

Should You Speak to Someone about Your Anxiety?

A Self-Diagnostic for Anxious Moms

How do you know when you should seek out help for the anxiety you face? You may wonder if your anxiety is severe enough to warrant reaching out to a counselor or medical physician for help.

Generally speaking, I would advise that if that question is on your mind to begin with, there is no harm in reaching out to your pastor or a biblical counselor in your area to discuss your experience and to determine if you could benefit from some ongoing targeted help with your anxiety. In some cases medication can be helpful in treating anxiety, so you may also benefit from a consultation with a medical physician about your symptoms and concerns.

If you are having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, please consult with your medical doctor immediately. Also, if you have a history of other mental illness alongside anxiety, or if you are abusing substances as a means of coping, please do reach out for medical care as well as counseling right away.

Otherwise, perhaps the following questionnaire can help you to determine the level of your anxiety and whether it is severe enough to reach out to a trained professional for additional help.

In the past week, how often have you experienced the following?

1. I felt anxious for no apparent reason.
 - 4 - Almost every day or every day
 - 3 - More than half the days
 - 2 - Less than half the days
 - 1 - Almost never or not at all
2. I felt intense concern for the safety of my loved ones.
 - 4 - Almost every day or every day
 - 3 - More than half the days
 - 2 - Less than half the days
 - 1 - Almost never or not at all
3. I had a general feeling that something bad was going to happen.
 - 4 - Almost every day or every day
 - 3 - More than half the days
 - 2 - Less than half the days
 - 1 - Almost never or not at all
4. I imagined situations to be threatening or unsafe even when they were not.
 - 4 - Almost every day or every day
 - 3 - More than half the days
 - 2 - Less than half the days
 - 1 - Almost never or not at all

5. I found handling uncertainty to be very stressful.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

6. I felt persistent worry about areas of life that might have been out of proportion to their impact.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

7. I overthought plans with a mind toward worst-case scenarios.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

8. I feared making a wrong decision.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

9. I struggled to redirect my mind from a particular worry.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

10. I felt edgy or restless.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

11. I had difficulty focusing, or felt mentally “foggy.”

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

12. I had trouble sleeping.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

13. I felt tension in my muscles.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

14. I had trouble catching my breath or experienced a racing heart connected to nervousness.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

15. I felt generally fatigued.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

16. My worry interfered with relationships or other parts of life.

- 4 - Almost every day or every day
- 3 - More than half the days
- 2 - Less than half the days
- 1 - Almost never or not at all

For moms of infants:

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| 17. I was able to sleep when the baby slept. | 18. I was able to relax when my baby was being cared for by someone else. |
| 4 - Almost never or never | 4 - Almost never or never |
| 3 - Very rarely | 3 - Very rarely |
| 2 - More often than not | 2 - More often than not |
| 1 - Almost always or always | 1 - Almost always or always |

If you chose a 3 or 4 as your answer for three or more statements, I would encourage you to find a good Christian counselor in your area and set up an initial meeting. You may also find it helpful to speak to your pastor or other mature believers at your church. Your church will likely have recommendations for wise counselors in your area, so ask for guidance for your counselor search. A helpful website for finding a counselor is www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/find-a-biblical-counselor.

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