This introductory Factsheet provides an overview of managing anxiety, worries and concerns.

**Introduction**

**Anxiety, worries and concerns**

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, expressed in ways such as worry, panic, phobias or fear, and it can be mild or severe. We all have feelings of varying degrees of anxiety at some point in our life. Whether it’s about a driving test, sitting an exam, having a medical test, having a difficult conversation, giving a talk/presentation or a job interview.

During times like these, feeling anxious can be perfectly normal.

But some people find it hard to control their worries. Their feelings of anxiety are more constant and can often affect their daily lives.

They key word here is ‘control’, most of us can cope with mild anxiety, but can we control more severe bouts of anxiety?

GAD (Generalised anxiety disorder) is a common anxiety disorder that involves constant and chronic worrying, nervousness, and tension. Unlike a phobia, where your fear is connected to a specific thing or situation, the anxiety of GAD is a general feeling of dread or unease that colours your whole life. This anxiety is less intense than a panic attack, but much longer lasting, making normal life difficult and relaxation impossible, unless you take control of it.

The benefits of being able to take control of anxiety include greater mental health, less stress, greater personal concentration & control and job performance/satisfaction, more vitality and zest for life, better sleep and easier to get along with. A benefit that is not always recognised is increased self-confidence.

**What are the benefits?**

The starting point of course is to recognise your anxiety and over-worrying and recognising the symptoms and that FEAR is a False Expectation that Appears Real. Make a committed decision to take control of it. If you are in a cycle of a trigger leading to disempowering thoughts leading to anxiety, leading to disempowering beliefs, that cycle needs to be broken. A great starting point is to regularly (several times every day) put the clear image in your mind of you been the calm, controlled and relaxed person you really want to be. To support that use positive self-talk statements that support this such as “I am calm, relaxed and in control”. The more you do this the more you programme your mind to believe it’s true.

**How do we do it?**

Other strategies you can use is to write your worries on the bottom of your shoe and imagine just walking them away (deal with them however if they are things you need to deal with). To break the cycle mentioned earlier find something like exercise that you can do as soon as you find yourself in that worry cycle. Humour is always a good strategy so find something funny! You can write all your worries down on pieces of paper and imagine putting them in a locker then pulling them out one at a time and dealing with them.

Find a purpose in life beyond self and that tends to focus your mind towards something meaningful. Talking to a friend is obviously helpful, as is gradual exposure to the things that make you anxious. Every day as you start worrying, write it down and then once a day deal with those worries, those you can do nothing about put in the bin and those you can be decisive, set some goals, develop a plan and take action.

Develop a healthy lifestyle as good physical health impacts psychological and emotional health. Consider learning to meditate, use self-hypnosis and even talking about your worry out loud helps. Using one or more of your 5 senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch taste) to take your mind off what you are worrying about for example look at, touch and smell a beautiful flower.

**Summary**

Make friends with anxiety, be comfortable with it, but don’t fight it, deal with it. Set yourself a 30-day anxiety improvement plan and after 30-days review your progress and success. The average length of time someone waits who has anxiety before deciding to take control of it is 10 years, but not you, don’t wait any longer, make the decision right now to take control of your anxiety and be the cool, calm and collected person you want to be. Write your decision and first 30-days action on this sheet.

Our facebook group has videos about, anxiety, responding to challenging people and events, emotional control, EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) and how to unearth and release trapped emotions. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/216645969611627>

**Further information**