



Wayne County Children Services Board

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The CONNECTION

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

ANXIOUS TIMES

(From MHRB Newsletter "Mental Notes" & WEB/MD and the article, "Coping with Anxiety" by Jeanie Lerche Davis, 2008)

TIP: Change what you can; accept the rest.

The economy, the election, kids, divorce, layoffs, threat of terrorism, price of gas – there's plenty of anxiety around for everyone these days. And very often, the source is something we can't change. How do you know when it's time to get help dealing with your anxieties?

Normal vs. Harmful Anxiety

The cold sweat of anxiety is that "fight or flight" response that kept our early relatives safe from grizzly bears and other scary characters. The adrenaline rush you get still serves you well under certain circumstances. Anxiety is, of course, a natural reaction to all those real stresses that we experience every day.

On a positive note, our body's reaction helps motivate us, prepares us for things we have to face and sometimes gives us the energy to take action when we need to.

But as you well know, sometimes it doesn't take a specific threat – only the possibility of crisis – to send humans into anxiety mode. People must learn to tone down that automatic response – learn to think – just how serious is the danger? How likely is the threat?

The Anxiety Toll

When anxiety is taking a toll, your body knows it. You have trouble sleeping, eating and concentrating. You get headaches; your stomach is upset. You might even have a panic attack – the pounding heart, a feeling of lightheadedness.

Anxiety may also feel like depression. Many times the two overlap.

When anxiety becomes so overwhelming that it interferes with day-to-day activities – when it keeps you from going places, from doing things you need to do – that's when you need to seek help.

As Jerilyn Ross, director of The Ross Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders, Inc., explains, "generalized anxiety disorder is a bigger syndrome – like a worry machine in your head. If it's not one thing, it's another. You're procrastinating to the point that you're almost afraid to take a step. You're so nervous about going to your child's school to talk to the teacher, you just don't go – you miss the appointment."

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FOSTER/ADOPTIVE FAMILY NEWS

2009 FOSTER/ADOPTIVE CAREGIVER TRAINING SCHEDULE

Sex Abuse Indicators in Young Children

Tuesday, February 24 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Trainer: Cynthia Wallis

Toolbox for Change: Advocating for Children with Mental Health Issues

Friday, March 27 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Trainer: Katie Terry

Calming the Chaos: Keeping Your Sanity While Living with an ADHD Child

Saturday, March 28 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Trainer: Ed Petrish

Never Be Lied to Again By Your Kids

Saturday, March 28 - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Trainer: Ed Petrish

Parenting Children w/ Disabilities in Early Childhood Through Adolescence

Saturday, March 28 - 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Trainer: Tyrone White

Budgeting: Making Ends Meet as a Foster/Adoptive Parent

Sunday, March 29 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Trainer: Tyrone White

Street Drugs Recognition

Saturday, April 18 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Trainer: Tyrone White

Self-Mutilating Behaviors

Saturday, May 9 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Trainer: David Zidar

Helping Children w/Mentally Ill Parents

Thursday, June 18 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Trainer: David Zidar

Speaking the Truth in Love

Friday, October 23 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Trainer: John Ward

NOTE:

All adoptive parents are also welcome to attend these trainings.

To register for any of the trainings listed, please call a foster care specialist at 330-345-5340.

****Please remember to pre-register at least five days prior to the training. If we do not have ten people registered by that deadline, the training will be cancelled.****



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How Do You Cope?

To cope with the plain-vanilla anxiety – “get real,” as they say. “Separate out the real risks and dangers that a situation presents and those your imagination is making worse,” advises Ross. It’s a twist on the old adage, “Take control of the things you can and accept those you can’t change.”

But when anxiety becomes overwhelming, perhaps it’s time for a therapist or maybe even medication.

Challenge negative thoughts.

Ask yourself: Is this a productive thought? Is it helping me get closer to my goal? If it’s just a negative thought you’re rehashing, then you must be able to say to that thought, “Stop.” It is hard for people to do that, but it is very important

Rather than becoming paralyzed with anxiety, here’s another message you can send yourself: “I may have to take a job I don’t like as much, may have to travel further than I want, but I’ll do what I have to do now. At least I will have the security of income in the short term. Then I can look for something at a later time.”

The most important message is to know when you have done everything you can – and to leave it rest and move forward.

Learn to relax.

Doctors have found that when people get anxious, they tend to hold their breath. Learn some more healthy patters of breathing – retrain yourself. Try to breathe from your diaphragm – deep. It calms your system. Also, yoga, meditation or just walking – get some exercise. It is a proven fact that exercise is a terrific outlet for anxiety.

There are legitimate reasons to feel anxious, to feel bad. But if you don’t deal with those feelings, they tend to compound. And pretty soon you could stand to lose a lot – job, friends, health. Try not to compound one stress by adding another.

Sometimes, depending on the type of crisis or amount of anxiety, it takes a while to work your way through it. If you are depressed, that may complicate things. In the case of divorce or the economy, it may take months or years to get back to being yourself. But if you find one aspect of your life – such as your relationships or your job – doing well, then you are probably on your way to dealing with anxiety in healthy ways.

Medication for Anxiety Disorders

Medication will not cure an anxiety disorder, but it will help keep it under control. If anxiety becomes severe enough to require medication, there are a few options. Check with your physician to see if anxiety medication could help you.

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Six Strategies to Reduce Worry

(From MHRB Newsletter "Mental Notes" & About.com article by William Meek, Dec. 2007)

- 1) **Make a Plan.** One thing people often worry about is unforeseen circumstances. Sometimes there are things happening in our lives that are out of our control, such as getting hired for a job. One way to cope with situations like these is to make plans for different possible outcomes. For example, make a plan as detailed as you need to determine your course of action if you do or do not get the job.



- 2) **Rehearse.** Another thing people often worry about is performances and presentations in front of peers. For school, jobs and our social lives, we frequently have to make presentations, speak publicly or talk to friends about something difficult. One way to reduce worry in these situations is to rehearse exactly what you are going to say and do this as many times as you need to feel comfortable.

- 3) **Attend to Your Physical Health.** When our bodies are in optimal health, we also have more mental resources available to cope with stress, solve problems and control our worrying. Achieve optimal physical health by eating a healthier diet, sleeping more and being more physically active. It can have dramatic effects on your mind and your ability to cope.

- 4) **Discover the Real Source.** Sometimes a person worries about things that are a distraction from the things that are really bothering him or her. For example, worrying about an outfit to wear the next day, which provides a distraction from worrying about what is really bothering them, like a quarrel with a loved one. Being able to trace the real source of your anxiety and worry can help us regain control of the situation and take steps to improve what is really troubling us.

- 5) **Put It in the Proper Context.** A hallmark sign of General Anxiety Disorder is magnifying and worrying about small things, making them more important than they really are. Taking a step back to put your worries into their proper context can be a quick way to reduce their intensity.

- 6) **Break Your Worries Down.** Worrying tends to make us build a giant mountain of fear and anxiety in our minds, and eventually we lose sight of what is actually part of the mountain. Taking some time to break down and list the things that are troubling you is a great way to get a handle on things and allows you to make several smaller plans of action, rather than being crippled by having to climb a mountain.



Thanks to the Mental Health & Recovery Board for allowing us to reprint their articles.



AGENCY STATISTICS

Intake Services	October, 2008	November, 2008
Reports of Child Abuse/Neglect	102	99
Reports of Child Abuse/Neglect-one year ago	112	98
Annual Total	1,161	1,260
Monthly Increase/Decrease	- 9%	+ 1%
Substitute Care		
Agency Foster Care	68	66
Purchased Therapeutic Care	17	14
Purchased Residential Care	19	19
Independent Living	0	0
Total Placements	104	99
Total Bed Days	2,957	2,801
Adoption Services		
Finalized Adoptions	0	2
Total Year to Date	3	5
PASSS Approved	4	3
Protective Services		
Families Serviced	171	177
Children Serviced	303	320
Children in Permanent Custody	20	23
Case Aides/Miles Driven	9,644.64	8,742.07
Volunteer Services		
New Inquiries	48	51
Active Volunteers	49	49
Parent Education		
Steps to Better Parenting I:		
Adults Enrolled	22	19
Adults Successfully Completed Program	11	-