

Helpful Scripture

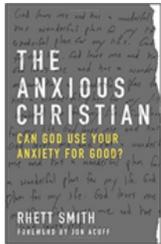
“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:6)

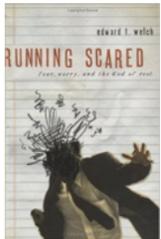
“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” (Psalm 56:3)

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)

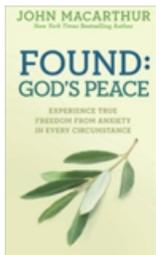
Helpful Resources



Rhett Smith
The Anxious Christian: Can God Use Your Anxiety for Good?



Edward T. Welch
Running Scared: Fear, Worry, and the God of Rest



John MacArthur
Found: God's Peace Experiencing True Freedom from Anxiety in Every Circumstance

Fear and Anxiety



**If you are experiencing fear or anxiety,
you are not alone. There is hope.**

Fear is an emotional response that results when a person believes they are in danger. Anxiety is a feeling of worry, uneasiness or apprehension about a future event with an uncertain outcome. Fear can be a healthy response when a person is in actual danger. However, fear and anxiety can become problematic when a person is not actually in danger.

When fear and anxiety become excessive and overwhelming in a person’s life, they may be experiencing an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are characterized by steady, all consuming anxiety that interferes with a person’s daily activities such as job performance, school work and relationships. Over the course of a lifetime, 29% of adults will at some point struggle with an anxiety disorder.

Take a minute and answer the following questions to calculate your current level of anxiety (mild, moderate, severe).

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Questionnaire (GAD-7)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Several days</i>	<i>More than half the days</i>	<i>Nearly every day</i>
<i>Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Not being able to stop or control worrying</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Worrying too much about different things</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Trouble relaxing</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Being so restless that it is hard to sit still</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Becoming easily annoyed or irritable</i>	0	1	2	3
<i>Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen</i>	0	1	2	3

Calculate the sum of the numbers circled for each question. Scores of 5, 10, and 15 are taken as the cut-off points for mild, moderate and severe anxiety, respectively. If you scored at 10 or higher or feel anxiety symptoms are interfering with your day to day life it may be helpful to speak with your primary care physician or a professional counselor about your symptoms of anxiety.

Reducing Anxiety Symptoms

1. Take time to understand your feelings. It is important to understand the nature of your feelings of fear or anxiety. The first step is putting into words the reason you are experiencing these emotions. Find a trusted friend to talk to or try journaling. Consider if your emotions are telling you something about how you view yourself, how you view the world or how you view God. Some anxiety is normal, however, when anxiety gets in the way of your day-to-day life or your anxious thoughts don't make sense or seem irrational, it is important to seek professional help.

2. Use Scripture as an anchor to adjust thinking. Once you can articulate your fear or anxiety, consider where there is alignment and misalignment with Scripture. Scripture can be used as an anchor or tool to measure thoughts and emotions against. This can help you to know when you are experiencing an emotion that reflects a distortion or when your thoughts or emotions reflect truth.

3. Seek God. God cares when His children are distressed and wants to offer peace, comfort and hope. That is why a critical aspect of coping with fears and anxieties is bringing them to God and asking for help. All too often, people feel embarrassed about having emotions that do not align with Scripture and want to hide them. On the contrary, God wants you to draw near to Him and give Him access to your heart so He can offer comfort and help.

4. Find healthy outlets. For some people, anxiety feels like pent up energy looking for a release. Healthy outlets for anxiety include activities such as exercise, prayer, worship, deep breathing, journaling or talking. Professional counselors can offer a number of tools to help reduce anxiety symptoms.

5. Build in appropriate support. When you are experiencing fear or anxiety, seek additional support. A variety supports such as a primary care physician, professional counselor, support groups, pastoral care and faithful friends can help. Each person's need for support varies depending on their unique situation. The Charis website (www.charisnetworkct.org) is a tool that can help you find care and counseling services offered from a Christian perspective.

Children and Anxiety

Anxiety is the most common emotional problem in children. Anxiety often looks different in children than it does in adults. Some children develop worries about things such as getting sick, loved ones dying or making mistakes. Others are extremely shy and even avoid things other children enjoy. Some have strong emotional reactions such as tantrums or meltdowns and others develop elaborate rituals such as compulsive handwashing or repeating activities over and over to help them manage their fears. Some anxiety is normal; however, when a child's anxiety begins to interfere with his or her day-to-day life it is best to seek professional help. If you are concerned that your child may be struggling with anxiety, talk to their doctor or schedule a time to meet with a professional counselor.