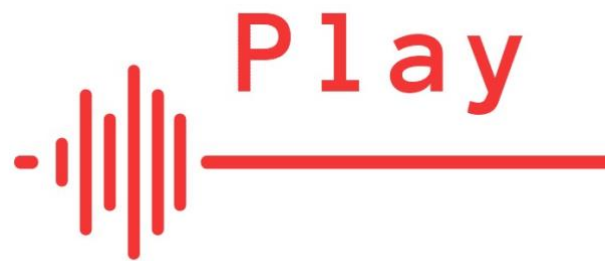


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PLAY: “Play, Learn, fight back AnxietY



Scenario 4 educational material

Educational information about “How to reduce Fear of Failure”

No shame policy: The most common fear of failure that young people report is the fear of shame and embarrassment. This is seen in students who don’t volunteer an answer to a question in class for fear of looking bad in front of their peers. Trying and failing is definitely seen as not cool. We can overcome this fear by creating an environment where failure isn’t followed by laughter, ridicule and embarrassment.

Address the problem: Psychologists believe that there are three ways people cope with situations. These are Avoidant, Emotional and Problem Focused. Let’s say you are worried about snakes in your garden. You could decide to never go into your garden again (avoidant focused), or convince yourself that having snakes in your back garden isn’t that bad (emotion focused) or go into your garden and get rid of the snakes (problem focused). Whereas avoidant and emotional focused coping may provide a short relief, problem focused coping addresses the issue head on, allowing you to make long term gains. Don’t be an ostrich and bury your head in the sand. If something is worrying you, work out how you can make it better.

Learn from your mistakes: Those who focused on their learning are called task-orientated. Creating a task orientated environment (by focusing more on individual development and less in comparison to others) should increase motivation, confidence, self-regulation, academic performance as well as reducing anxiety.

Don’t bottle it up: If something is worrying you, talk to someone like a parent, friend, teacher or coach. These people can give advice, support, or even just listen to you. Using the

support available to you is one of the strategies that Olympic champions use to develop their resilience.

Question your fears: Are your fears actually irrational and highly unlikely to come true? Many students end up worrying about the worst case scenario, often for no logical reason. It's good to reassure them that if they have put the hard work in, there is no reason to assume the worst.

Focus on what you can control: When people focus on things that they can't change, it often makes them stressed or nervous. By helping people focus on what they can control, it gives them a sense of certainty and confidence. Students can't control what grade they will achieve, but they can be processed focused if they concentrate on what they can control (their effort, their attitude, how organised they are).

Embrace the grey: Young people can think that a good grade means that everything is good. On the flip side, a poor grade or a defeat and everything seems all doom and gloom. This sort of black and white thinking can lead to stress, anxiety and fragile self-esteem. Judging yourself on your attitude, effort and what you've learned are better markers and are probably more likely to result in the good grades and wins that they so desire.

10 Signs You're an Overthinker

Overthinking comes in two forms: ruminating about the past and worrying about the future. It's different from problem-solving, because problem-solving involves thinking about a solution and overthinking involves dwelling on the problem. Overthinking is also different from self-reflection, which is about learning something about yourself or gaining a new perspective about a situation whereas overthinking involves dwelling on how bad you feel and thinking about all the things you have no control over. Time spent developing creative solutions or learning from your behavior is productive, but time spent overthinking, whether it's 10 minutes or 10 hours, won't enhance your life.

Here are 10 signs that you're an overthinker:

1. I relive embarrassing moments in my head repeatedly.
2. I have trouble sleeping because it feels like my brain won't shut off.
3. I ask myself a lot of "what if..." questions.
4. I spend a lot of time thinking about the hidden meaning in things people say or events that happen.
5. I rehash conversations I had with people in my mind and think about all the things I wished I had or hadn't said.
6. I constantly relive my mistakes.
7. When someone says or acts in a way I don't like, I keep replaying it in my mind.
8. Sometimes I'm not aware of what's going on around me because I'm dwelling on things that happened in the past or worrying about things that might happen in the future.
9. I spend a lot of time worrying about things I have no control over.
10. I can't get my mind off my worries.

Procrastinators

Procrastinators are often perfectionists, for whom it may be psychologically more acceptable to never tackle a job than to face the possibility of not doing it well. They may be so highly concerned about what others will think of them that they put their futures at risk to avoid judgment. This means that you have trouble persuading yourself to do the things you should do or would like to do. When you procrastinate, instead of working on important, meaningful tasks, you find yourself performing trivial activities.

Procrastination is one of the main barriers blocking you from getting up, making the right decisions, and living the dream life you've thought of.

Recent studies have shown that people regret more the things they haven't done than the things they have done. In addition, feelings of anxiety, regret, and guilt resulting from missed opportunities tend to stay with people much longer. Sometimes all our opportunities seem to be on our fingertips, but we can't seem to reach them. When you procrastinate, you waste time that you could be investing in something meaningful. If you can overcome this fierce enemy, you will be able to accomplish more and in doing so better utilize the potential that life has to offer.

Educational information about “Fear of Failure”

Fear of failure has been defined as “persistent and irrational anxiety about failing to measure up to the standards and goals set by oneself or others” (American Psychological Association 2007, p. 369). Failure fearers tend to be anxious, high in self-doubt, and are uncertain about their ability to avoid failure or achieve success (Covington 1992).

While these students may work hard and achieve, they tend to be adversely affected by setbacks as it tends to confirm their doubts about their ability and their uncertain control (Covington 1992; Martin and Marsh 2003). Often in response to this fear of failure, these students may actively sabotage their chances of success (e.g., procrastinate, leave tasks until the last minute, or expend little effort) so that they have an excuse if they do not do so well. This excuse serves a protective function in that they can blame their poor performance on their procrastination, for example, rather than a possible lack of ability (Covington 1992; Martin 2010).

Recent theory and research (Covington 1992; Martin 2010; Martin and Marsh 2003) has separated many failure fearers into two groups:

- (1) students who deal with their fear of failure by hard work and/or success, often referred to as overstrivers (or sometimes as perfectionists);
- (2) The self-protector, that means students who deal with their fear of failure through counterproductive activity that is aimed more at self-protection than attaining success.

The overstriver tends to avoid failure by succeeding (Covington 1992). Factors that are associated with this form of failure fearing include anxiety, perceptions of low control, and an unstable self-esteem (Martin 2010). The risks inherent in this form of failure fearing are

twofold. First, it renders the academic journey as somewhat unpleasant, fraught with anxiety, perceptions of low control, and unstable self-esteem (Martin 2010). Second, when overstrivers do not succeed, failure is seen as proof of suspected incompetence and this increases the risk of falling into the second and more counterproductive form of failure avoidance: self protection (Covington 1992).

The self-protector does not aim so much to avoid failure but to avoid the implications of failure (Covington 1992). They avoid the implications of failure through strategically maneuvering in ways to protect their self-worth. In doing so, they are able to mitigate the extent to which failure reflects poorly on their ability and consequent self-worth (Covington 1992).