

Ask our EXPERTS

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS HAS
ALL THE ANSWERS WHEN IT
COMES TO HEALTH, FITNESS,
AND LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

WELLBEING NUTRITION FITNESS HEALTH

Deborah Smith is a positive psychologist specialising in the science of happiness and mindfulness. She has more than 25 years' experience as a psychotherapist and is here to help, so email her at weightwatchers@seven.co.uk

Q I sometimes find myself dreading events so much that I make up excuses so I can cancel. How can I relax and face things more easily?

Suki Penson, Hastings



A First of all, you need to work out what it is about these events that you don't want to face – what is it that's making you feel anxious about them? If you can, talk to someone you trust about what's causing your anxiety. When we try to do this alone, our worries can be magnified (it's a bit like imagining there's a monster under the bed – the more you try to hide from it, the bigger and scarier it gets). But once you identify and share your worries, they won't have so much power over you, and you can start talking about strategies to overcome them.

If you're not keen to talk it through, try jotting down your thoughts instead. Start by writing about how you feel and continue, without stopping to think about it, until you have cleared everything out of your head. This will help to clarify what you're feeling and how to deal with it.

Try to get a more positive dialogue going in your mind too, by thinking of all the good things that could happen at these events. You can either feed negative thinking patterns and spiral into anxiety, or work on spinning the wheel the other way and letting one positive thought trigger another.

JOB LOT Worry you're in the wrong profession? Find the ideal career with the Career Crisis prompt cards, *A Job to Love* book, and What Should I Do With My Life? game, all part of **A Job to Love set**, £35, The School of Life

TRY IT
THIS
MONTH



MANTRA

*'Trust and believe
in yourself'*

Tell yourself that life has an **amazing way of working itself out in the end**, whether we see it at the time, or whether it takes years for us to understand why something happened.

TALKING
POINT

HOW TO
LEARN FROM
A MISTAKE

(RATHER THAN BEAT
YOURSELF UP ABOUT IT!)

1

ACCEPT

First, acknowledge what happened. We can't learn from something if we deny it or don't fully accept that it took place.

2

REFLECT

Think about what actually happened, not what you wanted or intended to happen. Ask yourself what went wrong and equally, what went right?

3

GROW

Mistakes are an opportunity to grow and to learn. Make the most of them by deciding what you would do differently if you were in that situation again.