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Think Like a Detective

Sometimes, kids find that they worry so much that they cannot make the worries stop. When that happens, worries can grow bigger and bigger until it is hard to tell whether these worries are about things that really might happen or about things that probably won't happen. You can help decide whether you should be worrying by thinking like a detective. Detectives look for clues to find out what the real solution is. When you are thinking like a detective, you can write down the answers to these questions or have your mom, dad, or other adult help you. Below is a sample chart you can use, showing an example about being worried about failing a test.

My worry	Is this true?	How likely is this to happen? (0–10; 0 = *not at all*; 5 = *it might happen*; 10 = *it definitely will happen*)	How can I stop this from happening?	How likely is that to work? (0–10; 0 = *not at all*; 5 = *it might work*; 10 = *it definitely will work*)
I am going to fail my test.	I don't really know yet because I haven't taken my test. No—this isn't true.	5	I can study for my test. I can ask my mom or dad to quiz me.	8

Now that you have thought like a detective, you can decide what a better, more helpful thought can be. In our example, we can think, "If I study hard for my test, I will probably make a good grade." For you, once you have thought like a detective and decided what you can do about your worry, write down a more helpful thought here:

_____

_____

_____

Remember that it takes practice to learn how to think like a detective. If you have thoughts that make you worried when you are trying to fall asleep (or go back to sleep), your body will not relax like it needs to in order to fall asleep. So, if you practice thinking like a detective during the day, it can help teach you to change the worries that are making it hard for you to sleep at night.

(*continued*)

Think Like a Detective Practice Chart

My worry	Is this true?	How likely is this to happen? (0–10; 0 = *not at all*; 5 = *it might happen*; 10 = *it definitely will happen*)	How can I stop this from happening?	How likely is that to work? (0–10; 0 = *not at all*; 5 = *it might work*; 10 = *it definitely will work*)

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