

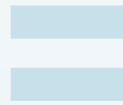
Anxiety is a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, often about an event or situation with an uncertain ending. It arises when we think about something bad that could happen, when the mind stays on negative thoughts, or without any known reason.

A WAY TO THINK
ABOUT ANXIETY:

Worry
is in
the mind



We feel **Stress**
in our body



Both

Anxiety is natural when caring for someone at the end of life.

It arises when we are:

- Grieving the loss of a loved one, even while they're still alive
- Afraid of a loved one dying and/or their death
- Feeling unprepared or unable to care for a loved one
- Worried about having little or no help, or feel uncomfortable asking for help
- Feeling helpless about a loved one's physical and/or mental decline
- Concerned about money or financial security
- Experiencing other personal stress

Feelings of anxiety can be mental, physical, or both.

Symptoms include:

- Irritability
- Sleeplessness (insomnia)
- Trouble breathing
- Restlessness or inability to focus
- Sweating
- Crying
- Stomach pain, nausea and/or diarrhea
- Dry mouth
- Tightness in the throat or chest





Feeling anxious is normal for caregivers but constant, intense anxiety can impact your health.

Talk to your Primary Care Physician about symptoms and to learn about medicines and other options.

To reduce feelings of anxiety:



- Calm your nervous system with slow and deep breaths



- Take a walk outside with a friend and talk about what's on your mind



- Play the "Name Game" - say or write down three things you see, three things you hear and three things you feel



- Try aromatherapy - lavender, bergamot, ylang-ylang and rose have calming effects



- Pet or talk to a beloved animal



- Listen to free audio guided imagery by experts like Dr. Kristin Neff and Leslie Davenport, MFT



- Learn meditation with an app like Calm, Headspace, Liberate (Black community-centered) or iBreathe



- Give yourself a worry "budget" - 15-20 minutes each day to freely worry - then spend the same time problem-solving



- Calm obsessive thinking by writing down your thoughts



- Create a soothing space with dim lights and peaceful music



- Watch a funny video or movie



- Avoid panic (anxiety that arises suddenly) by **talking** about scary things that *might* happen (ex. acute symptoms, a child seeing a loved one suffer), then **planning** so you're prepared



Sharing feelings and worries can build comfort and trust.

Your Social Worker and Spiritual Support Counselor can guide important conversations with your loved one, family members and other caregivers. Talk with your team to learn more.