



The Worry Trick: How Your Brain Tricks You into Expecting the Worst and What You Can Do About It

By David A Carbonell PhD

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Are you truly in danger or has your brain simply "tricked" you into thinking you are? In *The Worry Trick*, psychologist and anxiety expert David Carbonell shows how anxiety hijacks the brain and offers effective techniques to help you break the cycle of worry, once and for all.

Anxiety is a powerful force. It makes us question ourselves and our decisions, causes us to worry about the future, and fills our days with dread and emotional turbulence. Based in acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), this book is designed to help you break the cycle of worry.

Worry convinces us there's danger, and then tricks us into getting into fight, flight, or freeze mode—even when there is no danger. The techniques in this book, rather than encouraging you to avoid or try to resist anxiety, shows you how to see the trick that underlies your anxious thoughts, and how avoidance can backfire and make anxiety worse.

If you're ready to start observing your anxious feelings with distance and clarity—rather than getting tricked once again—this book will show you how.

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The Worry Trick: How Your Brain Tricks You into Expecting the Worst and What You Can Do About It By David A Carbonell PhD Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #8348 in Books
- Brand: New Harbinger Publications
- Published on: 2016-02-02
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.90" h x .60" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 232 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“If excessive worry affects the quality of your life, you owe it to yourself to get a copy of *The Worry Trick* by David Carbonell. A wise and caring teacher, Carbonell explains why the old, timeworn strategies to conquer worry don’t work very well, and why our best attempts to get rid of worry end up falling flat. In *The Worry Trick*, Carbonell teaches strategies that will most likely be new to you, and work amazingly well. Writing in a style that is both entertaining and easy to understand, Carbonell uses his wry sense of humor to great advantage. As I read the book, I marked many sections that provided valuable tools and insights, and others that made me smile or laugh out loud. I especially liked his comment that our strong-willed attempts to ‘stop worrying’ are like ‘trying to grab a greased pig on ice!’ So, if worry is affecting your life, don’t miss out on the solutions—and yes, *the fun*—you will find in *The Worry Trick*.”

—**Neal Sideman**, self-help advocate, internationally known coach and teacher for people recovering from anxiety disorder, member of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), and former cochair of the ADAA Public Education Committee

“Finally, someone has written a book about worry that I can give to my clients that I’m certain will be helpful to them as they struggle to better understand and deal with their constant worrying. So very many of my clients worry constantly and have searched in vain for tools and techniques to help them, but now Dave Carbonell has given them what they were looking for—a treasure chest of tips and ideas for handling worry. This is an eminently readable book that I’m sure I will recommend to many of my clients for years to come.”

—**Robert W. McLellarn, PhD**, founder and director of the Anxiety and Panic Treatment Center, LLC, in Portland, OR

“This is the best book on worry I have read. It has all you need to put an end to ongoing, painful, toxic worry. Carbonell speaks in a clear, witty, no-nonsense style, and explains why you have been unable to contain worry so far. He gives a comprehensive explanation of why the worry trick has fooled you into inadvertently keeping worry alive, even when you are trying so hard to make it go away. Read this book if you are a worrier, if you want to help a loved one who is a worrier, or if you are a professional treating a worrying client. There is no magic cure for ending worry—it takes effort and a good bit of courage, and it is easy to lose your way. This book is a flawless road map.”

—**Martin Seif, PhD**, founder of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), associate director at the Anxiety and Phobia Treatment Center at White Plains Hospital, creator of Freedom to Fly, and coauthor of *What Every Therapist Needs to Know About Anxiety Disorders*

“Thank you, Dave, for writing such a treasure of a book for those struggling with anxiety and out-of-control worry. Worry has a way of convincing those experiencing it that it is *VERY SERIOUS* and *IMPORTANT* and must be immediately attended to. The key to freeing oneself from worry is learning how to relate to it from a new perspective. This fabulous book, *The Worry Trick*, teaches readers how to move past worry by offering simple, easy-to-implement techniques. I plan on recommending it to all of my clients who struggle with uncomfortable, out-of-control worrying.”

—**Debra Kissen, PhD, MHSA**, clinical director at Light on Anxiety Treatment Center, and coauthor of *The*

“Have you ever thought of yourself as having a relationship with worry? In *The Worry Trick*, David Carbonell turns worry into characters—Uncle Argument or even a flatworm—so that it becomes possible to figure out what to do and, most importantly, how to change that relationship. With a lively sense of humor, Carbonell offers vivid images and analogies to help readers understand and do something about changing that relationship with worry. In my work on mental skills for optimal performance with athletes, performing artists, and business executives, we often address issues of performance anxiety. After reading *The Worry Trick*, I started using many concepts with clients; it’s a book that I will strongly encourage my clients to read as well.”

—**Kate F. Hays, PhD, CPsych, CC-AASP**, founder of The Performing Edge in Toronto, ON, Canada; and past president of the Society for Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology

“No ‘tricks’ here! Carbonell’s book is chock-full of advice based on the two leading evidence-based psychological treatments (cognitive behavioral therapy and acceptance and commitment therapy) for anxiety and worry. He presents concepts derived from these treatments in an extremely easy-to-digest manner, using imaginative metaphors and clear examples from his clinical practice to help illustrate them. This makes *The Worry Trick* an excellent option—either as a stand-alone resource or as an adjunct to treatment—for people struggling with chronic worry, as well as for providers interested in broadening their knowledge and skills at treating it.”

—**Simon A. Rego, PsyD, ABPP, ACT**, director of psychology training and the cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) training program at Montefiore Medical Center, and associate professor of clinical psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, NY

“Highly accessible with a minimum of jargon and ‘psychobabble,’ Carbonell’s new book will benefit worriers of all stripes—from occasional ruminators to chronically anxious individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or social, illness, or generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). *The Worry Trick* is written in an engaging, conversational style with abundant compassion and a terrific sense of humor. The author uses clever analogies and metaphors to simplify and bring to life scientifically based psychological concepts and interventions. His tone reflects decades of clinical experience helping anxious people build coping skills to achieve a more balanced perspective of their lives. *The Worry Trick* bridges the gap between more traditional cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for anxiety disorders and cutting-edge acceptance-based methods. I will be recommending it to hundreds of patients in my practice.”

—**David J. Kosins, PhD**, licensed psychologist in Seattle, WA; clinical instructor in the departments of psychiatry and psychology at the University of Washington; and founding fellow and certified trainer/consultant at the Academy of Cognitive Therapy; with thirty-plus years in private practice, focusing on CBT for anxiety disorders

“I would recommend this book to all the patients at our center. Reading *The Worry Trick* will bring welcome education and direction to anyone experiencing anxiety and worry. Carbonell’s voice is concrete and calming in providing helpful information and practical strategies. It’s as if the reader is one of his patients, sitting together in a group in his office. His approach is clear, compassionate, and current. To read his book is to know how the anxious mind works and how one can work toward, and achieve, a life of liberation from worry. Wonderfully clear, wonderfully understandable—*The Worry Trick* is an encouraging and useful guide for helping readers sort through the complexities of their worried minds.”

—**Judy Lake Chessa, LMSW**, coordinator at the Anxiety and Phobia Treatment Center at White Plains Hospital in White Plains, NY

“Dave Carbonell’s clear emphasis on theory and techniques to address *worry as process* has made a profound difference in my work with anxious clients. His witty and wise approach provides specific interventions that a therapist can apply immediately—while avoiding the trap of running in circles when we try to challenge the content of our clients’ worry themes.”

—**Carl Robbins, MS, MEd, LCPC**, director of training at the Anxiety and Stress Disorders Institute of Maryland, approved licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) supervisor, and clinical instructor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine

“Not only is Dave a friend; he is a collaborator, a fellow speaker, and he has a dry, witty sense about him. No wonder he figured out worry better than most people have—he was able to see worry for what it was—a trick that we play on ourselves to try to make everything better only to actually make everything worse. Want to learn how to deal with your own worry, or how to help your patients deal with their worry? Read this book. Want to have great examples to give to your clients or to use in your own life? Read this book. Want to finally smile and laugh again? Do what Dave advises you to do.”

—**Patrick B. McGrath, PhD**, clinical director of the Center for Anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (OCD) at Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital

About the Author

David A. Carbonell, PhD, is a clinical psychologist who specializes in the treatment of anxiety disorders in Chicago, IL. He is the “coach” at www.anxietycoach.com, and author of *Panic Attacks Workbook*.

Foreword writer **Sally M. Winston, PsyD**, founded and directed the anxiety disorders treatment program at The Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital in Baltimore, MD. She served as the first chair of the Clinical Advisory Board of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), and received their inaugural Jerilyn Ross Clinician Advocate Award. She is coauthor of *What Every Therapist Needs to Know About Anxiety Disorders*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Chad Wright:

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Lewis Shafer:

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