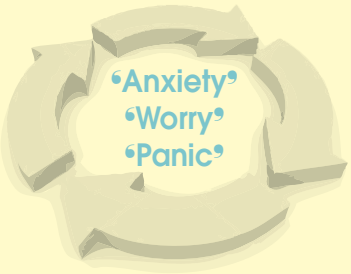
Fact Sheet - What is Anxiety?



Anxiety is when we worry a lot, its completely normal, something we all do at times.
However, if anxiety gets out of control or stops you from doing everyday things, you may feel:

Upset, Shaky, Dizzy, Sick, Scared and Thinking Frightening Thoughts

Sometimes when anxiety gets really strong, you might feel panicky.

Ways of coping with Anxiety

DISTRACT yourself for 10-15 minutes:
- Walk around the block
- Take a break - drink some water
- Find a quiet space - relax
- Focus on something other than your worry

If it continues REMIND yourself:
- These feelings won't harm you - it can feel scary and uncomfortable but you are not in any danger.
- You are not going to die from these anxious feelings, it's simply your body telling you to be anxious of 'a fear' and the **fear is fiction not reality**.
- You are unlikely to have something seriously wrong with you.
- You are not alone - many people in their lifetime will experience anxiety.
- You can learn to manage anxiety.

If it carries on STAY where you are:
- Place the palm of your hand on your stomach and breath slowly - feel your stomach expanding when you breathe in. Be patient it might take a while but eventually the panic will go away on its own - you will teach your mind to get used to coping with panic by soothing it down yourself.

Other ways to deal with anxiety:
- **Visualisation:** In a quiet safe space, take a few moments to close your eyes and imagine a place of safety and calm. It could be you walking on a beautiful beach, sitting in a peaceful garden, or anywhere you choose that is quiet and calm. Let the positive calm feelings sooth you until you feel more relaxed.
- **Exercise:** Some people prefer physical exercise - walking, cycling, going to the gym etc. This releases positive endorphins which lifts mood and is also a distraction.
- **Deep breathing:** Practice deep breathing on a daily basis - for tips see www.learnmeditation.org.uk
- Make changes: If you can identify things that are causing you stress, try to eliminate what you can or look for new ways to approach them and feel more in control.
- **Diet and Sleep:** Good sleep and healthy meals can help reduce anxiety and stress. Drink less coffee, fizzy and energy drinks as caffeine contributes to nervousness and anxious feelings.
- **Talk about it:** Talk to a friend or family member. If your fears aren't going away arrange to see the college counsellor. You can phone for an appointment on **01273 667746** or email **counsellors@ccb.ac.uk**. You can also speak to your doctor for advice and support.

Remember you are not alone. Many people suffer from anxiety at some point in their lives, often due to stress at home, college or work. Often it will go away after the stressful event. If not we hope this fact sheet might offer some helpful ideas.