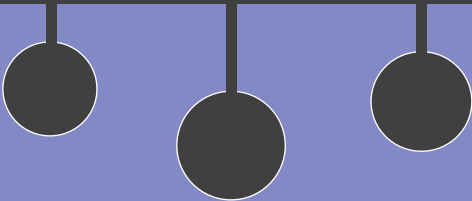


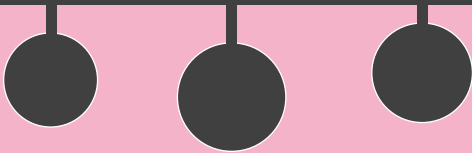
This factsheet is for neurodivergent adults, parents & carers and professionals who would like to know more about why neurodivergent people feel anxious, and how to address anxiety.

Neurodivergence and Anxiety



Anxiety is a crippling condition that can severely impact neurodivergent (ND) people living in a world not designed for them. But with some planning, life management and self-awareness, anxiety can be managed and addressed to prevent it taking over every aspect of life.

What is Anxiety?



Anxiety is worry and fear about a specific issue or life in general, and can be crippling. ND people are more likely, than others, to suffer from anxiety and for anxiety to have a significant negative impact on their lives. Unless it is addressed, anxiety can hold people back from reaching their full potential.

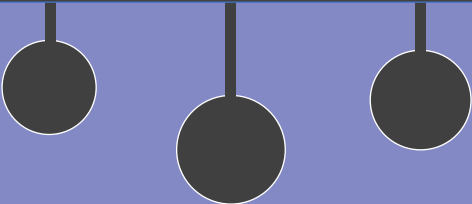


ND people may experience anxiety for many reasons, including sensory overload, struggling to understand the neurotypical world and social conventions, difficulty regulating their own emotions and past experience of being treated poorly for being different.

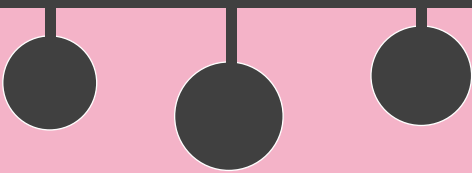
Anxiety can have many different effects, from sweating and negative thoughts to trouble sleeping, panic attacks and self-harm. It is exhausting to be anxious all the time, and this exhaustion then inevitably impacts on every other aspect of life.

Logic and rational approaches to the causes of anxiety are often ineffective – human brains, and especially ND brains, can be very good at imagining the worst possible outcomes in any situation regardless of evidence to the contrary.

How does Anxiety impact ND People?



What are the strategies?



Strategies that can help, include:

- Using routines to make life a bit more predictable and reduce changes that have to be addressed
- Avoiding situations which are known to create anxiety - if a party makes you very anxious, perhaps find another way to see friends like going out for a meal in a calm environment.
- Know what works to soothe and calm – this can be particularly helpful for parents trying to relax anxious children, where a fidget toy or watching a favourite video may work well.
- Being aware of tiredness and energy levels – everything seems worse when you are tired, so take breaks and be aware of the impact of fatigue on mental outlook and emotions.
- Counselling and medication can also help with anxiety, so speak to your doctor if you or a loved one are struggling.

Aubilities are not medical practitioners and content within this article (written by the neurodivergent community) is exclusively for the purpose of information sharing. For further information or concerns, please seek professional medical advice



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