

Coping with Anxiety

- **Reach out to others.** Spend time with friends or loved ones. Tell them about your fears, feelings, or uncertainties.
- **Express your feelings.** Do not keep your emotions bottled up. Find a way to experience them that is comfortable for you – talk to someone (friend, family member, counselor, religious leader, professor, etc.), write in a journal, go to a support group.
- **Focus upon a realistic assessment of your personal situation.** Try not to magnify your concerns.
- **Try to stay organized.** Keep a planner so that you know when papers and exams are coming up. Make sure to plan time for yourself away from work, class, and studying.
- **Cut down on alcohol and caffeine.** These can increase symptoms of anxiety.
- **Take care of your body.** Try to eat nutritious meals, get exercise, and get enough sleep.
- **Identify and minimize stressors.** Learn what situations or events cause you the most stress, and how to cope with them. Realize that life can be difficult, and that it is not so much a matter of what events have occurred, but what meaning we give to those events. We can not eliminate stressful events, but we can reckon with them.
- **Learn stress management and relaxation techniques.** Try yoga or meditation to help you focus on being calm. Experiment with muscle relaxation exercises, deep breathing, and mental or guided imagery.
- **Challenge the critical voice in your head.** Anxiety can make you feel like you are not normal or that you are a failure. You might find yourself thinking that other people are able to manage stress, that other people are not as scared as you, or that you are a bad student or person because you cannot handle all of your responsibilities. Realize that these thoughts are coming from the anxiety – not you.

Remember, the way others look may not show how they really feel.