



Anxiety Disorders

The Pacific Project 2019

Physical Signs and Symptoms

- Tiring easily or chronic fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping (trouble falling/staying asleep)
- More frequent muscle pains or tension
- Extended periods of rapid heart rate, sweating, shaking, dry mouth
- Panic attacks



<https://www.managementtoday.co.uk/7-tips-managing-mental-health-work-any-other-business/article/1437330>

Cognitive Signs and Symptoms

- Presence of excessive/uncontrollable worry, even when there is no specific threat present
- Restlessness
- Irritability
- Phobias/irrational fears
- Social isolation
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling disconnected from your surroundings
- Apprehension/dread



Anxiety Disorders

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

- Chronic, excessive, and uncontrollable worrying, often without specific cause or trigger
- People with GAD worry more severely; GAD can interfere with ability to complete daily tasks because of exhaustion from worrying
- Affects ~4 million Americans
- Occurs with higher prevalence in females

Panic Disorder



Panic attacks: intense, potentially debilitating periods of fear or sense of doom over a short time frame

- Associated with 4 or more: palpitations, sweating, shaking, trouble breathing, feeling of choking, chest pain, nausea, de-realization, numbness, chills

<https://youtu.be/73UiOoXUM3I>

- Panic attacks can be a potential symptom of a panic/anxiety disorder, whereas “anxiety attack” is not a term recognized by the DSM

Social Anxiety Disorder

- Characterized by extreme fear or anxiety in one or more social situations
- Can occur in one-on-one or group interactions
- Performance anxiety is a type of social anxiety
- Often driven by excessive worry about being accepted or embarrassed
- Affects ~15 million Americans

Agoraphobia

- Excessive fear or worry over being in situations or environments that are unfamiliar or perceived as difficult to escape
- May involve a fear of crowds or being outside alone
- Does not necessarily mean a fear of leaving the house
- Women are 2-3x more likely to develop agoraphobia
- Affects less than 1% of Americans

Selective Mutism

- Much lesser known anxiety disorder
- Most common in children
- Difficulty/inability to communicate/speak in select social settings due to anxiety
- Not the same as developmental shyness/developmentally appropriate behavior
 - Selective mutism signifies more extreme difficulty/instability than what children regularly experience

Anxiety Disorder Treatments

- Medication (antidepressants, tranquilizers, anticonvulsants)
- Therapy
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
 - Helps patients understand their thinking patterns so they can react differently to anxiety-inducing situations

HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY

ACTION



Take deep breaths.
Inhale and exhale slowly throughout the day when you are feeling stressed.

10

Slowly count to 10.
Repeat, and count to 20 if necessary.



Give back to your community.
Volunteer or find another way to be active in your community, which creates a support network and gives you a break from everyday stress.



Take a time out.
Practice yoga, listen to music, meditate, get a massage, or learn relaxation techniques. Stepping back from problems helps clear your head.



Get help online.
If you are struggling with stress and anxiety in your life, consider taking a mental health screen. Screening is an anonymous, free, and private way to learn about your mental health. www.mhscreening.org



Talk to someone.
Tell friends and family you're feeling overwhelmed, and let them know how they can help you. Talk to a physician or therapist for professional help.



Anxiety Stigmas

Stigmas around Anxiety Disorders

- Equating anxiety with stress
 - Anxiety is often generalized/passed off as just being stressed
 - “Everyone feels anxious when they're stressed; it's not a real disorder”



Stigmas around Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety patients can just “snap out of it”
 - “Just stop being so nervous”
 - “Don’t worry, it’s fine”
- Misuse of the terms “panic attack” or “anxiety attack”
 - “Oh my god, I couldn’t find my phone for a second and I legit had a panic attack”





Media Representation

Questions to Consider

- Is this a positive/negative representation of anxiety?
- Why or why not?
- How could anxiety be better portrayed in the media?



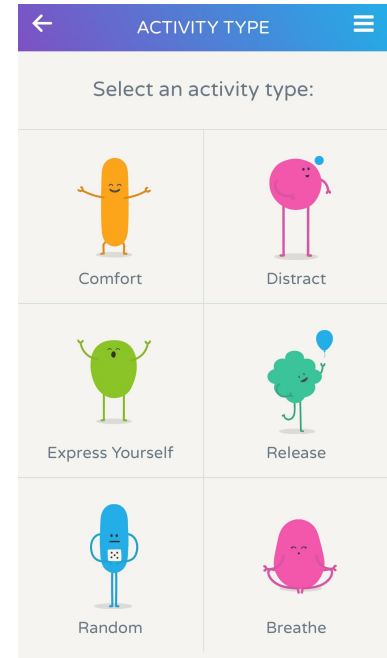
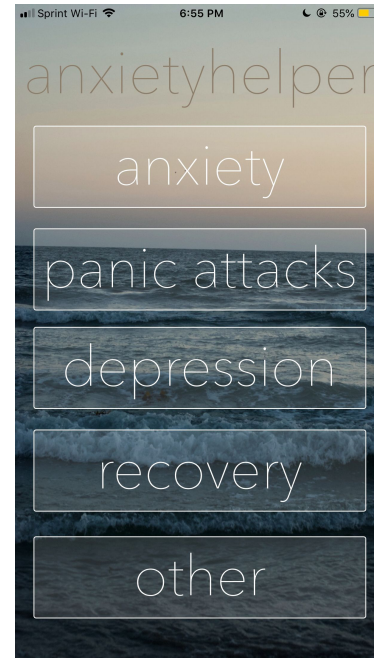
Anxiety Blogs



- Anxiety Slayer
 - Anxiety-relieving exercises, podcasts
- Verywell
 - Comprehensive information on social anxiety: symptoms/diagnosis/tips/treatments
- The Anxiety Network
 - Focus on panic disorder, GAD, also lesser known anxiety conditions such as selective mutism

Anxiety Apps

- anxietyhelper
 - Resources for anxiety
- 7 Cups
 - Discussion forums/"listeners" for anyone struggling emotionally/mentally
- Calm Harm
 - Resources for self-harm



Celebrities



- Kristen Bell
 - Often talks about the importance of mental health/eliminating the stigma
 - Presenting herself as a bubbly person, but this isn't always true
 - “Anxiety and depression are impervious to accolades or achievements. Anyone can be affected, despite their level of success ... there is a good chance you know someone who is struggling with it since nearly 20% of American adults face some form of mental illness in their lifetime. So why aren't we talking about it?”
 - I love her <3

TV, Movies, Books



- Chris Trager, *Parks and Rec*
- Randall Pearson, *This is Us*
- Fear, *Inside Out*
- Amelie, *Amelie*
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower
- Imagine Me Gone

References

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety/stigma-relating-to-anxiety>

<https://www.nami.org/Personal-Stories/The-Stigma-of-Anxiety-Disorder>