



## Lab A10-9 Recognizing Anxiety Disorders and Coping with Fears

### Part I. Are You Overly Anxious?

This self-test was developed to help screen for common anxiety disorders. Answer “yes” or “no” for each question based on your experiences *during the past month*.

Yes      No

#### Panic disorder

- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Did you experience a sudden unexplained attack of intense fear, anxiety, or panic for no apparent reason? (If “yes,” continue with questions a–c; if “no,” go to question 2.)
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ a. Were you afraid you might have more of these attacks?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ b. Were you worried that these attacks could mean you were losing control, having a heart attack, or “going crazy”?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ c. Did these attacks cause changes or avoidance patterns in your behavior?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Have you been afraid of not being able to get help or not being able to escape in certain situations, such as being on a bridge, in a crowded store, or in similar situations?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Have you been afraid or unable to travel alone?

#### Generalized anxiety disorder

- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Have you persistently worried about several different things, such as work, school, family, and money?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Did you find it difficult to control your worrying?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Did persistent worrying or nervousness cause problems with your work or your dealings with people?

#### Obsessive-compulsive disorder

- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Did you have persistent, senseless thoughts you could not get out of your head, such as thoughts of death, illnesses, aggression, sexual urges, contamination, or others?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Did you spend more time than necessary doing things over and over again, such as washing your hands, checking things, or counting things?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Did you spend more than one hour a day involved in your senseless thoughts or your needless checking, washing, or counting?

#### Social phobia

- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Were you afraid to do things in front of people, such as public speaking, eating, performing, or teaching?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Did you avoid or feel very uncomfortable in situations involving people, such as parties, weddings, dating, dances, and other social events?

#### Post-traumatic stress disorder

- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Have you ever had an extremely frightening, traumatic, or horrible experience—such as being the victim of a violent crime, being seriously injured in a car crash, being sexually assaulted, seeing someone seriously injured or killed, or being the victim of a natural disaster? (If “yes,” continue with questions a–e.)
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ a. Did you relive the experience through recurrent dreams, preoccupations, or flashbacks?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ b. Did you seem less interested in important things, not “with it,” or unable to experience or express emotions?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ c. Did you have problems sleeping, concentrating, or keeping your temper?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ d. Did you avoid anything that reminded you of the original horrible event?
- \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_ e. Did you have some of the above problems for more than one month?

Consider seeking professional assistance if your daily functioning is impaired or if you are significantly troubled by any of the areas in which you answered “yes.”

(over)

**LAB A10-9** (continued)

**Part II. Self-Help for Fears**

Everyone has fears. They may not be serious enough to meet the diagnostic criteria for an anxiety disorder, but if they interfere with the quality of your life, you should do something about them. Try the following self-help strategies for some of your common fears and worries.

1. Confront your problem by taking an objective look at yourself and your rationalizations. Are you really incapable of doing college-level work, or are you actually terrified by tests? Are you really not interested in a law career, or do you actually fear speaking in front of others? Are you really too tired to go to the party, or do you actually fear meeting new people?

Rationalization

More objective assessment

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Identify and critique your fearful ideas and negative self-talk: Are other people really so interested in you that they observe your every move, just waiting for you to embarrass yourself? Does each exam constitute an assessment of you as a human being?

Fearful self-talk

More realistic self-talk

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Rehearse and prepare for feared events: Set goals for study, for performing in front of others, or for meeting others, and then reward yourself for achieving your targets. Copy the behaviors of people who have learned to cope with anxiety and practice them.

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_ Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_ Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_ Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_ Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_ Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_ Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Develop relaxation strategies and practice them, especially before tests and performances (see Chapter 10). Use coping skills such as positive self-statements (“I feel calm,” or “I know I will pass”).

Relaxation technique(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Positive self-statements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Keep trying and get assistance, if needed. Fears are easier to avoid than to overcome, and success is not always swift. Don't expect to go from fear to fearlessness overnight. And if you find that your fears are interfering with your daily functioning, seek professional assistance.