

## Apply some problem solving skills

**Call it for what it is:** If you find yourself getting caught up in these patterns of thinking, try to name the pattern. It might be one in the list above, or you may discover some other unhelpful patterns (which you can come up with your own name for).

**Ask yourself:** 'Is this getting me anywhere?' If not, that's a strong indication that it's time to try a different approach.

**Get out of your head:** Take a walk, call a friend, or engage in some other activity to distract yourself, refocus, and loosen the hold of unhelpful thoughts.

**Breathe deeply:** Worrying doesn't only occupy the brain, it also impacts on the body. Our heart rate speeds up, and muscles tighten. Engage in deep breathing or a few yoga poses to eliminate that physical stress.

**Step away from the thoughts:** You could try a mindfulness exercise, or another strategy where you visualise yourself watching the unhelpful thoughts go past without getting caught up in them.

**Define, don't dwell:** Much of our worry is based soundly in how we feel: we're upset, we're angry, we're hurting. Instead of focusing on these feelings, try to describe and define the actual problem, and then accept it for what it is. From there, you can either solve it, or vow to move beyond it.