

ANXIETY 101

SYMPTOMS, CAUSES & TREATMENTS

By Sandy Mizerak NCC, LMHC

Anxiety is a broad term. Symptoms of each anxiety disorder vary in different people, they all provoke extreme fear or worry that interferes with a person's typical lifestyle. Anxiety is typically associated with anticipated fear of something happening in the future.

There are **seven** different types of anxiety disorders.



Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Excessive uncontrollable worry about everyday issues, including school, work, money, friends, and health.

Social Anxiety Disorder or “Social Phobia”

Avoidance of everyday social situations due to extreme anxiety about being judged by others or behaving in a way that might cause embarrassment or ridicule.

Panic Disorder

Severe attacks of terror which may feel like you’re having a heart attack or going crazy for no apparent reason.

Agoraphobia

Intense fear and anxiety of any place or situation where escape might be difficult, leading to avoidance of situations such as being alone outside of the home, traveling in a car, bus or airplane or being in a crowded area.

Specific Phobias

Intense fear reaction that leads to avoiding an object, place or situation such as riding in elevators or driving on bridges; those with specific phobias typically recognize that the fear is irrational and inappropriate for the circumstance.

Separation anxiety

Inappropriate and excessive fear or anxiety when faced with separation from the home or from specific people.

Selective Mutism

A consistent failure to speak in specific social situations by someone who normally is capable of speech.

Other disorders closely related to anxiety disorders:

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Persistent, recurring thoughts that reflect exaggerated anxiety or fears and manifest as repetitive behaviors or rituals; for example the uncontrollable need to scrub your hands or check or re-check.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Avoidance, detachment, difficulty sleeping and concentrating and reliving a traumatic event or experience several months or years after it occurred.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WORRY AND ANXIETY

Worry

- ◉ Experience it more in our heads.
- ◉ Tends to be specific.
- ◉ Worry is verbally focused
- ◉ Worry triggers problem solving (able to find a solution).
- ◉ Worry creates mild emotional distress.
- ◉ Worry tends to be based on realistic concerns.
- ◉ Worry tends to be controllable through good problem solving.

Anxiety

- ◉ Experience it throughout our bodies.
- ◉ More general/more vague.
- ◉ Anxiety includes verbal thoughts and mental imagery.
- ◉ Usually cannot find a solution or don't know what the problem is.
- ◉ Anxiety creates moderate to severe emotional distress.
- ◉ Anxiety tends to be more about the "what ifs".
- ◉ More difficult to "talk yourself out of" anxiety.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WORRY AND ANXIETY

CONTINUED.....

Worry

- ◉ Worry tends to be temporary.
- ◉ Worry does not tend to affect our personal and professional lives.
- ◉ Worry is considered a normal psychological state.

Anxiety

- ◉ Anxiety can linger for long periods of times and even jump from one focus to another.
- ◉ Anxiety often interferes with our professional and/or personal/social functional lives.
- ◉ Anxiety is considered a mental disorder requiring some type of psychological treatment.

WHAT ANXIETY LOOKS LIKE IN A CHILD

- ◉ Anger, aggression, irritability, tantrums, opposition
- ◉ Crying with no apparent trigger
- ◉ Sleeping problems
- ◉ Negative thinking
- ◉ Excessive clinginess
- ◉ Poor memory and concentration
- ◉ Perfectionism
- ◉ Withdrawal from activities
- ◉ Procrastination
- ◉ Sleeping problems/nightmares
- ◉ Complaints of stomachaches or headaches
- ◉ Complaints of always feeling fatigued
- ◉ Constantly worried about things that might happen or have had happened



LIVING WITH ANXIETY
IS LIKE BEING
FOLLOWED BY A VOICE.
IT KNOWS ALL YOUR
INSECURITIES AND
USES THEM AGAINST YOU.
IT GETS TO THE POINT
WHEN IT'S THE LOUDEST
VOICE IN THE ROOM.
THE ONLY ONE
YOU CAN HEAR.

ANXIETY

scared
chest pain
phobia
tension
tense
panic attacks
stress
fear
sweating
feelings
worry
restlessness
symptoms
emotional
border
mood
desperate
trembling
tension
angst
jumpy
headache



SOME STATISTICS ON ANXIETY

18 percent of adults suffer from some type of anxiety.

Over 40 million people have a diagnosis of anxiety.

25 percent of adolescents ages 13 to 18 live with some type of anxiety disorder.

Women are 60% more likely than men to experience an anxiety disorder over their lifetime.

Average age of onset is 11 years old.





RISK FACTORS

- Shyness or behavioral inhibitions in childhood...personality.
- Being female.
- Having few economic resources.
- Being divorced or widowed.
- Exposure to stressful life events in childhood and adulthood...trauma.
- Anxiety disorders in close biological relatives.
- Parental history of mental disorders.
- Elevated afternoon cortisol levels in the saliva.
- Abuse of drugs.
- Highly stressful home life with little to no knowledge of healthy coping skills.

CAUSES

- ◉ Excessive stress
- ◉ Side effects from medication
- ◉ Use of an illicit drug or withdrawal
- ◉ Some medical conditions
- ◉ Trauma
- ◉ Busy and fast paced lives
- ◉ Temperament

COMPLICATIONS

- ◉ Depression
- ◉ Substance abuse problems
- ◉ Insomnia
- ◉ Headaches
- ◉ Social isolation
- ◉ Poor quality of life
- ◉ Insomnia
- ◉ Digestive or bowel problems

TREATMENTS FOR ANXIETY

- ◉ Stress management techniques
- ◉ Medication
- ◉ Support groups
- ◉ Counseling such as CBT and Exposure Therapy
- ◉ Exercise
- ◉ Avoiding caffeine and eating healthier.
- ◉ Yoga or any mindfulness based activity
- ◉ Energy tapping
- ◉ Self-talk (changing your inner dialogue)
- ◉ Sleep
- ◉ Slowing down
- ◉ Deep breathing

Feeling anxiety? Do a "grounding" tool.



Look around you. Find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste. This is called "grounding." It's helpful to do whenever you feel anxious.

PEOPLE TEND TO DWELL MORE ON
NEGATIVE THINGS THAN ON GOOD
THINGS. SO THE MIND THEN BECOMES
OBSESSED WITH NEGATIVE THINGS, WITH
JUDGEMENTS, GUILT AND ANXIETY
PRODUCED BY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE
FUTURE AND SO ON.

-ECKHART TOLLE-

HOW TO HELP

- ◉ Be supportive
- ◉ Listen
- ◉ Learn about the disorder
- ◉ Do not judge
- ◉ Do not assume it is “all in their head”
- ◉ Suggest counseling or any self-care activity

FAMOUS PEOPLE WITH ANXIETY DISORDERS

- ◉ Paul Deen (agoraphobia)
- ◉ Heather Locklear (anxiety & depression)
- ◉ Whoopie Goldberg (specific phobia)
- ◉ Howie Mandel (OCD)
- ◉ John Mayer (Panic Disorder)
- ◉ Vinny Guadagnino (Jersey Shore)
- ◉ Abraham Lincoln (GAD)
- ◉ Barbara Streisand (GAD)
- ◉ Brian Wilson (GAD)
- ◉ Donny Osmond (GAD)
- ◉ Carly Simon (Panic Disorder)
- ◉ Clay Aiken (Panic Disorder)
- ◉ Ricky Williams (Social Anxiety)
- ◉ Amanda Seyfried (GAD)
- ◉ Dane Cook (GAD)

*It's sad, actually,
because my anxiety
keeps me from
enjoying things as
much as I should
at this age.*

*-Amanda
Seyfried*



HealthyPlace.com

“The root of the problem I have is anxiety, and it’s all derived from something-I’m just going to say it, some kind of sadness. It manifests in so many different ways and it affects people differently”.

Vinny Guadagnino-Reality TV Star

“I WAS NOT A SILLY KID OR OUTGOING. IN FACT, I SUFFERED FROM QUITE A BIT OF ANXIETY. I USED TO HAVE PANIC ATTACKS WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER, REALLY INCAPACITATING MOMENTS, BECAUSE I HAD SOME PHOBIAS”.

Dane Cook-actor/comedian

ANXIETY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- ◉ Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A)
- ◉ Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21)
- ◉ Leibowitz Social Anxiety Scale (LSAS)
- ◉ Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN)
- ◉ Beck Anxiety Scale
- ◉ Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-4)
- ◉ Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD 7)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- ◉ MTV Half of U
- ◉ The Jed Foundation
- ◉ ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America)
- ◉ Psychology Today
- ◉ NIMH (National Institute on Mental Health)
- ◉ Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy