

Recognizing My Anxiety

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As I am a person who likes to define what I am talking about, let's first define *anxiety*. In general, it is a noun defined as the feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, usually pertaining to an event or something with uncertain results. Psychiatry defines it as, "a nervous disorder characterized by a state of excessive uneasiness and apprehension, typically with compulsive behavior or panic attacks." It is not simply our normal stress, but instead, it is a reaction to that stress.

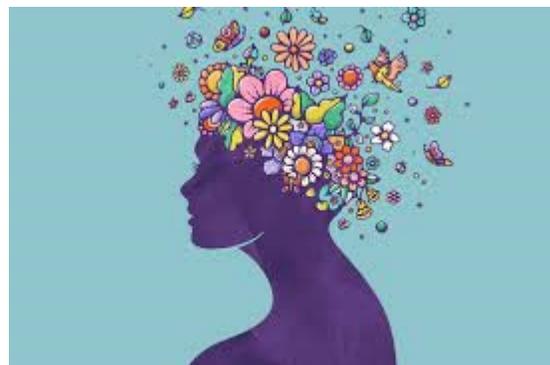
Anxiety happens to be our most common mental illness here in the U.S. with 19.1% of our population dealing with it. And only 36.9% of those suffering get treatment – an unfortunate subject for another day. The types of anxiety disorders range from generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder and medication induced anxiety disorder, just to name a few.

Today, I'd like to touch on my experience with situational anxiety, although it is not recognized in the doctor's manual as a distinct condition. It is not distinct because situational anxiety is thought to be "normal." That is until it moves into interfering with you making decisions and performing daily duties. Then it is considered to be specific phobia anxiety disorder.

I believe I dealt with this for years, prior to it coming to a head when I started looking to buy a house. OMG, I really believe I broke my first real estate agent! I would look at houses, choose one, make an offer, have my offer be accepted, then have a big panic attack, and change my mind. I did this more than twice. It got so bad I had to stop, step back and take a year and a half off from looking for a new home. I laugh about it sometimes now, as I went on, with very little anxiety, to successfully purchase a home.

What I came to realize is that I'd had this anxiety/phobia with making big financial commitments such as purchasing a car. It caused me so much anxiety I once had a car salesman tell me he'd never seen anyone look so sad about getting a new car. In my mind, all I could think was, did I pick the right car? What if this is not a good brand? What if it breaks down and I can't afford to repair it? To let you know, I bought a few cars prior to starting my house buying journey.

Once I recognized my issue (or phobia), I began to address it. By reading and using different tools I learned how to manage, capture the negative overwhelming thoughts, and bring them under subjection to the truth. My truths are "I got this" and it's okay to walk out the Serenity Prayer (*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.*)



I advise that you get to know yourself, recognize *your* issues as soon as possible, know *your* situation triggers, address them and use the tools and resources available to resolve or manage your challenges. You can also start by meeting with your primary care physician to discuss your specific issues with anxiety and get the support you need to overcome them. Hopefully, you'll look up one day and realize you're okay.

Check out these sources to learn more about anxiety disorders and the systems associated with them – [Anxiety & Depression Association of America](#) and [Very Well Mind](#).