Useful information for those who experience anxiety

I HAVE ANXIETY NOW WHAT?

ANXIETY
Anxiety is an unpleasant future-oriented emotional state. It usually arises as a response to new, strange, or dangerous situations that translates into a feeling of insecurity or fear.

Considered a protective and adaptive response present in all human beings, anxiety is felt by all of us at certain times in life without necessarily being pathological.

TYPICAL SIGNS OF ANXIETY
Symptoms of anxiety may include the following:
- fear
- restlessness
- dryness of mouth
- increased heart rate
- sweating
- tightness in the chest
- dizziness
- feeling of imminent danger, failure, sudden death, the loss of self-control, mental destabilization

The greater the number of symptoms, the greater the intensity of anxiety.

IDENTIFY THE SERIOUSNESS OF ANXIETY
There can be different degrees of intensity:

1. Mild
   - A slight sensation of fear and unease
   - Light tremor in the voice

2. Moderate
   - Difficulty speaking
   - Excessive sweating on body and palms of hands
   - Difficulty remaining still

3. Severe
   - A sense of imminent danger or death
   - Difficulty staying focused
   - Numbing of the senses
   - Panic attack

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Useful contacts:
Police | www.psp.pt
Health services | 24h Health Help line (808 24 24 24) | www.saude24.pt
Polytechnic of Leiria | www.ipleiria.pt

“When the blood begins to boil, it is foolish to turn off the heart.”
Nelson Mandela

www.sape.ipleiria.pt
9 TIPS FOR COPING WITH ANXIETY:

1. Talk to someone. The secret may be to tell someone we trust what is going on.
2. In a notebook, write the ideas that fill your mind.
3. Count to 20 quietly.
4. Know how to listen. Sometimes we get advice for dealing with anxiety that we do not accept or try to avoid, but which may be correct.
5. Do something different; try alternative solutions.
6. Make an appointment with a psychologist.
7. Try a relaxation technique.
8. Deal with the problem: the faster you deal with fear, the faster your anxiety decreases.
9. If your experience with anxiety is very intense, seek help at a hospital or an emergency service.

ANXIETY’S USEFULNESS

Emotions are important to our survival, and one of these emotions is anxiety. Anxiety alerts us to dangers and compels us to be alert.

When we are afraid of an exam, we study. When we are afraid of a car accident, we slow down.

When we are afraid of losing someone, we treat that person well.

DID YOU KNOW...

It’s normal to feel anxiety—it’s quite useful, because it makes us do something. Essentially, it’s part of us. We should accept anxiety and think about what we must do to cope with a problem.

Sometimes anxiety becomes extreme, such as when we stop doing things because of it (or when we do too much); when we get prescribed medication to lower anxiety; when we avoid people, places, or objects, etc.

BRIEF RELAXATION EXERCISE

1. Sit in a comfortable place.
2. Count to 10 and breathe calmly.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Think of a nice and quiet place (at the beach, at home, in the countryside, etc.)
5. Try to remember smells and sounds of this place.
6. Think of a pleasant event that happened there.
7. Relax your muscles progressively: first relax the legs and imagine the sensation of a wave that runs through the body, starting at the feet and rising all over the leg.
8. This wave of well-being continues to rise over the upper body and through your arms and hands slowly.
9. Finally, it reaches the neck and the head.
10. Don’t fall asleep! It is important to maintain an active mind but with a peaceful attitude.
11. Open your eyes and identify what you feel in the body.
12. Count to 10 again.
13. Get up and do something important to deal with the problem.

SSS can help you with:
- psychological support
- pedagogical support
- vocational guidance
- training in time management, study methods, presentation of work/projects, etc.
- student support and integration into school and the community
- sharing of information and activities or your interests

SSS has consultation offices in each of the IPLEiria campuses and a team of 3 specialized psychologists

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“A piece of bread eaten in peace is better than a feast eaten with anxiety.”

Esopo

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