

Overcoming Anxiety

The Plan

Anxiety is usually prompted by fear. It is healthy to feel fear when real danger is present. But when fear goes beyond real danger and lingers in our minds, it becomes anxiety or worry. It is often prompted by uncertainty and feeling of being out of control, a reality we all have to learn to live with.

Anxiety and worry are different. The main difference between worry and anxiety is that the symptoms are more frequent with anxiety.

Worry

- Doesn't interfere with your job or social life
- Worries are controllable and can be dealt with at a later time
- Only causes mild distress
- A specific cause initiated your worrying
- Limited to a specific topic or a small number of topics
- Lasts only for a brief period
- Not usually accompanied by physical or other psychological symptoms

Anxiety

- Significantly interferes with your work or social activities
- You feel that your worrying is out of your control
- Anxiety is distressing
- Worrying began for no reason
- You worry about a broad range of topics
- Excessive worrying for six months or more
- Three or more physical or psychological symptoms occur with your worrying

Spillover

Anxiety can lower self esteem, so it is important to not let your anxiety go unchecked. Create opportunities where you will succeed and push yourself to try new things and meet new people, especially if it causes anxious thoughts. Doing these things will lessen the anxiety over time.

Be aware of the causes of anxiety: stressful events, physical health problems, substance use and personality factors. Try to manage your triggers if possible, or avoid them if the causes too much stress.

Lastly, be sure to try meditation, exercise, confronting the issue, talking about the issue, do activities you enjoy and taking breaks. Everyone is different so find what works for you.