

STORIES OF THE MIND & FAITH



Brought to you by the Beautiful Minds Coalition, a mental health advocacy group at Covenant Presbyterian Church dedicated to breaking stigma through education and compassion.

Introduction

- ▶ I'm glad you're here!
- ▶ Using video clips from the Mental Health Channel's series "Stories of the Mind," this class will foster conversation about the important role that our faith community can play in the lives of those living with various mental illnesses and their families/friends.

- ▶ September 6th - "Family Portraits" led by Kathy Simmons & Laura Glueck
- ▶ September 13th - "Beating Anxiety" led by Laura Glueck
- ▶ September 20th - "A Place to Belong" led by Louise Ward
- ▶ September 27th - "Inside Schizophrenia" led by Michael McMains
- ▶ October 4th - "Succeeding with Bipolar Disorder" led by Michael McMains
- ▶ October 11th - "Ways to Wellness" led by Shelly Bosse

Opening Prayer

- ▶ Prayer: Father God, we are not afraid for we know that you go before us to prepare the way, you walk with us so we are not alone, and you have our back protecting us and guiding us when we need it. Thank you for this opportunity to learn more about our brothers and sisters who might feel that each day is a trial. Help us to learn patience with those who seem fearful when we are not, and help us to better understand their perspective and pain. We strive toward Christ's unconditional love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Anxiety in a person's heart weighs him down,
but an **encouraging** word brings him joy.

- Proverbs 12:25

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Which Is It?

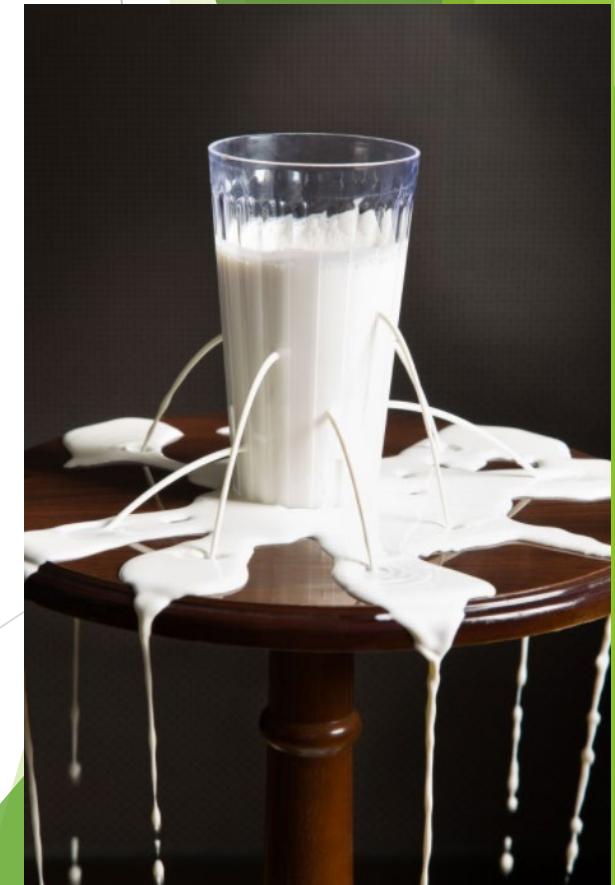
Everyday Anxiety	Anxiety Disorder
Worry about paying bills, landing a job, a romantic breakup, or other important life events	Constant and unsubstantiated worry that causes significant distress and interferes with daily life
Embarrassment or self-consciousness in an uncomfortable or awkward social situation	Avoiding social situations for fear of being judged, embarrassed, or humiliated
A case of nerves or sweating before a big test, business presentation, stage performance, or other significant event	Seemingly out-of-the-blue panic attacks and the preoccupation with the fear of having another one
Realistic fear of a dangerous object, place, or situation	Irrational fear or avoidance of an object, place, or situation that poses little or no threat of danger
Anxiety, sadness, or difficulty sleeping immediately after a traumatic event	Recurring nightmares, flashbacks, or emotional numbing related to a traumatic event that occurred several months or years before

Doesn't *everybody* have anxiety?

- ▶ Anxiety disorder is the most common disorder in the US. Around 40 million Americans (about 18%) have anxiety disorder.
- ▶ Only about a third of that number will seek treatment
- ▶ Includes General Anxiety (excessive worry and fear), Panic disorder, Phobias, Social Anxiety
- ▶ 60% of those diagnosed with anxiety are also diagnosed with depression (can be harder to treat)
- ▶ Co-occurs with OCD and PTSD so much that some consider them a type of anxiety (though there are important technical differences)

Video “Beating Anxiety”

- ▶ <https://www.pbs.org/video/stories-mind-beating-anxiety/>
- ▶ Watch the rest of the video to learn about social anxiety from John William Keedy, now an artist and teacher, but once someone who literally ran away from social situations. Some of his artwork about anxiety is below.

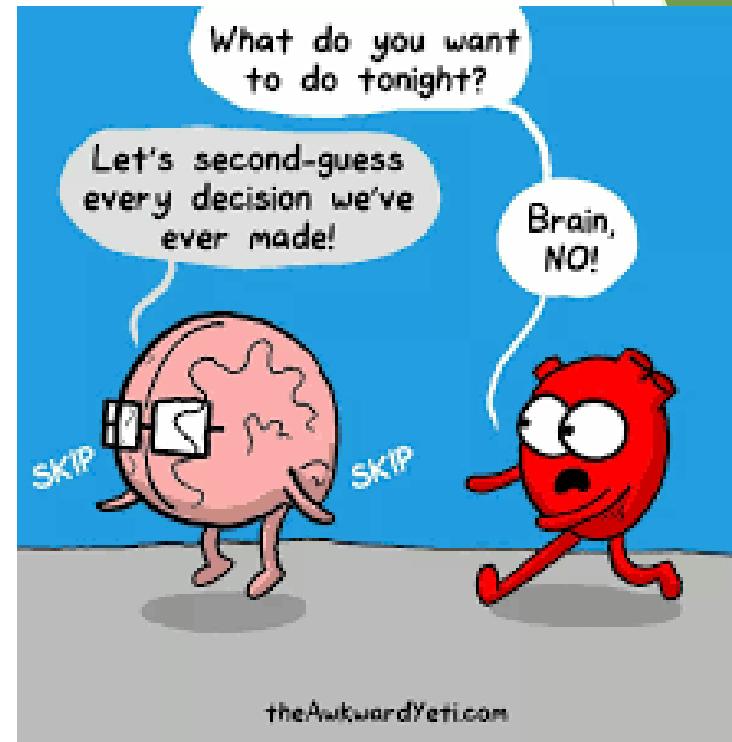


Reflection Questions

- ▶ What kinds of behavior did you see in Mary Lou in the video?
- ▶ She mentioned her anxiety had hurt her relationships. What did you notice from the video about her relationships? (understanding we have an incomplete picture, of course)
- ▶ If Mary Lou, or someone like her, went to our church, what could we do to help?
- ▶ What about people with General Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety, or perhaps PTSD? What could we do to better accommodate them?
- ▶ Do you know what to do if someone has a panic attack?
- ▶ Can you see how anxiety could develop into depression?
- ▶ Mary Lou is financially secure. How might poverty impact anxiety disorders? What if you can't afford to live in a calm, peaceful place?

Treatment

- ▶ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is the most effective psychotherapy and helps the anxious person learn new coping skills to lessen and prevent anxiety.
- ▶ Medications most often prescribed are antidepressants (both anxiety and depression involve issues with serotonin and sometimes norepinephrine). These include Lexapro, Cymbalta, Effexor XR, Paxil and others. All anti-anxiety and anti-depressants in this category can take a couple weeks to become fully effective.
 - ▶ Benzodiazepine - a sedative prescribed as an anti-anxiety drug to relieve acute anxiety on a short-term basis because they may be habit-forming.



Prevention & Management Through Lifestyle Choices

- ▶ Exercise is a powerful stress reducer. Commit to moving your body in some way every day for best/most consistent results. Even just a daily 10-minute walk helps.
 - ▶ Sleep is super important! If anxious thoughts are keeping you from sleeping, see your doctor.
 - ▶ Relaxation techniques such as mindfulness practices, grounding, visualization, meditation, yoga, and recitation ease anxiety.
 - ▶ Keep relaxing substances on hand such as lavender oil lotion and chamomile tea.
 - ▶ Prepare for events and be early. Avoid hectic rush.
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- ▶ Be particular about what you put into your mind and body.
 - ▶ Healthy, non-processed foods are best for all.
 - ▶ Avoid sugary foods
 - ▶ Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs. Although thought to be “calming”, that is temporary and they actually worsen anxiety.
 - ▶ Avoid caffeine and nicotine and any other stimulants as they can all worsen anxiety.
 - ▶ Avoid negative messages designed to promote fear and impulsivity.

Philippians 4:4-9

- ▶ **4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- ▶ **8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable— **if anything is excellent or praiseworthy** —think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me— **put it into practice.** And the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians advice, continued

- ▶ The bible verse was good advice then and is still advice given today to many who suffer with anxiety (and depression)
 - ▶ Remove or separate yourself from negativity and those things that give you anxiety symptoms. (Work on dealing with them in small doses so you can get used to them.)
 - ▶ Understand that you can't control everything.
 - ▶ Repeat positive statements that help to keep you calm. (Prayer and positive affirmations.)
 - ▶ Keep a positive mental attitude as much as possible so anxiety doesn't spiral into depression. (Keep a daily gratitude journal, etc.)



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And the peace of God

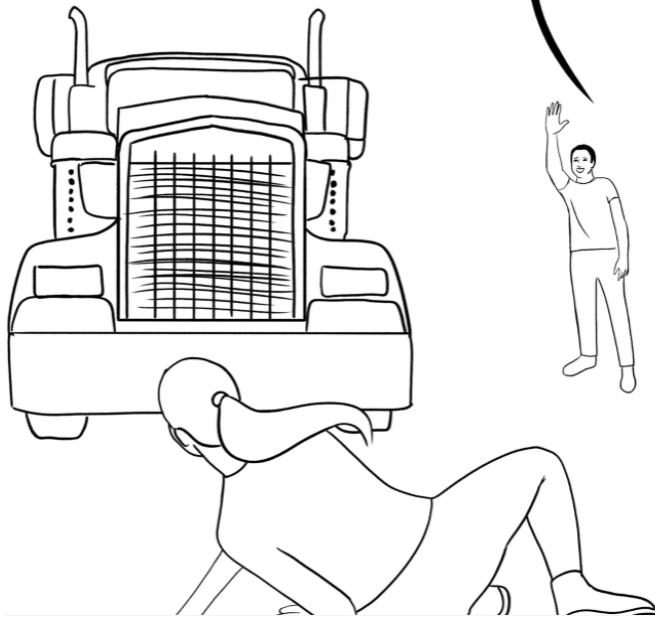
which transcends
all understanding,
will guard your
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-Philippians 4:6-7

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Anxiety in Modern Society

JUST FOCUS THINGS YOU ON THE CAN CONTROL.



What advice feels like to someone actively dealing with anxiety.



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Lol "having anxiety" is not another term for "feeling super nervous about something." Our generation is accustomed to diminishing real disorders for the sake of trendiness and it's not cool ok thank you and goodbye

2:33 PM · Jan 8, 2019

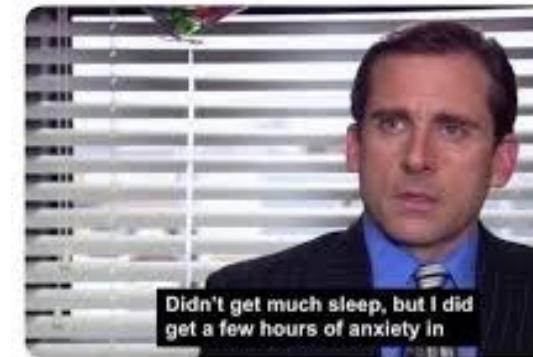


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39 people are Tweeting about this

When someone asks you how your night went



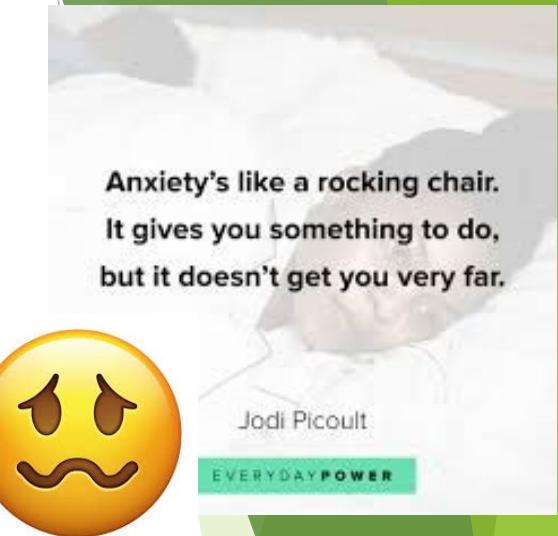
Jodi Picoult

EVERYDAY POWER

**"No need to hurry.
No need to sparkle.
No need to be
anybody but
oneself."**

-VIRGINIA WOOLF

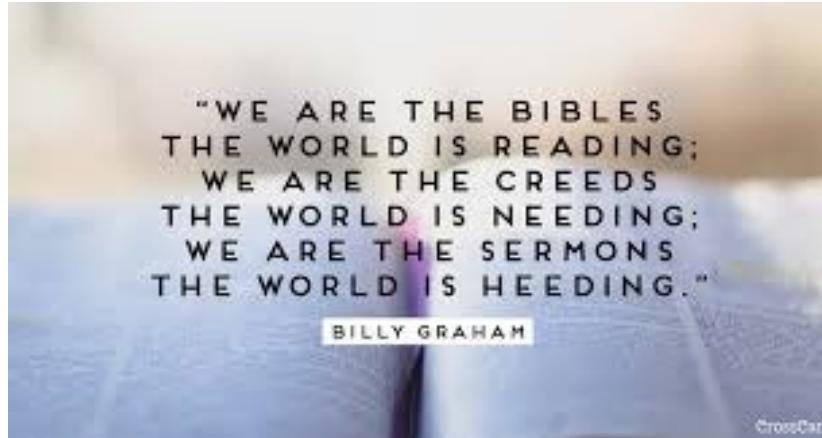
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE POSITIVE ALL THE TIME. IT'S PERFECTLY OKAY TO FEEL SAD, ANGRY, ANNOYED, FRUSTRATED, SCARED OR ANXIOUS. HAVING FEELINGS DOESN'T MAKE YOU A 'NEGATIVE PERSON'. IT MAKES YOU HUMAN.



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Final Words

- ▶ We as a church need to do a better job of not just welcoming those with mental disorders but preparing to care for them by familiarizing ourselves with their conditions and lifestyle needs.



- ▶ After all, statistically speaking, this congregation of 300 is large enough to contain around 55 members with anxiety disorder, though only 15 to 20 of them might be seeking treatment.

The first week of May is National Anxiety & Depression Awareness Week.

Resources



- ▶ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/generalized-anxiety-disorder>
- ▶ <https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety>
- ▶ <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/anxiety-disorders/what-are-anxiety-disorders>
- ▶ <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Anxiety-Disorders>
- ▶ <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/January-2018/The-Comorbidity-of-Anxiety-and-Depression>