



# Anxiety and Negative Thinking

## “In a Nutshell”

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Anxiety is a major source of loss of drive and enthusiasm. These symptoms of being low send negative messages through the body that in turn causes unpleasant sensations.

Messages such as “*I am bound to let her down*” or “*this is not going to work*” affect your ability to respond in a positive way.

Physical and emotional responses to anxiety can be extremely uncomfortable, including racing heartbeat, sweating, dry mouth etc. Talking to a partner or friend about what is making you anxious can help to get the cause of the anxiety and allow you to focus on alleviating the symptoms.

### **Anxiety is often the result of persistent and repeated negative thoughts.**

How do you know if your thoughts are negative or positive? Think about your recent physical and emotional responsiveness? Looking at your thought patterns in general is necessary for you to be able to move forward.

Do you always talk to yourself in terms of I “always” feel that “everything” goes wrong and “nothing” ever goes right?

Occasionally, feeling negative is justified some things do go wrong, and life can be hard. However, you can usually talk yourself out of a negative situation if your outlook is generally more optimistic.

Sometimes you can fall into the believing that it’s always someone else fault when things do not go the way to want them to, but this is not looking at your own behaviour. You cannot change others behaviour, only your own.

### **Identifying and changing negative thought patterns.**

It may take several weeks for you to understand your “negative thought patterns”.

Every time you are aware of a negative feeling, make a negative statement or are thinking a negative thought - write it down!

It may help to slow your movements down; this gives you time to note your responses to certain situations in order to become aware of your negative thoughts.

Once you have several thoughts noted down have a look at them, are they good for you? i.e. Do they serve your best purpose? Are they positive response? Did I feel good?

In looking at your thoughts you need to assess them in a positive response, this is called “re framing” to make your thought work for you in a good way.

Having a better awareness of your negative thoughts/feelings is the first step to being able to control the responses you give yourself. For many people you will have to become aware of how you are thinking on a conscious level for a good period of time, until it become a new habit. Once you start to see the new results, new feelings, new behaviours the new YOU it will be easier to spot any negative thoughts that do not serve in your best interest.

In time you will be able to look at your response and decide if your negative response is the best response for you. You then have time to change the response to the one that works best or better for you.



In time you will be able to identify and change negative thoughts, feeling and statements about yourself, don't forget to tell yourself "well done".

### **Relaxation**

Another way of being able to help yourself reduce your anxiety and negative thinking is to be able to relax perhaps through Meditation, Yoga, Relaxation exercises. This can take time; you can start to try to relax starting from 3 to 10 minutes each day.

### **Sleep**

Not having enough sleep is a real problem, generally either you can get to sleep but wake up after a couple of hours or you cannot get to sleep at all and lie in bed with your mind going around like a washing machine. Sleeplessness can become a habit! Try not to worry about not sleeping you can change your sleep just like you can change the way you think. Being able to go to bed relaxed will help.

### **Stress**

Stress comes in many forms having too little work or having too much work. Too much stress can mean that work becomes your life, when you are looking for a solution to stress your need to identify which feeling or emotion you are experiencing, stress can be attributed to many different things, finding out the source of your stress can help you cope better.

The following are physical, mental and behaviour symptoms of stress, how far you are from your normal way of being is what we are looking for, this indicated how stressed you are, you are looking to get back to your normal. *There are many more symptoms to the lists but also remember, you do not have to have all of the symptoms at once.*

#### **Physical reactions**

- Aching muscles
- Headaches and backaches
- Dry mouth
- Chest pains
- Sick feeling
- Restlessness

#### **Behavioural symptoms**

- Over or under eating
- Over or under sleeping
- Increase in smoking
- Drinking more alcohol
- Becoming withdrawn
- Over working

#### **Mental symptoms**

- Lack of concentration
- Unable make decisions
- Loss of confidence
- Always being tired
- Lack of clarity
- Lack of thought

#### **Emotional symptoms**

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Panic attacks
- Crying
- Anger