



## Worried Self-talk recordings (the internal iPod)

- **Worried self-talk** appears in two short words - "Oh No" - which means a whole series of **worried events**.
- **Worried self-talk** is almost always irrational but tricks you into thinking it's the truth. "What-if" thinking leads to expecting the worst things to happen.
- **Worried self-talk** tricks you into avoiding things. You tell yourself that something is scary so you avoid the situation. Then you don't feel anxious, so it makes you think that it is true.
- **Worried self-talk tricks your body** into thinking something is dangerous: Your heart beats really fast, palms are sweaty. Then you use **worried self-talk** - "Oh no it's happening again". You feel panicky which tricks your brain into thinking something terrible is going to happen. This is called a false alarm.

### The Worried Self-talk tunes are:

1. **The Worrier** - tricks you into thinking that something is dangerous or embarrassing.
  - anticipate the worst
  - overestimate the odds of something bad or embarrassing happening

"The Worrier plays the "what if" tune: "Oh no, my heart is starting to race...What if I panic and lose control?...What if I forget what to say?.....What if they see me shaking?...What if I stop breathing?....."

2. **The Critic** - tricks you into thinking that you are not good enough
  - Focuses on the things that you aren't as good at
  - Jumps on mistakes to make you think that you can never do it
  - Compares you to others and points out the things that you don't like rather than the things that you do like

The Critic plays the tune: "That was stupid...Can't I ever get it right?.....Why are you always this way?"

**3. The Victim** - tricks you into feeling hopeless and helpless

- Tricks you into thinking that things will never get better/change
- Tricks you into feeling bad, something is wrong with you

"The Victim plays the tune: "I can't - I'll never be able to do that so what's the point of trying."

**4. The Perfectionist** - tricks you into thinking that you're not working hard enough

- Tricks you into thinking that everything has to be perfect or you're not good enough
- Tricks you into believing that you have to be good all the time and please others
- Tricks you into thinking that you are bad if you make mistakes

"The Perfectionist" plays the tune: "I must \_\_\_\_\_", "I should \_\_\_\_\_", "I have to \_\_\_\_\_".

## **Steps to Treating Anxiety in Children and Youth**

Feeling Frightened: noticing the anxious feelings

Expecting Bad Thing to Happen: noticing anxious self-talk

Attitudes & Actions: Developing helpful coping strategies

Results & Rewards: Self-evaluation and self-rewards