



## Self-Worth – Anxiety

### Anxiety - Introduction

Anxiety is a normal human emotion that occurs when we feel stress, worry, fear and panic. Anxiety can often be intertwined with low self-esteem. Those who suffer from low Self Worth can experience symptoms of anxiety with some frequency.

An anxiety disorder is diagnosed when symptoms become severe, happen too often and interfere with a person's ability to live a normal life. It is not unusual for a psychologist to learn that an individual may have experienced symptoms for years before seeking treatment.

### Symptoms of low Self Worth and anxiety include:

- Depressive tendencies
- Hypersensitivity
- Hyper-vigilance
- Lack of assertiveness
- Lack of self-confidence
- Obsessive compulsive or addictive behaviours
- Workaholic behaviour
- Overachieving and underachieving behaviours
- Poor boundaries
- Poor relationship and social skills
- Self-sabotaging behaviours
- Sexual dysfunction

### Why is anxiety a serious problem?

The MindShift Foundation Clinical Psychologist Dr Lars Madsen confirms anxiety disorders are the most common of all the mental health disorders. Unchecked, they can lead to Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Agoraphobia, Social Phobia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Specific Phobia, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Disorder.

According to Dr Madsen, "People who struggle with an anxiety disorder often find themselves struggling with low Self Worth which can be distressing and debilitating. This may contribute to a loss of educational and employment opportunities, and difficulties in family and social relationships. Recovery is possible with appropriate treatment such as exposure therapy, attention training and a range of anxiety management techniques that can help manage symptoms."



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Dr Lars Madsen confirms that learning about anxiety is central to recovery. For example, education may include examining the physiology of the ‘flight-fight’ response, which is the body’s way to deal with impending danger. For people with anxiety disorders this response is inappropriately triggered by situations that are generally harmless. Education is an important way to promote control over symptoms.

### How can you lessen the effects of anxiety?

- Learning about anxiety
- Employ relaxation techniques
- Correct breathing techniques
- Cognitive therapy
- Behaviour therapy
- Counselling
- Dietary adjustments
- Exercise
- Learning to be assertive
- Building self-esteem
- Structured problem solving

### Where to get help

Always remember you are not alone. Your doctor or registered health professionals are there to help you.

Our online resource page has a full list of organisations where you can get further information.  
<http://mindshift.org.au/suggested-links/>

### Things to remember

Anxiety disorders can affect a person’s ability to work, study and participate in other activities, but recovery is possible with the appropriate treatment.

Some ways to manage anxiety disorders include learning about anxiety, relaxation techniques, correct breathing techniques, dietary adjustments, exercise, learning to be assertive, building self-esteem, cognitive therapy, exposure therapy, structured problem solving and medication.



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### In summary

Increased stress and inadequate coping mechanisms may also contribute to anxiety. Anxiety symptoms can result from a variety of factors including having had a traumatic experience, facing major decisions in one's life or having a fearful perspective on life. Anxiety caused by medications, substance abuse or alcohol abuse is not typically recognised as an anxiety disorder.

### Updates and Further information

For the latest updates and further information please visit [www.mindshift.org.au](http://www.mindshift.org.au).

### Our Mission

It is our mission to ensure that every person has access to the resources available to build healthy self-esteem, to have a positive sense of self and to find meaning in life.

### Disclaimer

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