

[https://www.pressrepublican.com/news/lifestyles/worried-sick/article\\_60b06719-a559-5ef1-8f96-cbcec0102bb6.html](https://www.pressrepublican.com/news/lifestyles/worried-sick/article_60b06719-a559-5ef1-8f96-cbcec0102bb6.html)

## Worried sick

Workshop aims to keep worrisome thoughts from taking charge

By ROBIN CAUDELL Press-Republican

Jun 16, 2017



PHOTO PROVIDED Lauren McGovern, M.S., leads "The Worry Workshop" to share her training and experience with a wider North Country audience. She has trained with anxiety expert Lynn Lyons, LCSW, and two other professionals on the topic of pediatric anxiety. "When anxiety or worry is in charge, everyone suffers," McGovern says.



WILMINGTON — Untie the knots of anxiety with Lauren McGovern's "The Worry Workshop" to demystify anxiety management with realistic and accessible tools.

McGovern will lead six free sessions during the summer and is open to doing more because the Cloudsplitter Foundation generously funded the project.

### COMMUNICATOR/FACILITATOR

She has been a school counselor at the North Country School in Lake Placid for nearly a decade.

“My background is just supportive counseling,” said McGovern, who has a master’s degree in counseling.

“The last five years, I’ve participated in professional trainings with an anxiety expert in New England. Her name is Lynn Lyons. She’s based in Concord, New Hampshire.”

Lyons’ seminars intrigued and interested McGovern to focus on ways to help people manage anxiety.

“I used the words ‘worry’ and ‘anxiety’ interchangeably,” she said.

“The purpose of the workshop is really just to give people tips and tools to manage worrisome thoughts and to gain freedom. As Lynn says, worry is like a cult leader. When worry is in charge, you really can’t get a whole lot done or enjoy life.”

## **NORTH COUNTRY SWEEP**

The first workshop will be held from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Monday, June 26, at the Lake Placid Public Library. A second workshop will be held there from 5:30 to 7 p.m. June 29.

She will conduct a workshop in the “Smart Room” at the Plattsburgh Public Library from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 28.

“It’s primarily for adults; of course older teenagers are definitely welcome to come,” McGovern said.

“I would say parents and educators might especially want the information. Parents may be dealing with their own worry and anxiety and then see it manifest itself in their children. And maybe they’ve come up with ways to handle it, but they just need a little extra support.”

Anxiety disorders top the lists of mental illnesses in the United States, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America.

McGovern designed her workshop has a way to share her training and experience beyond the North Country School, a boarding and day school for grades four through nine.

## IN THE TRENCHES

“Of course, educators, they're the front lines, and I would say school nurses are on the front lines of anxiety and worry,” she said.

“They are really working hard to help students to be able to manage their anxiety at school. Worry and anxiety, it shows up at school. There are a lot of transitions in school whether you're just starting out as a kindergartner and maybe leaving a daycare.”

School itself can be a new prospect for many kids.

“There can be a lot of changes and transitions as a part of school,” McGovern said.

“So, sometimes worry shows up or anxiety shows up in those situations. It's important to recognize that kids who are worried or anxious, they might need some help figuring out when that worry is appropriate or when it is just annoying, when it's just bothersome.”

## SIGNAL OR NOISE

It's important for parents and their children to figure out the difference between whether or not the anxiety is a signal or a noise.

“Worry actually clues us in to real danger,” she said.

“There are situations where we are really worried, and it's true you should be worried. Then, there is worry that gets in the way of things you want to do or things you want to achieve. Students that want to go on a class trip but are afraid of having an overnight experience away from home. I think kids who are worried are some of the most creative and imaginative kids around. But their worry is getting in the way of things they want, and things their parents want for them and things their teachers want for them.”

The first step, as with any problem, is to first recognize anxiety as a problem.

“Once you have that awareness, figuring out how it is working, how does worry take charge and deconstructing that a little bit,” McGovern explained.

“The point of my workshop is to help people understand and gain some awareness of how worry works and to distinguish between the signal and the noise.”

## **RESPONSE & REACTION**

McGovern is focused more on process not content.

“It doesn't matter what you are afraid or worried about,” she said.

“It's how you respond and react to it that is important.”

Email Robin Caudell:

[rcaudell@pressrepublican.com](mailto:rcaudell@pressrepublican.com)

Twitter: [@RobinCaudell](https://twitter.com/RobinCaudell)

## **THE WORRY WORKSHOP**

Lake Placid Public Library: 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, June 26; 7 p.m. Thursday, June 29.

Plattsburgh Public Library: 3:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 28.

Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay: 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, July 13.

Saranac Lake Public Library; 4:30 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 18, in the Cantwell Room.

Tahawus Center in AuSable Forks: 4:30 to 6 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 16.

Funding for the program comes from Cloudsplitter Foundation.

To register or learn more, reach McGovern at 518-837-7152 or [laurenmcgovern@frontiernet.net](mailto:laurenmcgovern@frontiernet.net).

## **TRENDING VIDEO**