

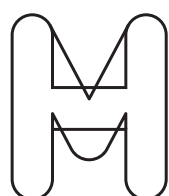
# A report about Anxiety



Easy Read summary



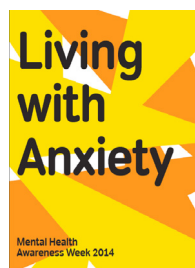
Mental Health  
Awareness Week 2014



mental  
health  
foundation



foundation for  
people with  
learning disabilities



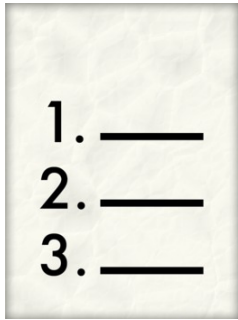
This is an Easy Read summary of the 'Living with Anxiety' report (2014).



This report was written by the Mental Health Foundation.



To see this report in full please visit our website:  
**[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)**



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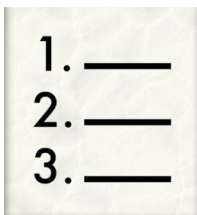
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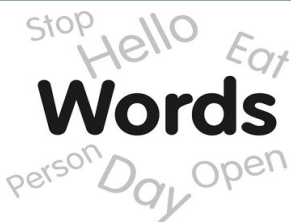
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# What this summary is about



This summary was written by the Mental Health Foundation for Mental Health Awareness week.



This year Mental Health Awareness week is about anxiety.



We hope that the report will get people talking about anxiety and what support we need to help with our anxious feelings.



Words in **CAPITAL LETTERS** and **ORANGE** are explained at the back of this summary,

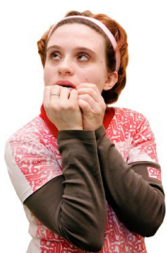


## What does 'anxiety' mean?

Anxiety is a feeling.  
It is when we feel worried and nervous.

People feel anxious when they are not sure about what's going to happen.

It can make us feel bad in our mind and bodies.





# What anxiety is and how it makes us feel

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Everyone has feelings of anxiety at some point in their life



But a lot of people still don't ask for help to deal with these feelings.



Feeling anxious can be helpful sometimes as it lets us know there may be danger.



Feeling anxious is a bit like feeling afraid but they are different.



When we feel afraid it is usually for a real reason – for example if a fire started when you were cooking it would make you feel afraid.



When we feel anxious it can sometimes be for no reason at all or about something that might happen.



For example worrying that we might be late for an important meeting.



Most people feel anxious for a while but can calm themselves down so it doesn't change their lives too much.



But for some people feeling anxious can take over their lives and stop them doing the things they want to do.



When people feel anxious they can sweat more, feel tense, feel pain, find it hard to breathe and feel dizzy.



Anxiety is part of many **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**.



1 in 6 people will feel anxious or depressed at some time in their lives.



People can have more than one **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE** at the same time, which can make it more difficult to know how to help them.



Sometimes the term 'Anxiety disorders' is used to explain lots of different **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**.



For example **PHOBIAS** and **OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDERS (OCD)**.



Anxiety can also cause physical health problems like high blood pressure.



Children and young people can also have problems with anxiety.





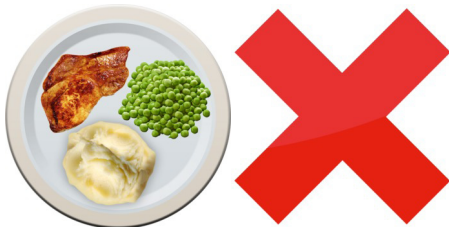
## An example of what it's like to feel anxious



**Esther is a journalist in her mid 20s**



Her parents got divorced and this made her feel really anxious.



Because of her anxiety she started controlling what she ate. This gave her an eating disorder. Thinking about what she ate made her feel more in control of her life.



She saw a **PSYCHOLOGIST**, who helped her understand what she was feeling



This helped Esther to feel better and more in control of her life and her anxiety.





## An example of what it's like to feel anxious



**Ian is a manager in his mid 30s**



Although he is a positive person, he has lived with anxiety for a long time.



Being anxious means that he gets a lot done, but he would like to feel calm and peaceful more often.



He can get anxious when he does new things for the first time or when he thinks about work.



He worries about what people will think of him if he does a bad job.



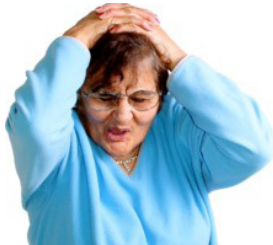
He's working with a counsellor, to try and change the way he thinks so that he can enjoy life more.



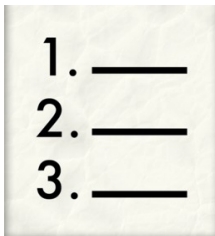
# What we did



We asked YouGov to do a survey of people to see if they were anxious.



They found that there are many things which make someone more likely to feel anxious.



**We found that:**



- Women, younger people, people from ethnic minority groups, and people without a job are all more likely to say that they feel anxious.

**18%**

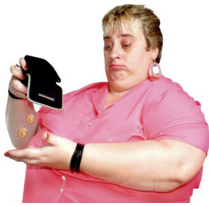


- 18% of people feel anxious either a lot of the time or all of the time.



- People may be anxious about things such as money, work, loved ones, growing old, and feeling alone.

45%



- 45% said that money issues make them feel anxious.



- People cope with anxiety in different ways, some of which may be bad for us like smoking or drinking too much.

19%



- 19% of people do not do anything to cope with their anxious feelings.



## An example of what it's like to feel anxious



**Living with anxiety: Jane is a volunteer in her early 50s**



Since she was a teenager Jane has felt anxious around people which caused her a lot of problems.



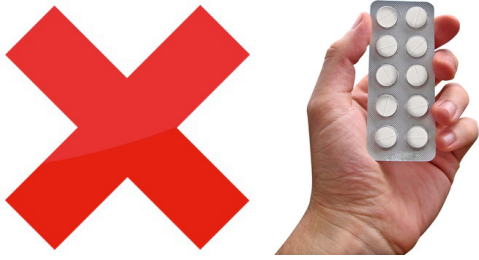
She started volunteering at a charity which did work around anxiety. They helped her feel better about herself.



She uses lots of different things to help her with her anxiety like talking to other people who have felt anxious, and using breathing to keep calm.



She now understands her anxiety better and doesn't feel ashamed of it anymore.



Anxiety is not an illness in our bodies like the flu, so cannot be cured just with medicines.



People who feel anxious can feel better by using lots of different things including **COUNSELLING**, relaxation, and positive thinking.



At the moment lots of people who feel anxious are not getting the right treatment, or are choosing not to have any.



**COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY** is the name of a type of counselling which helps people understand and control their anxious thoughts.



There are other types of therapy, some of which people can do by themselves like **MINDFULNESS**





Some people think that our anxiety can be caused by the bigger things happening in the world, for example worrying about wars or the financial crisis.



In 2010 the Government started a new survey to ask people how they were feeling.



They want to know whether we are feeling happier or less happy as a country than we used to.



There have been lots of good things happening to help people with anxious feelings. There is more understanding about anxiety now and treatments are better than they used to be.



But more help and support is still needed for people who feel anxious.

1. \_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_

# What we want to happen next

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1. \_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_

We want:



1. The training doctors get around anxiety to be looked at to see if it is good enough.



2. People should be asked how easy it was to see a **COUNSELLOR** or **PSYCHOLOGIST** through their doctor.



3. People who have had anxiety to be able to share what they have learnt and help other people (these are called peer mentors).





4. Research to be done to see why women are more likely to feel anxious and what can help them.



5. People who work in health services to help young people before their anxiety becomes a problem.



6. The Department of Work and Pensions to look at how people who are not working can be helped to stop them getting anxious.

# What these words mean



## Counselling/ Counselor

Counselling is where you talk about what is wrong. A counsellor is the person you talk to. They help you think about how you can feel better.



## Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is a type of counselling.

It looks at how you want to feel or behave and gives you ideas of how to do this.

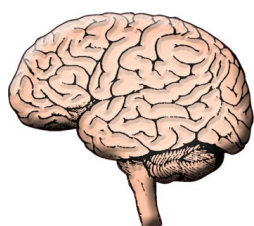
It doesn't talk about feelings as much as other types of counselling.



## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a way of feeling less stressed and anxious by focusing on what's happening now rather than worrying about the future.

It uses things like breathing to keep calm.



## Mental health/ mental health issues

Mental health or mental health issues are about how our minds are working.

Our minds are part of our brains, in our heads. It's the part where we think and feel things.

Our minds are really important to keep us healthy.

When this happens its called a mental health problem.



## Mentally healthy

In the same way our bodies can be physically unwell, our minds can become unwell too. Being mentally healthy is about thinking about how we are feeling and looking after our mental health.

If we are mentally healthy we will be feeling good and making good choices for ourselves.



## Psychologist

Psychologists are like counsellors. It's a job people train for.

They can help us to think about the things we do and how we can feel better.

They talk to us about what we are feeling.

This can be called 'talking therapy'.



## Phobias

A phobia is a very strong fear of a thing or place. It is something that you don't need to be afraid of.

A phobia can make people feel panic and they can change their life to avoid what they are afraid of.

**Example:** Being afraid of heights and not being able to walk across a bridge because you are scared of falling.



## Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

OCD is when people have lots of thoughts about a certain thing all the time.

They find it hard to stop these thoughts. They may feel like they need to do some things again and again try to feel better.

**Example:** Feeling like you have to wash your hands all the time because you are afraid of germs.



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**changing  
minds**