

Anxiety Axed . . . Read this report loaded with hints and tips on how to start beating anxiety.

Panic attacks or anxiety attacks are quite common in many people. Panic attacks are basically the physical manifestation of anxiety. The common physical symptoms are: dizziness, shooting pains up your arms, tightness in the chest, blurred vision and auditory perceptions, sensory overload, hyperventilation and excessive sweating. One of the most frightening things about acknowledging a psychological condition is coming to terms with the fact that your thoughts and feelings can really affect your physical body. But our head is attached to our body and it's inevitable that what we feel emotionally will affect how we feel physically. If we feel angry we might get a rash; if we feel stressed we could get eczema; many people who are anxious have digestive. All these are common examples of how thoughts and emotions have a direct effect on that body.

This report will not offer any quick solutions but rather guidance and advice on how to deal with the condition. I am not an MD, but write this report as someone passionate about the subject who has suffered in the past from the condition. It is estimated one in six people suffer from chronic anxiety or depression. The negative effects on our personal lives, let alone the social and economic costs, are huge. The current approach adopted by the medical profession largely neglects accurate diagnosis and relies too heavily on medication. This begs the question if drugs are not the sole answer to anxiety, stress and depression, what is? My experience suggests that even though medication has a role to play self help, on my part is the key. Let us take a step back and look at the term "anxiety" again. Imagine a life with no anxiety at all. How wonderful, you fear nothing; the future holds only sweet security and joy. Think again. With no anxiety, your response to almost everything will be slower. The total absence of anxiety may mean you arrive unprepared for say a work presentation!

Anxiety only poses a problem for you when:

- Anxiety lasts uncomfortably long or occurs too often.
- It interferes with doing what you want to do.
- You struggle to control your worries, but they keep disturbing you and never let up.

Using, new brain imaging techniques, it is now clear that the mere act of taking a tablet each day, even if it is a dummy drug or placebo, and believing that it works can have a beneficial influence on chemicals, metabolism and blood flow in the brain. It is remarkable that clinical trials of drugs to treat anxiety and depression often identify only small differences between the active agent and placebo – the active agent regularly accounting for less than 20% of the response, and the remainder being attributed to “non-specific” or “placebo” responses. If almost 80% of all patients’ benefit from an intervention is as a result of the “placebo” effect, then the placebo effect itself becomes an incredibly interesting phenomenon to explore scientifically.

If taking a dummy tablet every day can achieve this remarkable effect, then it is not difficult to imagine that environmental and nutritional factors can also have remarkable effects on the brain. A good example of this in anxiety and depression is the impact of the rural environment on human health and well being; clinical trials demonstrating that such exposures may in some cases be superior to medication. Another example is the remarkable improvement in mood disorders brought about by a supportive family and a nurturing and positive attitude in doctors and other health-care workers. Before going any further let us look at the seven main types of anxiety compiled by Psychologists and Psychiatrists listed as follows:

- Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD)
- Social Phobia
- Panic disorder

- Agoraphobia
- Specific phobia
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

You don't need a full-blown diagnosis to feel that you have some trouble with anxiety. Many people have more anxiety than they want but don't completely meet the criteria of having a diagnosable anxiety disorder. Only a mental health professional can tell you for certain what type of anxiety you have, because various other disorders can look similar. The diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems is a responsibility shared between you and your medical advisors. All diet and lifestyle changes should begin with a medical check-up to make certain that no special health problems exist and to confirm that there are no medical reasons why you should not make the changes. As the author, I do not accept liability for readers who choose to self-prescribe.

Before I offer you tips on how you can cope with anxiety, let us look at some of the causes of anxiety.

- Childhood circumstances – Emotional security and dependence
- Cumulative stress over time.
- Stressors that precipitate panic attacks – Significant personal loss, Significant life change, Stimulants and recreational drugs
- Fear of other people's perceptions, such as what will they think if I wear that? What will they think if I do that? You may think it is a weakness to be concerned about other people, but everyone is a little insecure: it makes us human. It isn't healthy however for the fear of being judged to stop us leading our life as we would like to.
- Fear of reaching our potential related to the existential fear of freedom and absolute independence. These two worries connect through the thought that

if we try to reach our potential, we may actually be successful and our success would give us a whole new dimension of freedom that we wouldn't be able to deal with. This type of fear is often harder for people to come to terms with because it seems less logical than the other types.

Tips on how to handle anxiety.

- 1) People are social creatures. When you connect with others, you're likely to feel better. If you're feeling down, call a friend or may be sometimes better still a stranger and talk through what is bothering you. Or phone or visit someone just for a chat about anything, even related to this issue. Whatever the reason you make that connection, it's likely to help.
- 2) Sitting in a warm bath or standing in a hot shower can comfort the body by loosening all those muscles that tighten up when you're stressed. (Saunas and steam rooms at the gym can also be effective.) As you feel the moisture and heat, imagine that you're wrapped up in a warm blanket. You can let yourself feel safe, soothed and serene.
- 3) The body responds to upset by producing stress hormones. However, you can begin burning up those hormones by exercising for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Try something aerobic such as running, jogging or brisk walking. If it is a nice day going outside gives you the added benefit of sunshine and fresh air. Or if it is more convenient, go to the gym and do your own work out or take part in an exercise class.
- 4) Sound influences your mind and body, in positive and negative ways. It can jar, startle, upset or soothe you. When you feel distressed, try listening to music that that you find relaxing whether classical, swing, jazz, Latin, hard rock or even heavy metal.
- 5) When you are upset, usually the only thing on your mind is what's bothering you. Focusing on that and on how awful you feel only makes things worse. We're not advocating putting your head in the sand, but if you need quick relief or minor stress and distress – and if there is nothing you can do about

the issue at that point – consider involving yourself in alternative activities such as:

- Reading a good novel
- Going out to a film, the theatre or renting a DVD
- Watching television
- Surfing the internet
- Playing a game

- 6) Most of what upsets you has to do with the past or the future. You may feel guilty and depressed about events from the past – anxious about events that have not yet occurred (and often never will). To escape this trap, focus on what's actually happening around you right now. Look around and observe. Don't judge. Just observe, breathe and concentrate on all the feedback from all your senses.
- 7) Whatever the cause of your anxiety, one factor that appears in every case is the negative inner voice. Your critical voice will eat away at your self esteem until you no longer believe that you can cope with the world. To get over your anxiety, you have to confront your critical self-talk. But before you do this you have to realize how powerful that voice is and work out what it's saying. Say a positive mantra (over and over again) like "It is not my fault. I don't deserve it. I can cure it." Say this even if you do not believe it. When you've said it 20-30 times every day for weeks on end, you will start to believe it – but you have to persist.
- 8) To treat your behavioural symptoms you have to stop joining forces with your anxious thoughts – and this means changing your actions. You have to stop doing the things that have started as a result of your anxiety and turn them on their head. You do this by creating new habits that literally displace your anxious behavior. E.g. You can change your body language, say stop hunching over and start to stand tall. While it may seem hard to stop doing something that feels compulsive, the things that you have been doing when

your anxious are just behaviours that you have learned. Even if you didn't learn them deliberately and you only started doing them in reaction to the anxiety, the fact that you have learned these behaviours means you can unlearn them. You never used to do them so you can go back to how you were before your anxiety started.

- 9) Find out what works for you; take a moment to reflect on how the various techniques I have listed have worked for you. On a sheet list the techniques that helped you and how you felt when you used them.

This report is aimed at helping you come to terms with anxiety attacks and also how to possibly start the road to recovery with the emphasis being on yourself. Never discount the role of professionals such as say a Counselor. Before you begin a treatment program make sure that your counselor is familiar with scientifically validated psycho-therapeutic techniques. The journey will never be easy, it was not for me, but I believe anyone with the right mindset, determination and attitude can start making serious inroads in the battle with anxiety. For a free copy of this report please visit:

www.AnxietyAxed.com

Disclaimer: This report is base on my experiences and on research I have carried out myself. I am *not* a qualified professional in this regard, so please seek professional advice if in any doubt. I will not be held responsible if acting on the contents of this report the desired outcome does not materialize.

