



Journal:

Stress, Anxiety and Depression

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Reproducible sheets:

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A free downloadable (PDF) version of this journal is available at www.MyTherapySession.com

Hope and Help for Stress, Anxiety and Depression

Stress/Anxiety 1 “The Pursuit of Peace” (video: 11 minutes)

Discussion/Reflection:

Are you overly stressed right now?

Start generating a list of things contributing to your stress or anxiety.

Causes / sources:

Society's solutions:

Risks / consequences:

Supportive intervention approaches:

Acceptable (at least sometimes)

1. Get someone else to carry your stress
2. Distractions, avoidances, denial

Personal Change Approaches

(Requires a sense that personal change can and should happen, so you may need to complete the *Self-Esteem and Goal Setting* track first)

The only way to change the things around us is to change _____.

Discussion/Reflection:

How much do you accept the notion that personal change is an option to manage your stress?

Stress/Anxiety 2

(video: 10 minutes)

Overview of:

CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) – Changing your thinking

IPT (Interpersonal Therapy) – Considering social support

Exposure and Response Prevention / Desensitization and Mastery

Exercise

Now take a look over your list and then fill out the following scale (0 = lowest; 10 = highest) for :

The severity of my anxiety problem is _____.

The extent to which I:

- _____ Would like to be less anxious
- _____ Feel like anxiety is in my control
- _____ Experience/training in relaxation/calming activities (when anxious)

My main fears/anxieties are:

The things I have found to be most effective for controlling my anxiety are:

The extent to which my Anxiety/Stress is based on:

- _____ Watching and learning it as I grew up
- _____ Unrealistic expectations of myself
- _____ Comparison of myself to others
- _____ Being self critical or harsh with myself
- _____ Other people being critical or harsh
- _____ Worry or prediction of bad things in the future
- _____ Phobias (e.g. flying, snakes, etc)
- _____ Unrealistic social fears (e.g. stage fright, meeting people, etc.)
- _____ Time pressures
- _____ Being overloaded
- _____ Being unprepared
- _____ Taking on too many projects
- _____ Trouble saying "no"
- _____ Financial stress/anxiety
- _____ Legal stress/anxiety
- _____ Sexual stress/anxiety
- _____ Immediate family relationship stress/anxiety
- _____ Extended family/friends relationship stress/anxiety
- _____ Job stress/anxiety
- _____ Fear of success
- _____ Addictions stress/anxiety
- _____ Trauma/loss/abuse anxiety/stress
- _____ Anger that is mistaken as anxiety/stress

The extent to which:

- It would be “wrong” to let go of anxiety or be calm or at peace in the midst of the things that currently make me anxious.
- Anxiety/stress could be the source of some of my physical problems
- Anxiety/stress could be why I haven’t tolerated medicines very well
- I literally pull my hair out with anxiety
- I bite my nails with anxiety
- I cry because of anxiety
- I lose sleep because of anxiety
- I drink or use drugs to deal with anxiety

CBT approach:

Discussion/Reflection:

What are your thoughts on managing your stress by changing your thinking?

What ideas do you have about ways you can change your thinking?

Write down your ideas and practice them.

Self-hypnotic technique:

Discussion/Reflection:

What ideas seem most applicable to you?

Practice these ideas.

Stress/Anxiety 3

(video: 4 minutes)

IPT approach:

Discussion/Reflection:

How could your stress be handled in interpersonal ways?

What role change might be contributing to stress/anxiety?

What could you do about them?

Exposure / Response Prevention approach - for mastery and desensitization:

Interactions (overlap) of depression and anxiety:

Chronic anxiety might lead to depression

Antidepressants

Discussion/Reflection:

What are your thoughts about the “overlapping” notion of anxiety and depression?

Might antidepressants be useful for helping you?

Stress/Anxiety 4

(video: 9 minutes)

Non-pharmacologic approaches:

Deal with addictions

Deal with other psychological illnesses

General principles

Write things down that are bothersome
Examine what can and can't be done about them
Allows us to find patterns and do something about the patterns

Relaxation

Meditation possibilities – “letting go” technique

(Optional) Spiritually inclusive segment:

Depression

“The Pursuit of Joy”

(video: 17 minutes)

Three themes reminder:

1. Look for the potential causes
2. Develop skills to manage the conditions
3. Utilize people close to us to help sort things out

Possible reasons for depression:

1. Anger turned inward []
2. Lack of assertiveness []
3. Biological factors []
 - Genetics
 - Chemical imbalances
 - Medications effects
 - Thyroid
 - Other medical problems
 - Sleep/light problems
4. Addictions []
5. Comparison []

6. Lack of connectedness []

7. Poor diet and lack of exercise []

8. High expectations []

9. No fun []

10. Financial stress []

11. Lack of skills []
Gratitude/thankfulness
Contentment/satisfaction
Others

12. Job dissatisfaction []

13. Grief and loss []

14. No meaning or purpose []

15. Poor modeling []

16. Overwhelmed []

17. Unhealthy relationships []

18. Trauma and abuse []

19. Values not matching actions []

20. Other []

(Optional) Spiritually inclusive segment: