

ANXIETY

Anxiety is a natural response to a stressful situation. Anxiety promotes feelings of worry, nervousness or apprehension.



TIPS TO MANAGE ANXIETY

1. Acknowledge your self-talk

When we are anxious we tend to say negative things to ourselves. Unhelpful self-talk might include things like, "I'm hopeless", "I'm going to be terrible at this", or "I'll never get this done". Negative self-talk generally makes us feel low and can increase anxiety. This can also prevent us from achieving our goals.

Start to draw some attention to how you talk to yourself and work on developing more helpful, calming and encouraging self-talk, such as, "This is challenging, however I am managing and will get through this", "This stressful time will pass", or "I managed last time. I will get through this again".

2. Put things into perspective

When we are worried it is easy to see things as worse than they really are. It is also easy to start thinking about all sorts of possible future problems. Take a step back and observe one of your worries. Ask yourself:

- am I assuming the worst when I really don't know the outcome?
- how likely is this outcome?
- if the worst were to happen, what could I do about it?

Sometimes thinking about how you would cope, even if the worst were to happen helps to put things into perspective.

3. Learn to manage the anxiety. Don't let it stop you from doing things

Try not to avoid situations which trigger your anxiety. Rather, learn how to work on managing these situations. If this seems too difficult, seek the help of a psychologist or other mental health professional. They will be able to help you work out a plan for facing your fears and increasing your confidence, one step at a time.

4. Practise relaxation, meditation or mindfulness

Practising relaxation, meditation and mindfulness on a regular basis helps your nervous system to settle, reducing those feelings of overwhelm and restlessness.

5. Look after your health

Your lifestyle, inclusive of your exercise and diet, can help support you to manage anxiety. It is important to:

- make sure you are eating well
- get regular exercise
- avoid using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to cope when you are finding things difficult.

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