How to stop worrying. Be aware how others affect you

How you feel is affected by the company you keep, whether you are aware of it or not. Studies show that emotions are contagious. We quickly “catch” moods from other people—even from strangers who never speak a word (e.g. the terrified woman sitting by you on the plane; the fuming man in the checkout line). The people you spend a lot of time with have an even greater impact on your mental state.

- **Keep a worry diary.** You may not be aware of how people or situations are affecting you. Maybe this is the way it is always been in your family, or you have been dealing with the stress so long that it feels normal. You may want to keep a worry diary for a week or so. Every time you start to worry, jot down the thought and what triggered it. Over time, you will start to see patterns.

- **Spend less time with people who make you anxious.** Is there someone in your life who drags you down or always seems to leave you feeling stressed? Think about cutting back on the time you spend with that person or establish healthier relationship boundaries. For example, you might set certain topics off-limits, if you know that talking about them with that person makes you anxious.

- **Choose your confidantes carefully.** Know who to talk to about situations that make you anxious. Some people will help you gain perspective, while others will feed into your worries, doubts, and fears.