

Exercise sheet

5 QUESTIONS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR ANXIETY



Are you constantly tense or worried? Do you worry about anything and everything? Here are five questions to help you better understand your anxiety so you can find inner peace.

1 Can my worries be controlled or resolved?

There are hypothetical situations that we worry about, such as the death of a loved one, that we cannot immediately control or resolve.

Thinking about it only increases our anxiety.

If you answered no to this question, thank your brain for alerting you because it tends to try to do so. Take a deep breath and imagine that you are placing that worry in a safe place. Suppressing your thoughts will only intensify them, while approaching things in a calm way will soothe you.

You now know how to manage 95% of your worries.

2 Is it a minor issue?

If it is, trust yourself to make a decision. You can do it, and you can save time and energy by not dwelling on small details. If it is an important decision, however, commit to making it. Worrying will not solve the problem. Only you can do that.

3 Does worrying help me solve problems?

Anxiety tells us lies. We believe that anxiety helps us solve our problems and it seems natural to us to worry. But by worrying we are sucked into a spiral of thoughts and emotions. An hour later, we realise that nothing has been resolved because we have been envisaging the worst. We blame ourselves for procrastinating, which makes us worry even more. We feel unable to cope with the whirlwind of our thoughts, the knot in our stomach and our racing heartbeat.

As stated above, worrying does not solve problems.

4 Do I believe that worrying helps me to be prepared?

Sometimes we can believe that worrying helps us to anticipate possible bad surprises or ensures we don't fail at something important. If you believe that worrying can prepare you for hard times, ask yourself if you wouldn't prefer to feel at ease rather than hypervigilant.

5 Where does my anxiety come from? What happened to me? Who influenced me?

People who are constantly stressed can generally be divided into two camps.

The first group says: "I've always been like that". The second says:

"I wasn't like this until [such and such event] happened".

If you have always been anxious, look back at how it developed: did you feel your well-being was under threat, which led you to be on your guard, or was there someone in your life who was often worried? While anxiety can be genetic, you can also acquire it. If you are in the second group, you should be aware that an unfortunate event can completely turn our understanding of the world upside down, and cause us to behave and see things very differently. We then use worry to protect ourselves.

