

Anxiety

Anxiety is a mental and physical reaction to perceived threats. In small doses, anxiety is helpful; it protects us from danger and focuses our attention on problems. But when anxiety is too severe or occurs too frequently, it can become debilitating.



Statistics

College students can easily feel anxious trying to balance school, work, friends and family while also trying to figure out the rest of their lives. Anxiety disorders are one of the most common mental health problems on college campuses.

Forty million U.S. adults suffer from an anxiety disorder, and 75% of them experience their first episode of anxiety by the age of 22.



of college students reported that stress had negatively affected their academic performance.¹



of college students reported that they had felt overwhelmed by everything they had to do at some point within the past year.¹



stated anxiety as the top presenting concern among college students.²



of college students reported they were taking psychotropic medication.²

Common Symptoms of Anxiety

(symptoms can vary for each individual)

Uncontrollable worry/racing irrational thoughts | Excessive nervousness | Sleep problems
Muscle tension | Poor concentration | Increased heart rate | Upset stomach | Avoidance of fear



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Healthy Coping Skills

- Deep Breathing
 - Sit comfortably, breathe in through your nose deeply, feel abdomen rise (4 seconds)
 - Hold (4 seconds)
 - Slowly breathe out through your mouth (6 seconds)
 - Repeat over a period of 3-5 minutes
- Challenge irrational thoughts
 - Ask questions such as: Is my thought based on facts or feelings? How would my best friend see the situation? How likely is my fear to come true? What is most likely to happen? Will this matter in a week or month from now?
- Imagery
 - For 5-10 minutes, focus on all your senses:
 - What do you see?
 - What sounds do you hear?
 - Do you taste anything?
 - What can you feel?
 - What scents are present?
 - Think of a place that you find comforting. Imagine yourself in that place and identify all your senses.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle
 - Regular exercise, balanced diet, healthy sleep schedule, engaging with social supports and seeking professional help if necessary

Control Your Worries (Cognitive-behavioral Therapy Technique)

Learn to challenge and replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts:

Example

Negative:

“If I do badly on the test, I’m a failure.”

Positive:

“Yes, this is a difficult test. I’m going to do the best I can. If I get a low grade, I’ll do what it takes to perform better next time.”

Negative thought		Positive thought
I always do poorly on tests	→	I've got a better study plan for this test than I ever had before.
If I don't pass this test, I'm a failure.	→	I'm going to pass, but if I don't, I can bounce back.
The test is going to have trick questions.	→	The test is designed to let me show what I know, and I know all the formats of the questions.



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