

WIRED TO WORRY

# The Meme of DREAM



**Christine  
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What could be better than memes? Funny, shareable, and no huge investment in time. However, the reality is that many of us spend an inordinate amount of time sharing these funny, little bits of wisdom! I've even heard people complain that they are suffering from pinteroids!

What is interesting to me to me as a therapist is noticing how people choose to spend their time. I always do my best to leverage that information when I am helping them to make more profound changes in their lives. I learned this in graduate school when we were studying the Premack Principle. If you're not familiar with it (or

you don't remember from grad school), the Premack Principle involves making high probability behaviours (e.g., playing video games, spending time on Pinterest) contingent on low probability behaviours (e.g., going to the gym, eating your vegetables).

In other words, you can suggest the time that clients usually think of as "wasted time" as their reward for working towards their goals. If you go to the gym, then you get to go on Facebook. If you declutter your closet, then you can tweet as much as you want.

These behaviours could also be used as a substitute, or

# My MS

replacement behaviour, for a bad habit that your client wants to stop. In this case, when you feel the urge to have a cigarette, then go on Pinterest instead and pin everything you want until the craving passes.

The ultimate use of memes and other viral ideas by therapists is to create them ourselves. I think of my cartoons as a way to plant seeds and quickly educate of those who read them and start the desire for positive changes in their own lives. Maybe it's a little naive to hope that cartoons could make the world a better place, but I'm having fun trying.



Humour is, ultimately, inspiring and encouraging. That seems like a great goal for all of us tech savvy therapists to pursue. Life can be hard, but we can approach more lightly and I believe reach more people effectively when we are funny. Maybe we can even make change go viral!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR:

**Christine Korol, Ph.D.** is a cartoonist, psychologist in private practice in Calgary, Canada and the host/producer of a podcast on [WiredToWorry.com](http://WiredToWorry.com) that provides free online anxiety and stress reduction education videos.