

Counselling Services

ANXIETY

Anxiety is a broad term that covers a range of symptoms and disorders. The common element is generally fear or worry. It is quite common and reasonable to experience some degree of anxiety at times (eg if you are speaking before a large group of people or a vicious dog is running towards you), but sometimes people feel *so* anxious that it affects their performance in various situations. Some people even feel fearful in situations that are not inherently dangerous (eg. going shopping or talking to a colleague). This can cause them to panic and escape from those situations, or even avoid them in the first place.

Symptoms:

Symptoms vary considerably but may include one or more of the following:

- Fast shallow breathing
- Racing heart/palpitations
- Shaking
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea
- Feeling hot and sweaty OR cold and clammy
- Dizziness
- Inability to concentrate.

What Can Help:

- Take slow deep breathes, concentrating on the lower part of your chest (abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing)
- Try to relax your whole body
- Check for tight spots in your body and relax them too
- Imagine a calm and pleasant scene
- Talk to yourself in a calming, coping way.

Other Sources of Help and Information:

- Community Mental Health Services
- "Living with it: A survivor's guide to Panic Attacks" by Bev Aisbett (1993)
- www.panicattacks.com.au
- www.anxietynetwork.com.au
- www.socialanxiety.com.au

QUT Counselling Services offers professional assistance with this and other issues

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