

How To Get Rid Of Your Worries Using the Vittoz Method

Christian H. Godefroy

Introduction

Negative thinking is important. It allows you to get rid of your fears, to prepare for the worst.

But it does not contribute to our happiness. It's quite the opposite. Scientific studies shows that the negative events we are expecting – at 98 % -- will never materialize.

Result?

Stress, worries, even depression...

Dr Roger Vittoz found a solution. His exercises can help you to eliminate worries and negative thinking. They are simple, easy to do, and very efficient.

But there is a catch: you have to practice. Without practice, these exercises will not help you. With practice, you life will change – for the better.

What do you have to lose? Try them!

1. Conscious walking

Start the exercise by concentrating on your right foot, the way it touches the ground, the sensation you feel as it supports your weight.

Then do the same with your left foot.

Become aware of your ankles, your knees, your thighs, your hips, the way your spine moves, the way your arms swing and balance, the way you hold your head. Feel your entire body in perfect balance and control. Feel the amazing mechanism that is your body as it moves in perfect harmony, on a simple command from your brain. As you concentrate on your walking, you will be so flooded with sensations that it will be impossible for your mind to wander.

This is an extraordinary exercise for calming yourself down, regaining a sense of harmony, and getting rid of fatigue.

Compare your mental state before doing the exercise, and after a few minutes of conscious walking. You will be sure to feel the difference.

Whenever you're under a lot of stress, when you get some bad news, or suffer a serious setback, one or two minutes of conscious walking is enough to re-establish your sense of inner calm.

Set yourself a daily route, and practice conscious walking regularly. It can be a short distance, from the garage to the car for example, or up the stairs to your office or apartment.

When you are used to doing the exercise, you can make it even more effective by adding conscious breathing.

2. Conscious breathing

Whenever you feel stressed or start thinking negative thoughts, your respiratory rhythm changes; you take shorter breaths, leaving some of the tainted air in your lungs, thus providing your body with less oxygen, which in turn makes you even more tense. As you can see, the effect is very much a vicious circle.

By becoming conscious of your breathing, you can control your respiration and free yourself from this harmful cycle, so that your lungs expand more fully and remain more flexible.

Concentrate and feel the air flowing up through your nostrils to the back of your throat, then down your trachea and into your lungs. Feel the cool fresh air entering your body and regenerating you.

Synchronize your rate of respiration with the conscious walking exercise (one deep breathe - inhaling and exhaling - per step).

You can also do a few minutes of conscious breathing at a predetermined rhythm. Dr. Vittoz recommends the following sequence:

INHALE for 10 seconds: HOLD for 5 seconds: EXHALE for 10 seconds and start again.

3. Voluntary acts

“I just can’t go on. It’s too much for me!”

Have you ever felt like that? Chances are you have. You may even go through periods where you feel you have absolutely no willpower left, and can’t seem to deal with anything at all.

Willpower can be re-educated. Dr. Vittoz advises practicing control on little everyday activities. “If these activities are really well done, patients will feel more in control, calmer and more rational. Since the brain is always occupied with something definite, persons become progressively less anxious. Their self confidence grows, and they get into the habit of being in control.”

Too often we confuse desire with willpower. Many people would like to speak a foreign language, be rich, have a better job or a more attractive companion, but how many of them have the willpower to go out and get the things they say they desire? The reason for this is that they don’t really WANT them.

Dr. Vittoz explains it by setting 5 conditions for having strong, healthy willpower:

1. Unity
2. Concentration
3. Definite objective
4. Possibility
5. Sincerity

1. Unity

The preceding exercises aim to restore your sense of unity, which your mental wandering or “dispersion” has eroded.

Feeling at one with yourself opens the door to all kinds of possibilities, and prevents you from hiding behind excuses and irresolute thinking. If you are at one with yourself, your will belongs to you, and is not imposed on you from outside.

Many people believe they have willpower, but in reality they have simply assumed the will of their parents, teachers, peers etc. All these influences stifle their own willpower and prevent any real voluntary behavior. This is not willpower as Dr. Vittoz understands it. The concentration exercises on the number 1, which we will look at a little later on, can restore this sense of unity, which modern life tends to erode.

2. Concentration

Concentration is the cornerstone of the Vittoz method. It is trained and developed in a series of exercises that we will review later on.

3. Definite object

You have to know what you want. Instead of saying, “I have to...” or “I should...” say “I want...”

Exercise:

1. Every time you have to do something you don't want to do, every time you feel under an obligation, take some time to think and find the reasons why you WANT to do whatever it is you think you should do. There are always reasons why you want to do something, and if there aren't, you'd better not do it. Ask yourself the question Why?

2. Define what you want precisely rather than in general terms:

What?

When?

Where?

How?

How much?

With whom?

3. Possibility

It would be futile to mobilize your willpower if what you want is impossible. Knowing yourself and your capabilities, and also generating confidence in those abilities, are essential stages in the process (of getting what you want). Ask yourself, “Can I do this?” and try to feel the answer in the depths of your being. A yes or a no will condition your future commitment.

4. Sincerity

Before committing yourself to a voluntary act, ask yourself one last question: “Am I really sincere?”

There may be hundreds of reasons for undertaking something that you don’t really want to do: pleasing someone else, keeping up appearances, staying on top of the corporate ladder, trying to be perfect, etc. Answering the question “Am I really sincere?” will prevent you from doing things for the wrong reasons.

Some possible applications

Start with very simple actions like drinking a glass of water, getting out of bed, arranging the objects in a room, getting the mail, turning the TV on or off, phoning someone, paying a bill, etc.

Then move on to more complex actions like preparing a project, going out, meeting people and so on.

Finally, set goals for yourself and use the same process to achieve them.

Dr. Vittoz recommended performing twenty such voluntary actions every day.

4. Concentration: First series of graphic exercises

These concentration exercises are mental. You will have to reproduce the following graphic figures in your mind - in other words you will have to “visualize” them. You can create a mental support for yourself in the form of a blackboard on which you write with chalk, or a computer screen or a TV screen, or any other device which will make visualizing easier.

If you find visualizing too difficult, don't persist. Remember that these exercises should be treated like games - they are not meant to make you tense or add to your stress.

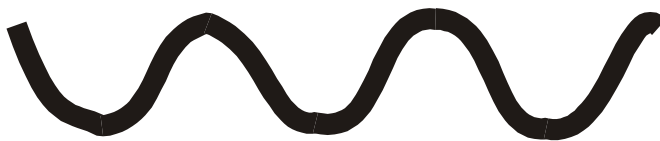
If necessary, start by actually drawing the figures on a piece of paper.

Then redraw them in your mind, with your eyes closed.

1. A continuous broken line



2. Waves



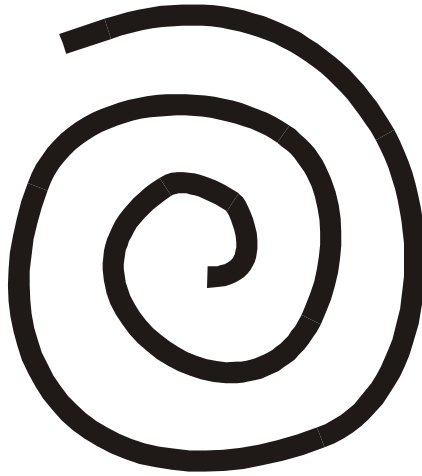
3. The infinity symbol



Don't try to draw it perfectly - the aim here is concentration, not artistic skill!

Practice drawing the infinity symbol in various positions.

4. Spirals



5. Straight lines

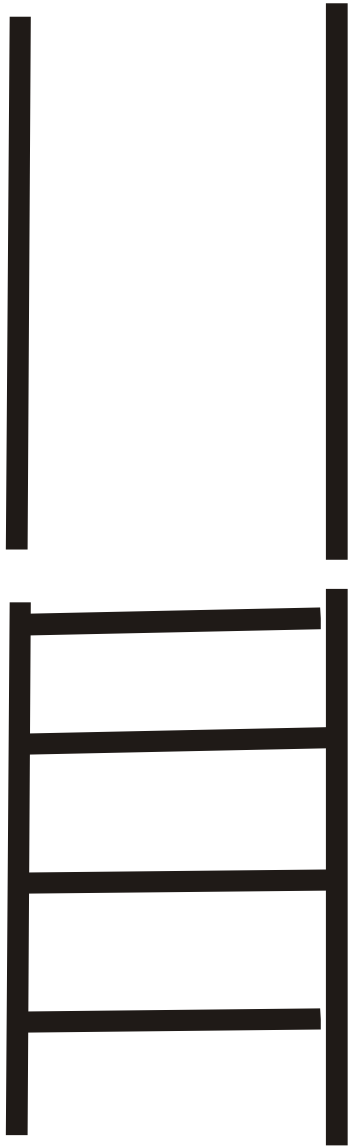
Randomly place two points on your mental screen, and then join them with a straight line.



Keep all the lines you have already drawn fixed in your mind throughout the session.

7. Ladders

Start with the two vertical lines, and then add the steps, one after the other:



5. Second series of graphic exercises

In this second series, you draw two lines simultaneously, as if you were using both hands.

1. Spirals
2. Hooks
3. Zigzags
4. Rose motifs
5. Calligraphy exercises

When you start becoming adept at visualizing lines, you can practice mentally reproducing these kinds of figures:

Elimination and de-concentration

As Dr. Vittoz put it, the aim of the exercises is to teach the brain to first set aside troublesome thoughts, and then to eliminate them completely.

This will prevent you from being overwhelmed by worries, and help you eliminate negative thoughts or obsessions.

Exercise #1 : Eliminating objects

Place 3 to 5 objects on an empty table. Observe them carefully, then close your eyes and draw a mental image of them.

Now open your eyes and remove one of the objects from the table. Look at the empty space, then close your eyes and once again create a mental picture of the table, this time without the missing object.

Open your eyes, remove another object, and so on. Repeat the exercise until there is no remnant of any of the objects in your visualization.

Exercise #2 : Mental elimination of objects

Repeat the above exercise, only this time do not physically remove the objects from the table. Imagine that you are removing them, and visualize them disappearing. The physical objects, however, remain on the table.



Make sure you terminate the exercise by imagining the table covered by a white tablecloth, devoid of any objects.

Exercise #3 : Eliminating numbers

Visualize three numbers in your mind, for example:

3 2 1

Now eliminate one number...

3 2

And a second number...

3

And the last number.

If you have trouble with this exercise, you can cross out the numbers instead of completely eliminating them, using 4 or 5 numbers instead of three:

3 2 1 6 9

~~**3 2 1 6 9**~~

Exercise #4 : Eliminating graphics

First choose a drawing:



Then eliminate parts of the drawing one after the other. For example:



Exercise # 5 : Eliminating letters

Visualize a series of letters that have no special significance. Write them on your mental screen, then erase the last letter, the next to last letter, and so on.

A S D F G H J K L

A S D F G H J K

A S D F G H J

A S D F G H

A S D F G

A S D F

A S D

A S

A

This is an example. You can start with upper case letters, and then use lower case ones.

a s d f g h j k l

a s d f g h j k

a s d f g h j

a s d f g h

a s d f g

a s d f

a s d

a s

a

Do the exercise again, after changing the order in which you eliminate the letters.

A S D F G H J K L

A S F G H J K L

A S F G H K L

A S F G H K

S F G H K

S F G H

S F H

S F

F

Exercise # 6 : Eliminating words

Instead of using random letters, choose a series of words which do not have any special significance for you:

New York

Paris

London

dog

cow

mountain

car

etc.

Exercise # 7 : Eliminating opposites

This time, use pairs of opposites:

war - peace

hard - soft

dark - light

cold - hot

stress - relaxation

noise - silence

etc.

Eliminate only one of the words in each pair, and repeat the one that remains.

Exercise # 8 :

Now use words that are meaningful - that represent negative thoughts which you wish to eliminate. For example:

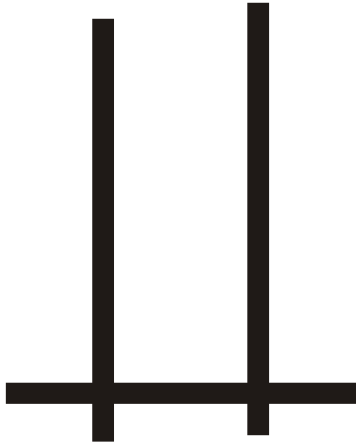
F A I L U R E

or

W O R R I E S

Exercise # 9 :

- In your mind, draw two vertical lines, and one horizontal line:



- Between the borders of the lines, write a series of the number 1, making each smaller than the one before it.

- As you write each number 1 in decreasing size, erase the number before it. The last number 1 should be so small you can hardly see it. Then erase that too.

Exercise # 10 :

A very effective combination: add a word that carries some negative connotation to the number 1 in the preceding exercise.

As you erase the numbers, you erase the negative word as well.

Exercise # 11 : Transforming negative into positive

This is the final phase of this series of exercises. Not only are you going to eliminate a word with negative connotations, you will also replace it with its opposite. For example:

LOVE of my mother
HATE

Another example:

CONFIDENCE I feel for the men in my life

FEAR

Variations:

You can imagine that you're using chalk to write the words down on a blackboard, and then erase them with a piece of cloth. Or you can type them onto a mental computer screen, and use the "DELETE" command to erase them.



Exercise #12 : Eliminating noises

Imagine a very loud noise (aero plane, motorcycle, car, siren, saw, gun, etc.) moving farther and farther away from you until it disappears.

Exercise #13 : Graphic distancing

Draw these graphics in your mind, moving from the largest elements to the smallest.

Concentrating on ideas

Dr. Vittoz recommends doing concentration exercises, in particular on the three following ideas:

CALM

ENERGY

CONTROL

Louise Bron-Velay, author of "A Practical Guide To The Vittoz Method" (Levain Publications, 1979) suggests doing the exercises in the following manner:

“After writing the word CALM in your mind, underline it with a curved line:

CALM



Now try and remember a time when you felt agitated, hurried, pressured, etc. Experience the feelings of tension this situation produced in you. Write the word “agitation” under the arc of the curved line:

Now erase the word “agitation” and reject the feelings associated with it completely. Recall the state of calm, and make it your own through concentration and assimilation of the feelings associated with it.

Reject the negative idea. Recall the state of calm and possess it.”

You can now use the same procedure for the other two positive concepts:

Energy - Inertia

Control - Impotence

Concentrating on a sentence

Choose one of the sentences in Appendix 1. It doesn't have to apply to your particular situation. In fact, you will probably make better progress with a sentence that you find somewhat disturbing at first.

Concentrate on its meaning - don't memorize the sentence exactly as it is written.

Then move on to other sentences which you find personally inspiring.

Concentrating on the number 1

This is one of the most difficult exercises in the Vittoz Method, which is why we saved it for last.

Write and repeat the number 1 in your mind three times in succession, without thinking of anything else. Empty your mind for a moment before each repetition.

If you find this difficult, start by actually writing the number 1 three times on a piece of paper, with your eyes open.

Use a lead pencil if necessary, so that you can erase the numbers afterwards.

With some practice, you will be able to do this exercise under any circumstances. It only takes a few seconds, and is an effective way to regain control and re-establish your sense of inner unity.

Conclusion

After a few weeks of practicing these exercises, you will find you have developed a powerful tool for maintaining cerebral control, which you can use under any circumstances.

Stress, problems, setbacks, and many kinds of psychosomatic illnesses will no longer affect you. Don't stop halfway - even if some of the exercises seem very simple at first, they are designed to mobilize extremely powerful inner forces, and their simplicity in no way alters their effectiveness.

When you have attained perfect cerebral control, you can share your discovery with your family and friends. Even your children will be receptive to, and benefit from the Vittoz Method. There is no age limit - anyone can obtain the desired results.

I hope your training is fruitful, and helps make your life more fulfilling and joyous.

Christian H. Godefroy

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
1. Conscious walking.....	3
2. Conscious breathing.....	4
3. Voluntary acts	5
1. Unity.....	5
2. Concentration.....	6
3. Definite object.....	6
Exercise:	6
3. Possibility.....	7
4. Sincerity.....	7
Some possible applications	7
4. Concentration: First series of graphic exercises	8
5. Second series of graphic exercises	11
Elimination and de-concentration.....	11
Exercise #1 : Eliminating objects.....	11
Exercise #2 : Mental elimination of objects.....	12
Exercise #3 : Eliminating numbers.....	12
Exercise #4 : Eliminating graphics	13
Exercise # 5 : Eliminating letters	14
Exercise # 6 : Eliminating words.....	15
Exercise # 7 : Eliminating opposites	16
Exercise # 8 :	16
Exercise # 9 :	17
Exercise # 10 :	17
Exercise # 11 : Transforming negative into positive	17
Exercise #12 : Eliminating noises	18
Exercise #13 : Graphic distancing	18

Concentrating on a sentence 19
Concentrating on the number 1..... 19
Conclusion.....21



This eBook is part of the free eBooks collection
available at <http://www.positive-club.com/>

Please feel free to send it to your friends.

If you want to sell it, add it to your site, or use it in any
way please contact:

<mailto:christiangodefroy@positive-club.com>

©Christian H. Godefroy, 2001