

4 MYTHS ABOUT ANXIETY...

1. **Everybody worries - anxiety is not really an illness.**

While it's true that stress and anxiety are a normal part of modern living, unaddressed anxiety can lead to mental disorders which may require treatment. If someone has a medical illness, we talk about it and get help. The first step to feeling better is to admit that you're having a real issue.

2. **There are so many people who are worse off – anxiety is not serious.**

We are all prone to anxiety especially during life transitions. For example, adolescence is a time of great change and identity exploration. All adolescents are undergoing incredible brain changes which can lead to impulsivity, risk-taking, and difficulty regulating emotions. Added to this are adjustment to old and new roles related to friendships, family relationships, academics, body image, sex, career, etc. Anxiety is a part of life, but excessive fear and worry can disable one's home, school, and work life and needs to be taken seriously.

3. **Positive thinking can override anxiety symptoms.** Just like there are many core fears that fuel anxiety disorders, there is no one magic cure. It is important to learn healthy ways to relax. What you find helpful may not work for someone else. The main thing is to recognize a problem and talk to someone you trust about your issues so you can get the right assistance. People generally get better with the help of a person who cares.

4. **If someone has anxiety symptoms, there must be something wrong with them or their family.** Many accomplished and successful people suffer from anxiety. We do not know the exact cause of anxiety disorders, but researchers look at a variety of complex factors including genetics, temperament, and environment. It's critical to understand that having anxiety is not your fault. If someone you care about has an anxiety disorder, do not take it personally if they are irritable or withdrawn. Don't give up on getting help!

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