



Coping with anxiety

Overview

It's absolutely normal to have feelings of anxiety from time to time. Certain things can be triggering such as an exam, a presentation or a new role at work. We all have our own ways of managing our anxiety but when these emotions become harder to manage, what steps can we take to alleviate these feelings and stop them from interfering with our lives?

A common – and natural – response to anxiety is to avoid what triggers your fear, so taking any action might make you feel more anxious at first. It can be difficult, but facing up to how anxiety makes you feel can be the first step in breaking the cycle of fear and insecurity. With that in mind, here are a few approaches:

- Talking to someone can really help, it's a scary prospect as sometimes the hardest thing is to accept you aren't coping, but just vocalising your anxiety can be a relief.
- Breathe... always remember to breathe. Take time to inhale. It's the simplest thing, but is forgotten in panic attacks.
- If you start to feel anxious try to distract yourself, play some music, go for a walk, make a cuppa, any small task that you can concentrate on and that diverts that panicked feeling.
- Looking after yourself can go a long way to helping you cope with anxiety. It's often related to well-being so if you have eaten well, exercised and slept for a decent amount of time, there's a good chance your anxiety levels will reduce.
- You may find keeping a note of what happens each time you get anxious or have a panic attack can help you spot patterns in what triggers these experiences for you, so you can think about how to deal with these situations in the future. You could also try keeping a note of times when you are able to manage your anxiety successfully. This might help you feel more in control.
- You might also find that alternative therapies may be beneficial. These won't suit everyone so it's a matter of trial and error. Some people have found practices like yoga, meditation, massage and hypnotherapy have really helped. More help can be found here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/complementary-and-alternative-therapy/#.WUfjVXn2Z1s>
- You might also find a support group a good place to turn to, they tend to be anonymous and very friendly. Find a local/online one here: <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Article/source

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/student-life/exams-and-assessments/#.WUI_j3n2Ymg

Supporting source

<https://youtu.be/IKWolwgiLRk>

Discussion points

Think about a time that you have felt anxious, how did you cope?

Example key questions

- What are some of your own strategies for dealing with anxiety?