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MIND ON THE BODY (Dubois 3)

Man, in short, suffers quite differently from the animals and he suffers more than they.

He does not content himself, so to speak, with brute suffering which is adequate for the physical disorders;

he increases them by imagination, aggravates them by fear, keeps them up by his pessimistic reflections (D1 20).

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 349)

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 350)

[contd from 5:3.1] 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 (*PF&F* 351).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

and, of course, they are not addicted to the human vice of worry.

In ascending the scale of animal life, interesting problems are encountered when we reach the ant tribes;

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

5:3.2 Man, in short, suffers quite differently from the animals and he suffers more than they.

He does not content himself, so to speak, with brute suffering which is adequate for the physical disorders;

he increases them by imagination, aggravates them by fear, keeps them up by his pessimistic reflections.

5:3.3 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.

Worry is simply some sort of abnormally insistent thought—some idea you can't get away from—a notion that grips you with a power you are unable to break.

SOURCE

EXCESSIVE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 358)

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 (*PF&F* 358).

THE GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 351)

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 351).

[contd] The fact that man is the only animal that worries 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,

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

It should be remembered that

while our imaginary worries are unreal, nevertheless, a worried imagination is one of the most real things in the world.

THE GENERAL CAUSES OF WORRY

5:4.1 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 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 of fear and the tendency to worry.

5:4.2 The fact that man is the only animal that worries 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,

SOURCE

forms those conclusions which cause him to look with fear and trembling into the future (*PF&F* 351).

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 351).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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

5:4.3 The causes of human worry are indeed varied, but in the last analysis they are usually found to consist in some form of nerve irritation, mental anxiety, or moral fear.

It not infrequently develops that numerous habits of life as well as certain physical practices are contributory to the development of the worry habit.

The use of alcohol, and many other forms of both psychic and physical transgression, are often discovered to be the hand maidens of worry and ancestors of sorrow.

5:4.4 Lack of self-control is another great cause of worry.

A strong will would cure nine-tenths of this unnecessary and hurtful grief.

Even the proverbial “wet hen” could undoubtedly overcome her anger if she would but

become reconciled to the presence of a little moisture or else

become a trifle indifferent to the matter of always keeping dry.

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

without making so much fuss about it.

SOURCE

HAPPINESS-HUNGER (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 351)

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 351-52).

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 352).

REASON AND SENTIMENT (Dubois 7)

But however complicated music may be, it nevertheless reduces itself to the combination of seven notes and their octaves.

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

THE EVER PRESENT HAPPINESS HUNGER

5:5.1 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 worries.

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to destroy our 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.

5:5.3 Concerning happiness hunger—human desire—Dubois says:

5:5.4 But however complicated music may be, it nevertheless reduces itself to the combination of seven notes and their octaves.

SOURCE

For the sentiments, in spite of their number and complexity, the simplification is still easier.

There are not seven sentiments, the combination of which would constitute the sentimental life; there are two only—*desire* and *fear*.

The former urges man forward and incites him to seek that which he desires; the latter holds him back and makes him recoil from that which he fears.

In short, these are sentiments only of *pleasure* and of *displeasure*.

I go further, and say that man has never had but a single motive of action—*desire*, whether it be a positive desire that something happen, or a negative desire that something do not happen.

Examine from this point of view all your actions and those of your fellow men and you will always find this single spring setting in motion all your energies—*desire* (D2 10).

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 349)

[contd from 5:5.2] 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;

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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5:5.5 Many good people entertain the false notion that possession of material riches can bestow happiness upon the soul.

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

SOURCE

but all this is a mistake.

True happiness is rather derived from the blessings of sound, physical health, mental peace, and spiritual rest (*PF&F* 352).

TEMPERAMENTAL PECULIARITIES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 352)

[contd] 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.

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 (*PF&F* 352).

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 352).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

But all this is a mistake.

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

TEMPERAMENTAL PECULIARITIES

5:6.1 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 very best friends.

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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 mental happiness and spiritual peace.

SOURCE

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 352-53).

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 353).

WEATHER-WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 353)

[contd] Every time you meet some people you will find that they are worrying over the weather.

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

5:6.3 Other people worry because they are inordinately timid—bashful or 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 even despondency.

5:6.4 Still others worry over their great responsibilities;

and, as a rule, these over-anxious individuals are found to be altogether too much concerned about certain minute details and other trifling matters

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

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

USELESS WEATHER WORRY

5:7.1 Every time you meet some folks you find that they are worrying over the weather;

SOURCE

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:

“Yes, neighbors, the crops are good, and the weather is fine, but I want to tell you it is mighty hard on the land” (*PF&F* 353).

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 353).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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

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

5:7.2 Some men and women are literally human barometers.

As the result of their rheumatic tendencies 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 far distant 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.

SOURCE

[contd] 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.

Still others are possessed with the constant fear of being struck by lightning; they are always terror-stricken by loud thunder (*PF&F* 353-54).

THE MAGNIFICATION OF TRIFLES (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 354)

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 354).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

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

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THE MAGNIFICATION OF TRIFLES

5:8.1 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 misfortune and difficulties to some trifling mistake in his youth, or to some insignificant blunder or minor transgression of later life.

SOURCE

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 354)..

[contd] 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 (*PF&F* 354).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

5:8.2 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 spy glass of life at the wrong end, and it was only necessary to reverse his telescope, as it were, to give him an entirely new viewpoint of life.

After an hour's talk he was ready to go to work and he has continued to make rapid progress and satisfactory improvement.

5:8.3 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

THE CHRONIC “KICKING” HABIT (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 354)

[contd] 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.

Such unfortunate creatures seem utterly unable to see good in anybody or to be satisfied with anything (*PF&F* 354-55).

[contd] 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.

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 (*PF&F* 355).

5:9.1 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.

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

They manifest constant resistance to their environment.

5:9.2 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 wholly permeated with chronic complaining.

However small and trifling the matter over which we begin to worry, this insignificant cause of our mental dissatisfaction will be found entirely sufficient to feed and nourish the spirit of uneasiness

to the point where it completely gains possession of the mind, threatens to wreck our career, and constantly harasses the soul to the point where life is almost unbearable.

SOURCE

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

Worry travels and operates in a sort of “vicious circle”—and all its terrible results unfailingly operate as the generators of new forms of fretting—new causes for worry.

[contd] 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.

5:9.3 But after all that can be said of the causes of worry, we can not 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;

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

their complaints have become chronic; they enjoy enlisting the sympathy of their fellows,

their complaints have become chronic; they enjoy enlisting the sympathy of their fellows,

having delight in describing their sufferings and explaining their miseries;

having great and evident 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 (*PF&F* 355).

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

XIII: WORRY, THE DISEASE OF THE AGE (**Marden** 223)

An habitual worrier—an aged woman said to her physician, “My head feels dull like, and I’ve kinder lost the power to worry over things.”

5:9.4 An habitual worrier—an aged woman—said to her physician, “My head feels dull like, and I’ve kinder lost the power to worry over things.”

A great many people would be much troubled were they to lose the power to worry over things.

A great many people would be much troubled were they to lose the power to worry over things.

They think it their duty to worry.

They think it their duty to worry.

SOURCE

They would not feel that they were conscientious or faithful if they were not always anxious over what they were doing.

They would not think they were showing a proper interest in it (M 230-31).

We Americans pity ignorant savages who live in terror of their cruel gods, their demons which keep them in abject slavery,

but we ourselves are the slaves of a demon which blasts our hopes, blights our happiness, casts its hideous shadow across all our pleasures, destroys our sleep, mars our health, and keeps us in misery most of our lives (M 223).

[contd] This monster dogs us from the cradle to the grave.

There is no occasion so sacred but it is there.

Unbidden it comes to the wedding and the funeral alike.

It is at every reception, every banquet; it occupies a seat at every table (M 223).

[contd] No human intellect can estimate the unutterable havoc and ruin wrought by worry.

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

They would not feel that they were conscientious or faithful if they were not always anxious over what they were doing.

They would not think they were showing the proper interest.

THE HANDICAPS OF WORRY

5:10.1 In cataloging the handicaps of worry, **Marden** says:

5:10.2 We Americans pity ignorant savages who live in terror of their cruel Gods, their demons which keep them in abject slavery,

but we ourselves are the slaves of a demon which blasts our hopes, blights our happiness, casts its hideous shadow across all our pleasures, destroys our sleep, mars our health, and keeps us in misery most of our lives.

5:10.3 The monster dogs us from the cradle to the grave.

Unbidden it comes to the wedding and the funeral alike.

There is no occasion so sacred but it is there.

It is at every reception, every banquet, it occupies a seat at every table.

5:10.4 No human intellect can estimate the unutterable havoc and ruin wrought by worry.

SOURCE

It has forced genius to do the work of mediocrity; it has caused more failures, more broken hearts, more blasted hopes, than any other one cause since the dawn of the world (M 223-24).

[contd] What have not men done under the pressure of worry!

They have plunged into all sorts of vice; have become drunkards, drug fiends; have sold their very souls in their efforts to escape this monster.

Think of the homes which it has broken up; the ambitions it has ruined; the hopes and prospects it has blighted!

Think of the suicide victims of this demon! (M 224)

Many a strong man is tied down, like Gulliver, by Lilliputians—bound hand and foot by the little worries and vexations he has never learned to conquer (M 225).

We borrow trouble; endure all our lives the woe of crossing and recrossing bridges weeks and years before we come to them;

do disagreeable tasks mentally over and over again before we reach them; anticipate our drudgery and constantly suffer from the apprehension of terrible things that never happen (M 225-26).

[contd] I know women who never open a telegram without trembling, for they feel sure it will announce the death of a friend or some terrible disaster.

If their children have gone for a sail or a picnic, they are never easy a moment during their absence;

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

It has forced genius to do the work of mediocrity; it has caused more failures, more broken hearts, more blasted hopes than any other one cause since the dawn of the world.

What have not men done under the pressure of worry!

They have plunged into all sorts of vice, have become drunkards, drug fiends; have sold their very souls in their efforts to escape this monster.

5:10.5 Think of the homes which it has broken up; the ambitions it has ruined; the hopes and prospects it has blighted!

Think of the suicide victims of this demon!

Many a strong man is tied down, like Gulliver, by Lilliputians—bound hand and foot by the little worries and vexations he has never learned to conquer.

5:10.6 We borrow trouble; endure all our lives the woe of crossing and recrossing bridges weeks and years before we come to them;

anticipate our drudgery and consequently suffer from the apprehension of terrible things that never happen.

5:10.7 I know women who never open a telegram without trembling, for they feel sure it will announce the death of a friend or some terrible disaster.

If their children have gone for a sail or a picnic, they are never easy a moment during their absence;

SOURCE

they work themselves into a fever of anxiety for fear that some accident will befall them, that something awful will happen to them (M 226).

Many a mother fritters away more energy in useless frets and fears for her children, in nervous strain over this or that, than she uses for her daily routine of domestic work.

She wonders why she is so exhausted at the close of the day, and never dreams that she has thrown away the greater part of her force (M 226).

Look at the women who are shrivelled and shrunken and aged at thirty, not because of the hard work they have done, or the real troubles they have had,

but because of habitual fretting, which has helped nobody, but has brought discord and unhappiness to their homes (M 226-27).

Worry not only saps vitality and wastes energy, but it also seriously affects the quality of one's work.

It cuts down ability.

A man cannot get the highest quality of efficiency into his work when his mind is troubled.

The mental faculties must have perfect freedom before they will give out their best (M 228-29).

It is the little pin-pricks, the petty annoyances of our every-day life, that mar our comfort and happiness and rob us of more strength than the great troubles which we nerve ourselves to meet.

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

they work themselves into a fever of anxiety for fear that something will happen to them.

5:10.8 Many a mother fritters away more energy and useless frets and fears for her children, a nervous strain over this or that, than she uses for her daily routine of domestic work.

She wonders why she is so exhausted at the close of the day, and never dreams that she has thrown away the greater part of her force.

Look at the women who are shriveled and shrunken and aged at thirty, not because of the hard work they have done, or the real troubles they have had,

but because of habitual fretting, which has helped nobody, but has brought discord and unhappiness to their homes.

5:10.9 Worry not only saps vitality and wastes energy, but it also seriously affects the quality of one's work.

It cuts down ability.

A man cannot get the same quality of efficiency into his work when his mind is troubled.

The mental faculties must have perfect freedom before they will give out their best.

5:10.10 It is the little pin-pricks, the petty annoyances of our every day life, that mar our comfort and happiness and rob us of more strength than the great troubles which we nerve ourselves to meet.

SOURCE

It is the perpetual scolding and fault-finding of an irritable man or woman which ruins the entire peace and happiness of many a home (M 230).

WORRY (Anonymous 693)

Worry is always a waste, always a disease.

Physically, it is traceable in drawn features, short breathing, tense bearing, irregular quick movements.

Mentally, it is distinguishable as a vicious circle of the intellect and the emotions, thought and feeling futilely rotating about some single object set out of focus (A 694).

Sometimes a trifling difficulty or risk swells to a mountain; some little business loss, some slight personal affront or passing ailment is bloated out by apprehension until it occupies the mind, becomes a fixed idea, even an obsession (A 694).

When there is no irritant at hand, worry finds or invents its object, setting the imagination to fabricate troubles and grievances out of any casual material of life (A 694).

Such anxiety or apprehension as relates to matters of real weight for which we have some true responsibility cannot be regarded as "worry";

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

It is the perpetual scolding and fault-finding of an irritable man or woman which ruins the entire peace and happiness of many a home.

THE WASTE OF WORRY

5:11.1 Worry is always a waste, always a disease.

Physically, it is traceable in drawn features, short breathing, tense bearing, irregular quick movements.

Mentally, it is distinguishable as a vicious circle of the intellect and the emotions, thought and feeling futilely rotating about some single object set out of focus.

Sometimes a trifling difficulty or risk swells to a mountain, some little business loss, some slight personal affront or passing ailment is bloated out by apprehension until it occupies the mind, becomes a fixed idea, even an obsession.

5:11.2 When there is no irritant at hand, worry finds or invents its object, setting the imagination to fabricate troubles and grievances out of any casual material of life.

Such anxiety or apprehension as relates to matters of real weight for which we have true responsibility cannot be regarded as worry;

SOURCE

this sort of emotion, rightly measured and directed, is a prophylactic evolved for the preservation of the individual and the race.

Worry is essentially irrational (A 694).

XXXII: NATURE AND CAUSE OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 349)

SPECIAL FEARS AND HOODOOS (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 359)

We have all along heard the old proverb, "Nothing kills so sure as care"; and it is literally true (*PF&F* 359).

[Source?]

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF WORRY (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 364)

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 (*PF&F* 364).

[Compare 6:11.3.]

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

this sort of emotion rightly measured and directed, is a prophylactic evolved for the preservation of the individual and the race.

Worry is essentially irrational,

and it is literally true that nothing kills so sure as care.

We must come to recognize that even self-pity is only a refined form of sensitiveness or selfishness.

5:11.3 Outside of the contagious and infectious diseases and certain organic degenerations,

it is highly probable that at least nine-tenths of all human suffering originates in the mind.

These trifling causes grow in the mind and expand in the physical realms until their victims are suffering from well-defined neurasthenia, dyspepsia, loss of weight, anaemia, sluggish circulation, high blood-pressure, hypochondria, headache, arteriosclerosis, pale skins, constipation, apoplexy, heart failure, paralysis, hysteria, and premature old age.

SOURCE

MENTAL WORK AND REST (*The Physiology of Faith and Fear* 358)

Worry is the smoke on the field-glass of life, and quite effectively it blurs our outlook and paralyzes all the creative faculties of the intellect (*PF&F* 359).

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

5:11.4 The results of chronic worry are equally destructive on character development.

It paralyzes the creative powers of the intellect.

It generates a pessimistic outlook on the battlefield of life, it smokes our social field glass, and blurs over views of relationship to our fellows.

From both the psychic and physical standpoints worry constitutes a vital leakage—an insidious seeping of one’s vital energies—demonstrating in the end that “fretting” is a far worse foe to human health and happiness than “fatigue.”

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

1. Worry may be defined as “chronic fear,” “spasm of the attention,” or over-concentration. Worry is fear-thought in contradistinction to forethought. It is a process of borrowing trouble from the future to augment our present sorrows.

2. The tendency 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, and, therefore, of all animals, makes himself most ridiculous by worry.

3. Man is not content to suffer as a mere brute, physically, but to this material distress he adds imaginary suffering.

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

4. The one great 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.

5. Worry results from some form of nervous irritation—coupled with anxiety, fear, and a marked lack of self-control.

6. Worry springs from one or the other of those all embracing human sentiments—*desire* and *fear*.

7. Many good people constantly worry because of their temperamental peculiarities. They feel that they are always being “neglected,” “slighted,” or “criticised.” Others are inordinately timid, backward, and bashful.

8. Some people are literally human barometers. They constantly worry over the weather—also sun spots, comets, etc.

9. “Making mountains out of mole hills” has come to be the regular business of some folks . They magnify the smallest trifles beyond all measure and reason.

10. Many lives are almost completely wrecked by inordinate worry over some youthful blunder, some early indiscretion. They need to reverse the spy glass of life.

11. Some people have acquired the chronic “kicking habit.” They see no good in anybody and are dissatisfied with everything that happens. They are in a state of constant environmental resistance.

12. Certain chronic worriers come to that sorry pass where they actually enjoy poor health, taking evident delight in reciting their complaints and sufferings.

SOURCE

5: WORRY AND NERVOUSNESS

13. Worry is a legacy of fear handed down from the savages of old, and yet modern civilization permits this barbaric mental attitude to play havoc with and almost overturn the peace and happiness of modern society.

14. Many a nervous woman expends more energy in foolish worry over the minor trifles of the daily life than she devotes to the solution of the real and major problems of family and social life.

15. Worry is a tremendous social, moral, physical, and economic waste. It is literally true that nothing kills so sure as care.

16. Worry is responsible for nine-tenths of human suffering and disease—if we exempt those afflictions caused by microbes and the natural degenerations accompanying old age.

17. Chronic worry exacts a physical toll embracing disturbances of circulation, digestion, and the nerves; including headache, high blood-pressure, constipation, apoplexy, neurasthenia, hysteria, and hypochondria.

18. Self-pity is a refined form of sensitiveness or selfishness.