

## Worry Management by Joyce Leonard

When I am worried, I feel like I'm on a hamster wheel – I just spin faster and faster, until I spin off the wheel and hit a wall. Then I wonder, “Why did I get so worried?” We have lots of things to worry about: finances, jobs, relationships, health, world issues.

How is worry helpful? Sometimes, that initial worry can help me create a plan or step into action. But I have found that the spinning kind of worry is only detrimental. I get paralyzed with worry, I don't think clearly or realistically, and I basically waste my time and energy being worried. When I am worried, my mind becomes very narrow – the issue is the only thing I can see. It's like I'm looking at my life through a telephoto lens. The issue consumes and dominates my thoughts and my life.

When I can pull out of that telephoto view and look at the whole of my life, I can stop the spinning of worry. I can see the issue with greater perspective. I can see the forest for the trees. I can see all that is right and good in my life and in the world. I can give myself some breathing room. My issue takes up less space in my thoughts and, therefore, in my life. It is then that better solutions will naturally arise, and I can handle the situation with less mental suffering.

Try this: I invite you to practice pulling out of your issue or problem – to see your situation from a mountaintop, instead in the muck of it all. Gain a broader perspective by making a list of all you DO have in your life. Count your blessings. Each morning, remind yourself of what you are grateful for. And each evening, do the same. These can be big blessings and little blessings. I can be grateful for my husband as well as for that red rose that opened up today. Get into the habit of seeing the whole of your life, including the beauty that is here right now, and you will be better able to manage your worry.