

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Feelings and behaviours
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- Feeling Anxious? What to do?
- Distortions of thoughts
- Anxiety, worry and stress

Key Words

Feelings, Behaviours, Hierarchy of needs, Maslow, Thoughts, Distortions, Anxiety, Worry, Stress

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add to anxiety, worry and stress

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Feeling Anxious? What To Do

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Why do I feel the way I do?

What motivates behaviour?

Emotions change daily, hourly and by the minute. University can be a real emotional roller-coaster. Emotions are typically broken down into four 'primary or basic' emotions: Anger, Fear, Sadness and Joy. Emotions don't always fit nicely into these boxes and many experiences invoke a combination of these emotions.

Emotions are a signal to yourself and others and are a motivator for action for ourselves. Emotions can indicate your needs are not being met. According to Humanist Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), our emotions and actions are motivated in order to achieve certain needs (Figure 1).

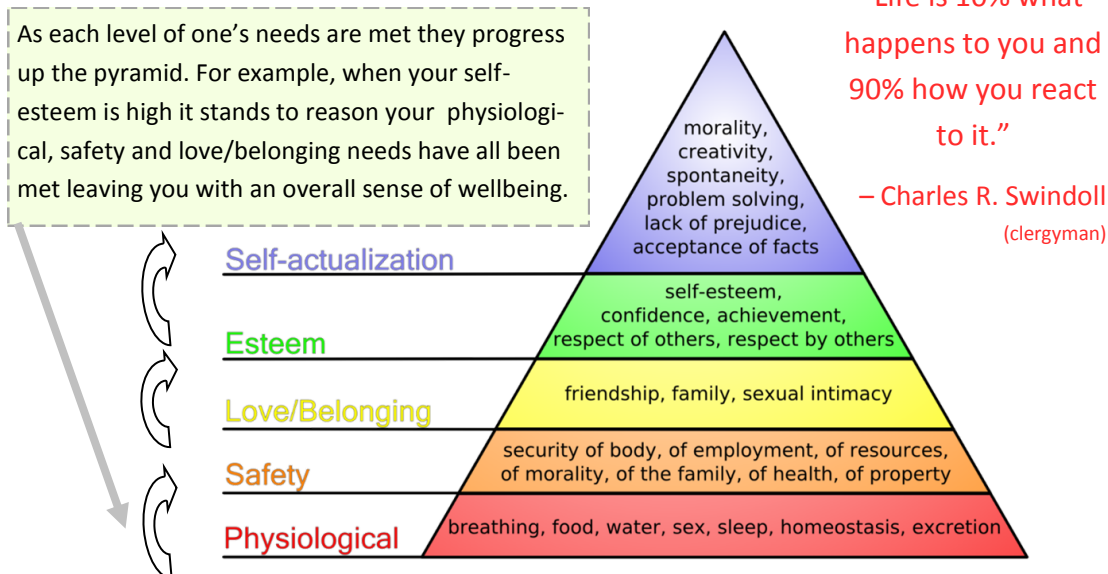


Figure 1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs with more basic needs at the bottom of the pyramid. Adapted from Maslow (1970a) and later transcendence needs (Maslow, 1970b).

If you are feeling grumpy check out Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Take care of yourself, starting at the bottom of the pyramid. If you are hungry, angry, lonely, tired (HALT) you will have less energy, esteem and a poor attitude.

Listen to what your body and emotions are telling you, take care of yourself physically and mentally. There is soooo much to do and so little time to do it in.

Life is an adventure. Believe in yourself, you can do it!



*"...85% of the things we
worry about never
happen."*

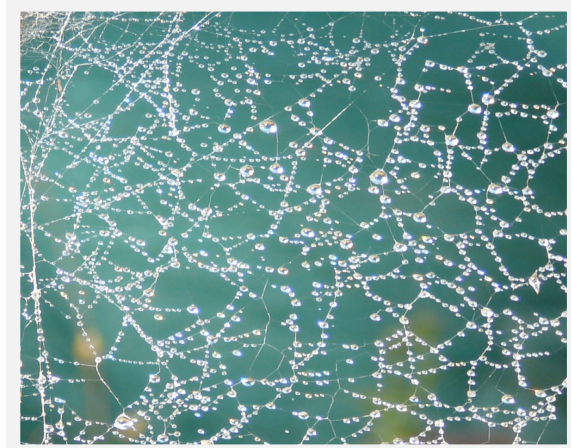
- Don J Goewey

(author of The End of Stress)

*"Poetry is the
spontaneous overflow
of powerful feelings: it
takes its origin from
emotion recollected in
tranquility."*

- William Wordsworth

(Poet)



Feeling anxious?

It is completely natural to feel anxious and we all experience it from time to time. Constant worries and anxious thoughts are fueled by negative beliefs which can take their toll physically and mentally.

The first thing to do is distinguish between solvable and unsolvable worries. When a worry pops into your mind ask yourself is the problem something you can solve? The following additional questions can help:

1. Is the problem something you are actually facing or imagined? ('what if?' questions are imagined)
2. If it is a 'what if', really how likely is it to happen? Are your concerns realistic?
3. What can I do about the problem or can I prepare for it? OR is it out of my control?
4. How will worrying about it help me or hurt me?
5. What would I say to a friend who had this worry? Be your own best friend :o)

Productive and solvable worries are

the ones you can take action on right away. For example, worried about your exams; you could get started on organizing your notes and reviewing them or make a study plan or strategy. You'll be amazed how much better you'll feel once you start to tackle the challenge. Most of the time procrastination and worry is the main cause of anxiety. Don't procrastinate.....Just Do It!

Learning to embrace your feelings rather than worrying about them can allow you to move on. When you worry about unsolvable worries you begin worrying about your feelings, "What's wrong with me? I shouldn't feel this way!" and so on.

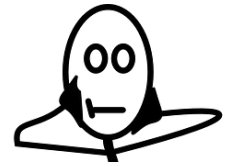
To deal with unsolvable worries you need to be comfortable accepting uncertainty. No matter how much you worry it will not change the outcome of a situation you do not control and can not do anything about. Is it really possible to be certain about everything in life?

:o) :o(:o/

Adapted from: http://www.helpguide.org/mental/anxiety_self_help.htm



Feeling anxious? What can you do?



There is no magic potion to relieve anxiety and telling yourself to stop worrying doesn't work. After you go through the suggestions on the previous page you could try:



- Meeting with friends who will be supportive and positive.
- Taking a break! Go see a funny movie or read a comic, go for a walk, play with your pet cat, dog, rat, what ever.
- Meditating can help relax you. Meditation is like a vacation for your over active mind. There are some amazing apps designed to help you relax and to meditate. Check them out and see if they work for you.
- Exercising is a great way to motivate yourself and to alleviate frustration and anxiety. Exercise can be a stress buster.
- Keeping a worry diary. Jot down your worries and what triggered them. Over time you'll start to see a pattern and you will be able to address the pattern and make some positive changes for yourself.

Distortions that add to anxiety, worry and stress

Rather than viewing your thoughts as facts, take the scientific approach and treat them as testable hypotheses. Flex your scientific muscles! As you examine each worry and fear you will develop a more balanced perspective.

Avoid the following popular distorted beliefs:

- All-or-nothing thinking – “If I fall short of perfection, I’m a total failure.” Nothing is black and white.
- Overgeneralization – “I didn’t get hired for the job. I’ll never get a job”. One negative experience will not hold true forever!
- The negative filter – recognizing one thing went wrong rather than every-

- Diminishing the positive – “I did well on ___but that was just luck”.
- Jumping to conclusions – “I just know something terrible is going to happen”. Making negative interpretations without evidence.
- Catastrophizing – “The lecturer said students struggled on the test. We’re all going to fail!!!”.
- Emotional reasoning – “I feel frightened, must mean I’m in physical danger.” believing the way you feel reflects reality.
- ‘Should’ and ‘Should-nots’ – beating yourself up if you break your personal strict rules.
- Labelling – “I’m a failure; idiot; loser”. Labelling yourself based on mistakes or

- perceived shortcomings.
 - Personalization – “It’s my fault” assuming responsibility for things that are outside your control.
- As you work through your assessment of your thoughts be kind to yourself. This too shall pass.



Adapted from: http://www.helpguide.org/mental/anxiety_self_help.htm

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.”

— Norman V. Peale (clergyman)

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