



Young people with anxiety

Anxiety is a condition that can affect anyone – it doesn't distinguish between age, background or social group. Even some of the most confident people you know may be living with anxiety. Recent research suggests that as many as 1 in 6 young people will experience an anxiety condition at some point in their lives, whether that be OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), social anxiety and shyness, exam stress, worry or panic attacks.

Many anxiety disorders begin in childhood and adolescence, and the average time a person waits to seek help for their condition (particularly for OCD and chronic worrying or GAD as it is known) is over 10 years! That is a long time to be feeling anxious. You can save yourself a lot of stress by getting help sooner rather than later.

Prevalence of anxiety & depression in UK 16-18s

1 in 10 young people experience a mental health disorder (Green et al 2005)

Increase in prevalence of mental health problems at 16-19 (Singleton et al 2001)

Over half of all mental ill health starts by age 14 and 75% develops by age 18 (Murphy and Fonagy 2012)

Anxiety and depression are most common mental health difficulties and these have high co-morbidity (Green et al 2005)

School learning, stress tolerance, confidence, motivation, personal relationships will be adversely affected (Layard 2008)

Untreated anxiety or depression can have a significant impact on employment, income and relationship stability in adult life (Goodman Joyce and Smith 2011; Green et al 2005)

Anxiety can affect us all in very different ways. Experiences of anxiety can vary greatly from person to person and no two people are the same.

First of all, anxiety is completely normal! It is something that we all experience to some level. Anxiety is useful to us as it tells us that something is dangerous and that we need to be careful. However, if anxiety gets out of control or stops you from doing everyday things, then this can lead to us feeling unhappy, upset and frustrated.

*it's okay
not to be
okay*

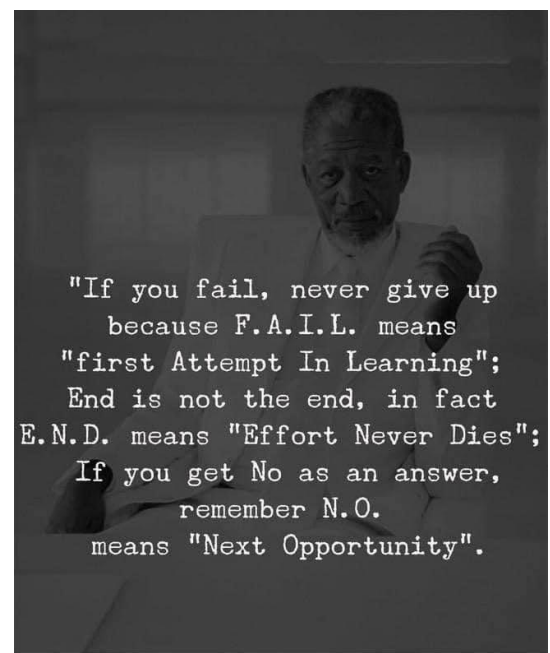
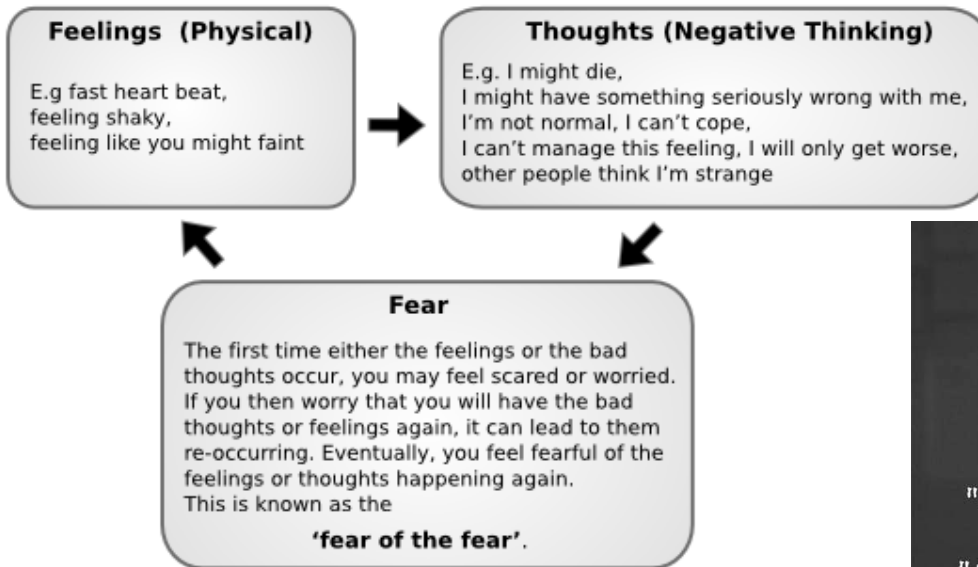


Worrying about things is normal

Excellence for all

When anxiety gets really strong, we might experience what we call a "panic attack". This is when the body is getting ready to fight, freeze or to run away from the situation that we are viewing as dangerous. This is known as the fight, flight or freeze response. Again, it can be quite scary to experience, although we know that it will not hurt you.

One of the ways to reduce the anxiety that we are feeling is to understand it better. By understanding how anxiety works, we can then understand why we feel that way and it will help us to break the vicious circle of anxiety that just makes things worse. The picture below can help to explain what happens when we get anxious.



TOOLS TO MANAGE ANXIETY

- EXERCISE, DO YOGA OR HAVE A GOOD STRETCH** (Illustration of a girl stretching)
- JOURNAL OR SET ASIDE "WORRY TIME" & WRITE IT OUT** (Illustration of a girl sitting at a desk writing)
- TUNE-IN TO YOUR SENSES. WHAT CAN YOU HEAR, SEE & FEEL?** (Illustration of a girl meditating with a boombox)
- PRACTICE GRATITUDE** (Illustration of a girl holding flowers)
- MEDITATE OR STOP & BREATHE DEEPLY** (Illustration of a girl meditating)
- TAKE A TIME OUT WITH A CUP OF COFFEE OR TEA** (Illustration of a girl with a cup)
- CREATE A PLAN, PROBLEM SOLVE & WORK THROUGH POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS** (Illustration of a girl with a signpost showing Plan A, B, and C)
- GET CREATIVE - DRAW, DANCE OR LISTEN TO MUSIC** (Illustration of a boy with a drawing and a music note)
- IDENTIFY UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS & GENTLY CHALLENGE THEM** (Illustration of a boy with a magnifying glass over his head)