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Anxiety in College Students

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PSYC 303: Research Methods of Psychology

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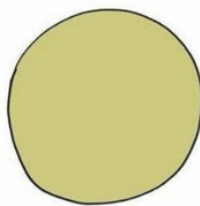
Anxiety in College Students

As a college student, have you ever had trouble falling asleep because you were thinking about everything that must be done tomorrow and then waking up and realizing other things you must do? With only 24 hours in a day and trying to manage to go to the gym, having class from ten in the morning till two in the afternoon, going to work for five hours, making sure you are eating three meals a day, socializing with friends, and on top of that have five or more assignments that you need to get done but do not know how to get it all day within the 24 hours. Lindsay Till Hoyt et al. clarified in their research that all students in April have high levels of stress, and typically, women have worse anxiety than men (Hoyt et al., 2021).



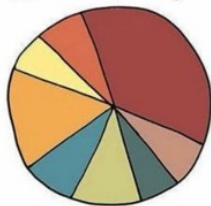
I have experienced this time and time again in my college years. John E. Lothes et al. explained that college students can have both psychological and physiological anxiety, like test anxiety, where to an instructor, a student looks calm, but the student is experiencing internal thoughts

WHAT PEOPLE THINK ANXIETY FEELS LIKE



■ WORRYING ABOUT EVERYTHING, ALL THE TIME

WHAT ANXIETY ACTUALLY FEELS LIKE



- sweating, a lot
- second-guessing yourself
- muscle tension
- trouble sleeping
- chest pain
- over-thinking all the things
- increased heart rate
- your mind and body refusing to cooperate, no matter what you know is rational

(Lothes et al., 2022). Some students like me have it so bad that they are on a type of antidepressant medication to help them throughout the day. Jungmin Lee et al. explain in their research that even before COVID-19, about one-third of college students across the United States had been diagnosed as having at least one mental health symptom, with anxiety being 27.7% (Lee et al., 2021). After reading this, I hope the reader

has a better understanding of what anxiety is, two main types of anxiety, and different treatments to help reduce it so it is not overwhelming.

Anxiety is a reaction to feeling stress, whereas mid-level anxiety can be beneficial in some situations. About 30% of adults will experience a type of anxiety in their lifetime. Most anxiety disorders can be treatable to help lead an everyday life (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d.). Anxiety disorders are different from normal stress. Anxiety disorders should be diagnosed and treated before they become worse during your college years. College students are prone to have either panic disorder or generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) (Anxiety Disorders, n.d.).

There are many different types of anxiety disorders such as phobias, agoraphobia, social anxiety disorder, separation anxiety disorder, and selective mutism, but the main ones for college students are GAD or panic disorder (What are anxiety disorders?, n.d.). Generalized Anxiety Disorder, or GAD for short, is a type of anxiety disorder that usually involves persistent and excessive worry that interferes with daily activities, which results in an ongoing state of worrying and tension that physical symptoms could accompany. Panic Disorder is another type of anxiety disorder that results in recurrent panic attacks or an overwhelming combination of physical and psychological distress (What are anxiety disorders?, n.d.). Jungmin Lee et al.



Concentrating so hard on the appropriate eye-contact-to-looking-away ratio that you have no idea what's being said to you

talked about how COVID-19 had brought changes to college students, with 44% of students showing moderate to severe anxiety. It is most common in females, people who live in rural areas, low-income, and

academically underperforming students are more vulnerable to mental issues like anxiety (Lee et al., 2021).

There are two main types of treatments to help with anxiety disorder, which are psychotherapy and medications. There is a type of psychotherapy called cognitive behavior therapy, or CBT for short, that helps a person with anxiety learn a different way to think, react, and behave to feel less anxious (What are anxiety disorders?, n.d.). John E. Lothes et al. did research on college students that showed the effects of sitting meditation and mindfulness.

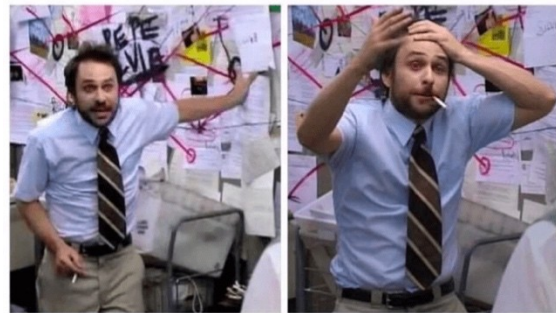
They randomly assigned 20 students to participate in mindfulness practice, which resulted in either sitting meditation or waitlist control over five weeks. The results showed that both groups

showed a significant reduction in test anxiety and overall anxiety. Mindfulness is the ability to bring personal inner attention to the experience of the present moment with no judgment (Lothes et al., 2022).

Another research study by Elizabeth Hoge et al. measured the difference between mindfulness-based stress reduction and escitalopram, a type of medication for anxiety and depression. This study was a randomized clinical trial in which participants either received mindfulness-based stress reduction or a dose of escitalopram. The results from the survey show that for anxiety disorder in young adults, mindfulness-based stress reduction was non-inferior to escitalopram (Hoge et al., 2023).

Anxiety is a normal thing that happens to everyone at some point or another. Some people may experience anxiety with other mental issues, such as depression. I did not think I

when u got anxiety and u try to explain anything to anyone



would have anxiety with my depression, but I live with it, and I still function like an average person. It is best to seek professional help if anxiety is affecting you more often to try medication or a different type of stress reduction. You are not alone when it comes to mental health, and do not be afraid to seek help or talk to friends and family about how you are feeling. As college students, you have access to the counseling center to talk to someone if you feel uncomfortable with talk to your family or friends.

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