

## What Is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a normal emotion people feel in response to life stressors—taking a test, making a presentation, dealing with a challenging issue. This normal emotion, however, turns into a disorder when it begins to interfere with your daily routine.

For some, anxiety can create fear and worry that is constant and overwhelming. So intense and crippling, this type of anxiety can sometimes lead to panic attacks, obsessive thoughts, flashbacks of traumatic events, nightmares, or other frightening physical symptoms. Anxiety disorders are varied; they can include specific phobias, social phobia, panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Many misunderstand anxiety disorders, assuming people can overcome the symptoms by sheer willpower. Unfortunately, a disabling anxiety disorder cannot be willed away, but there are many helpful resources and effective treatments available.

### WARNING SIGNS

- Excessive anxiety and apprehension about a range of events or activities
- Anxiety or worry that is usually associated with symptoms such as restlessness, fatigue, poor concentration, irritability, muscle tension, and sleep disturbance
- Anxiety that is difficult to control and severe enough to interfere with work or relationships
- Unexpected and recurring panic attacks that typically last 10 minutes or less and involve intense fear or discomfort with at least four of the following symptoms: pounding heart, sweating, shaking, shortness of breath, feeling of choking, chest pain, nausea, dizziness, feelings of unreality or being detached from oneself, fear of losing control/going crazy, fear of dying, chills, or hot flashes
- Recurrent thoughts or behaviors that feel uncontrollable

## Additional Resources

### Books:

*The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook*  
by Edmund Bourne

*Beyond the Relaxation Response*  
by Herbert Benson

*Don't Panic: Taking Control of Anxiety Attacks*  
by R. Reid Wilson

*Healing Fear: New Approaches to Overcoming Anxiety*  
by Edmund Bourne

## Related Scriptures

**Resting in God's peace and love**  
Proverbs 1:33 & 19:23  
Matthew 11:28-30  
Philippians 4:6-7

**Trusting God**  
Proverbs 29:25

**Being Still**  
Psalm 46:10

**Giving God Cares/Anxieties**  
Matthew 6:25-34  
1 Peter 5:7

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# Anxiety



## A Quick Reference Guide

Provided by the  
Office of Student Life

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## Taking Care of Yourself

1. **Find someone with whom you can discuss your anxieties.** All of us do better when we have a caring friend with whom we can share our troubles in conversation and prayer. In fact, the Bible instructs us to “bear each other’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2). The staff in Counseling Services, Student Life, Campus Ministries, and Residence Life are available to listen and encourage you.
2. **Try to identify culprits in your environment.** Make a list of situations that trigger anxiety. There may be conditions or situations in your daily life that you can easily change. Also, if a certain person causes you to feel uneasy or insecure, consider sharing how you feel with him or her. Often people are unaware that their actions or words are causing others concern and pain.
3. **Take note of your activities.** For example, are you being pressured into volunteering for tasks that cause you anxiety? If so, begin to say “no” to those activities. Simplifying your lifestyle can help reduce stress and anxiety. Making some adjustments in your schedule (e.g., taking a lighter course load or cutting back on co-curricular involvement) can open up time for renewal and restoration.
4. **Look inside.** Anxiety often stems from long-standing inner conflicts, memories, habits, and concerns. Sometimes talking to a caring friend about these things is enough to gain a better understanding of your feelings and perspective, but often a trained professional counselor is more appropriate to help uncover hidden sources of anxiety and ways to overcome the sources (see On- and Off-Campus Support).
5. **Engage in physical exercise.** Regular exercise can dissipate anxiety, offering physical, emotional, and psychological benefits.
6. **Make time for God.** God’s Word may not supernaturally make your anxiety disappear, but it can penetrate your life and bring unbelievable comfort if you read a portion of it each day.



## What if These Suggestions Don't Work?

The Office of Student Life (ext. 6300) and/or Counseling Services (ext. 8540) can help you get in touch with specialized help on or off campus.

40 million people (18 and older) are affected by some form of anxiety—that’s 18% of the American population. Of those people, only 1/3 will seek help, even though most anxiety disorders are highly treatable.

—Anxiety and  
Depression Association  
of America

Individual counseling is available on campus in addition to support offered by staff in Campus Ministries, Student Life, and Residence Life.

If you need immediate assistance, please call the Office of Security and Safety at ext. 6055 (available 24 hours).

## On- and Off-Campus Support

### On Campus

Office of Student Life: available to talk and pray with you as well as suggest options for further care; stop by or call for an appointment (BC252; ext. 6300)

Counseling Services: offers free support to students suffering with anxiety (Townhouse H1; ext. 8540)

Office of Campus Ministries: provides spiritual support and mentoring (HC325; ext. 6372)

Health Services: provides medical assistance and referrals for information and care (Townhouse H1; ext. 6215)

### Off Campus

Anxiety Disorders Association of America  
301.231.9350; [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)

Arden Woods Psychological Services  
(New Brighton): 651.482.9361

Midwest Center for Trauma and Emotional Healing  
(Minnetonka): 952.934.2555

Minnesota Renewal Center  
(Arden Hills): 651.486.4828

