



DAY 69 – Worry & Stress

Key Topics:

- To the ego, worry and stress are signs of love, responsibility, and purpose
- The ego's insane thought system
- Worry and stress are indicators of a decision you already made
- Choose again
- How do you choose again?
- Focus on what you want, instead of what you don't want
- Learn this happy new habit
- Yield not to illusions and all forms of pain and lack will disappear

To the ego, worry and stress are signs of love, responsibility, and purpose

In our world, worry and stress are often seen as symbols of love, responsibility, and a life filled with purpose, and the ego sugar-coats these negative emotions as a means of getting you to hold on to them. If you worry for a loved one, this is seen as a form of endearment, and if you are stressed, you might be labeled as a responsible person who is shouldering a heavy load. While the ego defines these words with a positive spin, you learn from the Course that worry and stress are always the result of fear, and fear always comes from the ego.

The ego's insane thought system

The ego represents the part of your mind that has accepted the false idea that you are separate from God. The ego's function is to preserve this idea, so you will continue on thinking you are a separated self in a separated body. Since the cause of this misperception (and the origin of the ego) is in your mind, the ego does everything it can to keep you from turning inward, so you will never recognize the real problem and deal with it at its source. As a form of distraction, the ego works overtime to make you (i.e., your separated body) feel threatened, unsafe, and vulnerable, and this promotes feelings of worry, stress, and anxiety. The intention is that you will be so busy dealing with these effects that you will never turn inward to find the cause. (Score: Holy Spirit 0 – Ego 1)

In Chapter 7, it says, “The ingeniousness of the ego to preserve itself is enormous, but it stems from the very power of the mind the ego denies. This means that the ego attacks what is preserving it, which must result in extreme anxiety. That is why the ego never recognizes what it is doing. It is perfectly logical but clearly insane. The ego draws upon the one source that is totally inimical to its existence for its existence. Fearful of perceiving the power of this source, it

is forced to depreciate it. This threatens its own existence, a state which it finds intolerable.

Remaining logical but still insane, the ego resolves this completely insane dilemma in a completely insane way. It does not perceive its existence as threatened by projecting the threat onto you, and perceiving your being as nonexistent. This ensures its continuance if you side with it, by guaranteeing that you will not know your own safety.” ACIM Ch.7.VI.3

Worry and stress are indicators of a decision you already made

Worry and stress are indicators that you have already decided against yourself. They are “effects” of a decision you have already made, and your decision will determine the outcome to your situation. Example: If you decide that something is wrong or lacking and you don’t know how to solve it, then you worry that you will have a negative outcome. If you decide that something bad is likely to happen, then you feel stressed about the situation. Worry and stress always follow your underlying decision against yourself, and it is wise to “choose again” whenever those feelings surface if you want a positive outcome. If you do not choose again and make a different choice instead, you will get to be “right” about your underlying decision and this will lead you away from happiness.

Choose again

In Chapter 31, it says, **“Temptation has one lesson it would teach, in all its forms, wherever it occurs. It would persuade the holy Son of God he is a body, born in what must die, unable to escape its frailty, and bound by what it orders him to feel. It sets the limits on what he can do; its power is the only strength he has; his grasp cannot exceed its tiny reach. Would you be this, if Christ appeared to you in all His glory, asking you but this: Choose once again if you would take your place among the saviors of the world, or would remain in hell, and hold your brothers there. For He has come, and He is asking this.”** ACIM Ch.31.VIII.1

How do you choose again?

As soon as you feel the onset of worry, stress, or anxiety, **these are signals that you have already decided against yourself (or someone else) and if you do not interrupt the process, you will get to be “right” about your decision.** This means it is time to “choose again” and make another and happier choice.

In Chapter 31, it says, **“How do you make the choice? How easily is this explained! You always choose between your weakness and the strength of Christ in you. And what you choose is what you think is real. Simply by never using weakness to direct your actions, you have given it no power. And the light of Christ in you is given charge of everything you do. For you have brought your weakness unto Him, and He has given you His strength instead”** ACIM Ch.31.VIII.2

Here’s an Example:

Let’s say that you are starting to feel worried and stressed because you don’t know how you will pay your next month’s rent. **This might be a familiar feeling, yet I want you to recognize your**

feelings of worry as a LOUD WARNING SIGNAL that you are in the process of DECIDING AGAINST YOURSELF. God would never choose pain for you, or lack, delay, deprivation, or suffering of any kind. By the time you feel worried about not having your rent, you have already decided you are not likely to have your rent, and your decision is what will drive the outcome.

In the above quote, you are reminded to “choose again” and to give the light of Christ in you complete charge of the situation and the decision. I like to use the words “decide for me” in my prayers because this ensures that the decision will be made for me and also in my favor. You can say a prayer like this: *(There are 150 Prayers available for free at: FreePrayerBook.com)*

Dear God,

I have a concern that I won't be able to pay my rent next month and I am willing to be wrong about this. I choose to see all of this differently and know that You would never leave me without something I need. My goal is peace. I turn this entire situation over to You and ask that you “decide for me”. I trust that whether I have the rent, or whether I don't, that Your Will for me is complete happiness and peace, and I have nothing to fear. I forgive myself for anything I think I did to contribute to this problem. I forgive others for my grievances against them. I will take my focus off of my problem and place my attention on You. I call upon the light of Christ within me to make all decisions for me. I have no interest in lack, suffering, or delay of any kind. I want the truth instead of this. Thank You, in advance, for the highest, happiest, and most miraculous outcome in all respects. It is Your strength in which I trust, and a happy outcome to all things is sure. I will listen for Your Certain Direction, without agenda. Thank You for guiding my every step and decision. Thy Will be done. Amen

Focus on what you want, instead of what you don't want

It is very helpful to focus on what you want, instead of what you don't want (if you want to be happy). Your thoughts are creating 100% of the time and your thoughts create your experiences. While you are learning to turn your thoughts around, you can do this: Instead of focusing on “not having your rent”, focus on the peace and joy of being financially free, with all of your bills and expenses being paid with ease. Think about what you will invest in with your surplus wealth.

Learn this happy new habit

The Course teaches a new response for you to use whenever you are tempted to perceive yourself as weak or miserable, as this declaration invites Christ's strength to prevail. I have used this response at least a thousand times: “Learn, then, the happy habit of response to all temptation to perceive yourself as weak and miserable with these words: **I am as God created me. His Son can suffer nothing. And I am His Son.** Thus is Christ's strength invited to prevail, replacing all your weakness with the strength that comes from God and that can never fail. And thus are miracles as natural as fear and agony appeared to be before the choice for holiness was made. For in that choice are false distinctions gone, illusory alternatives laid by, and nothing left to interfere with truth.” ACIM Ch.31.VIII.5

Yield not to illusions and all forms of pain and lack will disappear

Remember that the images you see with your eyes are reporting to you what you believe. You are not looking at the truth. If you would like for those images to change to something more happy, peaceful, and abundant, then you will need to call upon the Vision of Christ within you to do the seeing for you. The Course teaches that when you do this, you will see all pain, lack and darkness, wherever it occurs, disappear as mists before the sun. I can tell you from personal experience that this is a very true statement.

“You are as God created you, and so is every living thing you look upon, regardless of the images you see. **What you behold as sickness and as pain, as weakness and as suffering and loss, is but temptation to perceive yourself defenseless and in hell. Yield not to this, and you will see all pain, in every form, wherever it occurs, but disappear as mists before the sun.** A miracle has come to heal God's Son, and close the door upon his dreams of weakness, opening the way to his salvation and release. **Choose once again what you would have him be, remembering that every choice you make establishes your own identity as you will see it and believe it is.**” ACIM Ch.31.VIII.6