

Dealing with Anxiety Tip Sheet

Brina Tiemeyer, LMSW, CAADC-DP

Wedgwood Director of Clinical Services

Stress can be described as an emotional response caused by an external trigger, whereas anxiety is defined by the experience of persistent excessive worry that won't go away even in the absence of a stressor.

Anxiety might look like:

- ▶ Worrying excessively over what might happen.
- ▶ Being unable to enjoy the present moment.
- ▶ Sweating, rapid heartbeat, stomach aches, or headaches.
- ▶ Difficulties sleeping due to racing thoughts or worry.
- ▶ Feeling inadequate or less than others in some way.
- ▶ Lacking an appetite due to overwhelming feelings.
- ▶ Feeling jittery or hyperaware of everybody and everything around you.
- ▶ Spending a great deal of time over analyzing situations.
- ▶ Having obsessions or fixations that feel unable to let go of.
- ▶ Avoiding people, events, situations, out of fear.
- ▶ Feeling like everything is too much to process.
- ▶ Dreading upcoming situations or expecting the worst to happen.
- ▶ Feeling irritable, annoyed, or angry with no apparent cause.
- ▶ Feeling burned out or like there is way too much on your plate.
- ▶ Feeling mentally exhausted and neglecting self.

How to calm down feelings of anxiety:

- ▶ Deep Breathing Techniques
 - *Deep Breathing involves breathing in slowly through the nose and then slowly out through the mouth using the diaphragm and abdominal muscles.*
- ▶ Progressive Muscle Relaxation
 - *Progressive Muscle Relaxation involves tensing and then relaxing your muscles one by one.*
- ▶ Mindfulness
 - *Mindfulness is having awareness of our thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, and surrounding environment simultaneously*
- ▶ Cognitive Coping
 - *Cognitive Coping includes one's ability to reframe and challenge false self-beliefs that lead to certain undesired moods and behaviors.*

When anxiety presents as a barrier to the completion of day-to-day responsibilities, ability to have healthy interactions, or your ability to meet your own basic needs then it's time to seek help. You can contact Wedgwood Christian Services Bouma Counseling Center to complete an intake and receive services to aide you through the healing process and allow yourself a safe space for growth while acquiring skills needed to manage your anxiety on your own. Take back control!