



Worry and Ruminations Course

Centre for Clinical Interventions

What is worry and rumination?

While most of us will worry and think about negative things from time to time, usually this is short-lived and leads to positive problem-solving behaviour.

Worry and rumination can, however, become unhelpful and even problematic when it is very frequent and is difficult to control or dismiss. People who worry too much often experience multiple 'what if' thoughts such as:

- ▶ 'What if I lose my job?'
- ▶ 'What if I can't do the job?'
- ▶ 'What if I can't provide for my family?'

People who ruminate too much often think repeatedly about loss, failure and hopelessness. For example:

- ▶ 'I should have tried harder'
- ▶ 'If only I'd done things differently'
- ▶ 'Why did they treat me that way?'
- ▶ 'I can't do anything right'

You may have heard other terms used to describe repetitive negative thinking (e.g., 'brooding', 'dwelling', 'stressing', 'overthinking', 'over-analysing'). Thinking like this can cause significant distress and can leave us feeling anxious and depressed.

Worry and rumination treatment

Worry is often future-focused and relates to feelings of anxiety, while rumination is often past-focused and relates to feelings of depression. Their symptoms overlap as they each are types of repetitive negative thinking. Therefore, the



treatment approach for dealing with both worry and rumination is the same.

The CCI Worry and Rumination Course (WRC) is a structured group treatment focused on equipping you with practical skills and strategies to address repetitive negative thinking. This can help improve related symptoms of anxiety and depression.

The treatment approach used is Metacognitive Therapy. This is based on the premise that our initial negative thoughts are NOT the problem, but how we respond to our negative thoughts is the issue. We often respond to our negative thoughts in unhelpful ways because of certain beliefs we may not realise we hold about worry and rumination.



Initial "what if" thought

ok



Worry spiral

a problem

What does the WRC involve?

The WRC provides education about the factors that keep worry and rumination going, and introduces cognitive-behavioural strategies to address these.

Treatment strategies include:

Identifying and challenging beliefs that can lead to excessive worry and rumination

Learning to focus our attention on the present rather than our negative thoughts

Exploring more helpful ways of actively dealing with bothersome thoughts

If you are uncertain whether this is a relevant problem for you, it may be helpful to talk over any concerns with your GP. You can also find more information by reading the 'What? Me Worry?' modules, which are freely available on the CCI website.

Practical information

Each WRC runs for six weekly sessions of two hours, with a follow-up session four weeks after the last session.

All appointments take place during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).

The WRC is held at our clinic in Northbridge. As CCI forms part of the public mental health system, the service we offer is free of charge.

Why group treatment?

Many people find the idea of group treatment a bit daunting. Some people are used to keeping their difficulties private, so the thought of talking about difficulties in front of a group of unfamiliar people can be anxiety provoking.

As the WRC focuses on addressing what keeps problems going in the 'here and now', there is no expectation for you to talk about your past experiences, or to talk about your difficulties in great detail.

The sessions follow a set plan and the therapists have new information and skills to introduce each week. Group discussion is focused on the information and skills introduced during the course. It is up to you when, and how much, you choose to contribute to group discussions.

While it may be an anxiety-provoking prospect, we offer group therapy because research has shown it is effective. Group therapy provides an opportunity to learn that other people struggle with similar issues - this alone can be very validating. In addition, group therapy allows the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other people who are working on similar problems.

After completing the WRC, many people report that they were initially nervous about attending the group, but ultimately found the group very supportive and helpful.

Referral

If you are interested in attending the WRC at CCI, please ask your GP or psychiatrist to refer you to our service. Our referral form is available on the CCI website:

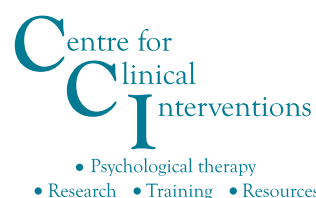
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