

## Feel better now? The rise and rise of the anxiety economy

<b>Notes &amp; Cues:</b>	<b>Article:</b> <p>In 1988 a TV writer called Alex Carswell threw a pen at a photo of his mother after a stressful phone call with his boss. It gave him an idea. It was the “Age of Stress” and so the perfect time for Carswell to launch his “stress ball”.</p> <p>If the 80s were the age of stress, this is the age of anxiety, with 30% of Britons experiencing an anxiety disorder during their lifetime. This has created a market for domestic anxiety cures that can be bought online, and fast.</p> <p>Consider the squishy. That repeated action led to fidget spinners becoming one of the most popular items bought on Amazon in 2017. They were not simply triangles of plastic; they were a stress-relief toy. They were the stars of a growing anxiety economy.</p> <p>Alongside products designed purely as medical aids, such as meditation apps, there is a thriving offshoot of lifestyle goods marketed through their anxiety-relieving qualities. Product innovation oriented around anxiety spans nearly 30 different categories, including chocolate, yogurt and air fresheners.</p> <p>Is anxiety itself being commodified?</p> <p>Dr Nihara Krause, founder of youth mental health charity Stem4, said, “The market seems saturated. There are a number of companies that are trading on fake news to promote a whole range of products that are meant to help with mental health problems but without any evidence base to them. Given that we are dealing with a vulnerable population it is questionable how ethical producing these tools without evidence base and systematic review of efficacy is.”</p>
<b>Summary:</b>	