

Anxiety

MANAGE YOUR WORRIES ACTIVITY BOOK

**Worksheets to help you explore,
understand, and manage your
worries**





ANXIETY

MORE THAN JUST WORRYING



What is Anxiety ?

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, fear, or nervousness when thinking about unpleasant things. It involves a pattern of thinking, often centered around something that could happen in the future. This leaves you feeling frightened, nervous, or anxious. Some people refer to it as worries, anxiety, or stress. Everyone experiences worries, but if you are feeling worried more often or find it difficult to stop thinking about your worries, causing distress, you may be dealing with anxiety.

Anxiety can interfere with everyday life, as it causes intense nervousness about potential dangers in specific situations. This can lead to constant worry, fear, stress, and a sense of being overwhelmed.

Anxiety disorders include specific phobias, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder.

HAVING ANXIETY IS NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS

Anxiety is a real illness that affects how you think, how you feel, and how you behave.



Body

Stomachaches, cramps, constipation, fatigue, aches and pains, weakened immune system, weight changes.



Thoughts

Bias perception, unhelpful thinking, fear, extreme worrying, trouble concentrating, and thinking about future worries.
"What if?"



Behavior

Staying inside more often, losing interest in activities, withdrawing from people, feeling unable to go to work, or avoiding specific places.

As many as 1 in 4 people will develop anxiety in their lifetime.



"I didn't know what was happening at first. I constantly felt panicky and nervous, with my heart racing. I often felt frozen with fear. I was ashamed to talk to someone, afraid they wouldn't understand what I was going through."

**HAVING ANXIETY IS NOT A CHOICE,
AN OVERREACTION,
A CHARACTER FLAW, OR
BEING STUCK IN A RUT**

**IT'S NEVER TOO
LATE TO START TALKING**



THE CAUSE OF ANXIETY

Research indicates many possible causes of anxiety, including faulty mood regulation by the brain, genetics, personality type, and stressful life events.

It is believed that there is no single cause of anxiety, and sometimes multiple factors interact to bring on anxiety. Everyone's causes and triggers are different.

ANXIETY IS NOT CAUSED BY

Laziness

Weakness

The inability to 'suck it up'



THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental factors include any stressful life events or situations, such as death, trauma, natural disasters, getting sick, abuse, or even pollution.



BRAIN CHEMISTRY

Many people are unclear about their cause. They feel they don't have "a reason" to feel that way. Some people lack neurotransmitters in the brain, which could contribute to anxiety.



COMMON BEHAVIORAL TENDENCIES

Certain behavioral tendencies are more at risk of developing anxiety, such as perfectionists, those easily flustered, those who lack self-esteem, or those who want to control everything.



THOUGHTS

Negative thinking patterns can, over time, lead to anxiety. Experts have identified several cognitive distortion patterns that can cause anxiety.



ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR

Preferring to be alone, withdrawing, spending too much time on social media, or playing video games. Being inactive or neglecting self-care can all contribute to anxiety.



GENETICS

Some research suggests that someone with a first-degree relative diagnosed with anxiety could be three times more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety in their lifetime compared to the general population.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR ANXIETY

Anxiety has many possible causes. Use this worksheet to reflect on and explore the factors that may have contributed to your anxiety. You may have multiple factors in one category and none in others. There is no right or wrong answer.

THE ENVIRONMENT

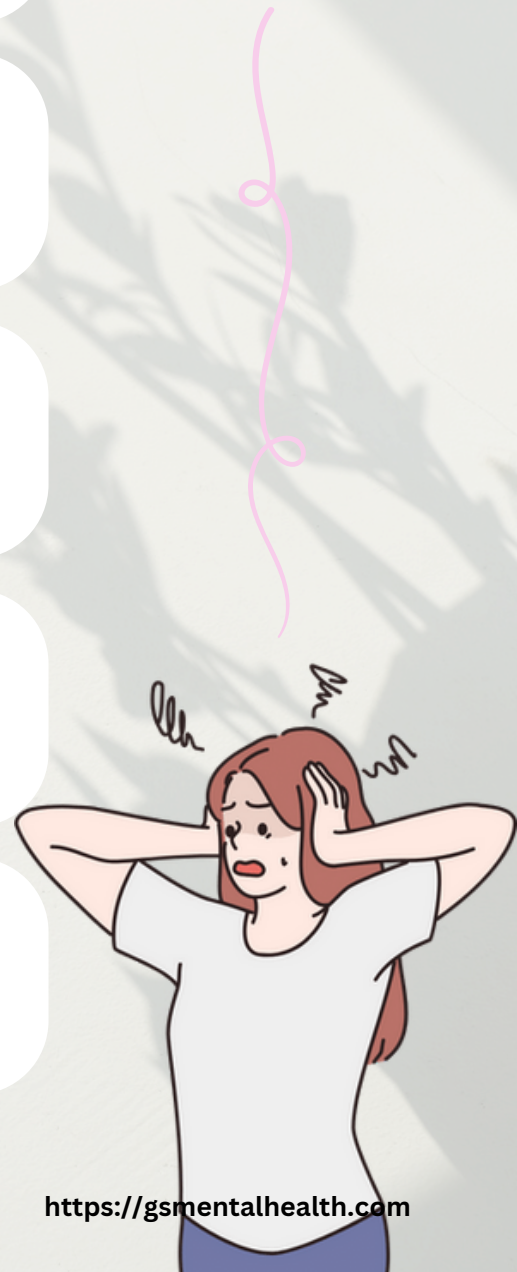
BRAIN CHEMISTRY

COMMON BEHAVIORAL TENDENCIES

THOUGHTS

ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR

GENETICS



Anxiety Bundle

WHAT YOU SEE



SCATTERED



NERVOUS



CRYING



ON EDGE



SPACED OUT



IRRITATED AND FIDGETY

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE



PANIC



RACING HEART



HOPELESS



WORRY



EMBARRASSED



GRIEF



NUMB

NO!



SHAME



GUILT

HEADACHES



RUN DOWN



CONCENTRATION DIFFICULTIES

INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS



THE ANXIETY ICEBERG

The iceberg theory is a model that shows how anxiety is expressed outwardly, but many other emotions remain hidden beneath the surface. Like an iceberg, you can't see the full extent of what is below.

The behavior you observe is **"the tip of the iceberg"** What lies beneath are the emotional, social, and other factors that are not visible but drive that behavior.

WHAT YOU SEE WHAT YOU DON'T SEE

FILL IN YOUR OWN ICEBERG

- Sleepiness
- Fatigued
- Low energy
- Lack of concentration
- Self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts
- Hopeless
- Loneliness
- Shame
- Guilt
- Memory problems
- Tremors
- Low appetite
- Big appetite
- Withdrawal
- Addiction
- Crying
- Giving up
- Poor hygiene
- Low confidence
- Anxiety
- Numb
- Grief
- Anger
- Insomnia

SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

CHECKLIST



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> MUSCLE PAINS | <input type="checkbox"/> STOMACH PAINS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NAUSEOUS | <input type="checkbox"/> SICK AND RUN DOWN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HEADACHES | <input type="checkbox"/> ALWAYS GETTING SICK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BACKACHES | <input type="checkbox"/> WEIGHT LOSS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE | <input type="checkbox"/> CHEST PAIN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BLOATING | |

THOUGHTS

HIGHLIGHT ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

"WHAT IF I CAN'T DO IT?"

"I'M GOING TO DIE OF A HEART ATTACK."

"PEOPLE ARE GOING TO LAUGH AT ME IF I MESS UP DURING THE PRESENTATION."

"I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY IF I CAN'T STOP FEELING SO ANXIOUS."

"THINGS ARE NOT GOING TO WORK OUT."

BEHAVIOR

TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- WITHDRAWAL
- BAD HYGIENE
- SLEEP DISTURBANCES
- CHANGES IN PERSONAL APPEARANCE
- NOT CALLING OR TEXTING PEOPLE BACK
- NOT DOING THINGS THAT YOU ONCE ENJOYED
- LACK OF EXERCISE
- MOVING MORE SLOWLY

FEELINGS

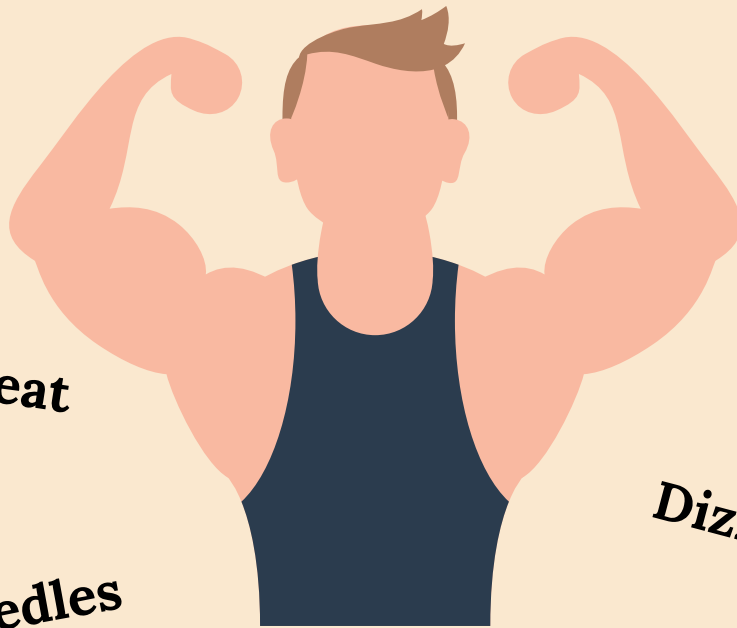
TICK ANY THAT YOU RELATE TO

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> OVERWHELMED | <input type="checkbox"/> IRRITABLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HOPELESS | <input type="checkbox"/> SADNESS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMPTY | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NUMB | <input type="checkbox"/> GRIEF |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRUSTRATED | <input type="checkbox"/> WORRY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANGRY | |

ANXIETY AND MY BODY

Our brains are designed to respond to perceived threats, and we can't always tell the difference between real physical danger (like a tiger) or a threat caused by worry or fear. The release of these chemicals is part of the sympathetic nervous system, leading to involuntary physical responses.

Everyone's body reacts to anxiety in different ways, but some common physical symptoms are listed below.



Sweating

Wide eyes

Fast heartbeat

Trembling

Pins and needles

Dizziness

Butterflies in the stomach

Nausea

Tense muscles

Weak knees

Fast breathing

Frequent urination

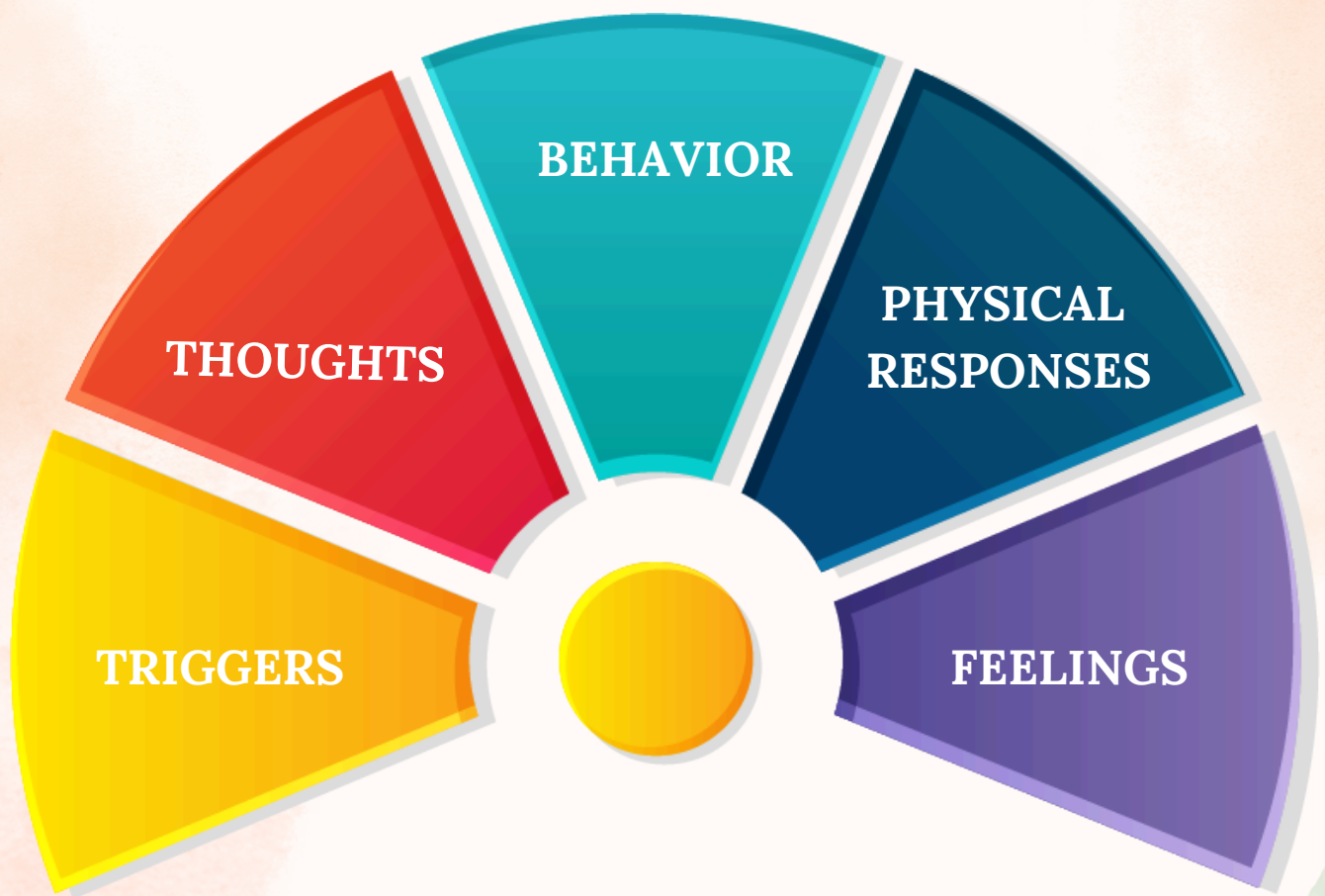
Goosebumps

Headache

THE CYCLE OF ANXIETY

Individuals living with anxiety often feel constantly drained of energy, motivation, and hope, which can severely impact their lives, daily routines, and behavior. These changes, unfortunately, worsen their anxiety and prevent them from improving.

Take a look at the anxiety cycle below.



TRIGGERS



A trigger is any event or situation that leads to stress or hardship. These can be short-term or long-term, and they vary from person to person.

For example:

Breakups, death, work/school, or hormones are common triggers.

THOUGHTS



Triggers often lead to negative thinking and thoughts, which may become irrational or exaggerated.

For example:

"I always mess everything up," "Nobody likes me," or "I'm hopeless."

BEHAVIOR



Our responses to thoughts, feelings, and symptoms can fuel anxiety, intensify triggers, or introduce new stressors.

For example:

Withdrawal, addiction, and poor hygiene.

PHYSICAL RESPONSES



Anxiety affects more than just worrying thoughts. The body reacts to triggers and negative feelings with physical symptoms.

For example:

Muscle pains, headaches, backaches, and nausea are common physical responses.

FEELINGS



How we think influences our thoughts and feelings, and the reverse is also true. How we feel impacts how we think.

For example:

"I feel frightened"; therefore, I believe there must be something to fear.

REVERSING THE CYCLE OF ANXIETY

Individuals suffering from anxiety can often get trapped in a downward spiral without realizing they have the ability to change and reverse the cycle of anxiety. Reversing this cycle starts by adopting healthy coping mechanisms, such as positive self-talk, exercising, socializing, and more.

HAPPIER FEELINGS



Positive emotions can counteract the physical effects of stress and help calm the nervous system.

For example:

Gratefulness, learning, kindness, and giving.

INCREASE ACTIVITY



Exercise and physical activities help reduce the symptoms and feelings of anxiety. Exercise can also improve your mood, leaving you feeling happier after engaging in it.

FEELING MORE HOPEFUL



Training your brain to think more positively is an effective way to combat the cycle of anxiety. Turning negative thoughts into neutral can help your brain think and feel less judgemental.

IMPROVED ANXIETY



Consistently practicing healthy coping skills will gradually improve your thoughts, feelings, and anxiety. You might not notice changes immediately, but over time, you will see positive differences within yourself.

GREATER ENERGY AND MOTIVATION



Since anxiety affects your energy and motivation, feeling happier within yourself will lead to increased energy levels. Use this boost to create better habits and changes in your life for long-term success.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

When we think of accomplishments, we often think of significant life moments. However, it's essential to celebrate all achievements, big or small, and incorporate this practice into daily life. Every accomplishment contributes to your success and deserves recognition.

THINGS I'M GOOD AT

COMPLIMENTS I HAVE RECEIVED

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT ME

CHALLENGES I HAVE OVERCOME

I'VE HELPED OTHERS BY

MY BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I'M A GOOD FRIEND BECAUSE

THINGS THAT MAKE ME UNIQUE



IDENTIFY YOUR PATTERN

Spot the triggers and change destructive thoughts.

SETTING/EVENT
TRIGGER

ACTION/RESPONSE

RESULT/
CONSEQUENCE

REFRAMING THOUGHTS

Our thoughts shape our behavior. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on positive thoughts. Shift negative thinking into more positive and productive thoughts.

Instead of...

Try...

Everyone is going to stare at me

People might look at me because they may like my outfit

What if I make a mistake

I won't know anyone at the party

I don't want to do this

Nobody at school likes me

I am a failure

I am going to come last

SAFETY PLAN

When I'm feeling



My body feels like



Warning signs that a crisis might be developing



Coping skills I can use



People I can call



Professional agencies I can call



Something or someone worth living for



ANXIETY COPING STATEMENTS



THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS

I AM SAFE IN MY BODY

I TAKE CARE OF MYSELF

ANXIETY IS NOT ALWAYS A SIGNAL THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG

MY BRAVERY IS STRONGER THAN MY FEAR

I NEED TO TRUST THE PROCESS. I AM OK

I DO NOT NEED TO SOLVE THIS FEELING

MY FEELINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS RATIONAL

IF I REMAIN CALM, I CAN OVERCOME THIS

I AM BRAVE

I CAN FEEL ANXIOUS AND STILL HANDLE THIS

THIS FEELING IS A FALSE ALARM. I AM SAFE

IS THIS THOUGHT IN OR OUT OF MY CONTROL?



ANXIETY IS A **NORMAL** HUMAN
EMOTION

FEELINGS TRACKER



This feelings tracker allows you to monitor how you feel each day. Reflect on the emotions you experience throughout the day and fill in the corresponding space. You may feel one or more emotions in a single day. There are three blank spaces available for you to add your own emotions.

HAPPY

SAD

WORRIED

PUTTING THOUGHTS ON TRIAL

THE THOUGHT

What exactly am I worrying about?

THE DEFENSE

Is there any factual evidence that supports my thought being true? These must be facts.

THE PROSECUTION

Is there any factual evidence that suggests my thought is not true? These must be facts.

THE JUDGE'S VERDICT

After reviewing all the evidence, can I conclude if my thought is likely to happen or not?

ANXIETY TRIGGERS

Situations or events that are stressful or unfamiliar can lead to fear, worry, or discomfort, commonly known as anxiety triggers. Additionally, specific circumstances or actions such as heights, lifts, spiders, social gatherings, and more, can trigger anxiety.

Each person has different triggers, so recognizing yours is essential.

WHEN THIS HAPPENS

THIS IS WHAT I THINK

THIS IS WHAT I FEEL

WHAT I CAN DO IN THIS EVENT
TO REDUCE MY DEPRESSION

ANXIETY TRIGGER CHECKLIST

Here is a list of common anxiety triggers. First, check off the ones that relate to you. Then, feel free to mention any others that may not be included.

- Being left alone**
- Reflecting on the past**
- Watching frightening shows**
- Visiting new places**
- School**
- Crowded areas**
- Doctor appointments**
- Speaking in public**
- Performing in front of an audience**
- Parents arguing**
- Getting into trouble**
- Homework**
- Loud sounds**
- Specific animals**



- **Watching the news**
- **Attending birthday parties**
- **Meeting new people**
- **Participating in sports**
- **Large, open spaces**
- **Taking a lift**
- **Feeling unwell**
- **Unclear plans for the day**
- **Exposure to violence**
- **The dark**
- **Sleeping alone**
- **Trying new foods**
- **Being excluded**
- **Unexpected events**



Anxiety Scale

MINIMAL

- Calm and relaxed feeling
- No physical symptoms are noticeable
- Focus and concentration are easy
- Able to participate in activities without distress

MILD

- Slight restlessness or mild discomfort
- Small increase in heart rate or mild stomach sensations
- Minor challenges with focus or concentration
- Occasional worry or feeling nervous

MODERATE

- Noticeable worry or nervousness
- Heart rate increase or palpitations
- Difficulty concentrating or staying focused
- Muscle tension or slight trembling
- Sometimes experiencing trouble with sleep

SEVERE

- Feeling very distressed, anxious, or tense
- Rapid heart rate or skipped beats
- Significant challenges focusing or concentrating
- Intense muscle tension or trembling
- Difficulty sleeping or staying asleep
- Struggles with making decisions or acting

DEBILITATING

- Intense panic or fear
- Fast, pounding heart rate or irregular beats
- Severe difficulty concentrating or focusing
- Frequent panic attacks or strong sense of dread
- Insomnia or major sleep issues
- Avoidance behaviors or extreme distress in certain situations



Coping Strategies

Steps I can take to reduce anxiety



1

MINIMAL

2

MILD

3

MODERATE

4

SEVERE

5

DEBILITATING





ANXIETY ACTION PLAN

BEHAVIOR

Increase

Reduce/Stop

How will this impact my behavior?

THOUGHTS

Increase

Reduce/Stop

How will this impact my behavior?

FEELINGS/EMOTIONS

Increase

Reduce/Stop

How will this impact my behavior?

"Being upset over something you cannot control is like sitting in a rocking chair—it keeps you busy, but it doesn't take you anywhere."

Things I Cannot Control

Releasing control of these things

Other people's thoughts

The past

Other people's beliefs

Weather

Death

My age

Other people's opinions

Sports match outcomes

Predictions of the future

Future events

How others respond to my boundaries

What others post online

Actions of others

Things I Can Control

Directing focus to these things

My boundaries

What I say about others

My actions

My beliefs and values

The people I choose to spend time with

My honesty

My goals

How I spend my free time

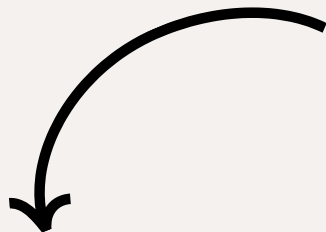
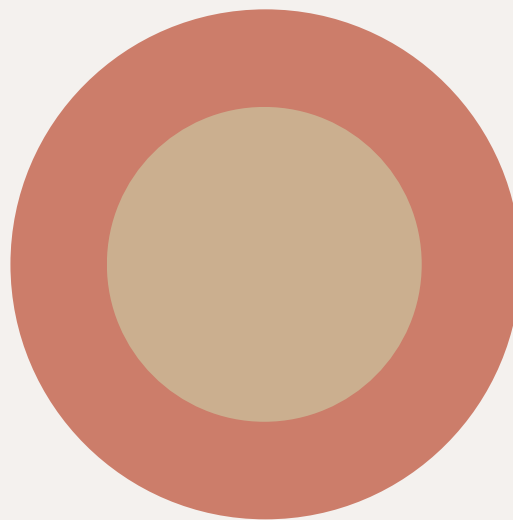
My own thoughts

CIRCLE OF CONCERN

CIRCLE OF CONTROL

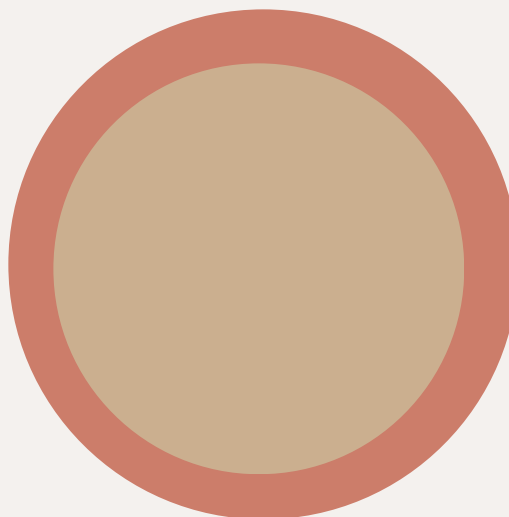
How reactive people act

Reactive individuals have a large circle of concern and a small circle of control. They spend a lot of time and energy reacting to issues they cannot control, leading to wasted effort.



CIRCLE OF CONCERN

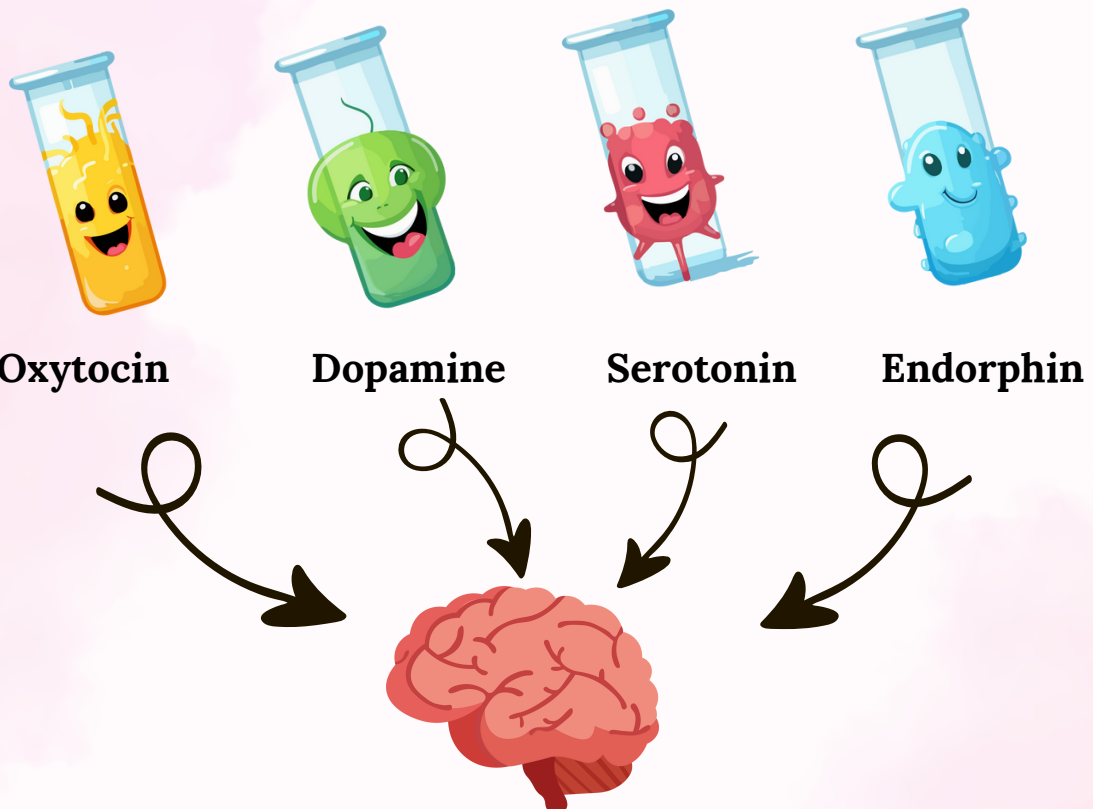
CIRCLE OF CONTROL



How proactive people act

Proactive individuals have a small circle of concern and a large circle of control. They focus their time and energy on issues they can control, ensuring their efforts are directed toward areas within their influence.

HELPING YOUR ANXIETY WITH THE 'HAPPY CHEMICALS'



What are they?

Various glands in your body produce chemicals that move through the bloodstream, acting as messengers and contributing to mood regulation. Some of these chemicals help to create positive emotions, such as happiness, joy, and pleasure.

There are four main chemicals that influence these positive emotions: dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins. These are often referred to as 'The Happy Chemicals.'



ACCESSING THE 'LOVE HORMONE'

OXYTOCIN : The Love Hormone

Oxytocin is the happiness chemical that helps us feel connected to others. It is released through human-to-human contact, like hugging or kissing. Trust also triggers the release of oxytocin, as social trust supports survival and makes us feel good.

Several activities can help release oxytocin, such as:

- Yoga
- Listening to music
- Getting or giving a massage
- Spending time with friends
- Engaging in conversations

Now, think of three ways to release oxytocin. Be specific about how, where, when, and with whom you will do it.

ACCESSING THE 'REWARD CHEMICAL'

DOPAMINE : The Reward Chemical

Dopamine is often referred to as the reward or pleasure chemical. It is released during pleasurable activities, such as exercise or eating, and rewards us with a sense of happiness. Dopamine is also released when we anticipate a reward, giving us that exciting feeling before receiving it.

This chemical influences several brain functions, including memory, learning, behavior, and movement.

Here are some ways to help release dopamine:

- Completing tasks
- Eating your favorite food
- Practicing self-care
- Celebrating small achievements
- Setting goals and working toward them

Now, write down three specific ways you can help release dopamine. Be clear about how, where, when, and with whom you will do it.

ACCESSING THE 'PAIN KILLER'

ENDORPHIN : The Pain Killer

Endorphins are known as natural pain relievers and mood enhancers. They are released during activities such as laughter, exercise, listening to music, and eating chocolate. Endorphins work by acting directly on the brain's opioid receptors, reducing pain.

When released, they lead to an energized, excited feeling.

In moments of physical pain, endorphins are released to provide a brief surge of excitement, a survival mechanism. Both laughing and crying can trigger small bursts of endorphins.

Here are some ways to release endorphins:

- Laughing out loud
- Watching a funny movie
- Eating dark chocolate
- Using essential oils
- Exercising

Write down three ways in which you can help release endorphins. Be specific about how, where, when, and with whom you will do it.

ACCESSING THE 'MOOD STABILIZER'

SEROTONIN - THE MOOD STABILIZER

Serotonin is a crucial hormone linked to emotions and mood. It's connected to feelings of satisfaction and optimism and also impacts physical health. Serotonin flows through the brain when we feel significant, confident, and proud of our achievements and work.

There are several ways to help release serotonin, such as:

- Meditating
- Swimming
- Walking in nature
- Spending time in the sun
- Practicing mindfulness

Write down 3 ways in which you could help release serotonin. Be specific about how, where, when, and with whom you will do it.

REFLECTION

