



# Anxiety Webinar

**Presented by Derbyshire Minds Mental  
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**Introductions**

# Agenda

- Introductions
- What is anxiety?
- How does it present itself
- Exercise
- Fight, flight and freeze
- Avoidance
- Exercise
- Mindfulness exercise to finish
- Questions





**What is anxiety?**

# What is Anxiety



- Anxiety is a feeling of worry or fear that can range from mild to severe. It's a natural response to stress or danger and can help us stay alert and focused. However, when anxiety becomes too intense or persists for a long time, it can become a problem and affect our daily life.
- Anxiety can also have different types, such as generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and specific phobias. It's essential to understand the specific nature of anxiety to provide proper support and treatment.

The background is a solid blue color. There are several thick, white, chalk-like curved lines that sweep across the frame from the top and bottom edges towards the center. These lines are slightly irregular and textured, resembling hand-drawn chalk on a surface. They create a sense of movement and depth.

**How does it present itself?**

# How can Anxiety present itself?



- Anxiety can present itself in various ways, including:
  1. **Physical symptoms:** rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, muscle tension, nausea, and shortness of breath.
  2. **Emotional symptoms:** restlessness, a sense of dread or panic, irritability and difficulty concentrating.
  3. **Behavioural symptoms:** avoidance of certain situations, compulsive behaviours, and being overly self-conscious.
  4. **Cognitive symptoms:** uncontrollable worry, racing thoughts and negative self-talk.

A hand-drawn smiley face is visible in the background, rendered in a light blue, chalk-like texture. The face is partially obscured by the text and consists of two curved lines for eyes and a simple upward-curving line for a mouth.

**What does anxiety feel like?**



Dry mouth and/or feeling thirsty

Feeling too hot or too cold

Pins and needles

Hot flushes and / or sweating

Low sex drive

Excessive worrying

Thumping or irregular heartbeat

Feeling dissociated from the world around you

Needing to go to the toilet

Loss of appetite

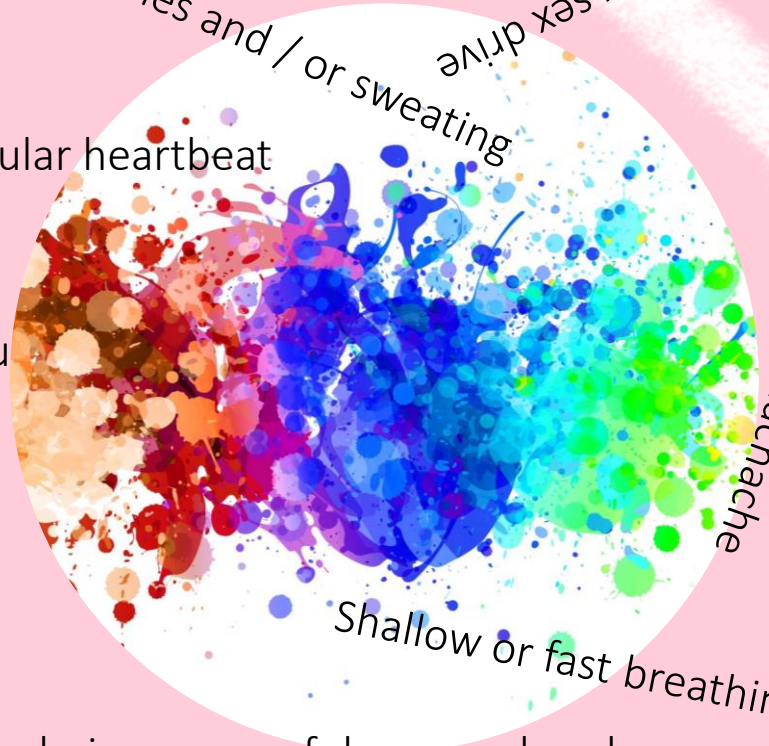
Negative thoughts

Feeling agitated, irritable and/or snappy

An overwhelming sense of doom or dread

Dizziness and lightheadedness

Headache and muscle tension



Nausea and/or stomachache

Shallow or fast breathing

**Behavioural changes**



# Behavioral changes?

- Craving reassurance
- Worrying people are angry or upset with you
- Deliberating over past experiences
- Overthinking
- Shut yourself away from the world
- Lashing out and being aggressive
- Crying or feeling tearful
- Not wanting to get out of bed
- Lack of self care
- Nervous behaviors; nail biting, lip chewing, scratching your skin, hair pulling
- Fidgeting and restlessness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Blaming others for your situation or behaviour
- Grinding your teeth or clenching your jaw
- Difficulty speaking
- Stumbling over your words
- Struggling to articulate yourself
- Struggling to maintain the demands of a job or home life
- Difficulty in forming or keeping relationships
- Lack of enthusiasm for trying new things
- Shyness
- Struggling to keep eye contact
- Wanting to run away or hide
- Nervous coughing

# Exercise 1



# What does anxiety feel and look like for you?

- Think of a time recently when you felt anxious, worried or afraid.
- What did that feel like in your body?
- How did you react?

**I FEEL.....**



Use **P.O.W.E.R.** to help you remember this exercise.  
You have the **P.O.W.E.R.** to choose when and how to  
react to your feelings.

**Pause** your thought process and relax.

**Observe** your breathing while allowing your thoughts and  
feelings to simply exist.

**Weigh** up your options – if you were giving advice, what would  
you suggest?

**Experience** your suggested advice, but try it out with only a  
small step at first.

**Review** whether your small step worked. What was most  
helpful? What would you do next time?



**Fight, flight or freeze**

# Fight, flight or freeze response



- When faced with a perceived threat, anxiety triggers the body to enter one of three different responses: fight, flight or freeze.
- In the context of flying, anxiety can trigger both the fight or flight and freeze response. The perceived threat may be the fear of the airplane crashing, turbulence or even fear of heights. In response, the body may trigger an increase in heart rate, rapid breathing and muscle tension, preparing the individual to either fight or flee. Alternatively, the freeze response can be triggered, causing the individual to feel helpless and unable to move or react.



**Avoidance**

# Avoidance

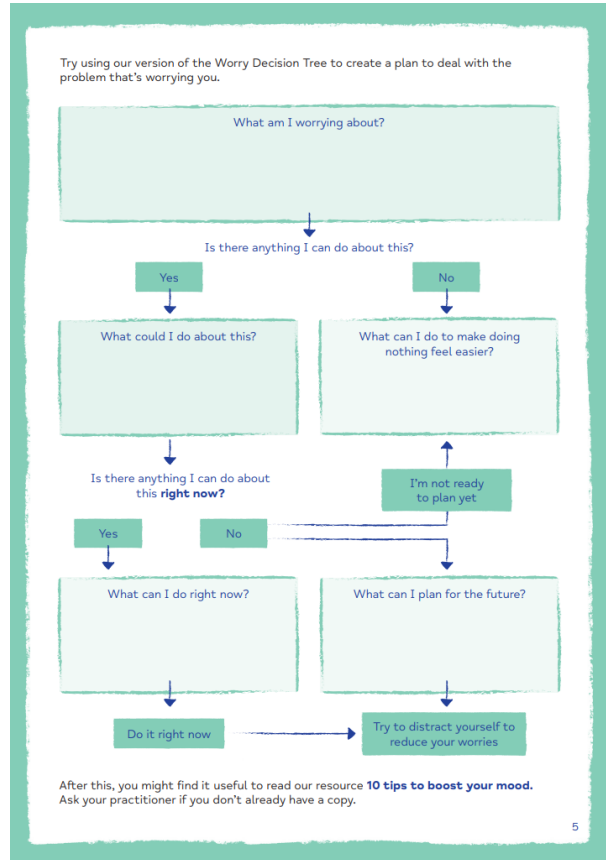


- Avoidance is a common coping strategy used by people with anxiety. It involves avoiding situations, people, or specific things that trigger anxiety symptoms. While avoidance can provide immediate relief from anxiety, in the long run it can reinforce and intensify anxiety because it prevents the person from facing their fears and learning that they are not as dangerous as they seem.
- Avoidance can also fuel anxiety by creating a vicious cycle, when a person avoids a situation that causes anxiety, they may experience temporary relief. However, avoiding the situation reinforces the belief that it is dangerous, making the anxiety stronger the next time they encounter it. Over time, this can lead to the development of phobias.

# Exercise 2



# Accepting uncertainty – worry tree





# Mindfulness exercise

# Mindfulness



## Using mindful thinking

Through better understanding of how our minds work, we can observe negative thoughts and feelings, without reacting to them.

In situations or experiences where we feel uncomfortable, we can use mindfulness to consider our choices, then decide how to respond.

Mindfulness can help us by:

- **Encouraging us to slow down** and appreciate the present moment
- **Enabling us to notice** our thoughts and feelings more
- **Giving us time and space** to think about how to react to the way we feel
- **Allowing us to explore** alternative approaches before acting

# Mindfulness

## Exercise 4

### Mindful breathing

Focusing on our breathing is a way of feeling more aware of the present moment. Breathing is something we all do without thinking. Our breath is always there, no matter what we're doing or how we're feeling.

The following breathing meditation should take around 5 minutes. As with all the exercises, take a break if you're finding it hard. Talk to your practitioner if you need to.



1. Find a quiet place where you can **sit comfortably**, with your back quite straight. This can be on a chair or on the floor.

2. Place your hands in your lap and **close your eyes** if you can. If not, you can gaze down at your knees or a spot on the floor.

3. Take a few **deep breaths**. Try to let go of any tension in your body. Spend a few moments focusing just on this.

4. Start to **become aware of your breathing**. Breathe through your nose if you can – feel the air as it enters and leaves your nostrils. Feel your abdomen expanding with each breath in, and shrinking with each breath out. Take your time.

5. Breathe in slowly, then out slowly. **Don't try to control your breath** – just allow it to flow naturally in and out. Continue to observe your breath, moment by moment, for a while.

6. The **rate of your breathing might have changed** since you started the exercise. Or it may be the same. Either way is fine.

7. Start to count your breaths. **Each time you breathe out, count silently** to yourself starting from 1. Continue until you reach 10, then start again at 1. Repeat this as many times as you feel comfortable with.

8. If you notice thoughts coming into your mind, be aware of them. **Let thoughts come, drift away**, then gently return to counting your breathing.

9. When you're ready to stop, **slowly bring awareness back to your body**. Be aware of the support of the chair or floor beneath you. Wiggle your fingers. Then your toes. Become aware of the room. When you're ready, open your eyes or look up.

**Any questions?**



Supported Self Help -  
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