Let's Beat Anxiety

Halliford School
SHEPPERTON

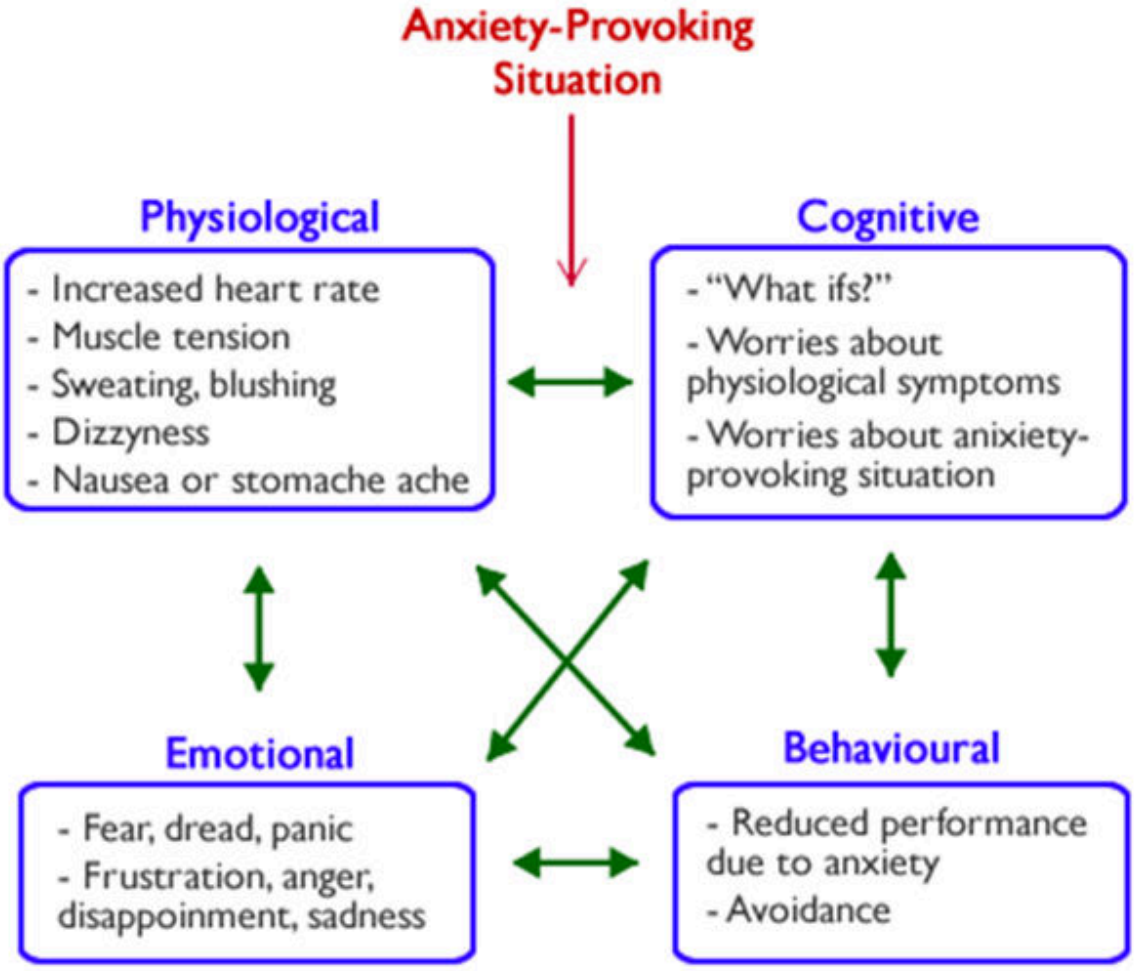


What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is often linked to thoughts, feelings or fears about something that is happening or might happen in the future. Feeling anxious is normal at times, especially when we go through stressful events. However, anxiety can become problematic if we have anxious feelings that:

- Last for a period of time
- Are not in keeping with the situation
- Cause us to start avoiding situations and events
- Cause us to have panic attacks or make us feel that we are not in control
- Prevent us from leading a normal life

Vicious Cycle of Anxiety



Symptoms of Anxiety

Physiological
Some symptoms can include:

- Increased heartbeat
- Feeling faint
- Body temperature change
- Shaking
- Shortness of breath
- Feelings of nausea
- Chest pains
- Feeling dazed or confused

Cognitive
Thoughts that often occur relate to our overestimating or exaggerating the actual threat and underestimating or minimising our ability to cope:

- I'm in danger right now
- What if the worst possible scenario is going to happen?
- What if I won't be able to cope with it?

Behavioural
These thoughts can then act like a cog, leading on to some of the following behaviours:

- Avoiding people or places
- Not going out
- Going to certain places at certain times, e.g. shopping at smaller shops, at less busy times
- Only going out with someone else
- Leaving social situations early

Emotional
Some common emotional symptoms of anxiety are:

- Apprehension, distress, dread, nervousness, feeling overwhelmed, panic, uneasiness, worry, fear or terror, jumpiness or edginess.
- Irritability
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep difficulties

What Can I Do To Help Myself When I Feel Anxious?

- Pause, take a breath, don't react automatically.
- Ask yourself: What am I reacting to?
- What is it that I think is going to happen here?
- What's the worst (and best) that could happen?
- What's most likely to happen?
- Am I getting things out of proportion?
- How important is this really?
- How important will it be in 6 months time?
- Am I overestimating the danger?
- Am I underestimating my ability to cope?
- Am I mind-reading what others might be thinking?
- Am I believing I can predict the future?
- Is there another way of looking at this?
- Is this fact or opinion?
- What advice would I give someone else in this situation?
- Am I putting more pressure on myself?
- Just because I feel bad, doesn't mean things really are bad.
- What do I want or need from this person or situation?
- What do they want or need from me?
- Is there a compromise?
- What would be the consequences of responding the way I usually do?
- Is there another way of dealing with this?
- What would be the most helpful and effective action to take for me, for the situation, for others?
- Visualise yourself coping in the situation you feel anxious about.
- See the situation to a successful completion.
- How to deal with the physical sensations of anxiety? Counteract the body's adrenaline response - it's readiness for action, by using that energy healthily.
- Practice calming or mindful breathing - this one act alone will help reduce the physical sensations, emotions and intensity of thoughts.
- Visualisation: Breathe in blue (for calm), breathe out red (for stress)
- Exercise - Go for a walk, run or cycle, or do some gardening or housework.

Most important of all, ask for help.

Your teachers, family and friends are all here for you.

Remember, you are not alone.





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Independent Senior Day School
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