

You can manage or even overcome anxiety.

115 Ways to Reduce Anxiety

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115 Ways to Reduce Anxiety

*Strategies for Dealing with
an Anxiety Disorder*

By Mike Marcoe

MIKE MARCOE

The Power of Genuine Emotions

Do you find it difficult to feel or express your own emotions, especially the negative ones? If so, you have company, because this trait is common in people with anxiety. In many of them, the anxiety substitutes for the emotions. When these people learn how to let themselves feel their emotions, their anxiety subsides.

Why do people not let themselves feel their emotions?

- Emotions can make some people feel that they are not in control of themselves.
- They may fear disapproval from others.
- Because they can be messy, emotions may make a person feel less than perfect.
- Emotions are clues to what we really believe about ourselves, other people, and life in general.

Many of the emotionally repressed are not even aware of it. They may see themselves as “in control,” “neutral,” “cool,” “collected,” “stress-free,” or some other description that actually masks a kind of emotional flatness. These people often resist therapy because they see nothing

wrong with themselves. It is only when they suffer a crisis involving a painful burst of emotions that they start to realize they are emotionally repressed.

45) *Examine how insistent you are that you are “cool,” “neutral,” or “in control.”*

Two tips for learning to feel emotions:

46) *Identify any strong physical symptoms that occur when you are having negative thoughts. They may be a clue that what you are truly feeling is not being expressed or felt.*

47) *Notice the way people react to you. Their reactions can pinpoint what you are feeling.*

Once you can identify an emotion, you can better express it.

<p style="text-align: center;">Note</p> <p>As a general rule, anxiety is incompatible with strong, healthy emotions. They cannot exist together.</p>

48) *Start expressing emotions with people you are comfortable with.*

49) *You may also want to consult a therapist who specializes in emotional therapy.*

Section 3



Physical Approaches

Learn a Martial Art

The ability to defend oneself breeds a kind of mental poise that others notice. But martial arts go beyond that. They help you cope with neuroses like anxiety. Therefore:

50) Learn a martial art.

Martial arts, more so than regular exercise, work by generating power from one's own body. They do this by combining proper posture, breathing (both of which are confidence-instillers), and alignment of body parts. The result is a force greater than the sum of its parts; this is the famous "chi" energy that kung fu and tai chi practitioners cultivate. Through years of practice, a person learns to develop this power and use it to overcome attackers. He or she takes this power and controls it, using it for defense purposes.

Martial arts can also instill in you an internal locus of control, meaning an internally felt ability to control your life.

When a person learns to develop, access, and use power from within, anxiety naturally lessens. The effects can even be felt during the very first class.

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Some people find that their anxieties (or various other issues) surface while they are sparring with opponents. This is normal. It just means that anxieties are coming to the surface of your mind, where they can be faced and dealt with. Many martial arts teachers are well aware of this phenomenon and can help.

When used correctly, the martial arts inspire *less* willingness to use violence. The confidence that is gained fuels assertiveness and an ability to stand up for oneself, and fighting becomes truly a last resort.

Tip

Attend a variety of martial arts schools at first. Many will offer a free introductory lesson. Also, watch educational videos on various self-defense methods and martial arts. Then settle on the art that works best with your body and about which you are the most enthusiastic. This will be the one that helps you the most.

Do Repetitive Activities

What do people do when they are stuck on a problem, or are so beset by worries that they can't think straight? They go for a walk!

Why? Because walking is repetitive. Repetition has a way of calming the nerves. Children know this instinctively. One of the ways that shamans and other practitioners of ancient religions enter trances is to repeat certain activities (sometimes to the point of boredom): widely spaced drumbeats are among the most common methods. When practiced regularly, repetition can also reduce generalized anxiety. People who pray regularly, or who knit regularly, or who walk regularly, know how their minds are freed from unnecessary worry when they do these tasks. With that in mind:

51) Make room for repetitive activities in your life.

What can they do for you?

- They train your mind to not expect results right away.
- They help you experience your own imperfections in a safe manner.
- They calm you down physically.

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- They put you into a light meditative state, which releases your creative thinking.
- They free your ability to brainstorm.
- They remove your inner "critic" and thus free you from the constraints you may typically put on yourself.

The last three points above are partly why so many artists, writers, and actors work as waiters and waitresses; aside from the good money, the patterned work that they do is conducive to the creative mindset.

Here are some repetitive activities to do:

52) Walk every day, usually on the same route.

53) Bike or walk to and from work every day.

54) Knit or sew, or do some other artistic activity, even if it's something easy, like paint by number.

55) Do some chore, such as dishes, on a regular basis.

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