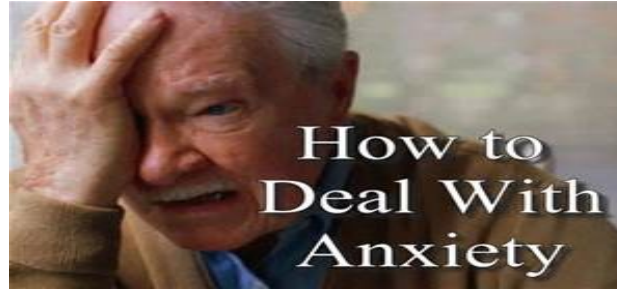


1. Do you find yourself breaking out in the "sweats" in specific situations?
2. Do you feel nervous or panicky in situations in which it is not appropriate?
3. Have you learned to restrict your life in some way to avoid nervousness?
4. Have you developed "rituals" which are intended to ward off anxiety or panic?
5. Do you have unexplainable fears in situations or in attempting activities which should not cause such feelings?

If you answer yes to any of the above questions you may want to consider the possibility that you suffer from an *Anxiety Disorder*.

No drug, psychotherapy or religion will eliminate anxiety from our lives. It is part of life. The good news about anxiety is there is a way to deal with it in faith to diminish its power so as to enable a way through it. Dealing with it generally involves a two-fold approach - increased faith in God and renouncing unbelief, and then facing it rather avoiding it.

The most important initial factor in treatment of Anxiety Disorders is to make an **accurate assessment** of the disorder, based on the DSM-IV criteria.



Diet

Good diet, or sensible eating, is very important in anxiety management and for health generally. It is becoming more and more clear that poor diet plays a significant role in the cause of many disorders such as anxiety, burnout, depression, chronic tiredness, various immune system maladies, and many cancers.

The main points emphasised for good diet are as follows.

- Low fat
- High fibre
- Low, or no red meats
- Low, or no chicken
- Lean meats
- Low or no, milk products
- Low eggs
- Low, or no refined sugar
- Low salt
- Low fast food
- High water intake (ten glasses a day)
- Low, or no alcohol
- High in vegetables and fruit
- Low butter and margarine

Relaxation Training

Relaxation exercises to manage hyperventilation, is an important part of treatment for most anxiety disorders. To be effective it must be done daily for two or more months.

Step 1

Inhale and exhale through your nose. This decreases the amount of air you take in.

Step 2

Inhale, feel your breath in the back of your throat, expand your chest, and then take that breath all the way into your stomach until you feel your stomach expand. Practice this belly breathing to take deep instead of shallow breaths.

Step 3

Use relaxation techniques such as focused breathing. Concentrate your thoughts only on your breathing as you sit in a quiet area, and practice nasal breathing for five to 10 minutes a day.

Graded Exposure

Various methods of modelling and exposure are standard forms of therapy for phobias and panic attacks. Systematic desensitisation, which involves a graded exposure to the stimulus in the imagination following relaxation exercises is the most common method used for anxiety disorder. This therapy aims to remove the fear response of a phobia, and substitute a relaxation response to the conditional stimulus gradually using counter conditioning.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

It is now well established that cognitive behaviour therapy plays a major role in treating all anxiety disorders. Treating anxiety disorders without cognitive behaviour therapy is like treating infections without antibiotics. As well as changing irrational thinking it includes such things as hyperventilation and grades exposure.

Journaling

Daily or weekly journaling (Anxiety Inventory) is a very useful tool in treatment, as it is with anger, depression and many other conditions. In the journal, or log, is recorded situations where anxiety occurred, what provoked it, self-talk, what actually happened and how was it managed, debating self-talk, and how it have been done better next time.

Counselling

1. Instruction in biblical teachings about not to worry. (Matthew 6:25-35; Philippians 4:6, 7; 1 Peter 5:7)
2. Unbelief needs to be constantly confessed and renounced.
3. Investigate the root cause (Family of origin, current family, recent trauma or stress)
4. Deal with guilt and resentment.
5. Building self-esteem and teaching Christian identity and self-acceptance.
6. Assertiveness training.

Anxiety Self-Assessment

Answer the following questions with a *Yes or No* and be as honest as you can.

1. *Do you generally suffer from fear and worry?*
2. *Does achieving and winning take a top priority in your life?*
3. *Do you feel guilty when leisure takes precedence over work?*
4. *Do you consider yourself a perfectionist?*
5. *Do you repress your anger rather than express it (appropriately)?*
6. *Is work more important to you than relationships?*
7. *Are you constantly trying to justify irrational behaviour?*
8. *Are you a first born child?*
9. *Are you a Type A personality (driven, fast paced, high achiever, aggressive)?*
10. *Do you have a fear of other people or speaking and eating in public?*
11. *Do you find yourself breaking out in the "sweats" in specific situations?*

If you answered three or more questions with *Yes*, you are a sure candidate for anxiety.

For more information please go to our website at <http://christ-education.blogspot.com.au>



Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety is a very uncomfortable feeling and can occur in various forms. Sometimes a general nervousness is felt which can seem permanent or can come and go. Often, a specific situation will trigger the feeling.

Other forms of anxiety are phobias which cause a person to fear specific situations such as flying or driving, going out or being closed in. These can be strong enough to be debilitating. So much so that some people with phobias are severely crippled in their attempts to live life.

Some of the physical signs of anxiety are sweaty palms, palpitations or outright panic, known as a panic attack or anxiety attack. Usually people with a history of anxiety, especially panic states, have learned to avoid situations which tend to trigger the feeling and can lead quite restricted lives as a result.

Psychotherapy can be a very helpful anxiety treatment for those suffering from anxiety and related disorders such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Sometimes psychotherapy treatment is accompanied by medication.

If you suspect that you or someone you know suffers from depression, anxiety, phobias or panic try the following quick test: