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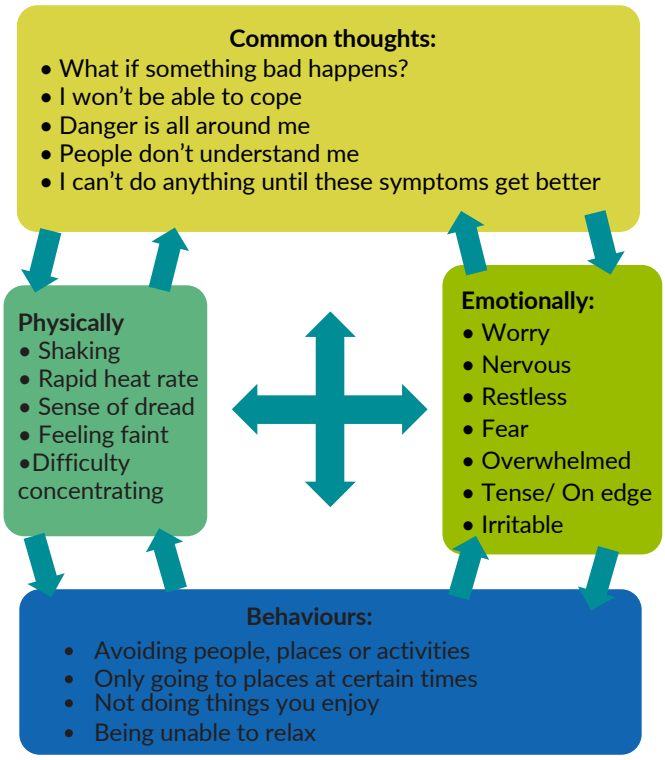
MANAGING YOUR ANXIETY

This information guide is for individuals living with a serious illness, and who are experiencing moments of worry and anxiety. This resource offers practical strategies to manage anxious thoughts and emotions that may be helpful in your daily routine.

What is anxiety?
Anxiety is when you feel worried, nervous, or uneasy about something. It's like having a little alarm going off in your mind, making you feel on edge or tense even if there's no immediate danger.

Adrenaline is rushed into the bloodstream to enable us to run away or fight (fight or flight) which creates the feeling of nausea or butterflies in the stomach, chest feeling tighter and breathing becoming more rapid which can be uncomfortable.

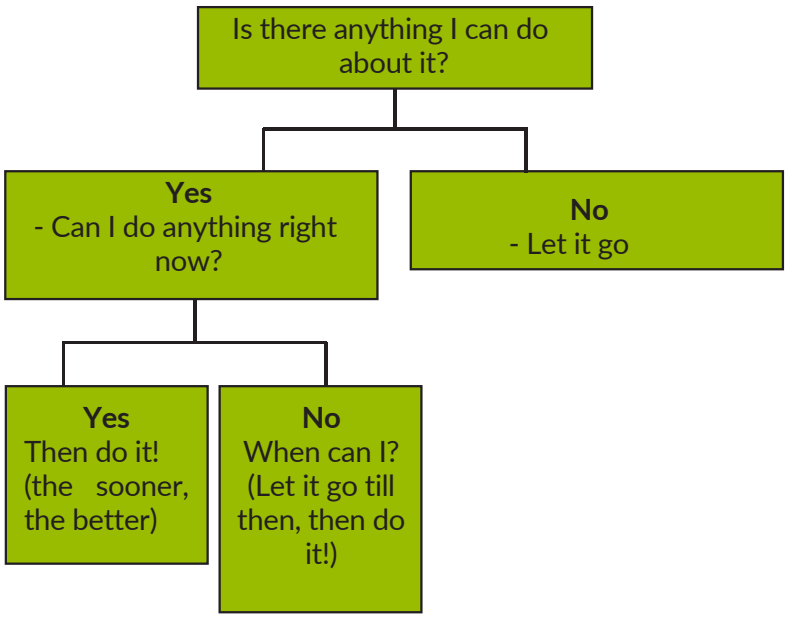
How does anxiety affect you?



How can you ease your anxiety?

When someone is diagnosed with a serious illness, their perspective on life changes. There are helpful ways to navigate challenging thoughts and physical reactions associated with anxiety to help increase resilience.

You might ask yourself the following question when your are feeling anxious or worried:



What can you do?
It's helpful to practice being present daily or whenever possible. The shift it brings happens slowly and subtly. There's no strict rule on how to be more in tune with the present. It's just about being fully aware of yourself, your surroundings, and your feelings right now, rather than dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Distance from thoughts
If you find yourself worrying and ruminating, try noticing thoughts as merely thoughts and not facts. Say to yourself *"I notice I'm having the thought that ..."* Then letting the thought go and move onto something else. If the same thought keeps returning, say to yourself "I'm having that thought again..."
then repeat the process of letting go and moving on.

Hobbies can distract us by focusing on something else
Include activities throughout your day that are enjoyable. It is also important to build healthy, positive relationships with others who can offer additional support which will in turn improve your mental health.

Do something you enjoy and allow yourself to fully focus on it:
Try to bring your full attention to whatever activity you are engaging in – If you are watching a movie- follow the plot, listen to the words, notice the images, what people are wearing, how they stand or move and what their voice sound like.

Be more present
Create moments in your day to connect to your five senses
- What can I see …
- What can I smell…
- What can I hear …
- What can I taste …
- What can I feel/touch

You can do this with any activity (reading, listening to music, chatting with friends or family, daily chores, whatever brings you a sense of pleasure or happiness)

Do not worry if these strategies don't work immediately. It requires regular practice to notice subtle changes.

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