

How to Deal with Anxiety

By Caprice Thorsen

A fresh way to deal with anxiety

Curious how to deal with anxiety? You've come to the right place if techniques and tools have failed you.

Anxiety is an acute form of fear that shows up in uncomfortable physical sensations. You might experience shortness of breath, panic, sweaty palm, a fast heartbeat. At least that is how it showed up for me. I experienced panic attacks three years ago when my marriage was ending and I was learning some surprising things about my ex-husband. Anxiety took over and I never left the house without a bottle of Bach Flower Essence in my purse. The only music I could listen to in my car was classical music.

I tried meditation, letting go, breathing exercises, and of course the Flower Essence. But I couldn't always put a dropper full of liquid in my mouth without calling attention to myself. I'd been a professional coach for over 15 years at the time and none of the tools in my toolbox were working. I couldn't figure out how to deal with anxiety.

I used to think that anxiety was coming from my circumstances. I thought my ex-husband and his actions were generating my anxiety. What I came to realize is that anxiety, like any feeling, comes from our thinking. I created a big, scary story of what might happen in the future and I was responding to my thinking about this possible, horrible future.

What is fear and anxiety really?

Let's talk about fear. What is fear? Does it really protect you from danger?

The only time that fear is useful is when your life is in danger - there is a snake on the path and you freeze. You bump into a bear in the woods and flee. You're jogging down the path and encounter an angry poodle and fight it off. Fight, flight, freeze. That is what the surge of adrenaline produced by an acute stab of fear does for us.

Chronic fear is a different thing. Fear, and the fear-based emotions anxiety, stress, and worry are not your friends.

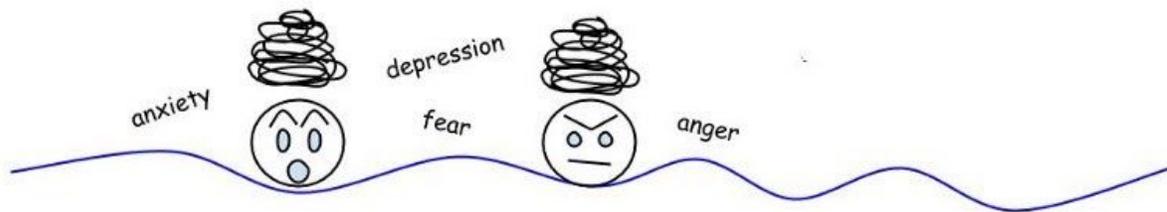
We've been trained to think that we are being responsible adults when we worry. So, we worry about the future. We worry about our kids, the economy, our health, the environment, and terrorist attacks. We are a very worried society.

We are also an anxious society. Do you know who in our society are the most worried? Teenagers! The reason they are worried... fear about personal achievement (or lack of it) in school and their future success in life.

We are literally worrying ourselves to death. There is a high correlation between stress and sickness. Dr. Bruce Lipton estimates that 90% of disease is caused by stress. Rates of depression and suicide are higher now than they were during WWII - a time in human history of complete social and economic upheaval. If events in the outside world really caused mental dis-ease, wouldn't we have seen more at that time?

Let's explore what fear is and how you can fear-proof your Self.

LIE: Your Thoughts are True



We are held captive by our thoughts, believing that they are all true. Yet, over 70% of everyone's thoughts are negative... I was trained to believe that *I am my intellect* and to believe all of my thoughts. My self worth became intricately connected to grades, ranking, titles, and achievement.

You live 100% in the experience of your thinking. It is actually all you can ever experience

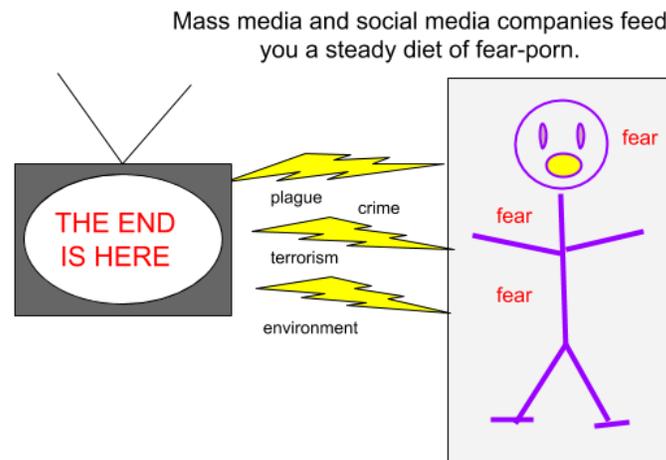
Here is how your beautiful, elegant operating system works: you have an experience, you think about it, your conditioned thought patterns make it mean something (good or bad) and then you have emotions. Most of the time, this happens so quickly, we are unaware of the process. We just suddenly have strong emotions and then we say, "what happened?" meaning what happened in the outside world to make me feel this way?

You cannot control your thoughts and they don't need to control you. Watch your thoughts come and go. Your free will is your ability to choose which thoughts you give life to.

Do not believe the endless stream of worries about the future or regrets of the past. It's like you have a toxic iPod playing in your brain all the time. Don't believe it.

LIE: Worry and Anxiety = Responsible.

To be a responsible citizen in today's world, you've been trained to plug into the media to stay informed. Little do you know that you are being fed a very distorted view of reality. 6 multinational companies [own almost all of media](#): the internet, cable, TV, and print media and they have an agenda. It's crazy to think that Disney owns the History Channel and TimeWarner owns Gaia.



The media uses highly biased emotionally charged words like “operative” and “heart-wrenching” combined with vague words like “presumed” and “allegedly” to keep you both fearful and confused. So, if we plug into a news story and it's very bad news, gloomy, end of the world stuff, we are conditioned to worry, so we start having fearful thoughts, thoughts of worry, and then we feel fear, anxiety, and upset.

As an informed citizen, you need to understand that the media is constructing a highly strategic narrative about the world and your place in it. When you can see the narrative for what it is, you cannot be manipulated.

Of course media companies and marketers know how to manipulate us

In the 1950s, companies started hiring behavioral psychologists to do advertising campaigns that would make people want to buy their products. Their task was to create artificial demand for a product that people didn't need yet. Take Wonder Bread. How did companies get women to buy bread instead of making it

themselves? They bleached it! They found that white fluffy bread was psychologically appealing to women. How did the razor companies get us to buy razors? By convincing women that leg hair was unsightly.

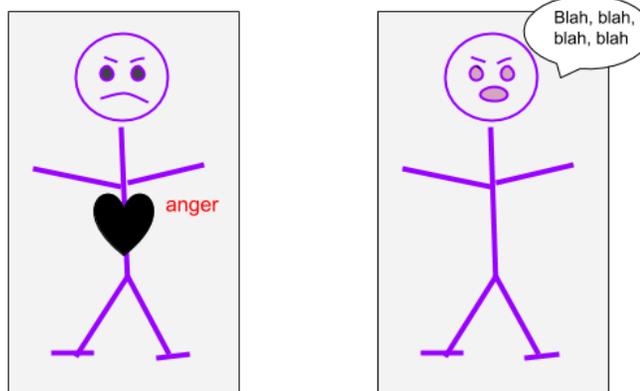
To extend it to your childhood, how did teachers get you to sit still and pay attention to boring subjects in school and compete in the endless game of information processing? Through operant conditioning that the behavioral psychologist brought into schooling. Rewards (gold stars, good grades, high GPA, honor roll, teacher approval) and punishments (bad grades, flipped cards, shame and embarrassment, being ignored by the teacher) are all ways to psychologically manipulate you. And I'm not trying to blame or demonize teachers. They too are trapped in the artificial system of information processing when they would rather be waking kids up to their inner genius.

But we need to delve a bit deeper into where your emotions are coming from. Is it the news story? The argument you just had with a co-worker? The guy that cut you off in traffic?

LIE: You are powerless

Society trains us to believe that there is a world outside of us and we are just reacting to it. The best we can hope to do is notice our reactions and work hard to change them to positive ones. The outside, objective world has the power. We don't.

When another person says or does something that you don't like, you believe that experience creates your emotions.



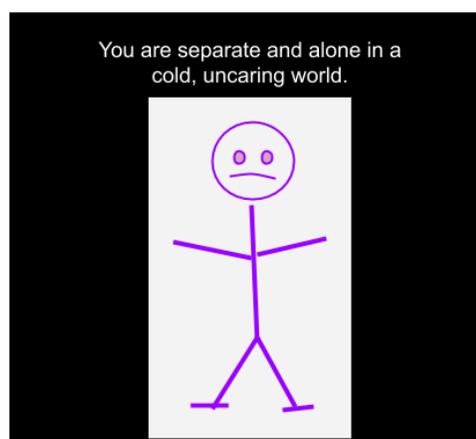
We are conditioned to analyze everything with our logical brains. We are taught to believe every thought that pops into our head. "Wow, they said I was lazy. That makes me mad!"

We live in our thinking-emotional reality. We do not live in the emotion of our experiences. It is what we THINK about our experiences that result in our emotions. Two people can have the exact same experience and view it differently, tell different stories about it, and have different emotions.

LIE: You are Alone in a Cold, Uncaring World

We have been trained to see the world through a materialist lens. In this worldview, the only thing that is real is physical matter. You are a separate block of physical matter that is alone in a cold, uncaring dead universe of other unintelligent matter. Millions of years of evolution produced a brain that gave you consciousness. When you die, your separate self and consciousness are no more.

So, you do your best to survive in this cold, competitive, uncaring world. You try to make some money, take care of your family, look out for #1, and hope for the best.



LIE: You are Not Enough

Growing up, there is always something that you're not naturally good at. You start believing that you are somehow lacking and need to fix yourself. It becomes your shameful secret. You think if you can just get enough money or followers or stuff, you will be okay. That's why every YouTuber and digital marketing guru talks about the Imposter Syndrome. Apparently, even [Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg](#) had imposter syndrome.

School trains us to compare ourselves to others in the game of who can process the most information wins. School forced us to focus on our weaknesses so that we could get straight As, a high GPA, get into an elite college, and then hope there was

a job waiting for us so that we can pay off student loan debt. The result is that we all judge ourselves as unworthy.

This training of generations has led to an epidemic of anxiety, depression, hostility, fear, and loneliness.

We need to break the cultural trance of fear and we do it one person at a time. I invite you to learn how your beautifully designed human operating system really works. It's quite magical!

TRUTH: you are a powerful energetic being, not a separate block of physical matter

There is a universal intelligence behind all life. It is an intelligent energy that grows babies, opens roses, and flows through all humans. It is far more powerful than our intellect. Our brains are tools of this universal intelligence, not its master.

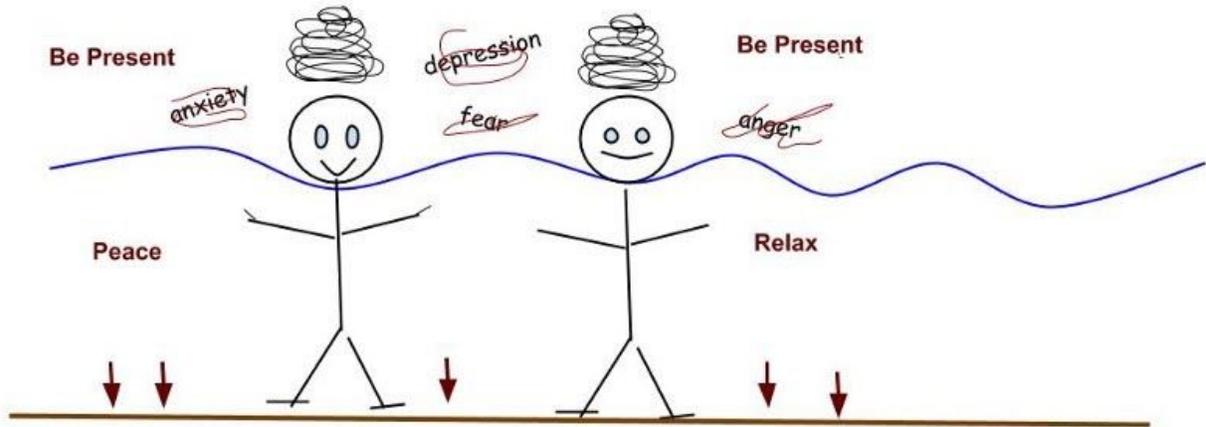
How can you possibly know that it exists? Because it comes to you in moments when you are calm and relaxed and you have a sudden insight or ah-ha moment. That's why so many people have great ideas in the shower or when walking the dog.

Quantum physicists and biologists have discovered something amazing about life. Life requires 3 things: energy, matter, and information. With the discovery of the human genome, they found that encoded in the DNA of all living things is information. Because of the advances in digital information and AI, they now know that this information cannot be random and cannot have emerged gradually through natural selection. There just wasn't enough time for this to happen.

So, the million dollar question: where did the genetic information in all living things come from? There must be an intelligent energy that is powering all life. Let's face it, scientists have come up with some pretty cool technology that has made our lives infinitely more interesting and have protected us from the elements of nature. But no human has been able to create life. So, how does life happen? If humans can't create it, aren't we playing God when we try to control it?

[Anita Moorjani](#) said in one of her podcasts, that when she crossed over to the other side during her near death experience, she saw that the part of us that resides in our bodies is only 20% of us. She urges us to connect with and love the other 80% of us that we cannot see.

TRUTH: The only thing that exists is the eternal NOW

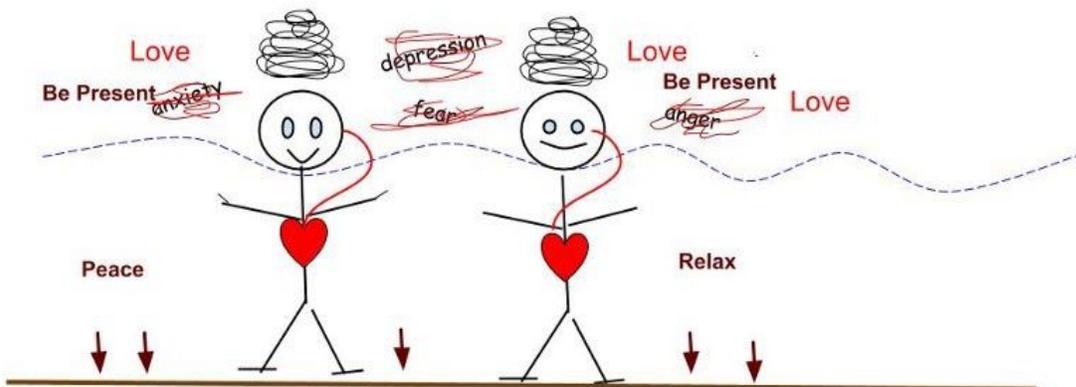


You can only be where your feet are. The NOW is the only thing that exists. The past only exists in your thinking - in your memories. The past is not real. The future is not real. And no amount of worrying or planning will control its outcome.

There are lots of ways to get present, be mindful, and be where your feet are including: meditation, walks in nature, music, laughter, breathing.

TRUTH: Your feelings and sensations are your GPS

Your emotions are a psychological compass that tells you the state of your thinking. Nothing more. Nothing Less.

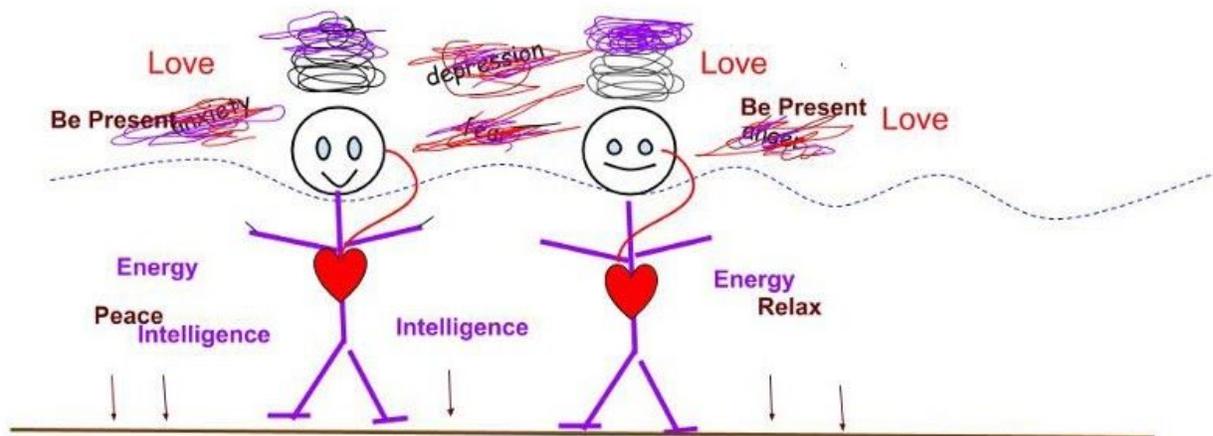


Relax into your heart space. Under your thinking, beliefs, and assumptions... you are PURE LOVE.

Our true essence is LOVE. Not romantic love, but unconditional love of all that is. I was told to ignore or mistrust emotions—they are irrational. I struggled to make sense of the ongoing battle between my head and my heart. To make decisions, I'd make a logical pros and cons list.

I now understand that I am love. I don't need to look outside of myself for something that I already am. I can go into the world needing nothing, ready to connect through love. To experience love as your true essence, it can be as simple as breathing into your heart space and feeling the warmth and love that is there.

TRUTH: Your body is intelligent



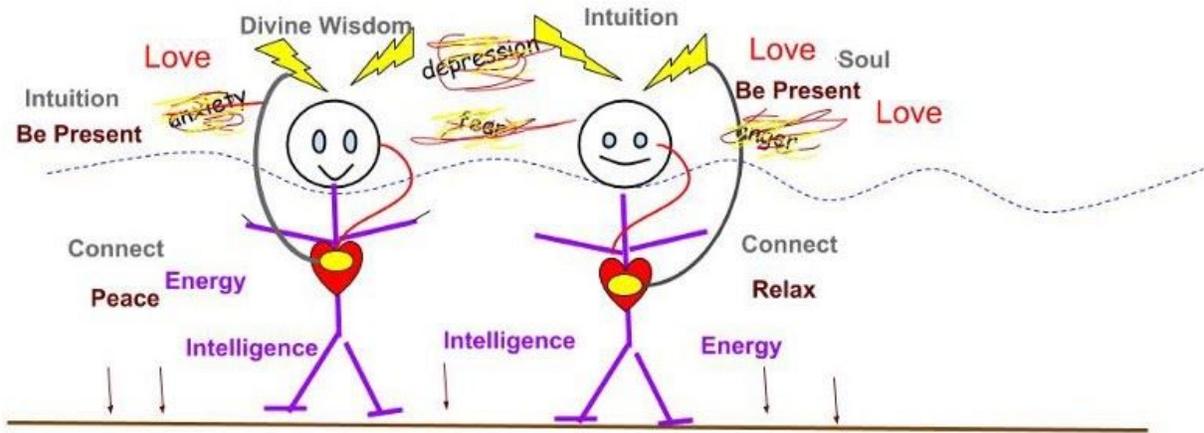
Our body has natural intelligence and is trying to communicate with us every second. Every cell of your body is intelligent. Relax into your body. Connect with the energy and intelligence behind all life.

I was trained to see my body as just a vehicle for my brain. 13+ years being forced to sit still and use your intellect for rote memorization has disconnected you from a body that wanted to be outside, run, play, move.

Medical professionals apply band-aids applies to any symptoms of dis-ease that popped up. I now understand that my body is continually sending me messages to let me know if I am on the best path for my highest good. Am I really following my true calling and hearing the whispers of my soul? Begin to move mindfully again. Do a [body scan](#) daily. Yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Dance, or other somatic practices can re-connect you with the intelligence of your body.

TRUTH: Your intuition/inner knowing guides you

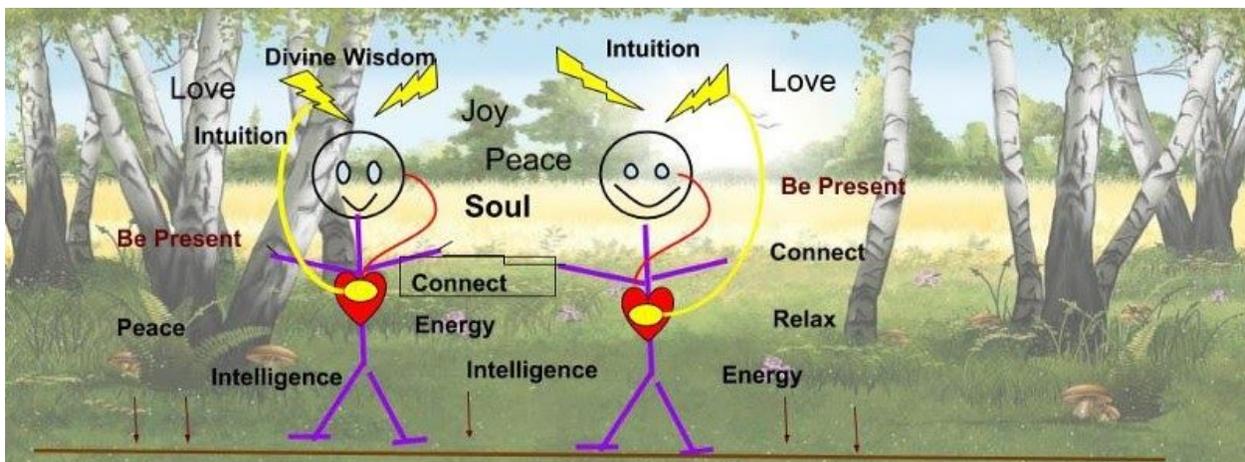
You are always guided moment by moment to action that serves your highest Self.



Our intuition/divine wisdom is a quiet whisper that we can hear when we take time to be quiet. You were born with this innate intelligence until it was conditioned out of you.

I know what my intuition feels like in my body. YES is light, expansive, and full of energy. NO is heavy and I energetically shrink.

TRUTH: You are part of the greater whole



We are trained to see nature as something to be tamed and conquered. It is unpredictable and random. Human technology can conquer it. How well is that working?

“The major problems in the world are the result of the difference between how nature works and the way people think” — Gregory Bateson

Here’s a better view of life and self from science, common sense, and direct experience. In nature, we see the abundance, perfection, and oneness of all life. Experience your Self connected to the Oneness of life. **Reject all thoughts and fears that you are separate, alone, or unsupported.**

Nature beckons to you to come and experience your connection to life. The gentle breeze, warm sun, cool rain, icy winds, call of the birds, buzzing of insects, kisses from your dog are all invitations to join in the majesty and beauty of this earth.

Putting it All Together

I invite you to create a set of morning practices to do when you wake up. I’ll share my favorites here:

1. **Ground Your Self.** Take 3 minutes to connect with your body. Just breathe and feel your body. Notice where you are holding any tension and breathe into that space, just noticing. Lovingly accept it. Don’t force it to relax.
2. **Feel your Self as Love.** Breathe into your heart center for 3 minutes and affirm that you are pure love. Use words, colors, or images to guide you.
3. **Ask your Self,** “Who do I need to be today? What do I need to do?” and wait for the answers and impulses to show up now and as you go through your day. Set the intention that you will be guided by your Soul.
4. **Set aside time to just be in nature.** Marvel at the beauty and abundance all around you. Be a child again and allow yourself to be in awe as if you are seeing it for the very first time.
5. **Trust your intuition.** When faced with a decision, use your divine Yes and No.

Above all else... Be fearlessly your Self, Demand Joy, Be Grateful.

*with love,
Caprice*

If you would like guidance and support on your journey, schedule a free 15-minute coaching session [here](#) with me or send me an [email](#) to connect.