

THE WORRY CUBE

-written by Jeff Cook

Max and Noreen lived in a large, beautiful house. The house was located near the bank of a river. Max and Noreen had a large yard, with trees, tall grass and plenty of space.

Max and Noreen were wealthy. They seemed to have everything they could ever desire in life. There was just one problem. Max and Noreen tended to worry a lot. They seemed to worry about everything.

One day, Noreen answered a knock at the door to find an elderly man in overalls standing on their porch.

"I have a landscaping business," the man said. "I've been admiring your property and I would like to landscape it for you."

"How much would it cost?" Noreen asked, worriedly.

"I'll do it for free," replied the man.

Max and Noreen thought that was certainly a reasonable price, so they told the man to go ahead.

The work took a few weeks to complete. Max and Noreen were very pleased with the result. There were plenty of tastefully arranged flowerbeds, a rock garden, neatly trimmed trees and a beautiful view of the river from their back windows. There was just one thing Max and Noreen weren't sure they liked. In the backyard, about halfway between the house and the river, the landscaper had made a ring of stones. In the middle of the stones was a tiny cube.

"What's that?" Max and Noreen asked.

"That's a Worry Cube," the landscaper answered.

That evening, Max and Noreen were trying to decide what to have for supper.

"We don't have enough food in the fridge," said Noreen. "I don't know what to make."

"I don't know what to make, either," said Max.

And they both said, "Oh my!"

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT BIGGER

A few days later, Max and Noreen were getting ready to go out to a social gathering.

“What will I wear?” asked Noreen.

“I don’t know which tie I should wear!” said Max.

And they both said, “Oh My!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT BIGGER

The next weekend, Max and Noreen were hosting a party at their house.

“Whom should we invite?” asked Max.

“If we invite the Buttons we can’t invite the Smiths,” said Noreen.

“But if we don’t invite the Smiths they’ll be angry at us,” said Max.

And they both said, “Oh My!!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT BIGGER

One day, Max was reading the newspaper and saw a story about colds.

“There sure are a lot of colds going around,” said Max.

“Oh, I hope we don’t get a cold,” said Noreen.

“What would we do if we got sick?” said Max.

And they both said, “Oh My!!!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT BIGGER

Max and Noreen were planning on going on a driving trip in the coming month, but they were worried about their car.

“What if the car breaks down?” wondered Max.

“What if the engine falls out?” worried Noreen.

And they both said, “Oh My!!!!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT BIGGER

By this time, the cube in the backyard had gotten so big that Max and Noreen could not see the river. All they could see when they looked out the back window was the Worry Cube. Max had phoned the landscaper and left messages on an answering machine, but so far, they hadn't received a reply.

One evening, after supper, Max went for a walk. He walked around the cube and went down to the river. There he watched the sun setting, listened to the water, and saw some geese flying overhead. He ran back to the house and got Noreen and brought her down to the river.

"Look," he said. "I had forgotten what the river was like. I'd forgotten how beautiful a sunset could be."

They stood there, in silence, for several minutes.

And they both said, "Wow!"

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT SMALLER

A few days later, Noreen was listening to the radio while she was working in the house. The radio started to play Pachelbel's Canon.

"Max, listen," she said. "Isn't that music beautiful?"

They both stood there listening for a few minutes.

Then they both said, "Wow!"

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT SMALLER

The next week, Max and Noreen were raking the leaves. As they raked, they noticed all the different colours – yellows, reds, oranges and greens.

They stopped raking and stood there for several minutes, looking at the leaves and listening to them crunch under their feet.

Then they both said, "Wow!!"

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT SMALLER

The next day their neighbour brought them a plate of freshly baked cookies.

"I never knew our neighbour could make such good cookies," Max said.

“We really don’t know our neighbours very well,” said Noreen. “We should invite them over for dinner,”

They each ate a cookie.

Then they both said, “Wow!!!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT SMALLER

Later, when they were about to start to eat supper, Max said grace. He offered thanks to God for food and friends and all God’s creation.

After the prayer, Max and Noreen sat quietly for a minute.

Then they both said, “Wow!!!!”

AND THE WORRY CUBE GOT A LITTLE BIT SMALLER

Eventually, the Worry Cube got so small that they barely noticed it at all. Occasionally, when Max and Noreen would start worrying about something, the cube would begin to grow a bit, but they didn’t seem to spend as much time worrying any more.

They spent time noticing the world and their neighbours and feeling thankful.