

Wellness Wednesday



March 22, 2023

LifeAdvisor.com

Ulliance

Enhancing People. Improving Business.



Find your path to total well-being!

6 Hidden Ways Anxiety Could Be Holding You Back At Work

Anxiety can show up in ways you don't expect. Here's what to watch out for.

Feeling anxious can not only take over your brain; it can also hurt your career in the long run.

Beyond the obvious signs of dread and panic, there are hidden ways anxiety can show up in your job performance.

"Anxiety can be very sneaky. Your brain will want to avoid what causes it anxiety," said Shannon Garcia, a psychotherapist at States of Wellness Counseling in Illinois and Wisconsin. "It's a natural reaction designed to protect us, but it can have unintended consequences, especially at work."



Here are some of the unexpected warning signs to watch out for:

1. You don't speak up, even if you have ideas to share.

Anxiety can have you jumping to negative conclusions about how your colleagues will perceive you. It can keep you quiet even when you have something important to say.

"Let's say you're in a meeting and you have a great idea that would help your team perform better. However, you get anxious that others will judge you, that they'll think your idea is dumb, or that you'll stumble over your words. So, you don't share the idea," Garcia said.

The problem is that hard work does not speak for itself. Staying silent in team meetings can give others the incorrect impression that you lack ideas.

"Sure, avoiding speaking up in a meeting means you won't be anxious about speaking in front of others," Garcia said. "But it also means your idea doesn't get noticed and your boss won't see you as someone who contributes."

That's why Garcia recommends seeing your anxiety as separate from yourself.

"Instead of 'I don't want to speak up in this meeting,' say to yourself, 'My anxiety doesn't want me to speak up in this meeting.' Identifying how your anxiety is attempting to control your behaviors can help you begin to challenge the anxious behaviors."

2. You keep missing deadlines.

Procrastination is a common way anxiety shows up at work.

"It's, 'Oh no, I'm not to going to feel good if I do this.' Maybe you're dealing with imposter syndrome, maybe you're questioning your performance," said Alicia Velez, a licensed clinical social worker based in Brooklyn, New York. "Procrastination is a mechanism of the anxiety and a form of avoidance."

But avoiding your duties will only hurt your well-being and your performance in the long run.

"Unfortunately, anxiety tends to worsen over time if not addressed. The more you avoid, the more your brain learns that avoidance is the only way to lessen the anxiety," Garcia said. "Avoidance is temporary relief for whatever we are anxious about."

Velez said one antidote to procrastination is to face the task head-on and to "try going through instead of around it."

Breaking up tasks into smaller chunks can be a way to make them less daunting. "If you visualize stairs, what would be the first step? ...If I look at 12 steps, that's too much, but if I look at the first step, that can be more tolerable," she said.

3. You're grouchy and judgmental of your co-workers.

Anxiety can also creep into your mood and make you less pleasant to work with.

"Many people are familiar with anxiety showing up as an inner critic — when you are perfectionistic about your own work and worried that it's never good enough," said Lauren Appio, a psychologist, executive coach and consultant. "But a sneaky way that anxiety can show up is as an outer critic — feeling irritable, judgmental, and annoyed by coworkers. You may find yourself micromanaging others, seething in meetings or otherwise disengaging to manage this manifestation of anxiety."

Maintaining good relationships with colleagues is not just good for helping workdays pass quicker; it's also critical to helping you advance within your company. People talk, and making enemies of your co-workers will hurt your career.

If you do not address this side effect of anxiety, "People may walk on eggshells around you or try to avoid working with you. And of course, the health of your relationships with colleagues and people in your network is key to advancing at work," Appio said. "But it will also be really stressful for you to always feel like you can't rely on anyone to do their job right — it will increase the pressure on you to overfunction and overwork for sure."

"Instead of 'I don't want to speak up in this meeting,' say to yourself, 'My anxiety doesn't want me to speak up in this meeting.' Identifying how your anxiety is attempting to control your behaviors can help you begin to challenge the anxious behaviors."

- SHANNON GARCIA, PSYCHOTHERAPIST AT STATES OF WELLNESS COUNSELING

In the long run, it can help to distinguish between the behaviors of others that are simply annoying or stylistically different than you and those that are outright wrong and harmful.

"The outer critic ultimately is trying to protect you from harm, but sometimes it gets a little overzealous. Work with a therapist, coach or mentor to explore when it is wise for you to intervene with others, and when it is wise to sit back and allow them to do their work their own way," Appio suggested.

4. You're too exhausted to network or job-hunt.

If you find you need coffee to survive the workday and are constantly drained, your anxiety could be the reason why.

"There is no space to rest [when you're dealing with anxiety at work] because you're worried about a potential future outcome and therefore are coping with the demands of the present and what potentially could happen in the future," said Cicely Horsham-Brathwaite, a licensed psychologist and executive coach.

Over time, she added, this can prevent you from job-hunting or planning your career. "You're so exhausted and depleted that you don't have the energy to even consider that there could be something better."

5. You turn down new opportunities.

Anxiety can often stem from a fear of the unknown, which can keep you trapped in roles and jobs you should have left long ago.

"It becomes 'the devil you know is better than the devil you don't,'" Velez said, noting that trying to predict a future outcome that can't actually be predicted can leave you stuck in the anxious space you already inhabit.

"The anxiety of 'Maybe I'll be in a worse situation' keeps us back, even though we have the information that we know we do not feel good right now."

Horsham-Brathwaite said this fear of the unknown can also lead people to be "underemployed" because they don't believe they can handle what it would take to be in a role that matches their professional contributions.

"You might not interview for a promotion because that job description involves running meetings, and you have anxiety about speaking in front of others," Garcia offered as an example.

Horsham-Brathwaite said that to cope with this type of anxiety, it can be helpful to find someone within the organization, such as a mentor or trusted colleague, "who can help you do some reality-testing. You can ask them questions like, 'How did I sound when I was sharing my thoughts in the meeting today? Did that make sense?'"

That way, you can feel more confident about pursuing opportunities to speak up and be noticed without feeling so much anxiety.

6. You're stuck in a career you chose only to please others.

If you're a people-pleaser, you often worry more about what others think about you than about how you think about yourself. This is an anxious work trait that can prevent you from seeking the kind of authentic career you actually want — and leave you stuck in a career you hate.

Velez said she commonly sees this type of anxiety in clients who are first-generation young professionals of color pursuing a certain kind of job because it will make their parents happy.

"A lot of times it's guilt. 'My parents did not make all these sacrifices, my parents didn't work 80 hours a week, my parents didn't go through inter-generational trauma, or what have you, for me to sit here and do nothing, or for me to just choose to be happy,'" she said. "When we start to buy into that narrative of 'Things that are worth it must involve struggle'... we start telling ourselves to not be very kind to ourselves."

And if family disapproval is the root of your anxiety, try seeing where your family is coming from and having a difficult conversation with them about the career you prefer to pursue. The conversation may surprise you.

"Maybe you're underestimating your ability to have an assertive conversation with your parents and effectively communicate your wants and needs to them, and [are underestimating] your ability to tolerate discomfort," Velez said, adding that we learn about anxiety not through avoidance, but through confronting our fears and realizing that these types of emotions can be a temporary state.



ASIAN CHICKEN LETTUCE WRAPS



102 Calories | PREP TIME: 10 mins | COOK TIME: 40mins | TOTAL TIME: 50 mins
YIELD: 6 servings | Course: App, Dinner | Cuisine: Asian

INGREDIENTS

8 oz skinless, boneless chicken thighs, ground (or buy already ground)
1/4 cup water chestnuts, chopped fine
1/4 cup dried Shiitake mushrooms, If you can't find dried, fresh, chopped Shiitake mushrooms will work
1 tbsp reduced sodium soy sauce
1/4 tsp dark soy sauce
1/2 tsp oyster sauce
1 1/2 tsp sesame oil
1 tbsp rice wine or dry sherry
1/2 tsp sugar
freshly ground white pepper, to taste
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
6 iceberg lettuce leaves, rinsed (careful not to break)
2 tbsp diced scallions

For the Spicy Hoisin Dipping Sauce:

4 tbsp hoisin sauce
1/2 tsp chili sauce, I used Sriracha
1 tbsp warm water

These delicious Asian Lettuce Wraps are quick and easy! Made with ground chicken, Shiitake mushrooms and water chestnuts with a spicy hoisin sauce.

What lettuce is best for lettuce wraps?

I have a few favorite lettuce options for lettuce wraps. Each leaf should be deep enough to hold the filling, without wilting when adding warm food. The best lettuce for lettuce wraps are sturdy head lettuces such as iceberg, bibb, Boston, endive and little gem.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 lettuce wrap, Calories: 102 kcal,
Carbohydrates: 9.5 g, Protein: 8.5 g, Fat: 3 g,
Saturated Fat: 0.5 g, Cholesterol: 32 mg, Sodium:
344 mg, Fiber: 1 g, Sugar: 4.5 g

Source: Skinnytaste.com



INSTRUCTIONS



1. Place mushrooms in hot water to soften a few minutes. Remove stems and chop fine.
2. Combine soy sauces, oyster sauce, 1/2 tsp sesame oil, rice wine, sugar, and pepper in a bowl.
3. Combine ground chicken (I put the chicken in the food processor), softened mushrooms and water chestnuts into a bowl. Pour over chicken; toss. Let marinate for 15 minutes.
4. Mix Spicy Hoisin Dipping Sauce ingredients in another bowl. Set aside.
5. Heat remaining sesame oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic; cook until golden, about 10 seconds. Add chicken mixture; stir fry until browned, breaking the chicken up as it cooks, about 4-5 minutes.
6. To serve, spoon 1/4 cup of the chicken into each lettuce leaf. Garnish with scallions and a spoon a little spicy hoisin dipping sauce onto each one.

Note:

If you want to make this quicker, you can buy ground chicken and use it in its place. This makes 6 wraps as an appetizer, to make it a meal, I would double the recipe to serve 4.

FEATURED EXERCISE

[https://www.lifehack.org/462795/7-exercises-that-can-transform-every-part-of-your-body-in-4-weeks?](https://www.lifehack.org/462795/7-exercises-that-can-transform-every-part-of-your-body-in-4-weeks?action=click)
action=click

Featured Exercise ► Downward Dog Leg Pull

» **Do it:** If you're familiar with the yoga pose "downward dog", this exercise will feel right at home to you. It's a great way to work your core, thighs and bottom!

- Start in the downward dog position, on all fours pressing back into your heels
- Lift one leg straight back and up shown in the image here
- Bring that leg down and in to your chest
- Repeat on the other side



[Click here to view online!](#)

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



Meet Ulliance Senior
Wellness Account Manager

LIFE IS
10%
WHAT HAPPENS
TO YOU
AND
90%
HOW YOU
REACT TO IT.