

## The Fear Response

When afraid, the body has an instinctual response. It's a survival mechanism.

***Fight, Flight or Freeze***

### **Fear Facts**

1. Fear is a normal response that has developed to help us learn to avoid dangerous situations.
2. Anxiety is an irrational fear; it is a cycle stemming from fear of fear.
3. Anxiety is an uncomfortable, overpowering sense. It is an uneasiness accompanied by self-doubt and dread concerning one's capacity to handle an event seen as a threat.
4. Fear is not the same as stress, although it may manifest under stressful conditions.
5. Often, anxiety stems from difficulty in handling the stress in our lives. Anxiety arises when one exaggerates danger. It is associated with typically sensations, actions, and thoughts.
6. Anxiety becomes problematic when it remains long after the fearful stressor has disappeared.
7. Anxiety causes distress when daily activities are interrupted as a result of its presence.
8. When a person is bothered by ongoing sensations, actions and fear inducing thoughts it can lead to impairments, anxiety is getting in the way of their functioning in life.
9. Fear is common and experienced by all. We can all learn and grow through it.
10. Anxiety itself is not a bad thing. We will all experience anxiety in our lives. If leveraged and used to our advantage, the energy can be harnessed and motivate us to take adaptive action..
11. Previous experience conditions and shapes our interpretation of things. It can predispose us to both fear and anxiety.
12. The ability to control fear and reduce anxiety is a capacity that can be built.

## **Signs of Anxiety**

### **Sensations**

These are the bodies natural physiological reactions to fear, although they might be magnified. Physiological markers related to the operation of the body and its organs. These responses are associated with the body's natural fight, flight or freeze response. They they tend often misinterpreted when people are anxious.

- Tension
- Flushing
- Rapid heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating

### **Actions**

Certain actions serve as markers of anxiety. They relate to the behaviours an individual might engage in as a result of anxiety. They are easily observed and are within ones awareness. .

- Avoidance of social situations
- Engaging in risky behaviour
- Clinging or otherwise engaging or eliciting care taking or “safe activities”
- Compulsive behaviours or habits (picking, tapping, checking etc,)
- Substance abuse

### **Thoughts**

Certain thoughts associated with anxiety. They can become habitual and outside of owns present awareness. They can also be charged with training to become more positive.

- Sense of doubt
- Thoughts of catastrophic events
- Sense of dread
- Exaggerated negative outcomes
- Belief that one will die (eg. Have a heart attack)