



Anxiety issue

When we expect to encounter challenging or dangerous situations, anxiety will alert us to make preparation. However, when it happens during inappropriate times and happens too frequently, it may adversely affect our daily life and we may need to consider seeking professional help to prevent the condition from getting worse.

If you have an issue with anxiety, you may consider the following advice:

1. **Avoid unconstructive worries** – they are unhelpful thoughts that go over your mind again and again, making you imagine the worst-case scenario, triggering stress response and emotional distress. For example:
 - Catastrophising – making assumptions on what is going to happen, and the assumptions are much worse than what will actually happen
 - Black and white thinking – assume that there are only situations at the extremes, having no other possibilities in between
 - Should and must thinking – this kind of thinking focuses on how things ‘should’ or ‘must’ be done, instead of simply looking at them by their nature
 - Jumping to conclusion – assume knowing what others think, or be able to predict what is going to happen in the future
 - Focus on the negative – dismiss of positive experiences and focus on the negative experiences
2. **Create a ‘worry time’** - Create a 15 to 20 minute-‘worry time’ every day to review your worries. If you experience worries at other times, write down the worries first and then review them at the next designated ‘worry time’
3. **Distract yourself** - Distract yourself from negative thoughts by doing simple and pleasurable things
4. **Construct a self-talk** - Remind yourself to think objectively. Ask yourself ‘Will I still worry about this a week, a month or a year later?’, ‘Have I overestimated the negative possibilities?’
5. **Solve your problems** - Take the initiative to evaluate and solve the problems that are worrying you. Focus on what you can learn from the mistakes and how you can improve yourself in the future
6. **Do exercise** - ‘Pleasure chemicals’ are released after exercise. These chemicals which improve concentration and regulate breathing can help you stay relaxed and combat stress
7. **Keep avoidance at the minimum** - This will maintain your anxiety problem. Try to expose to your fear and allow for coping practice. Use a step-by-step approach to face your fear, from the easiest ones to the hardest ones
8. **Do relaxation exercises** - Practice relaxation exercises regularly, like deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation
9. **Sharing with supporters** - Share your thoughts and feelings with family, teachers and friends so that they can understand, support and help you

