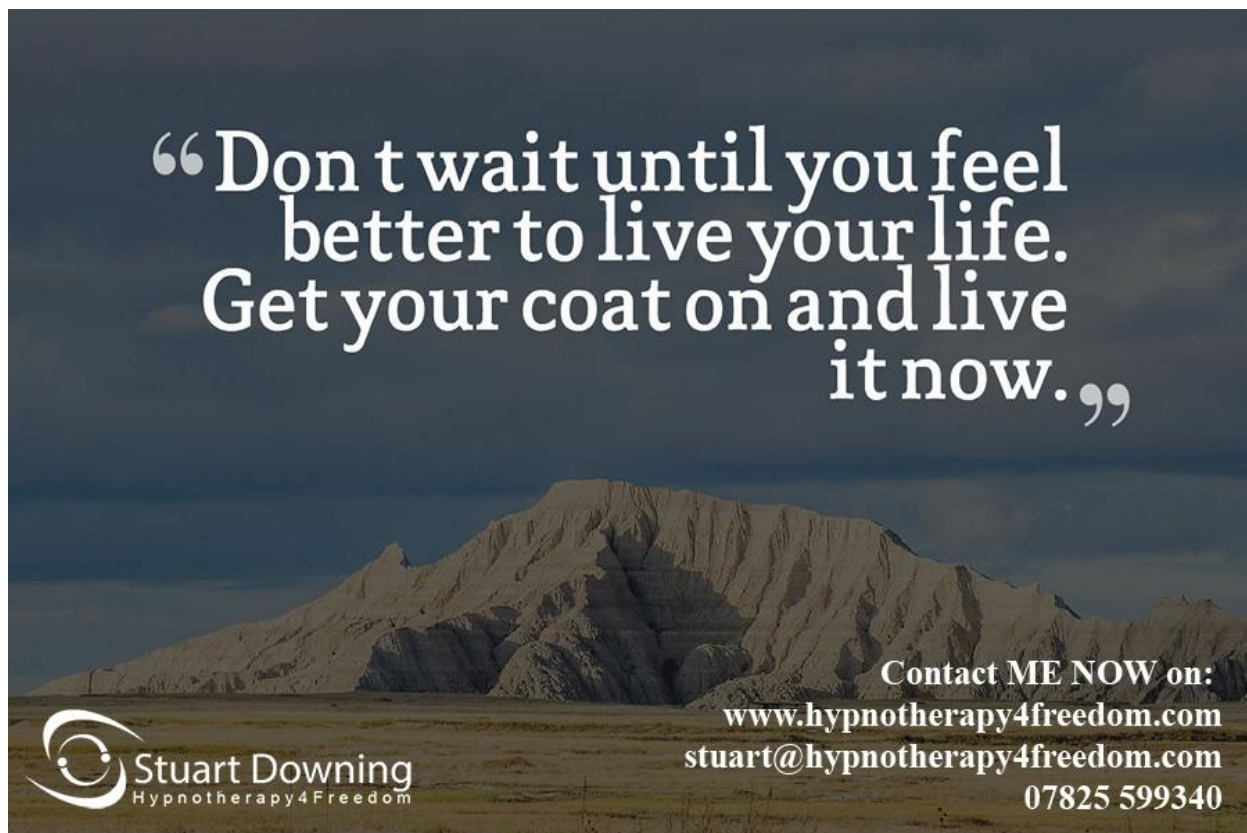




BREAK FREE OF ANXIETY


The Anxiety Rescue Manual

Stuart Downing



“Don't wait until you feel
better to live your life.
Get your coat on and live
it now.”

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 **Stuart Downing**
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Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear that can be mild or severe.

Anxiety often presents as irritability, restlessness and a difficulty in concentrating.



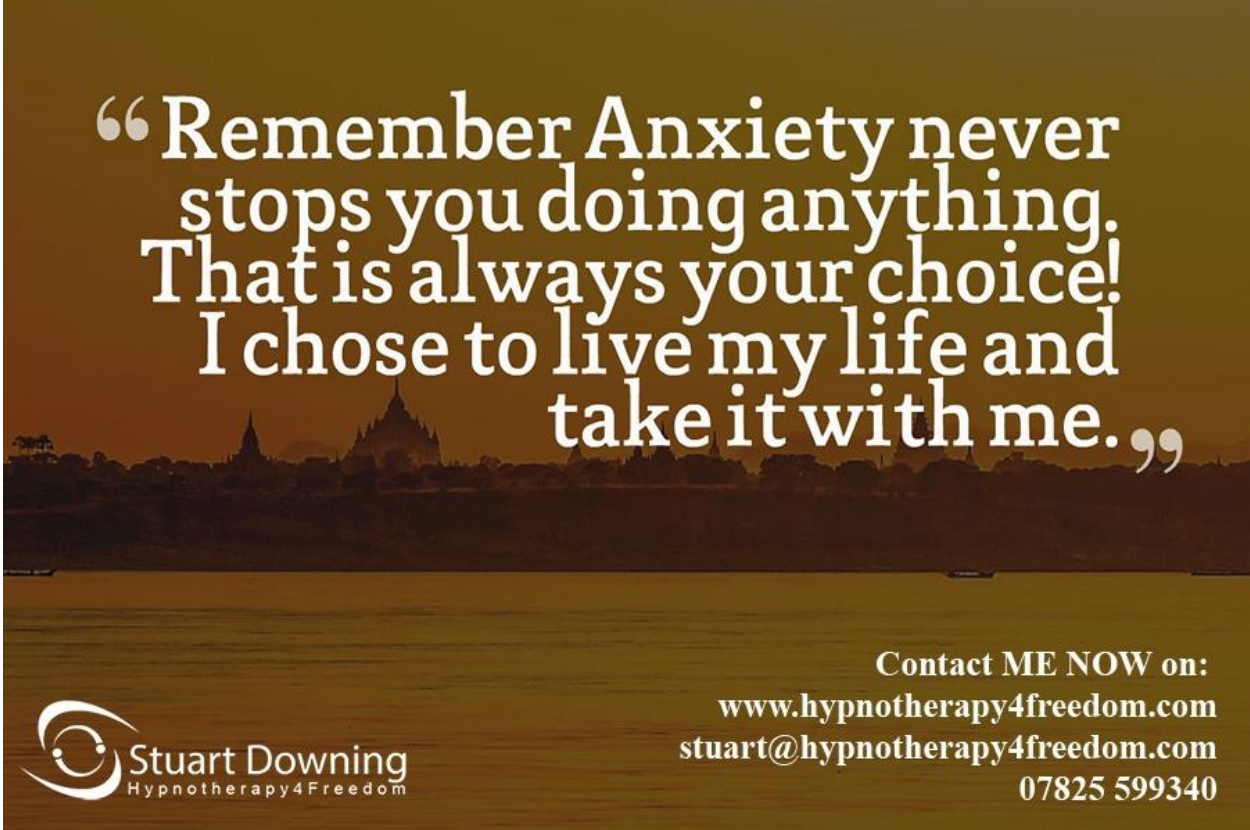
“Learning to accept who we are
is the first step to recovery, trying
to rid ourselves of discomfort
and distress only serves to increase
it.”



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You may find yourself procrastinating more and suffering panic or anxiety attacks.

If you suffer from anxiety, you may be tempted to turn to substances, alcohol, gambling or food to cope with your symptoms.



“Remember Anxiety never stops you doing anything. That is always your choice! I chose to live my life and take it with me.”

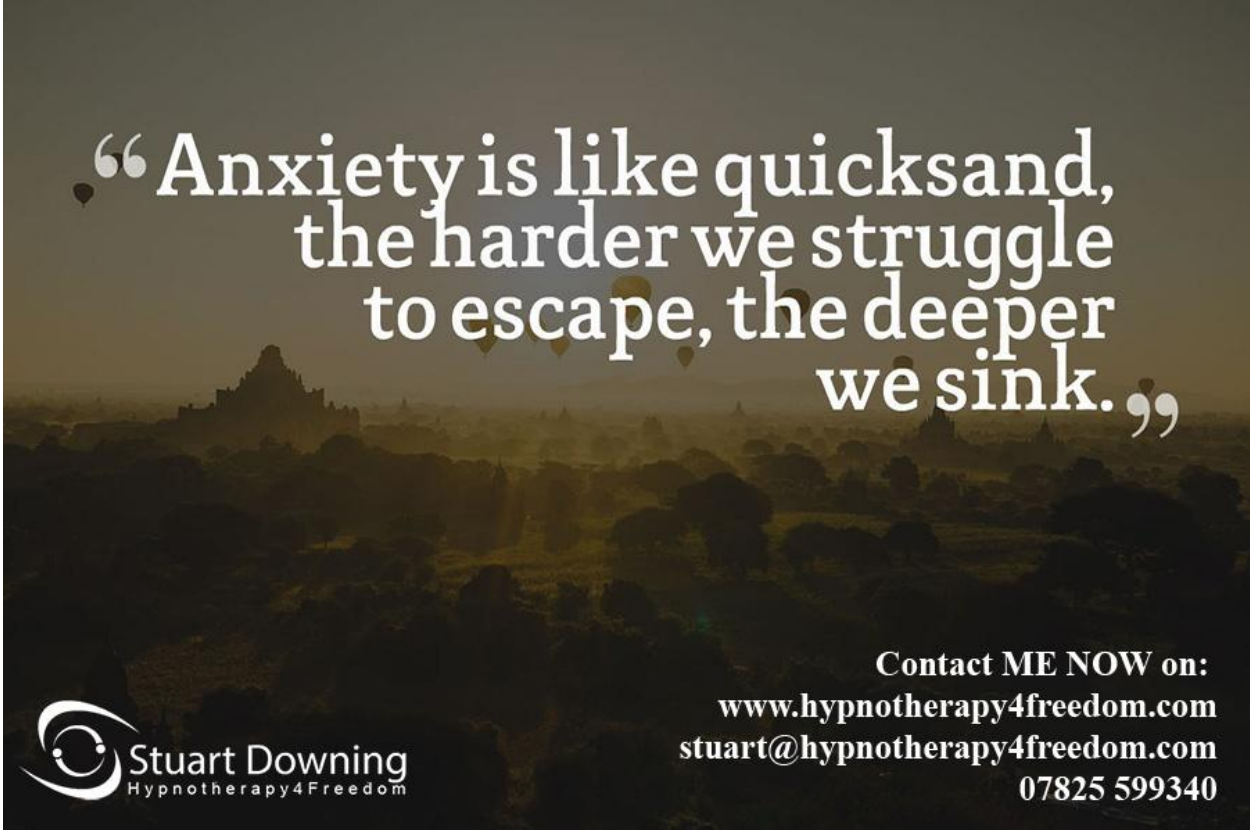


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Avoidance of social situations and events and feelings of awkwardness can normally develop, completing the cycle of misery!

In certain situations, you could find you obsess regarding order or counting, personal comfort or security or maybe germs, dirt or touching.

You may find these obsessions become a daily ritual and present as an uncontrollable negative trance state which you are unable to break.



“Anxiety is like quicksand,
the harder we struggle
to escape, the deeper
we sink.”



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Left untreated, it has a tendency to intensify and normal everyday problems become unmanageable.

Everyone has feelings of anxiety at some point in their life – for example, you may feel worried and anxious about sitting an exam, or having a medical test or job interview.

During times like these, feeling anxious can be perfectly normal. However, some people find it hard to control their worries. Their feelings of anxiety are more constant and can often affect their daily lives.



“Have faith that things will get better, maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but things will get better.”

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Anxiety is the main symptom of several conditions, including:
panic disorder, OCD, phobias – such as agoraphobia or claustrophobia
post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
social anxiety disorder (social phobia)

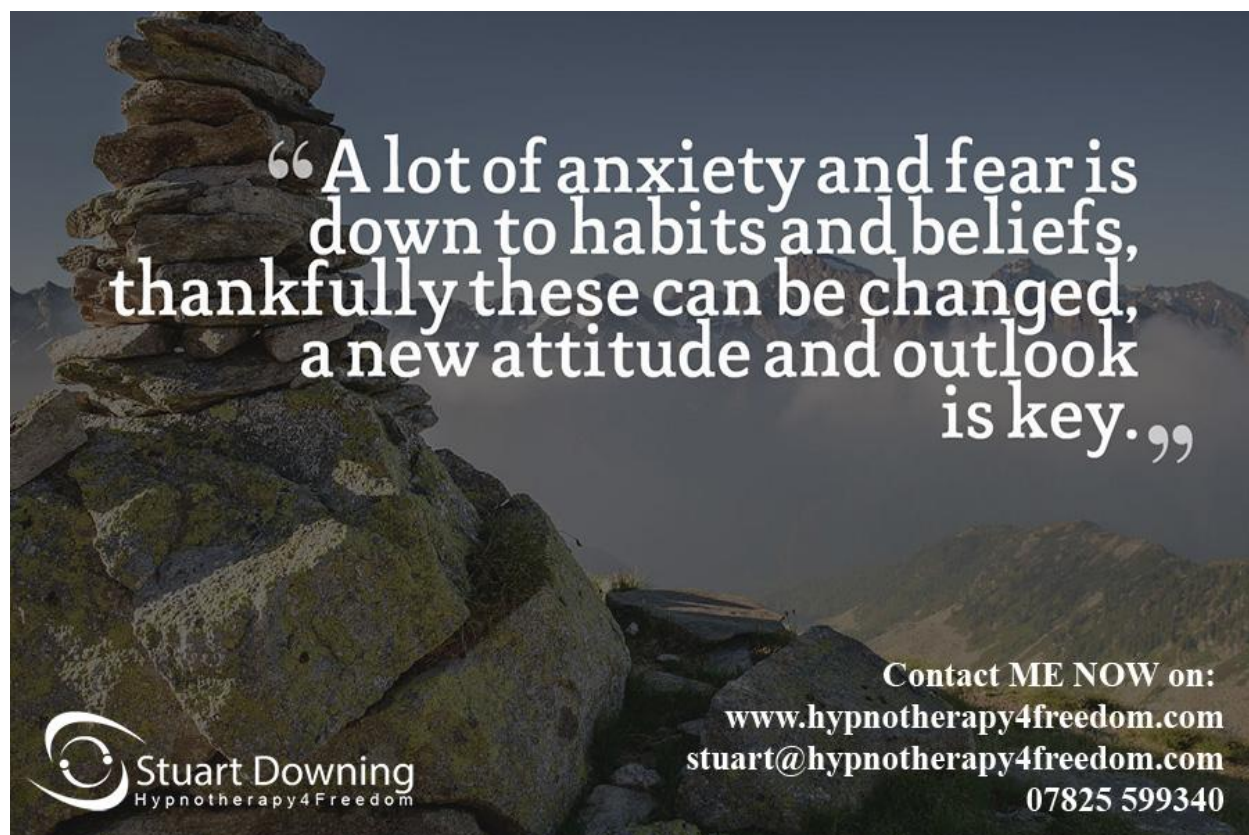
Habitual anxiety, or generalized anxiety disorder as it's sometimes called, is often caused by long-term habits which can take a little longer to resolve .

“An intrusive/fearful thought is not important, it's your reaction to it that is, give it its space and move on with your day.”



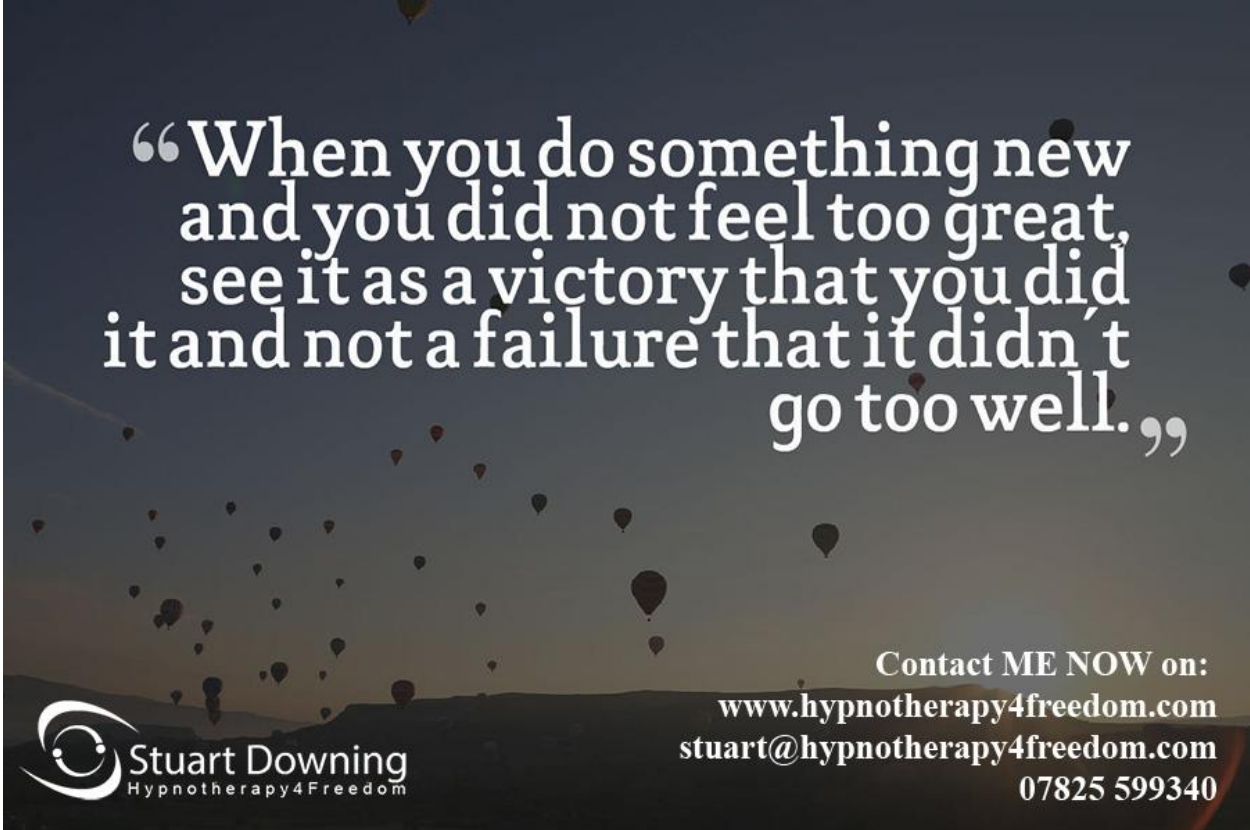
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The amygdala is a set of small, almond-shaped clusters of nuclei near the base of your brain. These almond-shaped clusters are the most active when you experience fear or aggression, due to the fact that they are responsible for triggering the body's fight or flight response.



The amygdala is the starting point for your fear and anxiety reactions.

First there is usually an emotional or environmental trigger: obsessive negative thoughts, or something you see, smell, hear, taste, or feel. Note that the trigger can also be inside you. You may not always know exactly what's triggering it. The subconscious mind is a very real thing.



“When you do something new
and you did not feel too great,
see it as a victory that you did
it and not a failure that it didn't
go too well.”



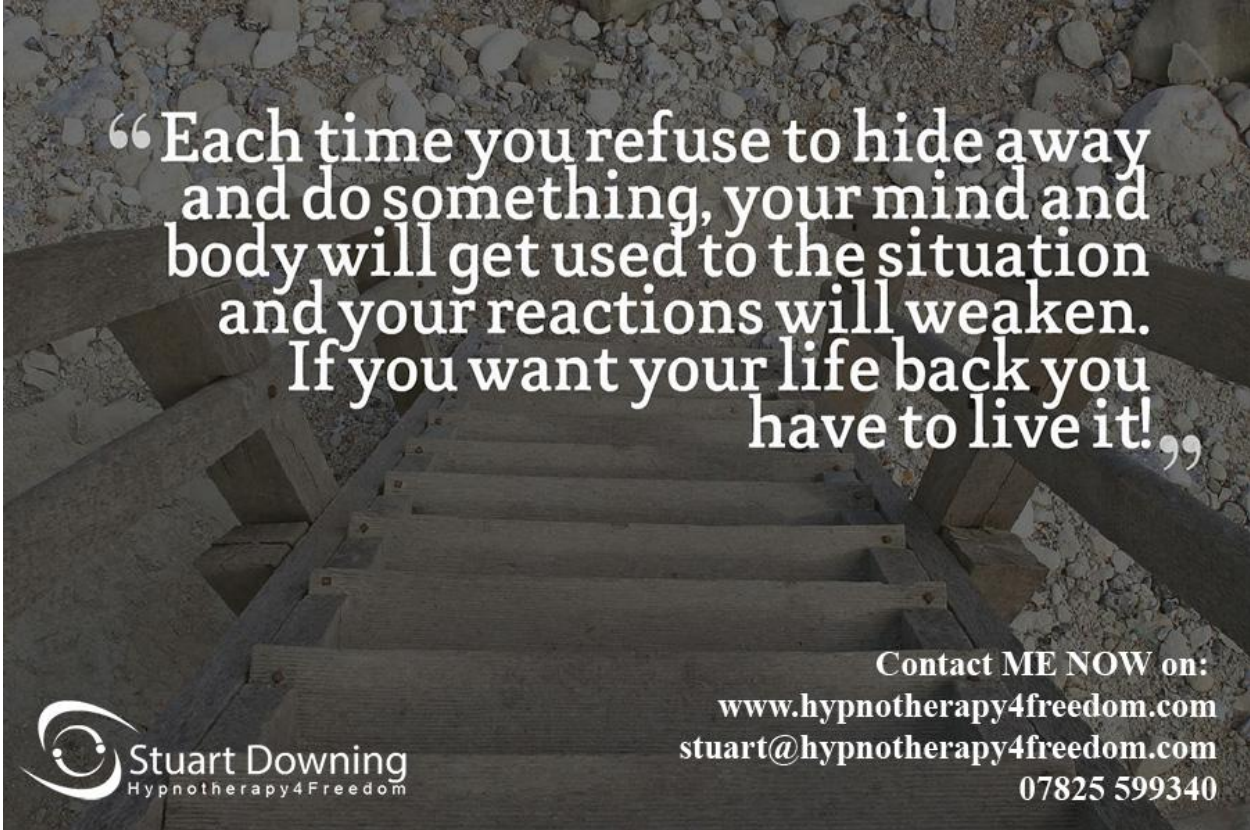
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Amygdala Reacts

The amygdala reacts to a trigger by preparing you to fight or run away. Triggers that are related to emotional past experiences produce stronger reactions in the amygdala.

Adrenal Action

Preparation for fight or flight involves the release of the adrenal chemical epinephrine into the bloodstream. Epinephrine is associated with adrenaline, and makes all your bodily processes speed up.



“Each time you refuse to hide away
and do something, your mind and
body will get used to the situation
and your reactions will weaken.
If you want your life back you
have to live it!”



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Blood Sugar

The epinephrine released also has the side effect of raising blood sugar levels in the body. The blood sugar is then available to the muscles and can be converted into quick energy.



“Truly no longer care what others think, drop the act, the painted smile, don't feel the need to convince others that everything is ok.”



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Shaking

Shaking encourages blood to reach the extremities and can also be the result of the extra energy in the body.

Pounding Heart

Epinephrine boosts the heart rate, which sends extra blood to power the body.



“With anxiety we have
far more imaginary
worries than real ones.”



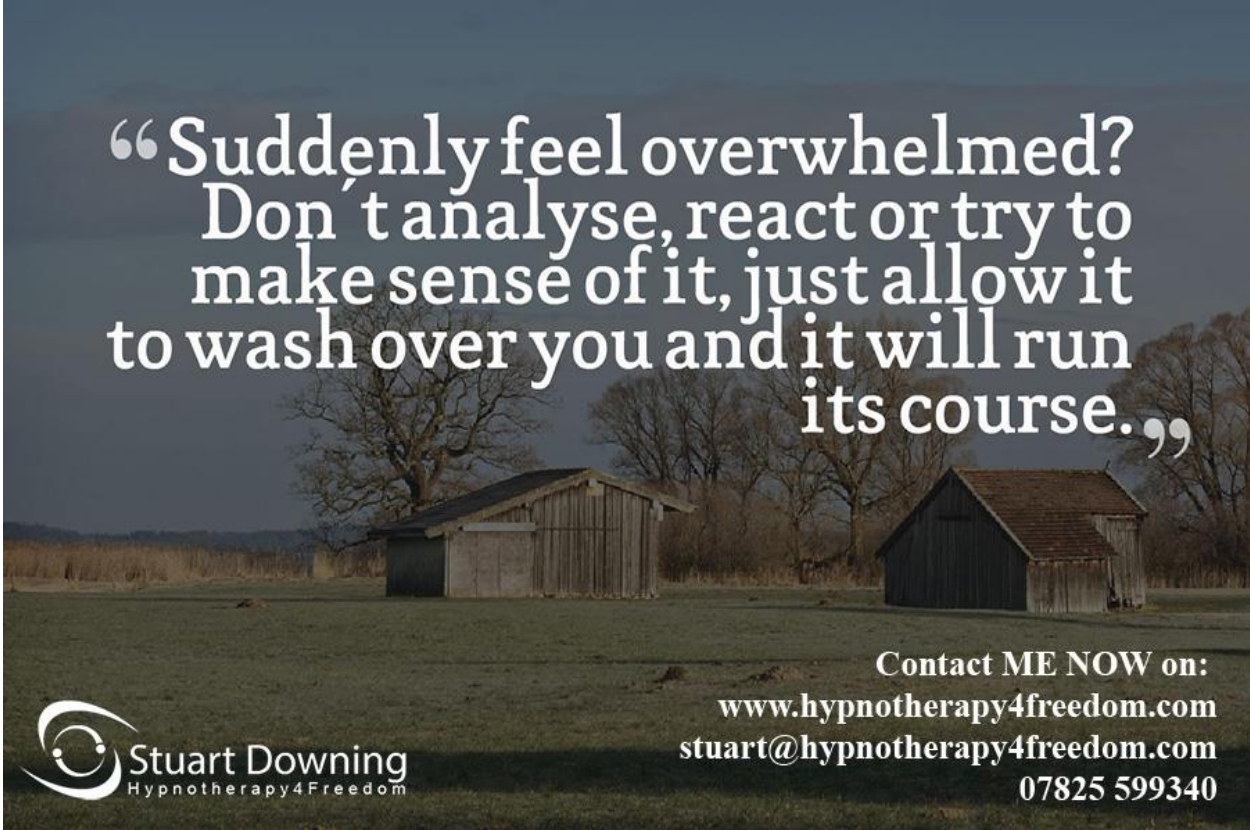
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Flushing

Extra blood from the heart that the muscles don't use shows up as a red tinge in the face, neck, arms and/or chest.

Faster Breathing Rate

As your heart rate climbs, your lungs have to work faster to make sure the blood circulating in the body is supplied with enough oxygen.



“Suddenly feel overwhelmed?
Don't analyse, react or try to
make sense of it, just allow it
to wash over you and it will run
its course.”



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Aching Chest

Your lungs and heart working harder than normal can cause your chest to ache.

The amygdala wants to keep you safe. It's processes are specifically designed to keep you out of danger. But when it regularly overreacts, it becomes an anxiety disorder.

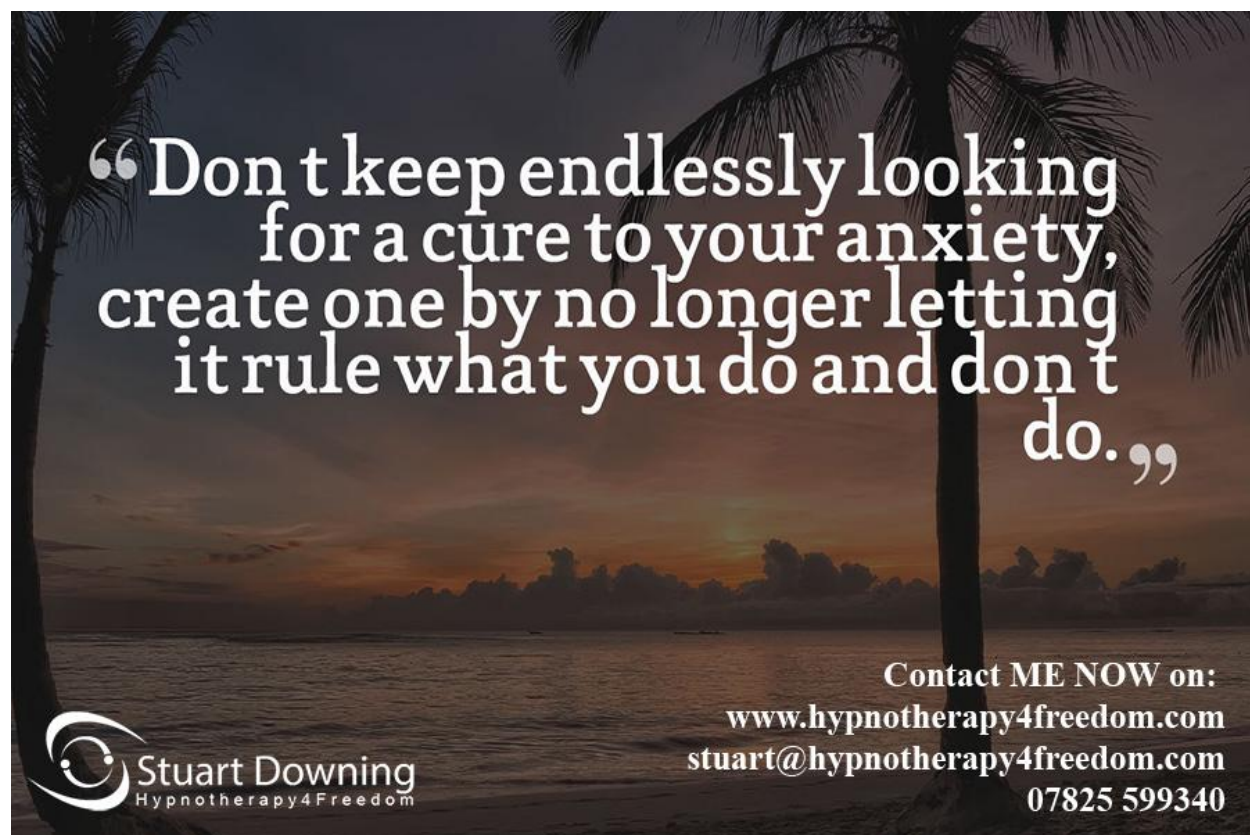


“If anxiety tried to stop me
doing something, I would
do it even more to show
it who was in charge.”



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The amygdala is not a “thinking” part of your brain so much as it is a “reacting” part. Its role is not to figure out why you are afraid, but to alert you if bad memories support a fight or flight reaction, and, if they do, to cause that fight or flight reaction to take place. For this reason, it is difficult when your amygdala has already been triggered to “talk yourself out of” the reaction. The amygdala doesn’t much care if your rational mind is saying there’s no real danger: it has reacted because other parts of your brain believe that there is.



“Don't keep endlessly looking for a cure to your anxiety, create one by no longer letting it rule what you do and don't do.”

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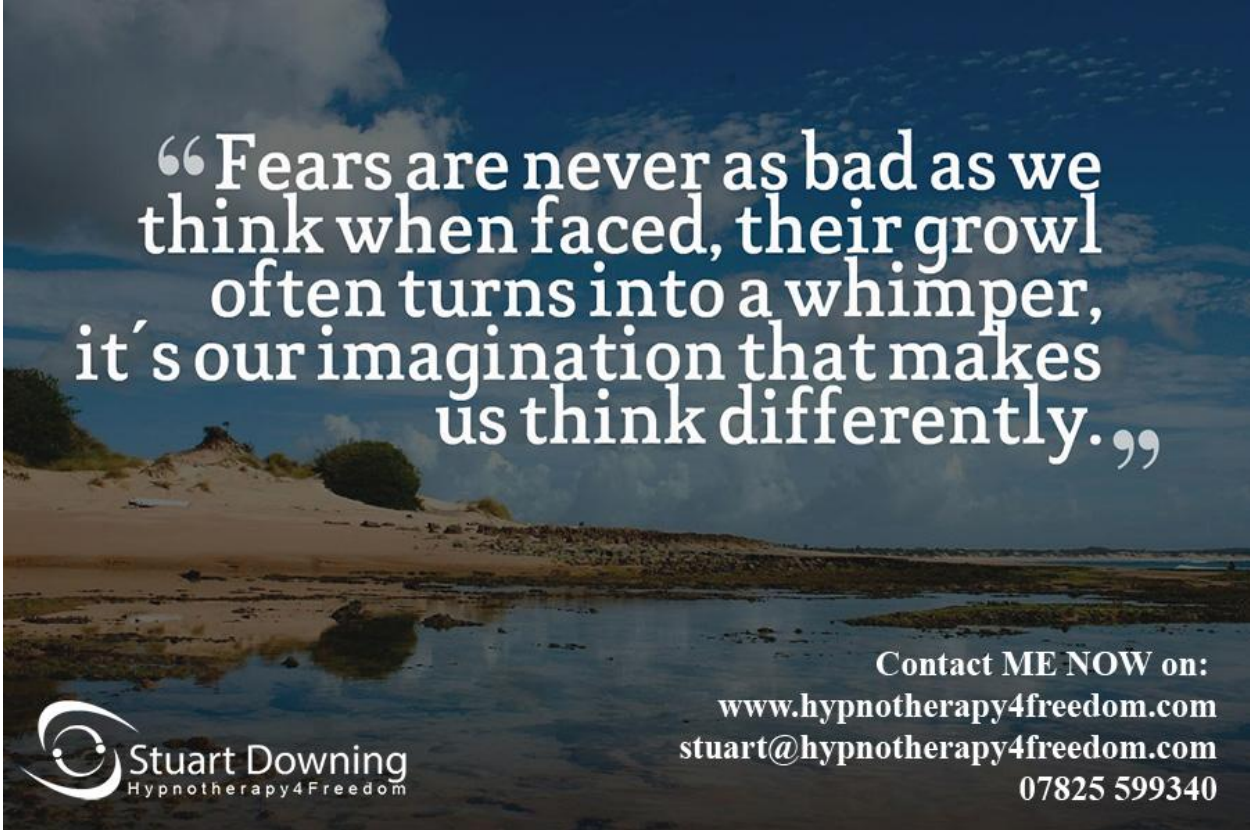
Start to Identify your anxiety triggers-

What or when are the times when you are more likely to get anxious? If you can see the patterns, then maybe you can do something about those situations, and do something different.

Certain places?

Certain people?

Anytime, anyplace?



“Fears are never as bad as we think when faced, their growl often turns into a whimper, it’s our imagination that makes us think differently.”



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See certain things?

Hear certain things?

Think ahead to certain situation?



“See a setback
as a comeback.”



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Once your triggers are identified, ask yourself -

What am I reacting to?

What is it that I think is going to happen here?

Is this fact or opinion?



“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength.”

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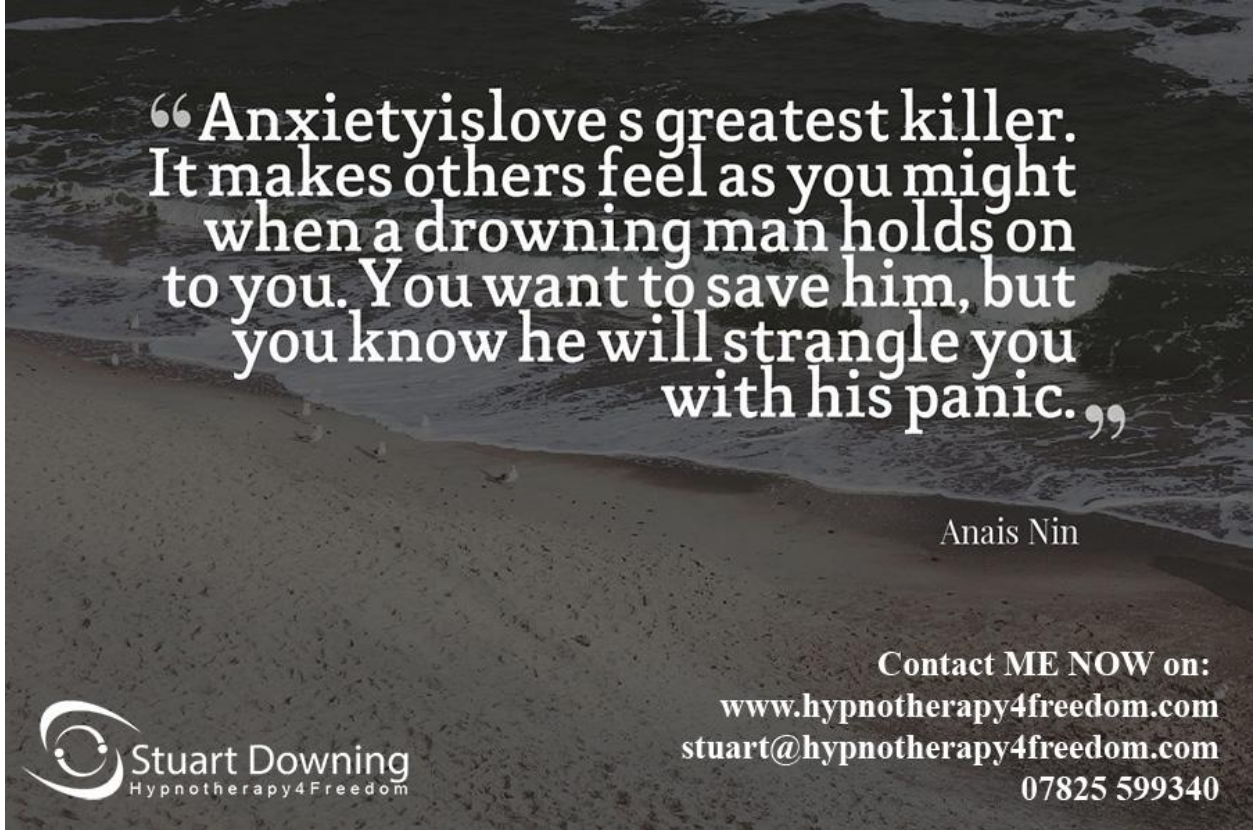
What's the worst (and best) that could happen? What's most likely to happen?

Am I getting things out of proportion?

How important is this really? How important will it be in 6 months time?

Am I overestimating the danger?

Am I underestimating my ability to cope?



“Anxiety is love’s greatest killer. It makes others feel as you might when a drowning man holds on to you. You want to save him, but you know he will strangle you with his panic.”

Anais Nin



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Am I believing I can predict the future?

Is there another way of looking at this?

What advice would I give someone else in this situation?

Am I putting more pressure on myself?

Just because I feel bad, doesn't mean things really are bad.



“Anxiety’s like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn’t get you very far.”

Jodi Picoult



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What do I want or need from this person or situation? What do they want or need from me? Is there a compromise?

What would be the consequences of responding the way I usually do?

“Life is ten percent what
you experience and ninety
percent how you respond
to it.”


Dorothy M. Neddermeyer



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Is there another way of dealing with this? What would be the most helpful and effective action to take? (for me, for the situation, for others)

Challenge your automatic thoughts



“Every time you are tempted
to react in the same old way,
ask if you want to be a prisoner
of the past or a pioneer of
the future.”

Deepak Chopra



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Recognise your anxiety behaviours; which could be-


Avoiding people or places

Not going out

Going to certain places at certain times, e.g. shopping at smaller shops, at less busy times

Only going with someone else

Escape, leave early



“If you trade your authenticity
for safety, you may experience
the following anxiety, depression, eating
disorders, addiction, rage, blame,
resentment, and inexplicable grief.”

Brene Brown



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Safety Behaviours: You go to to the feared situation, but use coping behaviours to get you through. For example : holding a drink, smoking more, fiddling with clothes or handbag, avoiding eye contact with others, having an escape plan, taking medication. Safety behaviours can also help to keep your anxiety going. Whilst you depend on them to help you cope, you don't get to challenge the situations of anxiety.



“Smile, breathe,
and go slowly.”

Thich Nhat Hanh



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Even though you can't see or feel it, there's a lot you can do to help keep that small, almond shaped bit of your brain in check when you find that it's working overtime.

Taking care of your body and mind is the first step you should take. Once you do this, you will be better prepared to face the stressors in your life and hopefully retrain your amygdala to stop reacting to the non-threatening stimuli that produce anxiety.



“People have a hard time letting go of their suffering. Out of a fear of the unknown, they prefer suffering that is familiar.”

Thich Nhat Hanh



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Healthy eating -

Eat lots of fruit and vegetables, and try to avoid too much sugar.

Resulting dips in your blood sugar can give you anxious feelings. Try to avoid drinking too much tea and coffee, as caffeine can increase anxiety levels.

“You don't have to control
your thoughts. You just
have to stop letting them
control you.”

Dan Millman



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Avoid alcohol, or drink in moderation

It's very common for people to drink when they feel nervous. Some people call alcohol 'Dutch courage', but the after-effects of alcohol can make you feel even more afraid or anxious.

Regular deep relaxation can 'reset' your nervous system's baseline so that you remember how it feels to be relaxed on a daily basis.

Hypnosis and NLP techniques will help you retrain your fight and flight response and regain control from your anxieties .



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Anxiety Trauma Therapy

helping people overcome anxiety and trauma



Panic Attack and Stress Therapy

helping people take control of their lives



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