

## Work in Progress

Published monthly by Michele Crawford  
Work in Progress is an electronic newsletter intended to assist individuals seeking optimum well-being.

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Work in Progress March 2006 Volume I Issue I  
Feature Article: Worry Less! Tangible Relief from the Stress of Constant Worrying

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1) Note from Michele

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Dear Reader

Welcome to Part One of Worry Less! Tangible Relief from the Stress of Constant Worrying. Part Two will follow in one month.

There are many ways that people can suffer from trauma, anxiety or depression. This article highlights one way that elevates anxiety: *worry*. To worry is to have an over-concern about the future.

Read on and discover ideas for reducing the anxiety of worrying.

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2) Part One: Worry Less! Tangible Relief from  
the Stress of Constant Worrying  
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**Did you know there are many concrete ways to reduce the effects of worry-based stress on your health and lifestyle?**

Worrying is a fear-based example of stress. **What exactly is stress?** This definition is simple: **stress** refers to *the problems that occur outside of you* (in your environment) and *the problems you have inside* (within your body).

“Problems outside” refers to those obstacles in life labeled **stressors**. Examples could be traffic, deadlines, timelines, newspaper headlines, relationship conflicts, accidents, tragedies, and so on.

“Problems inside” alludes to your **interpretations** of those stressors that have the potential to create **negative emotions** (like fear) and **physical complaints** (like a knot in your stomach that could eventually grow into an ulcer).

**Do you want to know 2 strategies that can bring you closer to living a less fearful life?**

Here are two cases in point that have proven to be very effective in decreasing stressful worrying, thereby promoting improved emotional and physical wellness. They can be called **focusing and mirroring** (Part One) and **perspective** (Part Two).

Understand **focusing and mirroring**...

Let’s pretend you want to buy a new car. Now cars start preoccupying your thoughts: you are single-mindedly *focused* on cars, researching and talking about them, noticing car advertisements and promotions and certain automobiles now catch your attention on the street. Then you purchase a car and this all disappears... well actually, it doesn’t so much disappear. Cars only disappear from preoccupying your thoughts because you are no longer focused on buying a car. Car-

related images and ads, etcetera, continue to exist but now your focus has shifted to something else.

*Focusing* refers to where **you choose to concentrate your attention**. An analogy for *focusing* could be the light on a coal miner's helmet. Whatever he shines his light on is considered most important. Likewise, if you "shine your light" on negativity, negativity will influence what becomes foremost in your mind and experience (negativity will be everywhere). Conversely, **if you chose to focus your light/attention on an optimistic view of events, then outcomes will be dramatically improved** (encouragement will be everywhere).

Your choice of focus influences your attitude towards your surroundings. Then feedback from your surroundings is created as a *reflection of your attitude*.

To understand this better, imagine the following experiment. You are walking from one end of a mall to the other, smiling at everyone you see. Most people will respond positively. That is feedback to your smile. Next, turn around and walk back, this time growling and barking at people. For the greater part, peoples' reactions will not be the same affirmative response your smile elicited. That too is feedback.

This example illustrates the concept of *mirroring*. **However you choose to focus influences your attitude and ultimately, your reaction to your surroundings. This reaction is then reflected back to you!**

The expression "You create your own experience" is based on the concepts of *focusing and mirroring*. It begins with choosing what attitude you want to focus on, especially when bad things happen. If you choose to focus on the good that can come from adversity, (e.g.: core beliefs like "Everything happens for the best" or "What can I learn from this?"), you will recover sooner and evolve more than if you choose to focus on an attitude of helplessness and hopelessness.

If you choose to *focus* with helplessness and hopelessness, then the *mirror* of helplessness and hopelessness will influence your outcomes.

Part Two will follow next month!

For more information, please contact:

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3) About Michele  
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Michele Crawford is a therapist who assists individuals who are struggling with trauma, anxiety or depression. Her passion for her work remains embedded in being able to connect with you in your suffering, helping you find real solutions no matter how complex the issue may be.

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4) Counselling Services  
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Are you prepared to live with more happiness, optimism, confidence, self-worth and hope? If your answer is "yes," then your next step is to contact me for a free 20-minute phone consultation. We can then discuss how I might best help you resolve your problems of Trauma, Depression and Anxiety.

The benefits of counselling with Michele include: significantly reduced stress levels, an optimistic outlook in life, increased confidence and hope.

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