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# **Managing Anxiety with CBT**

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## **Learn to:**

- Understand what anxiety is and how it can hold you back
- Prepare for change and establish goals for the future
- Face your fears and keep your worries in perspective

**Graham Davey  
Kate Cavanagh  
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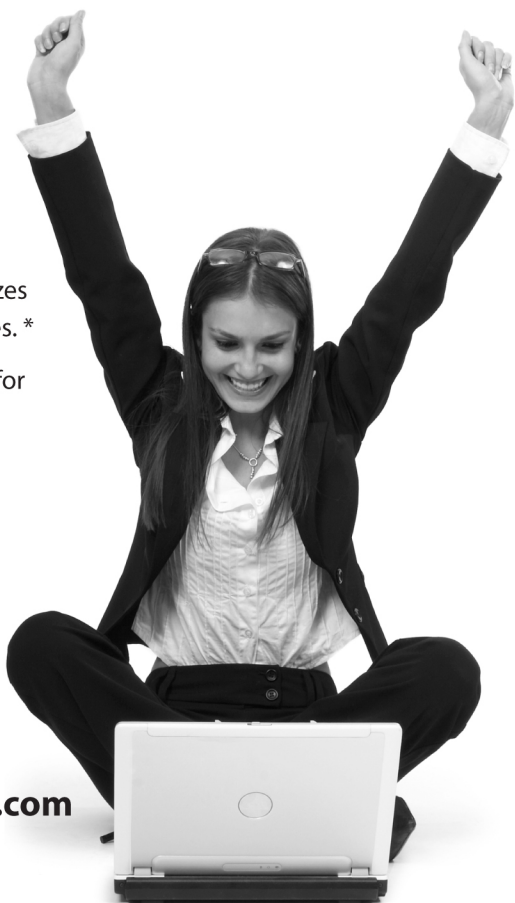
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*Managing Anxiety  
with CBT*

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with CBT***

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**by Graham Davey, Kate Cavanagh,  
Fergal Jones, Lydia Turner and  
Adrian Whittington**

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# Introduction

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**C**ognitive Behavioural Therapy, or CBT, is one of the most popular modern treatments for psychological problems, and is the treatment of choice for common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. In this book we help you use the principles and practices of CBT as a tool to help you overcome problematic anxiety.

The strength of CBT is that it helps you to identify patterns in your thoughts and behaviours that exacerbate and maintain your anxiety. CBT then provides basic ways in which you can change unhelpful thinking (the *cognitive*, or thinking, bit), and find new ways to behave (the *behavioural* bit) that minimise anxiety.

You're not unusual if you suffer from anxiety problems. They're a common feature of modern-day living, and sometimes anxiety can overwhelm you. In this book we use tried and tested treatment methods that enable you to overcome your own anxiety. We discuss how normal anxiety can turn into a problem, and the various ways in which problematic anxiety can manifest itself. And we show you how the principles and practices of CBT can help you, and how you can maintain your progress and build a better and fuller life.

## About This Book

We wrote this book to provide comprehensible coverage of what anxiety is and how you can use CBT to overcome it. The book covers:

- ✔ Knowing what anxiety is and how it can become a problem.
- ✔ Understanding your own anxiety and drawing up a map of your anxiety that helps you explain what causes it and what maintains it.
- ✔ Setting goals for yourself when starting to deal with your anxiety.

- ✔ Using techniques for facing up to your fears and anxieties.
- ✔ Dealing with uncontrollable worrying.
- ✔ Identifying unhelpful rules you use that maintain your anxiety, and providing you with various techniques to change these rules and 'errors of thinking'.
- ✔ Putting your anxiety into perspective and helping you to make lifestyle changes that maintain your mental health and ward off anxiety.

We've tried to adopt a simple, readable style, and we've provided interesting activities, examples and illustrations that we hope you find accessible and even entertaining. Most importantly, we hope that you find out a little about CBT and are able to use it in the context of your own life to help you understand and manage your own anxiety.

However, if your anxiety is causing you considerable distress to the point where it's interfering significantly with the things you need to do each day and with your enjoyment of life, then we recommend that you seek professional help to provide you with an additional helping hand.

## *Conventions Used in This Book*

*Italics* introduce new terms, underscore key differences in meaning between words and highlight the most important aspects of a sentence or example.

**Bold** text shows keywords and the action part of numbered lists.

Sidebars – the grey shaded boxes you see in most chapters – contain interesting titbits of information or occasionally expand on a topic within the chapter. Read them if they look interesting to you, or skip them.

## *How This Book Is Organised*

We divide the book into four parts consisting of a total of 11 chapters. The table of contents lists subheadings that provide more information about each chapter, but below is a brief description of the purpose and contents of each of the four parts of the book.



---

## ***Part I: Understanding Your Anxiety***

This part helps you to understand what anxiety is and why people experience it.

In Chapter 1 we discuss ways in which people experience anxiety, and cover the physical experience and how anxiety affects your thinking. We explore the question of when anxiety becomes a problem, what forms anxiety takes when it becomes a problem and whether you can learn to overcome your anxiety when it seems to control you. We also introduce you to CBT and how CBT can help you to manage your anxiety.

Chapter 2 then guides you through making a map of your anxiety that helps you to explain what causes it and keeps it going. This map is useful in later chapters because it provides you with a guide to what you need to change.

## ***Part II: Tackling Your Anxiety***

We start this part, in Chapter 3, by helping you to think about what goals you set for yourself and where you would like to end up when you've dealt with your anxiety. Chapter 4 provides you with some methods for facing up to your fears and anxieties, and we discuss ways of putting yourself into situations that you've previously been avoiding. Then, in Chapter 5, you put your anxieties into perspective with a few tests to determine whether your fears are real or not.

Chapter 6 gives help in beating that chronic feature of anxiety known as 'worrying'. Persistent worry is one of the main features of anxiety, and overcoming it requires dedicated attention. Finally, everyone lives by rules, and Chapter 7 describes how unrealistic and unhelpful rules for living play a role in anxiety, and describes ways of overcoming these rules.

## ***Part III: Making Progress and Moving On***

There's more to you as a person than anxiety! In this part we start, in Chapter 8, by putting your anxiety into perspective

by describing some of the common contributing problems, such as low mood, depression, troubled sleep and problems with alcohol or prescription drugs. We also provide you with tips and advice about keeping a healthy lifestyle that helps you keep anxiety at bay. Then, in Chapter 9, we look at how you can move toward a brighter future based on our guidance in the book, building on successes and dodging pitfalls.

## *Part IV: The Part of Tens*

This section contains some quick tips about dealing with anxiety and using CBT. We offer our top tips for tackling anxiety and the best ways to expand your horizons and get on with your life.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

We use the following icons in this book to alert you to various important or helpful types of information:



This icon alerts you to a true-to-life example that helps you understand the point.



Here we provide practical advice for putting CBT into practice or describe an activity that we hope you find useful in helping you to understand your anxiety.



This icon tells you that we're discussing something important, so make sure that you take this issue in and remember it.



Beware! This icon alerts you to red flags and things that you should avoid in order to progress successfully or to develop better emotional health.



Whenever you use CBT to help you with your problems, you engage in specific activities to help you understand the process. This icon provides some examples of things for you to try out.

## *Where to Go from Here*

We hope you enjoy this self-help book and benefit from the journey we lay down for understanding and managing your

anxiety. We also hope that you gain a genuine insight into how you can use CBT to deal with common emotional and mental health problems.

If you feel that you cope better with anxiety as a result of using this book, make sure that you build on these successes and move towards a healthier and happier lifestyle.

We wish you well!