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What worrying does to us

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We cannot be free of worry till we get to the root of it

A young lady came into possession of a stray kitten she found in a dump near her house.

Deciding to give the kitten a home, she picked it up and went to meet her teacher who she asked to give the kitten a name. The teacher asked her to name her cat 'worry'. So the young lady named her kitten 'worry' and reared it fondly.

However, in time, the cat gave her endless cause to feel anxious, for she would slink away or return with a dead mouse and suchlike. The young lady visited her teacher and sought her advice. The teacher told the lady to deposit the kitten, now grown into a cat, far away from home.



The lady did that, yet soon the cat reappeared at her door step. The young lady went back to her teacher and explained her predicament. The teacher advised the young lady to trap the cat in a sack and leave her in a nearby forest. The lady did so, yet on releasing the cat in the forest, she did not know the way back, and thus had to follow her cat that promptly and effectively led her home.

Worry, like the cat, grips us and we cannot shake it off easily.

Worry, unlike its attendant emotion anxiety, is non-specific. While we are and can be anxious for something that is identifiable, worry grips us for no apparent reason, when we allow ourselves to dwell most often on anxiety-inducing situations, for no clear or apparent reason. We often worry, simply because our mind is agitated or that we are restless.

The antidote is to ask ourselves what is our pay off in worrying and what we are getting out of it. If we are honest with ourselves, we will realise it is our way of punishing ourselves and no more.

While anxiety will pass when the impetus causing anxiety is recognised and tackled, worry will not part from us, for the cause itself is unclear, and so being, we cannot counter it.

A friend when I was younger and prone to bouts of worry in jest called me 'worrywart'. I trust I am not alone in being called so.

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