



**EXPLORABLE**  
*Think Outside The Box*

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## Is Your Worry "Real"?

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If I were to ask you late at night whether the worry keeping you up was "real" or not, you might be tempted to answer, "of course it is, that's why I'm worried!"

Worries are sometimes based in the future and are fears about what could possibly happen. But not all the things we worry about have the same chance of happening. What's more, even if there is a strong chance of something happening, our worrying about it often doesn't do anything to change the fact.

**EXPLORABLE**  
*Quiz Time!*

**Quiz:**  
Psychology 101 Part 2

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Psychology 101 Part 2

**Quiz:**  
Flags in Europe

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## How Likely Is It?

Look at the following worrying thoughts, and decide whether the fear is real or imaginary. In other words, how likely the fear is of coming true.

- You get a rare form of cancer from eating some expired food in your fridge and will die within a month.
- You get a rare form of cancer.
- You get cancer.
- The person who is late and hasn't texted you back has been in a horrible car accident.
- You won't have enough money saved up for retirement.
- People are talking behind your back.
- Your spouse is cheating or will eventually.

If you hesitated with some of these, it's understandable. Naturally, it is more difficult to decide if something is real or imaginary, when you are already worrying about it.

## **Do You Have Any Control?**

A good way to start moderating and managing your worry, however, is not to ask how likely a thing is to happen – after all, every one of the above could theoretically, hypothetically, possibly happen. Instead, ask how much control you have over the situation. In part three of this course, we'll look in more detail at techniques to do this more thoroughly, but for now, go back to the above thoughts and see if you change your answers when you ask, "how much control do I have over whether or not this happens?"

How does this change the way you think about the above thoughts?

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