

Worry, Problem or Uncertainty?

Not every anxious thought needs the same response. Use this sheet to decide whether there is a problem to solve, information to obtain, or uncertainty that cannot be removed yet.

Choose the response that fits the problem

COMPLETED EXAMPLE

The worry

Write the question, prediction, or situation that is taking up your attention.

My work contract ends in two months. What if it is not renewed?

A. A real problem ☐

Something is happening and a useful action is available.

Response: Plan / act

B. Missing information ☒

A reliable answer can reasonably be obtained.

Response: Ask / check once

C. Uncertainty ☒

No reliable answer is available yet, or reasonable action is already complete.

Response: Allow / wait / continue

Which category fits best - and why?

If more than one fits, separate the solvable part from the uncertain part.

Mostly missing information plus uncertainty. I can ask when renewal decisions are made, but I cannot know the final decision today.

If action or information is available

What is the next proportionate step? When will you stop once the useful step is complete?

Ask my manager at our next 1:1 when renewal decisions will be communicated. Update my CV this week so I have a practical backup plan.

If no reliable answer is available

What question will remain unanswered? What can you return your attention to instead?

The final renewal decision is not available yet. I can return my attention to current work after I have taken the proportionate steps.

My enough-information rule

Complete: "For this situation, enough information means..."

I will ask once about the timeline and act on any new information. I do not need to mentally rehearse every possible outcome each evening.

Next reasonable step

What will you do after this worksheet - including choosing to wait or do nothing?

Add one hour on Saturday to update my CV and note the renewal question for Tuesday's 1:1.