

## 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-worth. 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. Combined with low self-worth, this can lead to a number of negative outcomes.

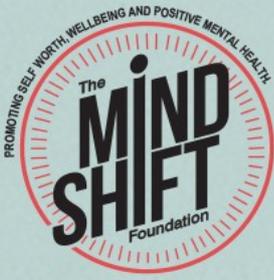
### Outcomes of low self-worth and anxiety include:

- 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

### Anxiety types

Anxiety has a number of types and might reveal itself as:

- Generalised anxiety disorder
- Social phobias
- Specific phobias
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Agoraphobia
- Acute stress disorder



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### Signs of anxiety

Certain feelings can be symptoms of anxiety. These may include:

- Worry
- Fear or apprehension
- A racing mind
- Powerlessness
- Agitation
- Panic

Anxiety may also produce physical symptoms such as:

- Heart pounding
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Twitching or fidgeting
- Issues with sleep
- Restlessness
- Dry mouth
- Tension headaches

Some of these physical symptoms are also indicative of varying medical conditions, so please consult your GP to rule out any physical issues.

### Faulty thinking and anxiety

Anxiety can amplify low self-worth and lead to faulty thinking. In this case, it's thinking that our anxious emotional state is a true reflection of reality. This is generally not the case, but trying to break those thought patterns can be difficult without help. Some thoughts that show low self-worth compounding anxiety might be:

- 'I'm wrong, it's all wrong, nothing's right.'
- 'I can't handle this.'
- 'I'm useless.'
- 'I think I'm dying.'



## Self-Worth – Anxiety

### Why is anxiety a serious problem?

Dr Lars Madsen, clinical advisor to The MindShift Foundation, confirms anxiety disorders are the most common of all mental health conditions. 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.”

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.

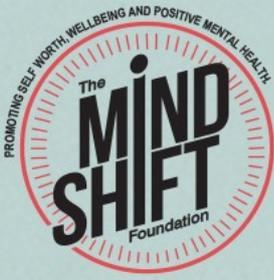
### How can you lessen the effects of anxiety?

- Learning about anxiety
- Employ relaxation techniques
- Correcting breathing techniques
- Cognitive Behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Counselling
- Dietary adjustments
- Exercise
- Learning to be assertive
- Building self-worth
- 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/>.



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### 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, correcting breathing techniques, dietary adjustments, exercise, learning to be assertive, building self-worth, cognitive therapy, exposure therapy, structured problem solving and medication.

### In summary

Increased stress and inadequate coping mechanisms may 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. Faulty thinking that fuels anxiety can be treated through education, understanding and talking to a healthcare professional.

### 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-worth, to have a positive sense of self and to find meaning in life.

### Disclaimer

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