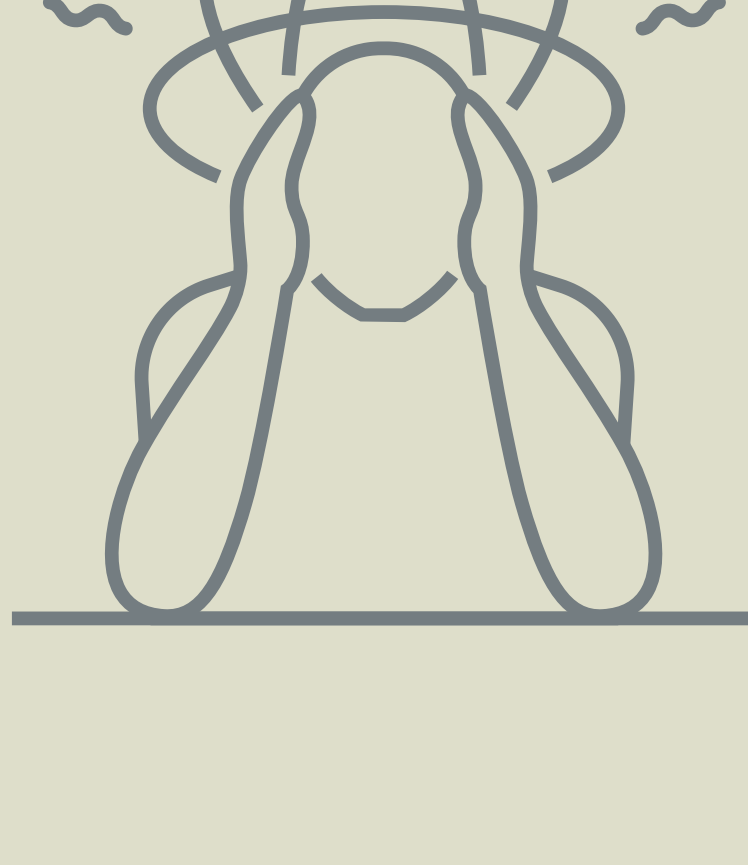


A 4Life View of

Anxiety and Worry

As Christians, we recognize that anxiety can be normal; in fact, according to Scripture, our Savior and many other saints faced anxiety to some degree. Yet, anxiety can also have a spiritual component. We may be anxious about our daily needs because we've forgotten that God has promised to provide for them (Matthew 6:25-34). When we fear evil and worry about our safety, we forget that God has promised never to abandon us (Psalm 23:4). Anxiety can happen when we trust worldly explanations over God's promises (Genesis 18:13-14).



What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome (Oxford Dictionary).

Short-term anxiety is normal, but if it is unmanageable and impairs your daily functioning at work or school, or if it impairs relationships, it may be classified as an anxiety disorder.



Anxiety creates a fight or flight response to fear.

Some **physical manifestations** include rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, shaking, headaches, nausea, restlessness, and insomnia.



According to the National Institute of Mental Health,

1 in 3

youth ages 13-18 will experience an anxiety disorder.

Anxiety rates in college students have increased **110%** from 2013 to 2021.

Yet, according to the Anxiety & Depression Association of America 2020 report, only **43%** of Americans with anxiety disorders get treatment.

Our sinful condition can cause anxiety, but God does not abandon us to deal with it alone.

He gives us...

Christian Fellowship

God's people are a feeling to us when we're feeling anxious. Reach out to those who will point you back to Christ and His promises. Ask them for quality time to talk and pray together.

Pastoral Care

Talk to your home pastor or another pastor you trust. You may also reach out to Word of Hope (888-217-8679 or info@word-of-hope.org) for spiritual guidance and a referral to a local Lutheran pastor.

His Word

The Bible is full of comfort and hope for God's children. Here are some passages that remind us of this sure and certain hope:

God's promise of salvation and eternal life:
1 Peter 2:24-25; Romans 10:9-10; John 3:16

Peace with God through faith:
Romans 5:1-5

Trust in the Lord:
Matthew 6:25-32; Proverbs 3:5-6

The peace of God in prayer:
Philippians 4:6-7

God's comfort:
Psalm 23:4; John 14:26-27; John 16:33

The strength of God:
Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 62:1-2

In-the-moment tips for coping with short-term anxiety:

Have a Christ-centered mindset.

Satan is the one who tempts us to doubt God and focus on our anxieties, but Christ warns us of this. When He became man, Jesus was tempted by Satan, and He gives us a perfect example of resisting this temptation. He refuted the devil with the Word of God. Likewise, God's Word combats anxiety. It reminds us that we are not alone; God is our sure defense. God's Word strengthens us and enables us to cling to Him when tested.

Breathe.

Try taking some slow breaths. Count to four breathing in and six breathing out. This calming activity helps create distance between us and our anxious thoughts, enabling us to take a moment to reset before moving forward.

Talk yourself through it.

Remember God's Word. Repeat His promises. What would Jesus say to someone who was feeling worried? We don't have to wonder; the Bible tells us! Encourage yourself in the same way. Try to remember other times the Lord provided and came to your aid despite your anxious thoughts.

Pray.

Talk to God about what's bothering you, knowing that He promises to listen, He cares, and He wants you to turn to Him. No problem is too big or too small to give to God. 1 Peter 5:6-7 says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you."

Ask for help.

Ask a friend or loved one to help you find joy. Martin Luther suffered from anxiety and depression. His advice? Laugh and sing. Read a funny story or hum a favorite hymn. Take a walk with a friend or loved one. Ask others to help you find joyful distractions.

If anxious thoughts persist for too long and prevent you from doing the things you love to do, you may need to seek professional help. Talk to your pastor, contact Word of Hope, or ask an adult you trust for help finding a Christian counselor or doctor. There is no shame in using all of the resources God provides - spiritual, physical, and emotional. Seeking help is a life-affirming choice for you and for the people you love.

Sources

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