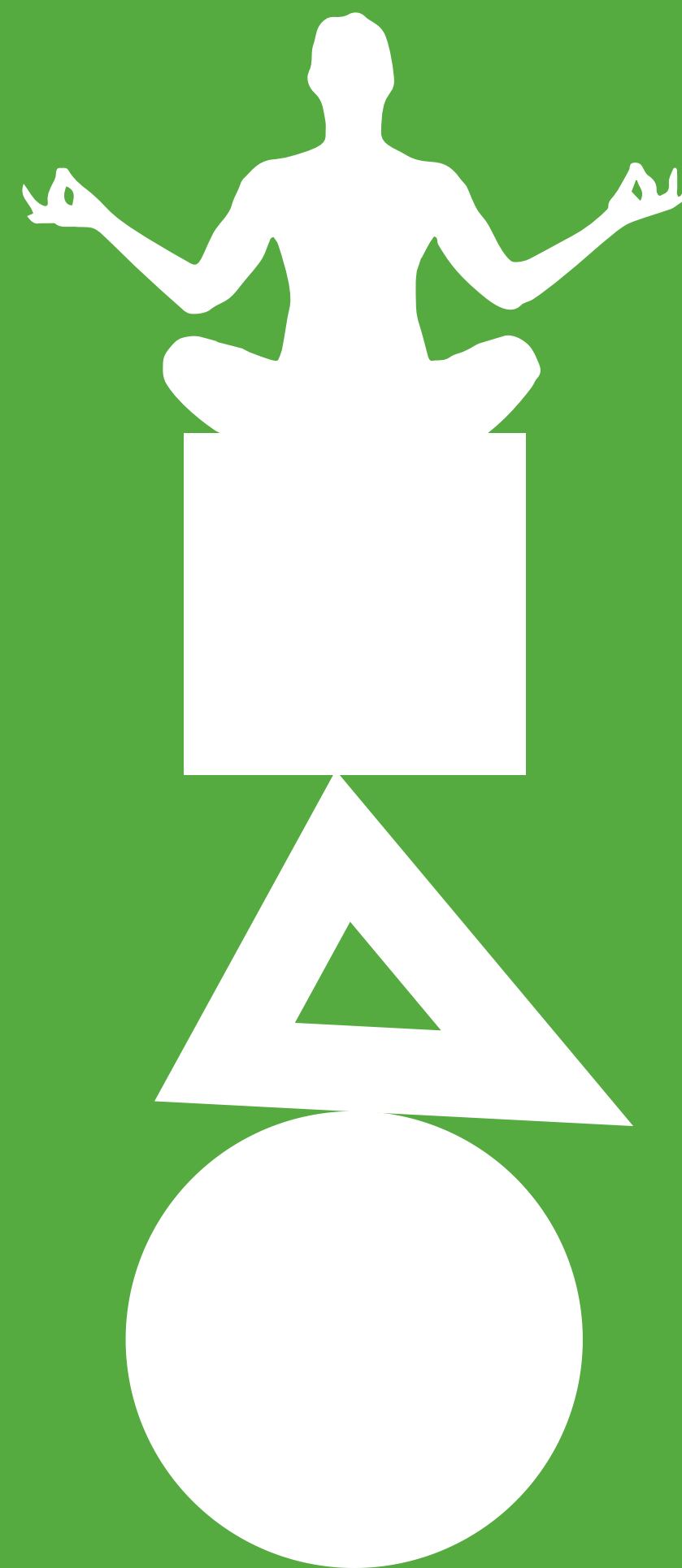


Anxiety

By Sadhri Kumar



Land Acknowledgement



What is anxiety?

- A natural response to stress, normal to feel occasionally during uncertainty or change (the person may or may not always know the cause)
 - First day of school
 - Before an exam or test
 - Public speaking/presentations
- Dates back thousands of years - a response against a threat - to keep us safe
 - Fight, flight, or freeze response

Anxiety Disorders

- Feelings of worry don't leave and begin interfering with your daily activities
 - Lack of focus, unable to do things you normally do
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
 - Excessive worrying or fear that lasts for several weeks or months (may not always know the cause)
 - Excessive fatigue, restlessness, irritability, increased heart rate, difficulty breathing, muscle tension, difficulty falling asleep/staying asleep
 - Impacts one in 5 people at some point in life
- Panic Disorder
 - Frequent, unexpected panic attacks, which can come out of the blue or be triggered by a fear
 - Increased heart rate, trembling, difficulty breathing, sweating
 - Impacts 1 in 75 people

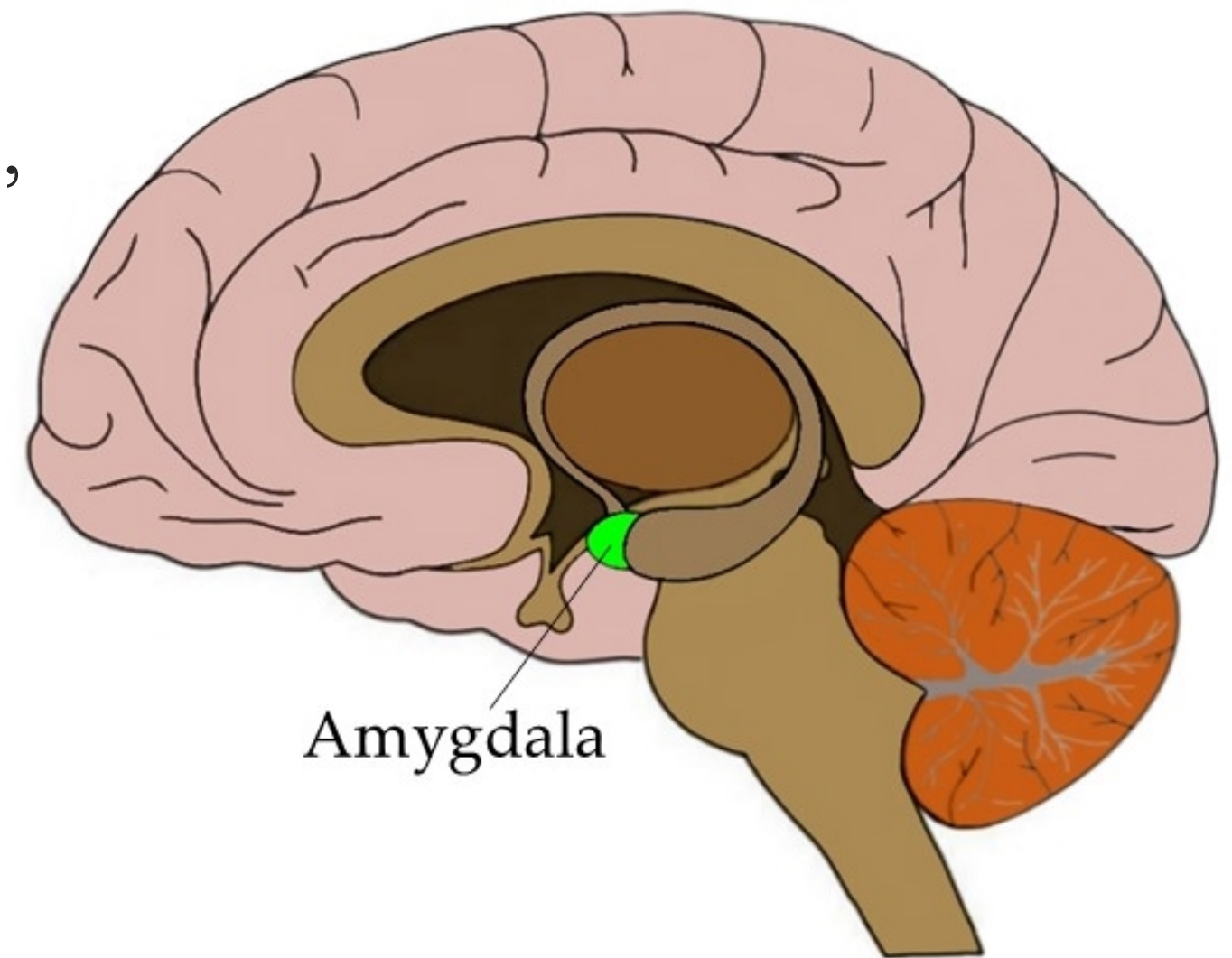
Anxiety Disorders (con't)

- Phobia-related disorder
 - Anxiety due to an irrational fear of something (objects, situations, activities) which gets blown out of proportion in the mind
 - Just experiencing fear or discomfort does not make you phobic
 - Blood or injections, heights, spiders, public speaking, dogs
- Social Anxiety Disorder
 - Anxiety related to social interactions or meeting/seeing others

*Anxiety and depression go hand-in-hand. If you experience one, the chances of you experiencing the other are quite high.

Anxiety Disorders - The Science

- The limbic system of the brain - emotions, memory
 - Stress hormones are released (adrenaline, cortisol)
 - Triggers the amygdala to become overactive - the fight or flight response
 - Blood is sent to parts of the body that will help you fight or run (legs)
 - Digestive processes might stop - butterflies
 - AKA Amygdala Hijack



Neuroscientifically Challenged

What can I do to alleviate anxiety?

- Sleep, exercise, diet
 - Sleep 7-9 hrs/day
 - Exercise ~30 mins/day
 - Balanced diet, moderation
 - Plenty of water
 - Avoid alcohol and caffeine
 - Consume a variety of fruits and vegetables to ensure adequate nutrient intake
- Facing your fears and avoiding "avoidance behaviours"
 - If you give in to these behaviours, you will further depend on them

What can I do to alleviate anxiety?

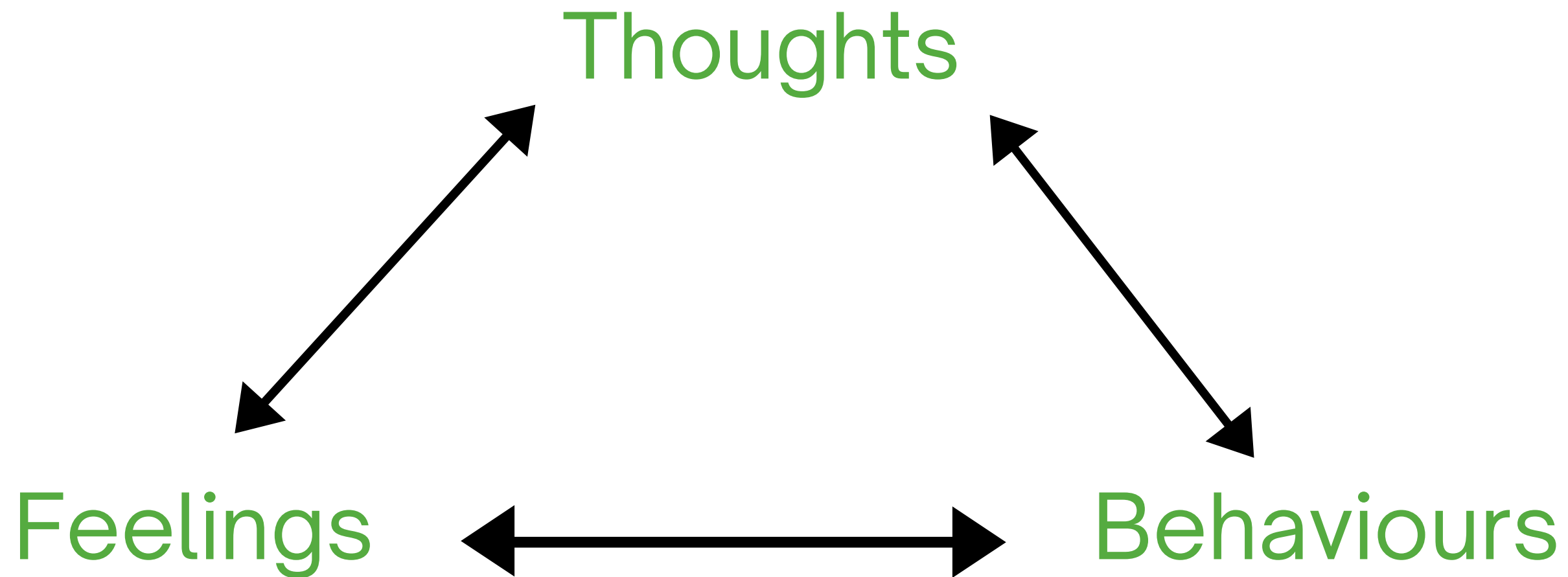
Counselor: has a master's degree, can help with general counseling and psychotherapy.

Psychologist: has a doctoral degree, can help with counseling, psychotherapy, psychological testing, and treatment plans for mental disorders. Often work with psychiatrists.

Psychiatrist: a proper medical doctor specializing in mental illnesses. **Can prescribe medications.**

- Psychotherapy/seeing a counselor or psychologist
 - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
 - Prescribed medication

Alleviating Anxiety (con't)



Anxiety can often put us into this loop of negative thoughts, unpleasant feelings, and unhelpful behaviours. By tapping into any one of these three, we can break the loop of anxiety.

Alleviating Anxiety (con't)

- Relaxation techniques
 - Drawing/colouring
 - Yoga
 - Meditation

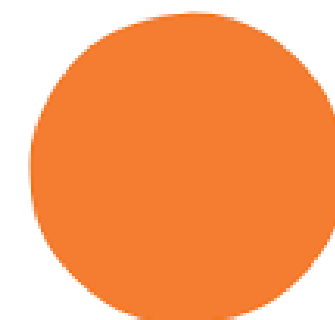


Insight Timer

- Do something fun!



Mindshift



headspace

You eat every day because your body physically needs it.

Food is fuel for the body.

**Similarly, relaxation/mindfulness moments are
fuel for the mind.**

Set a time to do something for yourself for just 5-10 minutes every day.

Make it a **non-negotiable**.

Relaxation and Mindfulness

Annotate!

self care

getting fresh air outside

meditation

being in nature

for people with anxiety or panic disorders,
doing repetitive actions helps ease the
nerves because the motions are predictable

being around animals

listening to music

Helping Others With Anxiety

Don't's

- Don't encourage avoidance behaviour by doing things they avoid for them
- Don't push the "face your fears" attitude
- Don't say "it's all in your head" or "it's not a big deal" etc
- Don't say "I know how you feel"
- Don't make assumptions or recommendations about what they should do. Everyone is different, and their coping mechanisms are too.

Helping Others With Anxiety

Do's

- Ask them what they would like you to do
- Ask them 3 questions: what is the worst-case scenario, what is the best-case scenario, and what is most likely to happen?
- Remind them that while anxiety is uncomfortable and unpleasant, it's a necessary system the body needs
- Encourage them gently to go for a walk outside, or step away from a crowded place
- Just remind them this feeling will pass and you are there for them

Whether or not you have anxiety, it is important to learn about it. 1 in 5 people in their lifetime will experience anxiety. This means chances of you knowing someone with anxiety are really high. If you learn about it, you are better equipped to help someone deal with it and face it.

Resources

- Mindshift app
- Health Link BC
- Anxiety Canada
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA)
- 8-1-1 Speak to a Registered Nurse
- Crisis Centre

References

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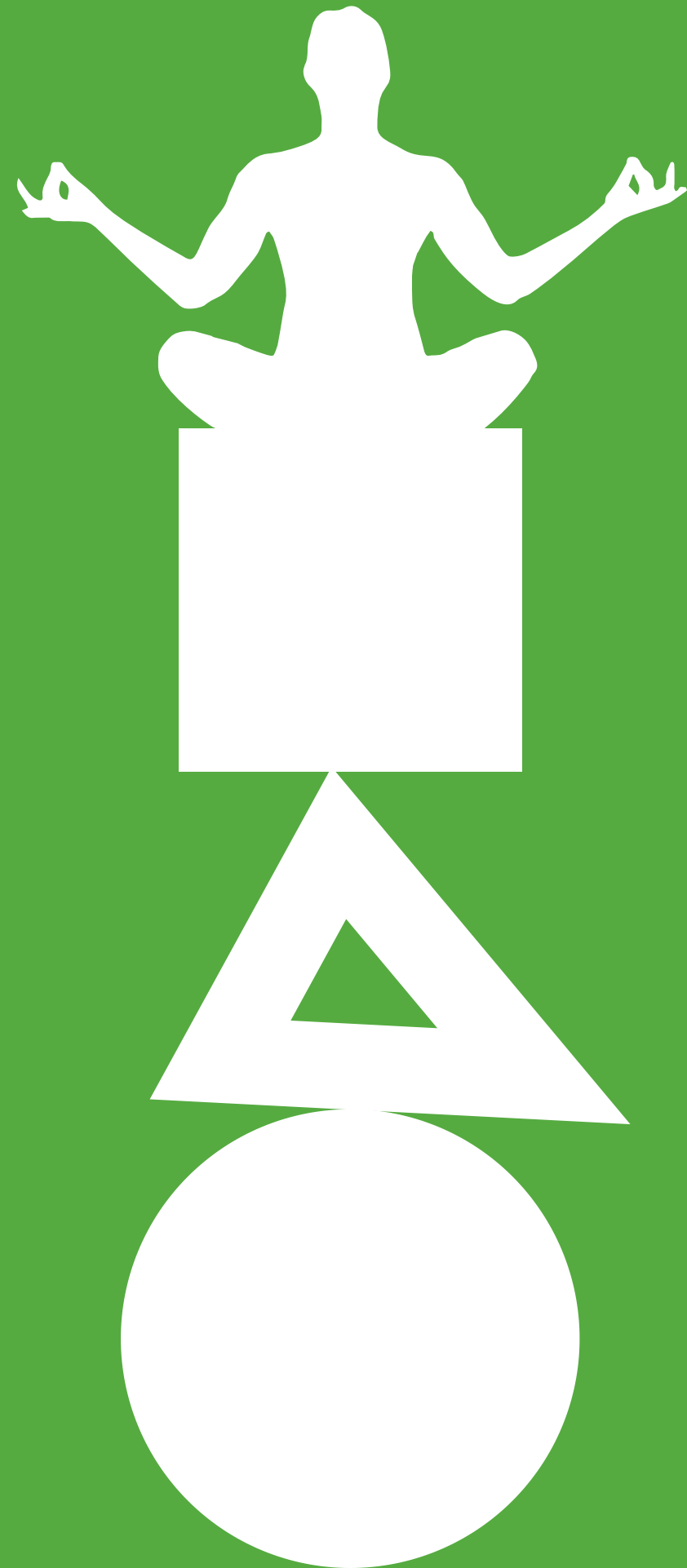
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<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/how-friends-and-family-can-help/>

<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/guide-to-psychiatry-and-counseling>

[A Crash Course video on Anxiety](#)



Anxiety

Tips

By Ravi Safaya

A Spiritual Lense

- Meditation and silent sitting with deep breathing and listen and analyze the root cause of your anxiety. Often the anxiety is because of your projection.
 - For example, on a dark night, you may infer a rope on the street for a snake. In first camping, you are afraid of animals walking into the tent. Research more, know more and educate yourself, which will help combat anxiety arising due to ignorance.
- Follow any Spiritual Masters (Shirdi Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sri Ravi, Sadguru, Mooji Baba, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Chinmayananda, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Yogananda, Swami Rama, Harekrishna founder Swami Prabhudeva, or source Bhagwad Gita)
 - They have faced many obstacles and have deeper introspection about life. Read their lectures, teachings, and tag on to the higher thought and consciousness. You will find some nuggets in their words that will uplift you and carry you through problems. Make it a point to start reading early as in this life; many challenges will come your way, so get equipped sooner than later.

A Spiritual Lense

- Red book: Pick any spiritual book (quotes from any master in the previous slide), and when in stress, open any page at random, and look at any quote (decide on the left corner top or bottom, middle, right side, etc.); read that quote often. You will have an answer.
- Select soul music you can understand. (Bhajan, English devotional music, Gurbani, etc. Krishnadas, Kailesh Kher, Sanskrit bhajan, mantras, etc.) Start listening to different singers, and you will find a sweet spot. Use headphones and sit in a meditative pose and listen with intent. You will be transported to a different world and away from the current problem causing anxiety.
- Deep and long sleep. The body will recover from the stress, and you will feel better.
- Share your anxiety with an elder; they can guide you better as they must have gone through that. Sharing helps.
- Play a long game. The dark clouds will pass. The sun will rise after a dark night. Spring is around the corner. Change is the only constant in life. Have patience, time will change.

A Spiritual Lense

- At a younger age, any small problem seems so big. If the challenge is not life-threatening, it is not so bad and unmanageable. Think of the worst.. bad tests, low grades, loss of friendship, etc.... and believe me, you can recover from all of this. It is not worth spoiling your mental peace.
- If you suffer from performance anxiety, only preparation, practice can help. Practice, practice, practice do your best and leave the rest.